

KASHMIR Sentinel



*We Wish Our Readers
A Very Happy New Year*



Let Truth Prevail

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Editorial

HOMELAND DAY

ON 29th of December the Kashmiri Pandits in the capital and from elsewhere would meet in New Delhi under aegis of Panun Kashmir to reaffirm their resolve to retrieve their homeland. In a way the mass of the exiled Pandit community treats this day as momentous, a day far more significant than any other in its long history of political and religious persecution. On this day 16 years ago in 1991 the members of the Kashmiri Pandit community decided to bid adieu to what they call **'politics of servility and collaboration with Muslim communalism'**. They declared aloud and clear: 'henceforth, the often-wronged Pandit community would decide its destiny on its own and return to its homeland as a matter of right and choice.' The community put forth its resolve in a historic document that has come to be called **MargDarshan' 91**.

Soon after the passing of this historic resolution few dissenting groups, which had their origin in 'old-guard servile politics' (which advocated crumbs in place of genuine social, economic and political empowerment), tried to create obstacles by misrepresenting the logic and arguments of the MargDarshan demand. Over the years these groups too have fallen in line, either due to community pressure or probably due to their own experience. The exiled Pandit community is convinced that creation of Panun Kashmir is the only instrument through which the community can return to Kashmir to live there and perpetuate itself. Lived experience is the only experience which can guide an exiled community to its final destiny. An exiled group which is oblivious to its own survival has only one place in history——complete oblivion.

No community can rest on its oars just on mere slogans and resolutions. Panun Kashmir leadership has been well seized of it. Over the years it has not only fought attempts at deflection from without but has also succeeded in evolving a baggage of politics to justify the demand. The result has been that the logic and relevance of Panun Kashmir demand has made entry in to the discourse at the national level. It is no more what a cynical intellectual once said——'pariah'. Panun Kashmir is now seen as a solution—not only to perpetual homelessness of Kashmiri Pandits but also to break the impasse in Kashmir on a permanent basis. The more this demand becomes popular the greater would be the machinations employed by those who have imposed genocide on it. From time to time culturally alienated members had been calling the community's forced exodus as 'a self-imposed one'. Consistent work done by the Panun Kashmir leadership has exposed the politics behind this. Alertness at all levels is desirable in

future as well to counter these attempts. Doling out 'certificates of good conduct' to groups who have collaborated in Pandits' genocide or lampooning those who have come to community's rescue does neither serve the interests of the community nor the nation. **'Incomprehension'** and **'internal betrayal'** inflict far more damage to the exiled group.

The exiled Pandit community faces challenges at three levels——

One, the menace of terrorism. As long as the nation does not deliver decisively a body-blow to terrorism the return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits would remain a pipe-dream. As frontline victims of terrorism it is Pandit community's onerous responsibility to deepen its understanding of Islamist terrorism and build strong national awareness on it. It has also to aid the national effort to counter terrorism and ally with those forces who are battling the scourge of terrorism.

The second challenge manifests from the growing communalization and talibanisation of society and politics in Kashmir. Prof. TN Madan rightly calls secularism as the dream of the minority. What better protection a minority can have other than the sincere commitment of the majority to a secular social order? Keeping visibility on the errors of omission and commission committed against Kashmiri Pandits and raising political stakes for those who pursue consistently communal politics under the hubris of 'identity', can go a long way in creating a climate fertile for the growth of secular politics in Kashmir. The Pandit leadership needs to hone its politics, to ensure an ever-widening constituency at the national level to clamour for a truly secular dispensation in Kashmir. The Pandit community has to identify the forces which would be its partners in the long battle for secularism in Kashmir.

Lastly, the exiled community has to look inwards. What are the efforts it is making to sensitise the newer generations, particularly the ones born after 1990, to community's ethos, culture and the political goals of the struggle to retrieve the lost homeland? Has the community's Writers' fraternity done enough to produce the desired literature in this regard? Why has the Pandit intelligentsia failed to produce such men of gold——Yehudi Amichai, Edward Said, Mehmood Derwish, to name only a few, who too were products of exile? What has been the effort of its intellectual class in developing human resources, easing the pain of the disadvantaged members and in networking to broaden the reach of the community?

It is hoped the community members on this solemn occasion would deliberate these challenges and fine-tune the strategies for survival ♦

Panun Kashmir and Kashmir Sentinel condole the demise of the following members of the community.

- Sh. Prem Nath Pandita S/o Sh. Vishnu Ji Pandita originally resident of Bomai Sopore Kmr; presently at 41-A, Swaran Vihar Durga Nagar Bantalab, Jammu. 14/6/2007
- Smt. Jai Kishori Bhat W/o Sh. Jagar Nath Bhat, R/o Ali Kadal Sgr; presently residing at Jawala Colony, Old Satwari Jammu Cantt. 15/6/2007
- Sh. Brij Nath Mattoo S/o Late Sh. Jagar Nath Matto, R/o Bagh Jogi Lankar, Rainawari Sgr; presently at Priyadarshani Lane No: 2, Patta Paloura, Jammu. 15/6/2007
- Smt. Rajlakshmi Koul (Kilam) W/o Prof. T.N. Koul originally resident of Shivpora Sgr; presently residing at H.No: 65/14 Rajpur Road, Dehradioon. 15/6/2007
- Smt. Uma Jigri W/o Late Sh. Aftab Ram of Pinglish Tral Kmr; presently residing at Qtr. No: 37-A, Muthi Camp Phase-II, Jammu. 15/6/2007
- Smt. Arandati Koul W/o Sh. Jia Lal Koul R/o 128-Karan Nagar Sgr; presently residing at 39 A/C Gandhi Nagar, Jammu and B-40, SFS, Flats Sheikh Sarai Phas-I, New Delhi. 15/6/2007
- Sh. Pearay Lal Bhat S/o Late Sh. Moti Lal Bhat originally resident of Danow Bogund Kulgam Kmr; presently resident of 44-H, Muthi Camp, Phase-II, Jammu. 16/6/2007
- Smt. Kamlawati Koul W/o Late Sh. Dwarka Nath Koul of Shalayar Habbakadal Sgr; presently at Shahibabad (UP). 16/6/2007
- Sh. Arjan Nath Sathu S/o Late Sh. Sarwanand Sathu R/o Ranipora Teh. & Distt. Anantnag Kmr; presently residing at Phase-II, Community Hall Purkhoo Camp Jammu. 16/6/2007
- Sh. Gopi Nath Dhar S/o Late Sh. Shankar Nath Dhar R/o Malhipora Handwara/zAINDAR Mohalla Habbakadal Sgr; presently residing at 903-A, Janipur Colony, Jammu. 17/6/2007
- Sh. Moti Lal Raina R/o H.No: 11, Lane-8, Near Kothian Lower Barnai Jammu. 18/6/2007. formerly residen of Drusu Pulwama, Kmr.
- Smt. Kamlawati Bhat W/o Late Sh. Sarwanand Bhat R/o Village Gund Gushi Kupwara Kmr; presently residing at H.No: 2-C, Lane-3, Bharat Nagar Bantalab, Jammu. 18/6/2007
- Sh. Chandler Dhar S/o Late Sh. Sri Kanth Dhar R/o 45, C/C Gandhi Nagar, Jammu. 19/6/2007
- Smt. Janki Jigri W/o Sh. Kashi Nath Koul originally resident of Ganesh Ghat Ganpatyar Sgr; presently at 410 Super Tech Residency, Sector-5, Vaishali Gaziabad UP. 19/6/2007
- Sh. Shiban Lal Raina S/o Sh. Madsudhan Raina, R/o Namthal Chandora Kmr; presently residing at H.No: 15, Lane-8, Roop Nagar Enclave-B, Jammu. 19/6/2007
- Sh. Triloki Nath Razdan S/o Late Sh. Lambohar Ji Razdan formerly resident of Drabiyar Sgr; presently residing at New D-4, Medical Enclave, Meheshpora Bakshi Nagar, Jammu. 20/6/2007
- Smt. Arundhati Bhan W/o Late Sh. Niranjan Nath Bhan, R/o Jawahar Nagar Sgr; presently residing at 468-Lane-4, Roop Nagar, Enclave Jammu. 20/6/2007
- Smt. Shobawati Raina W/o Late Sh. D.N. Raina originally resident of 175, Jawahar Nagar Sgr; presently at H.No: 4/2008-A, Shant Nagar Disco Morh, Janipu Jammu. 21/6/2007
- Sh. Radha Krishen Pandita S/o Late Sh. Jagar Nath Pandita originally resident of Shergund Anantnag Kmr; presently residing at Shiv Bawan Block-G, Mishriwalla Camp, Jammu. 22/6/2007
- Smt. Uma Shori W/o Late Sh. Anand Ji Tickoo R/o Seer Hamdan Anantnag Kmr. 22/7/2007
- Sh. Dwarka Nath Tickoo S/o Late Sh. Diva Lal Tikoo, R/o Village Wadvan Distt. Budgam Kmr; presently residing at Qtr. No: 353, Phase-I Camp Purkhoo Jammu. 23/6/2007
- Sh. Radha Krishen Sabni originally R/o 57-A Small Plots Gandhi Nagar, Jammu left for his heavenly abode on 23/6/2007 at his residenc B-128, F-1, Ramprastha Colony, Gaziabad (UP).
- Sh. Girdhari Lal Raina S/o Late Sh. Keshav Nath Raina originally resident of 39 Private Jawahar Nagar Sgr; presently residing at H.No: 90, Pamposh Colony, Sector-2 Janipur, Jammu. 23/6/2007
- Sh. Sri Kanth Jotshi S/o Late. Sh. Anand Joo R/o Saligam Kmr; presently at Vikas Colony Paloura Top near Migrant Camp Phase-I, Muthi Jammu. 24/6/2007
- Sh. Lachman Jee Raina S/o Late Sh. Shiv Jee Raina originally resident of Achan Pulwama Kmr; presently residing at JMC-917, Suraj Nagar, Lane No: 6-A, Talab Tillo, Jammu. 25/6/2007
- Smt. Pran Piyari W/o Sh. Bushan Lal Dhar resident of Langate Handwara Kmr; ;presently residing at Shiv Vihar Trilokpura Gole Gujral Jammu. 25/6/2007
- Sh. Man Mohan Nath Tickoo S/o Late. Sh. Tika Lal Tickoo, R/o Aragam Bandipur Kmr; presently residing at Community Centre Battal Balian Camp Udhampur. 25/6/2007
- Smt. Prabha Saproo W/o Late Sh. JN Saproo R/o 473, Jawahar Nagar Sgr; presently residing at 12-113, Colonel Colony, Sector-, Talab Tillo, Jammu. 27/6/2007
- Smt. Janak Rani Dhar W/o Sh. Janaki Nath Dhar resident of Harmukh Appts. Noida. 27/6/2007
- Sh. Janki Nath Saraf originally R/o Fatehkadal Sgr, left for heavenly abode on 27/6/2007 at Ware House D-18, Govt. Qtrs. Jammu.
- Smt Janak Rani W/o Sh. Janki Nath Dhar, R/o Nawabazar Kmr; presently at Noida. 27/6/2007
- Smt. Rattan Rani Mattoo W/o Late Sh. KN Mattoo originally resident of Badiyar Bala, Habbakadal Sgr; presently residing at A-10-Bharat Nagar, Talab Tillo, Jammu. 28/6/2007
- Smt. Laxmi Shouri W/o Sh. Ram Chand Koul, R/o Seer Anantnag, Kmr; presently residing at Nanak Vihar Lower Muthi, near Gatta Factory Jammu. 30/6/2007
- Sh. L.N. Jotshi S/o Late Sh. Shamboo Nath Jotshi of Bijbehara, Kmr; presently living at H.No: 126-D, Lane No: 2 Durga Nagar Sector-1, Bantalab Jammu. 30/6/2007
- Sh. Maharaj Krishen Dhar S/o Late Sh. Sri Kanth Dhar R/o 8/2 KK Sokhta Nawakadal Sgr; presently residing at 9/A, Ambedkar Nagar High Court Road, Janipur Jammu. 30/6/2007
- Sh. Mohan Lal Khar S/o Kailash Ram Khar R/o Martand Mattan Kmr. 30/6/2007
- Smt. Shobawati Bhat W/o Late Sh. Permanand Bhat R/o Villagam Handwara Kmr; presently residing at Qtr. No: 22 Phase-II Purkhoo Camp Jammu. 1/7/2007
- Smt. Mohini Ganjoo W/o Late Sh. Radhey Nath Ganjoo originally resident of Bana Mohalla Habbakadal 2nd Bridge Sgr; presently residing at F-274/A1 Pratap Vihar Gaziabad (UP). 1/7/2007
- Smt. Dhanwati Dhar W/o Late Sh. Govind Joo Dhar R/o Kankhai Sokhta Nawakadal Sgr; presently residing at 52 Mahinder Nagar Canal Road, Jammu. 2/7/2007
- Sh. Nand Lal Lal Raina S/o Late Sh. Amar Chand Raina R/o Pallahalan Pattan Kmr; presently residing at 269 JMC P.D. Lane: 4, Talab Tillo, Jammu. 3/7/2007
- Sh. Kanth Koul S/o Late Sh. Mana Koul, R/o Achan Pulwama Kmr; presently residing at Bawani Nagar, Gole Pully Talab Tillo, Jammu. 4/7/2007
- Capt. Madsudan Kaul (Jalali) originally resident of 99 Naidyar Rainawari Sgr; presently residing at Flat 452 Windsor Green Tower-4 Sector-50, Noida (UP). 4/7/2007
- Sh. Inder Krishen Koul S/o Late Pt. N.N. Koul Advocate originally resident of Jawahar Bavan Karan Nagar, Sgr; presently residing at B-9 37-A, Sector-34 Noida (UP). 5/7/2007
- Smt. Kanta Tiku W/o Late Triloki Nath Tiku, originally resident of 123, Jawahar Nagar Sgr; presently at Boston (USA). 6/7/2007
- Sh. Makhan Lal Koul S/o Late Sh. JL Koul formerly resident of 86 Karan Nagar, Sgr; presently residing at 318, 241P Extension Patparganj New Delhi. 6/7/2007
- Sh. M.K. Trakroo originally resident of Indira Nagar Sgr; and presently residing at A-17/201 Shalimar Garden Ext.-II Sahibabad (UP). 16/7/2007
- Sh. Makhan Lal Munshi resident of H.No: 32, Lane-1, Adarsh Nagar, Bantalab Jammu. 7/7/2007
- Sh. Mohan Lal Mattoo originally resident of Bagh Jogi Lankar Rainawari Sgr; presently at Reshikesh. 7/7/2007
- Sh. Ashok Kumar Bhat S/o Late. Sh. Veshamber Nath Bhat R/o Yall-Pattan Baramulla Kmr; presently residing at Migrant Camp Nagrota Camp, Jammu. 7/7/2007
- Smt. Mohini Rania W/o Sh. Sohan Lal Raina, R/o Arresh Teh. Kulgam Kmr; presently residing at Village Swarn Purkhoo Jammu. 9/7/2007
- Dr. Areen Fotedar S/o Prof. D.N. Fotedar originally resident of Karan Nagar Sgr; presently at California, San Diego (USA). 9/7/2007
- Sh. Omkar Nath Koul originally resident of Sonyar Habbakadal Sgr; presently residing at 104-D Shiva Enclave Lane No: 3 Roop Nagar, Jammu. 10/7/2007
- Sh. Soom Nath Pandit S/o Late Sh. Mahadev Ram Pandit R/o Vessu Anantnag Kmr; presently residing at H.No: 65, Sector-6, Muthi Camp Phase-II Jammu. 10/7/2007
- Dr. Vijay Kumar Vakhlu S/o Prof. Somnath Wakhlu R/o E-1 RRL Jammu. 11/7/2007
- Dr. Som Nath Malik S/o Late Sh. Tara Chand Malik R/o Melapura Habakadal Sgr. presently residing at 7-Harit Niketan, West Enclave Pitampura Delhi. 34/11/2007
- Sh. Baba Ji Kaul S/o Late Sh. Jia Lal Koul, R/o Narperistan Sgr; presently at A-3-6/1 Sector 9, Mallinium Towers Sanpada Navi Mumbai. 11/7/2007
- Sh. Jawahar Lal Dhar S/o Late Sona Joo Dhar R/o 1-2 Bana Mohalla Sgr; presently residing at E-6/44, Arora Colony Bhopal (MP). 14/7/2007
- Smt. Jaikishori Padora W/o Late Sh. T.N. Padora; presently at residing at H.No: 1887 Sector-7, Karnal Haryana. 14/7/2007
- Smt. Pranashori Raina W/o Sh. Triloki Nath Raina originally resident of Avil Kulgam Anantnag, Kmr; presently residing at H.No: 32, Lane-7, Anand Nagar, Bohri, Jammu. 14/7/2007
- Sh. Jaggar Nath Saproo S/o Late Sh. Raghunath Saproo R/o Seer Kadligund Anantnag, Kmr; presently residing at Migrant Camp Nagrota Qtr. No: 414, Jhiri Phase. 14/7/2007
- Smt. Soomawati Raina W/o Late Sh. Sham Lal Raina R/o Kihardori Purshya Habbakadal Sgr; presently residing at Sector 56, H.No: 211 Gurgoan Haryana. 14/7/2007
- Smt. Sharika Koul W/o Sh. Som Nath Koul, R/o ... Anantnag Kmr; presently at Rama Krishna Vihar, Lane No: 1, Udhaiwala Jammu. 12/7/2007
- Smt. Pyari Zaroo W/o Late Sh. T.N. Zaroo R/o Kathial Zaindar Mohalla Sgr; presently at 64 Paloura Top Bidh.. BSF HQ, Jammu. 16/7/2007
- Sh. Gopi Nath Pandita S/o Late Sh. Tika Lal Pandita R/o Bomai Sopore Kmr; presently at H.No: 63, Govind Nagar Gole Gujral Road, Talab Tillo Jammu. 12/7/2007
- Smt. Dulari Kanth W/o Late Sh. Janki Nath Kanth R/o Karihama Kupwara, Kmr; presently residing at Qtr. No: 271 Muthi Camp, Phase-II Jammu 17/7/2007
- Sh. Nand Lal Tickoo S/o Late Sh. Sansar Chand Tickoo R/o Brah Anantnag Kmr; presently residnig at H.No: 858, Lane No: 2 Anand Nagar, Jammu. 17/7/2007
- Sh. Triloki Nath Razdan S/o Late Sh. M.L. Razdan, R/o Chandil Wanigam Tangmarg, Kmr; presently residing at 100-A, Patoli Mangotrian Jammu. 21/7/2007
- Pt. Arun Koul S/o Late Pt. J.N. Jalali originally resident of Rainawari Sgr; presently residing at 80/60-B, Malviya Nagar Delhi 21/7/2007
- Sh. Bansri Lal Khosa R/o Bagi Sunder Bala Chattabal Sgr.; presently residing at Sector-71, H.No: 267 Maohali Chandigarh. 21/7/2007
- Sh. Rattan Lal Raina S/o Late Sh. Reeshi Lal Razdan of Salia Anantnag Kmr; presently residing at Sector-4, H.No: 356 Gangyal Gardens Jammu. 21/7/2007.
- Smt. Lachkuji Koul W/o Late Dr. K.N. Koul of Village Wanpoah Anantnag Kmr; presently at Koul Niwas Nawabad Sunjiwan Road, Jammu. 22/7/2007
- Smt. Laxmi Shori W/o Late Damoder Pandita R/o Chillipora presently at Vinayak Nagar Sector-1, H.No: 182-A, Jammu. 22/7/2007
- Sh. Sunder Lal Bhat S/o Late Sh. Sarwanand Bhat R/o Fatehpur Anantnag Kmr; presently at 77-Sec-B, Tirath Nagar, Jammu. 22/7/2007
- Sh. Omkar Nath Safaya S/o Late Gopi Nath Safaya, R/o 183, Upper Laxmi Nagar, Sarwal, Jammu. 23/7/2007
- Sh. Makhan Lal Dhar S/o Late Sh. J.N. Dhar R/o 110 Safakadal Sgr; presently at 6053-5, Sector-D, Pocket-5, Vasant Kunj New Delhi. 23/7/2007
- Smt. Rukhmani Katroo W/o Late Sh. Radha Krishen Kotroo R/o Rainawari Sgr; presently at Udhaywalla BOhri Jammu. 24/7/2007
- Smt. Jaikishori Bhat W/o Sh. Neel Kanth Bhat, R/o Gasserana Kulgam Kmr; presently at Qtr. No: 464, Nagrota Camp Jammu. 24/7/2007
- Sh. Mohan Lal Raina S/o Ptl. Kailas Ram erstwhile resident of Meamandar Shopian Kmr; presently residing at Raina Niwas Lalle-da-Bagh Jammu. 24/7/2007
- Sh. Shiv Jee Bazaz S/o Late Sh. Mansa Ram Bazaz, R/o Bagh-e-Bahu Bala Sgr; presently at H.No: 29 Lane-5 Poonch House, Talab Tillo, Jammu. 24/7/2007.
- Smt. Vidyawati W/o Sh. Radha Krishan R/o Mattan Kmr; presently residing at Lane No: 5, H.No: 127 Lakad Mandi, Janipur, Jammu. 24/7/2007
- Sh. Sham Lal Razdan S/o Late Sh. Shridhar Joo Razdan R/o Syed Ali Akbar Sgr; presently residing at Billan Bowli, Post Office Lane Dhar Road Udhampur, Jammu. 24/7/2007
- Sh. P.L. Mattoo S/o Sh. Anandjoo Mattoo, R/o Kumar Bawan Nursing Garh Sgr; presently residing at 166-H Durga Nagar, Sector-2 Talab Tillo Jammu. 24/7/2007
- Smt. Santosh Koul W/o Late Girdhari Lal Koul R/o Chandapora Habakadal Sgr; presently at 220-Shalimar Garden (UP). 24/7/2007
- Sh. R.C. Bhat S/o Late. Sh. Dhamodhar Lal Bhat R/o 1068 Qazi Mohalla Anantnag Kmr; presently residing at 8-A Doctors Qtrs. Narinder Mohan Hospital Mohan Nagar Gaziabad (UP). 25/7/2007
- Sh. Shiban Krishen Koul S/o Sh. Sh. Jia Lal Koul R/o 69/1, Shiliteng Habakadal Sgr; presently residing at 319-B Durga Nagar Jammu. 25/7/2007
- Sh. Janki Nath Tickoo S/o Sh. Hari Ram Tickoo, R/o Bomai Sopore Kmr; presently residing at 15/12 Sanjay Nagar, Jammu. 26/7/2007
- Sh. Triloki Nath Khar S/o Late Sh. Shiv Ram Kher R/o Zainapora Kmr; presently residing at H.No: 15, Ward-6, Bank of India Road Udhampur, Jammu. 26/7/2007
- Smt. Vicky Koul (Mahaldar) W/o Sh. Chushool Mahaldar R/o 80-A Patoli Opp. Mast Bab Ashram Jammu. 27/7/2007
- Sh. Moti Lal Zutshi R/o Dhobiwan Tangmarg Kmr; presently residing at 93-D, Sector-1, Durga Nagar Jammu. 27/7/2007
- Smt. Shobawati Dhar W/o Late Sh. Prem Nath Dhar R/o Dukani Sangam Fatehkadal Sgr; presently at Dina Nagar H.No: 5, Barnai Jammu. 28/7/2007
- Col. P.N. Kak original resident of 15-Gupkar Road Sgr; presently at Banglore Karnataka. 28/7/2007
- Smt. Ratna Kachroo W/o Late Sh. Dina Nath Kachroo R/o Dewan Bagh Baramulla Kmr; presently at H.No: 1046-Puran Nagar, Bagwati Nagar Jammu. 29/7/2007
- Sh. Bushan Lal Kabu S/o Late Sh. Shambu Nath Kabu, R/o Narparistan Fateh Kadal Sgr; presently residing at H.No: 29, Basant Nagar, Janipur, Jammu. 29/7/2007
- Sh. Keshav Nath Tingloo S/o Late Sh. Shankar Dass R/o of Kulgam Kmr; presently at RK Vihar, Lane-1 Udheywala Bohri, Jammu. 30/7/2007
- Smt. Sham Mohini Trisal W/o Sh. Sham Lal Trisal R/o Malik Angan Fateh Kadal Sgr; presently residing at 10C Lane 24, Bhawani Nagar, Jammu. 30/7/2007
- Sh. Saroop Nath Raina S/o Late Sh. Ram Chand Raina of Lok Bhawan Anantnag Kmr; presently at Purkhoo Camp Phase-I Jammu. 30/7/2007
- Smt. Lalita Koul W/o Sh. Chaman Lal Koul R/o H.No: 216, Lane No: 14, Block-D, Lower Shvi Nagar Jammu. 30/7/2007

Kashmir's accession is irrevocable



By J N Raina

WHILE turbulent Pakistan is straightening itself and has reportedly accepted a 'dossier' on terror in Jammu and Kashmir, some Kashmiri leaders are playing pranks and indulge in fluid talks, to keep the pot boiling in Kashmir. They have many faces—and sometimes look alike—making it difficult to distinguish one face from the other. Rather they are faceless.

Pakistan had earlier been refusing to discuss Kashmir-related terror, which it took "as freedom struggle".

One feels aghast at the statement of the National Conference patron Farooq Abdullah that recent incidents (of human rights violations) are "forcing his party to think twice, whether the accession of Jammu and Kashmir with the Indian Union was right". Breaching all limits of decency and rectitude, the maverick NC leader and a former chief minister has stirred up a hornet's nest by questioning the state's accession with India, lashing out at the Army for committing 'ex-

cesses'. Perhaps he is oblivious of what is happening in anarchic Pakistan, where several hundred civilians have been killed by the security forces, especially in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) and the federally-administered tribal areas. Such incidents in the beleaguered Kashmir valley are minor in nature as compared to genocide in the Swat valley of Pakistan.

This is in contrast to Abdullah's often-repeated rhetoric: "I was an Indian, I am an Indian and I will remain an Indian". Perhaps, keeping next year's Assembly elections in view, he wants to placate the jihadis, who are pouring in to the valley overwhelmingly after emergency was declared in Pakistan.

As if Abdullah's tantrums were not enough to malign India, the separatist Hurriyat Conference leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, with ashes in his mouth, has said: "There can be no solution of Jammu and Kashmir within the framework of the Indian Constitution".

Just on the eve of delivering his 'obiter dictum', the Mirwaiz told a leading national daily that a "pre-1953 plus" status for Jammu and Kashmir could be a 'starting point' for the 'resolution' of the so-called 'Kashmir problem', in recognition of what he said 'new realities on the ground'. In what manner the

'ground realities' have changed, he ought to explain, rather than obfuscate the current peace initiative between India and Pakistan.

The prankster has told the daily: "We (as if he represents the entire set of people) want complete devolution of powers; and our own President and Prime Minister, as the status was until 1953" (when late Kashmir leader Sheikh Abdullah was deposed and arrested). But Mirwaiz ought to know that after remaining in political wilderness for 22 years, the Sheikh and his lieutenant Mirza Afzal Beg had renounced 'plebiscite', in the wake of Pakistan's division, leading to the emergence of Bangladesh, after 1971 war. The Sheikh, under the impact of this new development had dissolved "Mahaz-e-Raishumari" or 'Plebiscite Front', of which he was the patron. The 'plebiscite' then became a dead issue. It was then that a dialogue had begun between Beg and G Parthasarthi, the two emissaries of Sheikh Abdullah and then Prime Minister Ms Indira Gandhi respectively. Four-year-long dialogue culminated into an historic accord in early 1975. Sheikh Abdullah regained power and was sworn in as Chief Minister. Later he did not think it prudent to change the nomenclature of the Chief Minister to Prime Min-

ister and that of the Governor to Sadar-i-Riyasat (President). The Plebiscite Front was disbanded and the National Conference he had founded was revived to suit the existing political climate.

After assuming power in February 1975, the Sheikh had said: "Kashmir's accession with India was final and irrevocable". He never questioned this fact. He had even given a rebuff to then Pakistan President General Zia-ul-Haq for the latter's move to illegally annex Gilgit, Hunza, Nagar and Skardu with Pakistan, which are part of the undivided state of Jammu and Kashmir. The Sheikh had time and again made it clear that Kashmir is an integral part of India and it is so "legally, constitutionally and by the will of the people whom he represents". This is notwithstanding the fact that many a times he had confrontation with the Centre.

It is not for any Tom, Dick and Harry to reopen the accession issue. When India and Pakistan are fighting a common enemy, the scourge of terrorism, Kashmiri leaders are crazy about Kashmir. They know it very well there cannot be any rollback so far Kashmir's accession is concerned. Instead, they should help in defeating terrorism, which has engulfed the entire sub-continent.

One is not bewildered at the usual anti-India hysteria of radical Jammait-e-Islami leader Syed Ali Geelani, for he has not deviated from his known stand for merger of Kashmir with Pakistan, even though that country is on the verge of another split. Geelani has explained to his 'audience' that "traitor Musharraf's Pakistan was the place for Kashmir to be in." He must understand that Pakistan, the country he loves, has lost its sheen and status, because of increasing terrorist violence. Instead of changing his stance, he is still opting for Pakistan. Ipso facto, the fundamentalist leadership in Kashmir has not only destroyed Kashmir, but Pakistan as well. Now new events are taking shape. Even the 'hell' is not going to accept Kashmir, not to speak of its merger with Pakistan. The fundamentalists should shout "peccavi" (we have sinned) for their abject role in destroying the fabric of society in the valley. People in Islamabad have come to realize that Paki-

stan has got ruined because of its wrong Kashmir policy.

The People's Democratic Party (PDP) leader Mufti Mohammad Sayed has in a jaw-jaw tone, as if in tizzy, announced that seeking an early resolution of the 'Kashmir problem' will be his party's main poll plank in the next years Assembly elections. This seems to be a new device to garner votes on Kashmir. Seeking an amicable solution to the 'Kashmir issue' he says, will figure 'outstandingly' in the PDP's election manifesto. PDP is a coalition partner of the Congress, led by Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad. The Mufti and his daughter Ms Mehooba Mufti have been campaigning for demilitarization of Kashmir, as per the wishes of General Pervez Musharraf. The Mufti has come to believe that 'economic future' of Jammu and Kashmir is 'significantly' linked to the 'liberty of its people to travel freely across the border'.

Fifty years ago, some 50 leading Muslim citizens of West Bengal had declared that the progress of Kashmiris could be assured only by their continuing to be a part and parcel of India.

"... To the Muslims of India--Kashmir does not now remain a problem at all", they had maintained. The Mirwaiz has sought an indirect role for Pakistan while elaborating his 'plus' demand. He has said: "There needed to be a relationship with 'Azad Kashmir' (PoK) and through Muzaffarabad (capital of PoK) with Islamabad, which should keep discussions 'alive' on the issue of joint management with regard to the 'defence, communication and foreign affairs' (of Kashmir). But even this anti-India posturing evoked resentment among the separatists, who accused him of 'readying for a sellout by falling into the footsteps of Sheikh Abdullah'. Sheikh Abdullah was a towering personality and no one can match his leadership qualities. The present lot of Kashmir's leadership, suffering from hallucination, continue to hoodwink the people of Kashmir.

Be as it may, the mandarins in the South Block however, need not take them seriously.

*(The Author is a Veteran Journalist, based in Pune).

COMMUNICATION

Amarnath Muthoo

Sir,

I saw Kamlajee more than half a dozen times when in late August or early September 1948 she came to see Swami Nand Bab. He used to stay off and on in our house at Bulbul Lankar. I very clearly remember the episode of Nand Bab giving her two rupees and saying "*amis ai assne gachnai*" (she will need this). I also remember the last time she came accompanied by a small daughter. Swami Nand Bab took the girl in her lap and started singing with tears rolling down his cheeks.

Majay Mukhta Biol Cha Kanse Vowmut (Mother Has anybody sown the seed of pearls?. I will try to recollect few more details of the episode.

--M.M. Munshi
Gandhi Nagar, Jammu

PANUN KASHMIR

Organises

One Day Convention To Celebrate HOMELAND DAY

At

CHINMAYA MISSION HALL,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi

On

SATURDAY, 29TH DECEMBER, 2007

THE SPEAKERS EXPECTED TO SPEAK ON THE OCCASION:

Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi (Former Union Minister of Human Resources),

Sh. G.Parthasarthi (Veteran Diplomat),

Dr. Ajay Churugoo (Chairman Panun Kashmir),

Sh. Kuldeep Raina (Gen. Secy. Panun Kashmir) &

The Chief Spokesman of Hindu Jan Jagrut Samiti.

The Cultural Programme will be presented by

Sh. Bhajan Sopori.

Prominent Kashmiri Pandits will also be felicitated
on the occasion.

For further information and delegate registration

Please Contact:

1. Dr. Shakti Bhan	--	09810071700
2. Sh. Vijay Tickoo	--	09871095533
3. Sh. Kanwal Wangnoo	--	09810343522

By Dr. Subhash Kapila

Introductory Observations

Pakistan's meltdown after eight years of military rule by General Musharraf finally reached a climax on November 3, 2007 when General Musharraf and his discredited Pakistan Army carried out a second military coup to pre-empt disqualification of General Musharraf's continuance as self-styled President by Pakistan's Supreme Court.

Pakistan's tragic political system's vulnerabilities to continued usurpation of Pakistan's governance by the Pakistan Army once again has come into sharp focus.

More tragic for Pakistan is the fact that while Pakistan Army's earlier military coup in 1999 which brought General Musharraf to power was aimed at bringing down then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for daring to bring the Pakistan Army under civilian control, the current military coup stands "squarely directed at the people of Pakistan" where since March 2007 independent of Pakistan's political parties, the legal fraternity and the growing Pakistani civil street were involved in wide protests calling for democracy and return of the 1973 constitution.

General Musharraf has declared "Emergency" in Pakistan which for all practical purposes is "Martial Law". The entire Supreme Court of Pakistan stands dismissed except for three or four Musharraf loyalists. A new Chief Justice loyal to Musharraf, Justice Dogar has been appointed as the previous Supreme Court Judges had declared as unconstitutional the declaration of Emergency by General Musharraf as "unconstitutional". Pakistani press reports indicate that this has Benazir Bhutto's concurrence.

The earlier Supreme Court judges and leading activists of the judiciary have been placed under house arrest. Leading political leaders of parties other than the ruling PML (Q), Bhutto's PPP and Musharraf's Mohajir MQM are the exceptions. Private TV channels and the print media stand gagged.

In Pakistan today with the murder of democracy for the second time in eight years and in succession, "darkness has descended at noon", Pakistan's melt-down has been given its final touches by the Pakistan Army under General Musharraf. A nation's melt-down takes place when political governance is replaced by military governance, the constitution is thrown in the waste-paper basket, judicial processes are thrown out of the window and the people's political aspirations are brutally suppressed. After eight years of military rule in Pakistan under General Musharraf, this is the current picture of Pakistan today.

Pakistan's melt down has strategic implications for the region and the United States in particular, not because of Pakistan's

PAKISTAN'S MELTDOWN UNDER MUSHARRAF: STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS FOR UNITED STATES

nuclear arsenal but more for the wider impact that it would have on United States political influence and military presence in Greater South-West Asia.

To focus on the above, this paper would like to follow on the following related aspects:

- Pakistan's Brutal Military Suppression: The United States and International Reaction is Disappointing
- United States "Arc of Woe" Widens in Greater South West Asia. Due to Musharraf Generated crisis
- Pakistan's Meltdown: The Strategic Implications for the United States
- Pakistan Army's Brutal Political Suppression Could hasten Pakistan's Talibanization

Pakistan's Brutal Military Suppression: The United States and International Reaction is Disappointing

The United States could not be expected to come out with strong denunciation of General Musharraf and Pakistan Army's current brutal political suppression in Pakistan. The United States, General Musharraf and former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto jointly and in union scripted the current unfolding scenario in Pakistan. The United States wanted General Musharraf's continuance in power in Pakistan at any cost and has been ensured.

The United States in the wake of November 3, 2007 events in Pakistan, therefore made only some muted proforma protests for forms sake. The United States steered clear of outright condemnation of General Musharraf or the Pakistan Army. The United States was totally silent on the imperatives of democracy in Pakistan and the enforcement of civil liberties and human rights.

The Western countries and other allies of the United States adopted similar positions. The United States and these countries are vociferous when it comes to Myanmar, Iran and elsewhere on these counts. Their silence on Pakistan is deafening and affects their image the world over. India as a country likely to be most affected seriously in terms of the turbulence of Pakistan has once again taken cues from Washington on Pakistan. The official statements were not condemnatory nor highlighted the imperatives for restoration of democracy in Pakistan as an Indian strategic imperative. This



was the subject of an earlier paper by this author.

India seems to have been oblivious that whenever violent turbulence under military regimes in Pakistan has taken place, the Pakistani rulers resort to military adventurism against India.

India's statement on Pakistan's should have reflected that what is happening may be Pakistan's internal matter but it endangers South Asian regional security and that United States should undo its Pakistan script focusing on Musharraf.

United States "Arc of Woe" Widens in Greater South West Asia. Due to Musharraf Generated crisis

Pakistan's crisis generated by General Musharraf's political suppression has all the makings and potential of generating a civil war in Pakistan. The Pakistan Army under him stands badly mauled and discredited in the explosive western frontier provinces of Balochistan and NWFP. The General has launched a frontal attack on Pakistan's supreme judiciary, its increasingly activist civil society and media. Punjab and Sindh are restive. Suicide bombings especially against Pakistan Army targets has become a daily occurrence.

Pakistan therefore is on the boil today and no amount of military suppression by Musharraf can soothe the Pakistani hatred against General Musharraf and his mafia of Corps Commanders.

The United States strategic "arc of Woe" stretching from Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan now extends to incorporate Pakistan also in its fold. To this when are added the other West Asia flash points of Lebanon, Turkish-Kurdish confrontation, Syria-Israel confrontation, Israel-Palestinian conflicts and the Pakistan supported Taliban in Afghanistan, the United States has its hands full of strategic turbulence which it is not in a position to control.

Pakistan is one place where the United States can control the situation immediately and thereby limiting its "arc of woe".

All that it has to do is to force General Musharraf to quit, warn the corps commanders that further military rule is not acceptable and install an Interim Government with a non-political Interim Prime Minister.

Pakistan's Meltdown: The Strategic Implications for the United States

Pakistan's melt-down and lengthening the United States "strategic arc of woe" has already been touched above. The strategic implications for the United States are grave and can be outlined briefly as follows:

- Strategically, the United States has been left with hardly any political solution for the Pakistan meltdown other than a direct military intervention to put the wayward Pakistan Army in its place.
- Pakistan's melt-down limits United States strategic options in its confrontation with Iran
- United States and NATO's much sought after political stability and reconstruction in Afghanistan will be seriously endangered. It may even lead to United States and NATO exit from Afghanistan
- The entire Eastern flank of Hormuz straits, so important for United States strategic interests in the regime passes to hostile hands
- United States strategic interests and attempts for military presence in Central Asia will be seriously endangered

Global terrorism would receive a boost with the Islamic Jehadi outfits emboldened by Pakistan Army's unrestrained hold on Pakistan.

The United States is likely to endanger strategic support from its traditional Western allies and Japan when they view that the United States with Musharraf as its 'blind-spot' is becoming strategically oblivious to the strategic threats that holler on such a course.

Pakistan Army's Brutal Political Suppression Could Hasten Pakistan's Talibanization

Pakistan Army's brutal political suppression launched on the order of General Musharraf to perpetuate his power has left no "safety valve" or outlet to dissipate the rising political opposition against military rule and the

continuation of General Musharraf in power at the helm of Pakistan's affairs.

Pakistan's agitated masses in political turmoil have been left with no political options to achieve their aspirations for restoration of democracy in Pakistan.

Musharraf's present suppressive crackdown and the United States tacit approval and orchestrating the script devised to keep Musharraf in power, leaves the Pakistani people with no other alternative but to turn to the gun. At such a breaking point for the Pakistani masses turning to the Taliban or themselves launching "Talibanised strategies" to oust General Musharraf, and the Pakistan Army could become a reality reinforced by their intense hatred for the United States for concurring in keeping a military regime in power in Pakistan against their opposition. This process could be hastened if the United States persists with the present script.

Pakistan's emerging and enlarging civil society including the judiciary, legal fraternity, the media and civil society activists are the only bulwark against the Talibanisation of Pakistan. Sadly, they today stand sidelined and suppressed by General Musharraf with background support and laudatory American statements appreciating and supporting General Musharraf.

Concluding Observations

Pakistan's present crisis generated by General Musharraf has no military solutions. The Pakistani General is in no mood for any political solution which does not concede and ensure his continuance in power.

The United States as the strategic patron of General Musharraf, has taken on itself the liability to ensure that the General's grip on power does not falter. Proforma statements of American protests on General Musharraf's jettisoning the democratic processes that were striking root in Pakistan cannot hide the strategic reality that it is the majesty of United States power which sustains Musharraf's military regime against vehement opposition in Pakistan.

In the ultimate analysis of the developing scenario in Pakistan, more than General Musharraf, history would hold the United States for the meltdown of Pakistan and the adverse strategic consequences that are likely to follow for the United States and the region.

(The author is an International Relations and Strategic Affairs analyst. He is the Consultant, Strategic Affairs with South Asia Analysis Group.)



By Dr. Ajay Chrunoo

John Ruskin, the famed British essayist, classified books into two categories—**Books of the hour** and **Books of all time**. 'In search of a future-The story of Kashmir', a new book on Kashmir by David Devdas, a well-known columnist, defies this classification. The book offers rich historical material, flaunts interesting formulations, yet it has major structural weaknesses. The very premise on which Dev Das tries to build his thesis of 'alienation' is flawed and untenable. Even his assertions on origins of the terrorist movement are not backed up by facts. Still the book retains its relevance. It is scholarly and a valiant attempt to contest some of the myths, assiduously perpetuated by different actors with vested interests.

Frustrated aspirations':

David Devdas tries to locate Kashmiri alienation (read Muslim alienation) in '**Frustrated aspirations**' of new groups of educated youth aspiring for jobs. He attributes '**historical socio-economic resentment**' against Kashmiri Pandits and their **disproportionate share** in professional trainings and jobs as the basis of so-called 'thwarted aspirations'. At times the author makes confused and contradictory statements. For example at one place he says '**Selfish aspirations have run amok**'. The 'frustrated' and 'selfish' expressions have two conflicting connotations. What can be the basis for study of share of different communities in land, trade, manufacturing, jobs and trainings and even demography other than historically verifiable data? Devdas does not provide any statistics at all. Anecdotal tales do history.

'Frustrated aspirations' thesis has been directly lifted up from '**Frustrated Middle Class**', a hackneyed expression used by **Prem Shankar Jha** in 1990. Jha's sympathies, if his writings and public stances are any indication, lie with exclusivist Kashmiri Muslim sub-nationalism. His contribution to distortion of facts to render legitimacy to this regressive sub-nationalism has been legion. As terrorist movement unfolded in Kashmir a self-righteous section of Indian Civil Society, rooted in left-liberal politics, sought to rake up '**economic reasons**' behind the armed revolt.. **The objective was to obfuscate the theo-fascist**

THE KASHMIR STORY

character of the movement. How could the religious-based separatist campaign build the emotive pitch for the terrorist movement without raking up extreme religiosity? For this identifying a religious minority as '**the other**' was a compulsion. It has been true of all communal movements in history. Inventing imaginary wrongs committed by Pandits against the majority community became a necessity—both to build a 'socio-economic rationale' for the theo-fascist movement as well as to unleash religious-cleansing against Kashmiri Hindus.

Communal view:

Devdas takes a communal view of history. He identifies religious communities as homogenous groups, ignoring class and social stratification. How do few members of the community, who may have held substantial jagirs, make up the whole community? More than 80% of Kashmiri Pandit population lived in the city of Srinagar at all times during the past 200 years. How many of them were landowning families? How many Pandit families were engaged in big shawl trade? Why should a historically persecuted minority be subjected to psychological retribution just because few Pandit families happened to be part of landed gentry? Is it not to build a rationale for permanent cleansing of Kashmiri Pandits for all times to come?

Land Reforms:

During the tribal invasion there were innumerable instances where Pandit families were saved by their Muslim tillers. How could this be possible if Pandit landlords had been harsh towards their tenants? During 1819-1947 one does not come across a single peasant revolt in Kashmir. Why has it been so? If peasant question was missing in National Conference campaign in pre-1947 period it was because landlordism was not a serious issue at all. Peasantry suffered because of low-yield of agriculture and occasionally because of excesses committed by revenue bureaucracy. Before 1931 Kashmiris were reluctant to take land because of difficulty in paying revenue. It was after 1931 when proprietary rights were granted in Kashmir that Kashmiris—both communities began investing in land. In 1948-1950 when new regime initiated land reforms Sheikh Abdullah and Bakshi Gh. Mohammad were cool to the idea. Mirza Afzal Beg, who himself was a landlord, and GM Sadiq supported land reforms for communal and communist reasons respectively. Sheikh Abdullah came to support land reforms at a later stage when threat of plebiscite was looming large and Pakistan was raking up religious emotions to clinch the issue. Pt Rish Dev, a communist leader and Director of 'Debt Cancellation Board' has authored a study on the land

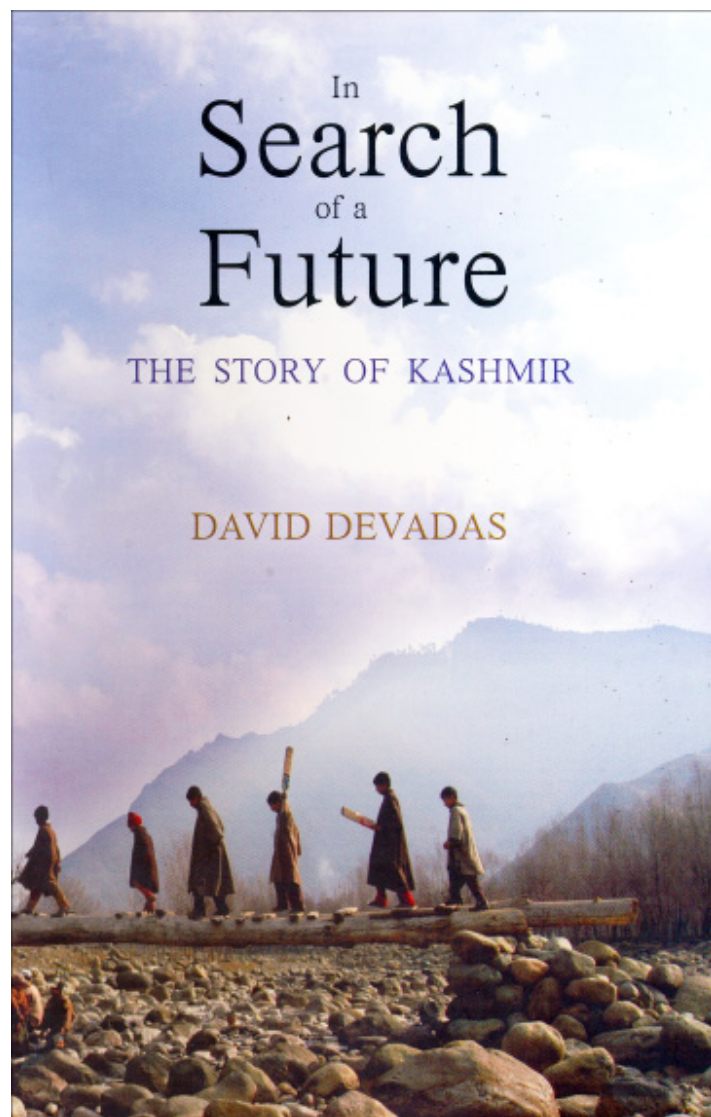
reforms in Kashmir, an English translation of which is now available. He has provided shocking details of how landlords of the majority community behaved towards their tenants and also circumvented land reforms through political patronage. Normally, the tenants should have had more resentment against their co-regionalists. Devdas takes a very superficial view of Kashmir's rural scene, remaining contented in listening to 'daleels' rather than dissecting the problem deeper. If sections of landed gentry, shawl and other traders, educated youth from majority community were fuelling communal passions against Pandits it was because geo-political factors were in operation. The Britishers had been putting enough pressure on Dogra Maharajas over the issue of Gilgat. They were not happy with Maharaja Hari Singh, particularly over his role during Round Table Conference. There was also spillover of communal politics from Punjab.

Jobs Market:

Even on the issue of jobs, the greater share of which is supposed to have gone to Pandits the boot is on the other leg. There have been two phases of separatist armed insurgency—1960s and 1980s. 1960s was the age of plenty. Large-scale development and huge funds pushed by the Central government into Kashmir flooded Kashmir with jobs.. There was, infact, paucity of people to fill the vacancies. If Kashmiri Pandits could also gain entry into State government sector particularly as teachers, it was understandable. At the time of exodus in 1990 the number of Pandit employees was 13 thousand among 4 lakh state government employees. Out of this 6500 worked in education sector alone. So where was the question of resentment over jobs and trainings? Moreover, besides increased number of jobs available there was a revolution in agriculture and dairy, productions increased many fold. There was also boom in carpets/handicraft and horticulture sector. Even the poorest of the poor became beneficiaries of the expansion of Handlooms.

Communalism, Secessionism and Fundamentalism:

To look for economic reasons behind the eruption of armed revolt is to search for black spots on the sun. The origins of communal-separatist movement in Kashmir need to be looked into elsewhere. In 1947 the size of Kashmiri Muslim educated class was small. Due to free education and better economic opportunities it expanded manifold. Whether it was Land Reforms, Debt cancellation or expansion of development sector there were no politically meaningful campaigns to back these. These were implemented as part of '**Correcting Historical Wrongs**'. This strengthened communal political consciousness among the youth who grew up



between 1947-1964. The threat of reopening of accession also loomed large. This introduced an element of opportunism. And finally, the youth was exposed to communal-secessionist politics of Plebiscite Front since 1953.

Parallel with this campaign the fundamentalist organisations-Jamaat Islami, Ahli Hadith and Allawale were trying to bring religious consciousness in tune with Wahabi orientation. Since 1980 the Kashmiri youth were exposed to transnational jihad also. **It was not 'frustrated aspirations' but heightened sense of communal identity and increasing proclivity to fundamentalist-secessionist ideas that was breeding alienation from India. Instead of countering this trend the mainstream politics tried to sail with it.**

Bizarre Formulations:

The author makes some bizarre formulations. One that the areas which benefited from Land Reforms and Development were not pro-Pakistan. Secondly, the pockets



David Devdas

where land reforms had been rolled back-by consolidating orchards which were exempt from land ceilings the Jamaat dominated. Thirdly, doctors and engineers came to be attracted by Jamaat Islami.

Jamaat Islami's strongholds were Zaingir-Pohru belt and Sopore in north Kashmir, Kulgam-Shopian in South

Kashmir and Mochow-Soibug-Wadawan in Central Kashmir. In Srinagar it was the Solina area which Jamaat considered its bastion. None of these areas had anything specific which was not common to rest of the Valley. **There has always been a thin line between pro-Pak sentiment and local Muslim sub-nationalism. Infact, there has been inter-changing of roles. To locate pro-Pak sentiment in thwarted land reforms and non-development is to fly from facts.** Lastly, it were not doctors and engineers as professional groups who were more enamoured by Jamaat Islami. The cadres from Jamaat came mostly amongst teachers (who had access to Jamaat

(Contd. on Page 6)

The Kashmir 'Third Round Table Conference' Part-I Story

(Contd. from Page 5)

literature), masons, Pir-Syed group who leaned towards Wahabism-Debandi ideology, some members of low social origin who needed a superstructure ideology for respectability.

Jamaat Islami's top leaders Syed Ali Shah Geelani, Saadudin, Qari Saifuddin etc. started their career as teachers. Geelani's father was a casual night watchmen and not a member of ruined feudal class. Another section which identified itself with Jamaat Islami were corrupt members of bureaucracy and upstart elite. In this case cover of Jamaat Islami provided a smokescreen to

CONTINUATION

camouflage their misdeeds. An excellent study of this phenomenon titled '**Kashmiri Muslim Society-Changing Contours**' by Dr. K.N. Pandita was published in *Kashmir Times*, Jammu in 1991.

David Devdas wrongly singles out National Conference leadership for seeing Jamaat Islami only as a doctrinal grouping and not as a socio-economic force. **None of the leaders-Bakshi, Sadiq or Sheikh Abdullah treated Jamaat Islami as a threat-either as a doctrinal threat or as a socio-political force. They maintained opportunistic relationship with Jamaat Islami. Mir Qasim even rewarded them with 5 assembly seats in 1972.** In fact, emerging rural elite used Jamaat as a vehicle for getting share in administrative and political power. Qasim-Jamaat alliance was its manifestation.

David Devdas would like us to believe that ISI started training Kashmiris in subversion only after December 1987. Nothing can be farther from the truth. Not only a leading news agency but also government's own sources had confirmed that by May 1984 hundreds of Kashmiri youth had undergone training in 13 camps set up by Pakistan and were paid Rs 20 thousand on return by ISI. Who were these people who underwent training if JKLF/Islamic Student League went for training only after December 1987? Devdas is silent on this.

Dev Das has a solution—Indo-Pak problem can be resolved only if Kashmir heals itself. He remarks, **"That healing must be internal. Harmony within Kashmir is not possible without moral courage. It involves accommodation of others' aspirations and that is only possible through non-attachment and discipline"**. Will Kashmiris listen?

*(The author heads Panun Kashmir)

By Dr. Ajay Chrungoo

WHEN the government made its intention to hold the Third Round Table Conference in New Delhi, it appeared to be in undue haste. Out of the five Working Groups constituted by Govt. of India during the 11nd Round Table Conference held in Srinagar, only four had submitted their reports. The fifth, and the politically most crucial group, was yet to complete its work. In fact it was not even half way through with its agenda. Out of the four Working Groups which had submitted their reports, the group dealing with **Confidence Building Measures** headed by Mr. Hamid Ansari (Now the Vice-President of India) had miserably failed to build the consensus.

Dr. Agnishekhar who represented Kashmiri Pandits in this group had dissociated with its recommendations after duly registering his objections. None of the participants had received the reports of the Working Groups even till just before midnight on the eve of the conference. The delegates were handed over the Working Group reports immediately after the dinner hosted by the Chief Minister of the Jammu and Kashmir State, Sh. Ghulam Nabi Azad. The Third Round Table Conference as per the agenda had to discuss these very reports so that they could be duly adopted. It was humanly impossible for the delegates even to have a cursory look on the reports, not to speak of developing a firm opinion on the contents and the recommendations made. Was it the intention of the Govt. of India not to allow time to the delegates to evolve a firm opinion? Perhaps the intention of Govt. of India was to push through the recommendations during the Third Round Table Conference without a due consideration by the delegates.

I tried to have a look on the recommendations of the Working Group dealing with the agenda of Confidence Building Measures. Dr. Agnishekhar had already briefed us about the deliberations of the Working Group as also his written objections and observations to the Working

Group report. For me to make some opinion about the recommendations of this Working Group in the short time available appeared little less daunting. As I went through the contents and recommendations of this Working Group headed by none other than the eminent Hamid Ansari I was alarmed. I felt that Govt. of India had embarked on a course of adopting measures for tackling Kashmir problem which would gradually unhinge not only the sovereignty of the nation over Jammu and Kashmir but also cripple nation's efforts to defeat terrorism and separatism. The delay in providing the copies of the reports to the delegates started assuming a new meaning in my mind. The chairman of the Working Group on 'Confidence Building Measures' declares on Page 3 of its report, "The Working Group concerns itself only with the rehabilitation and improvement of conditions of the militancy victims and did not go deeper into the causes or the genesis of militancy in the state". I wondered how the chairman could devise a framework for helping the victims of militancy without going into the genesis of militancy. Could any body devise measures to help the victims without understanding the causes why they were targeted?

Perhaps a more relevant question which comes to mind is why in the entire report, not once, has the issue of 'terrorism' been mentioned, not to speak of addressing it. Could the victims of terrorism be helped without addressing the issue of terrorism? The report very meticulously and deliberately avoids or circumvents the issue of terrorism. And what is the understanding of the chairman about what constitutes militancy in the state is reflected very clearly by going through its observations on the--**'Measures to improve the condition of people affected by militancy'**". The report observes, "The necessity of curbing human rights violations was stressed by most members of the Working Group. Emphasis was placed on Prime Minister's assurance of 'zero tolerance' for human rights violations as on India's international commitments

and international image. It was considered imperative to develop a mechanism in which responsibility for specific human rights violations can be fixed and derelict officials identified and proceeded against". The observations clearly indicate that the report identifies militancy primarily as state accuses, dereliction or acts of commission and omission. It does not at all consider the issue of terrorism as the prime cause of violence in the state. The report recommends measures to improve the conditions of people affected by militancy like inculcating Human Rights awareness 'in all civil and military government functionaries and in the public' and reviewing and revoking of 'certain laws made operational during the period of militancy e.g., Armed Forces Special Powers Act, Disturbed Area Act".

With this type of understanding of militancy, advocated by the report of Working Group on 'confidence building measures across the Segments of Society' in the state we were going to the Third Round Table Conference. My apprehensions deepened about the entire gamut of exercises conducted in other Working Groups as well. An attempt seemed to be afoot to set a course for national policy on Jammu and Kashmir, with serious implications--international, regional and local. This could be clearly gauged from the concluding remarks in the same report--

..."It has to be recognized that the problem of militancy and alienation of some sections of the society has to be tackled in a very broad framework in this behalf. Central and State government may consider application of internationally accepted policies in consultation with experts.

...."An unconditional dialogue process should be started with militant groups for finding a sustainable solution to the problem of militancy in the state".

...."The probable role of media should be examined in generating an image of the people of the State so as to lessen the indignity and suspicion youth face outside the state..."

Will the delegates in the

Third Round Table Conference be able to grasp and respond to formulation and recommendations of Working Groups which can harm national interest? Will the highest at the helm in Govt. of India including the Prime Minister, Home Minister, National Security Advisor and others attending the Third Round Table Conference see through any measure or recommendation by the Working Group which will damage the national cause in Jammu and Kashmir and will they put their foot down? I had these questions in my mind while I prepared to attend the Third Round Table Conference. The experience of the deliberations of the Third Round Table Conference was mixed. Many delegates rose up to the occasion, called a spade a spade and emphatically cautioned Govt. of India against falling into trap of such perspectives couched in Worked Group reports as observations or recommendations which were detrimental to national interests. The deliberations, did not reflect a unanimous view while the Govt. of India tried hard to ... a unanimity which could not be arrived at during the conference. However, Govt. of India role during the conference was far from reassuring. It seemed almost helpless and in a state of abject surrender to all such views which undermined and damaged national interests in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. More dismaying was that many a times Govt. of India looked more eager to facilitate these views.

(To be concluded)

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By **M.M.Munshi**

WHEN Soviet Russia took virtual control of Sinkiang (Xinjiang) in 1935 the British Indian administration came to an agreement with the Maharaja of Jammu & Kashmir under which a sixty year lease of GILGIT (which formed part of Jammu & Kashmir State) was executed. The sole responsibility of defense and administration of Gilgit became the responsibility of the British who raised an irregular force "Gilgit Scouts" recruited from Hunza and Nagar and adjoining parts of NWFP officered exclusively by British. With the announcement of Mountbatten Plan on June 3rd 1947 Gilgit was handed back to the Maharaja of J&K amidst much jubilations and funfair in July and Gilgit Scouts became part of the state forces. The Maharaja dispatched a senior officer of the State Forces Brigadier Gansara Singh as Governor who was accompanied by the Chief of Staff of the State Forces Maj. Gen. H.L.Scot. The Governor and Maj. Gen. Scot were informed by the officers of the Gilgit Scouts that all of them had opted to serve Pakistan. Scot returned to make a report to Maharaja while the Governor stayed on in Gilgit. Neither the British officers were segregated from the Gilgit Scouts nor the force was disbanded which proved to be unpardonable mistake. After the Pakistani tribal invasion of Kashmir valley took place the Gilgit Scouts placed the Governor under house arrest and provisional government was installed. Major Brown the British commandant of the scouts ceremoniously hoisted the Pakistani flag. An official from Pakistan arrived and established himself as Political Agent. An under strength battalion of State forces 6th J&K Infantry composed half of Mirpuri -Punchi Muslims and half of Sikhs under Lt. Col. Abdul Majid Khan was located at Bunji. On hearing about invasion of Kashmir and revolt of Gilgit scouts the Mirpuri-Punchi Muslims revolted and along with Gilgit Scouts attacked the Sikh troops and routed them. Col. Abdul Majid Khan who remained loyal to the Maharaja was taken prisoner. East of Gilgit Skardu in Baltistan was garrisoned by a weak battalion under a Gurkha Commander Lt.Col. Sherjang Thapa and a smaller detachment of State Forces was also at Kargil. East of Kargil and at Leh no troops were deployed anywhere. After the fall of Gilgit Operation sledge was planned at Pakistan's army headquarters and launched from Gilgit in Feb. 48 and obvious target being Leh the capital of Ladakh The enemy

SAVIORS OF LEH

force to implement the operation was composed of a strong element of Gilgit Scouts, Mirpuri and Punchi deserters of J&K State Forces from Bunji and tribals from NWFP of Pakistan. It was an ambitious plan involving a foot march of about 500 Kms. over rugged but not unfrequented terrain all that might have been encountered would

Attacks against the fort were delivered at periodic intervals but a steady fire, firm defense and the casualties inflicted upon the enemy repulsed the latter. The next alternative for the enemy would be to lay siege of the Skardu Fort and force it's surrender by starvation. The Gurkha commander at Skardu envisaged that with the stock of food gradu-

ammunition and food stocks.

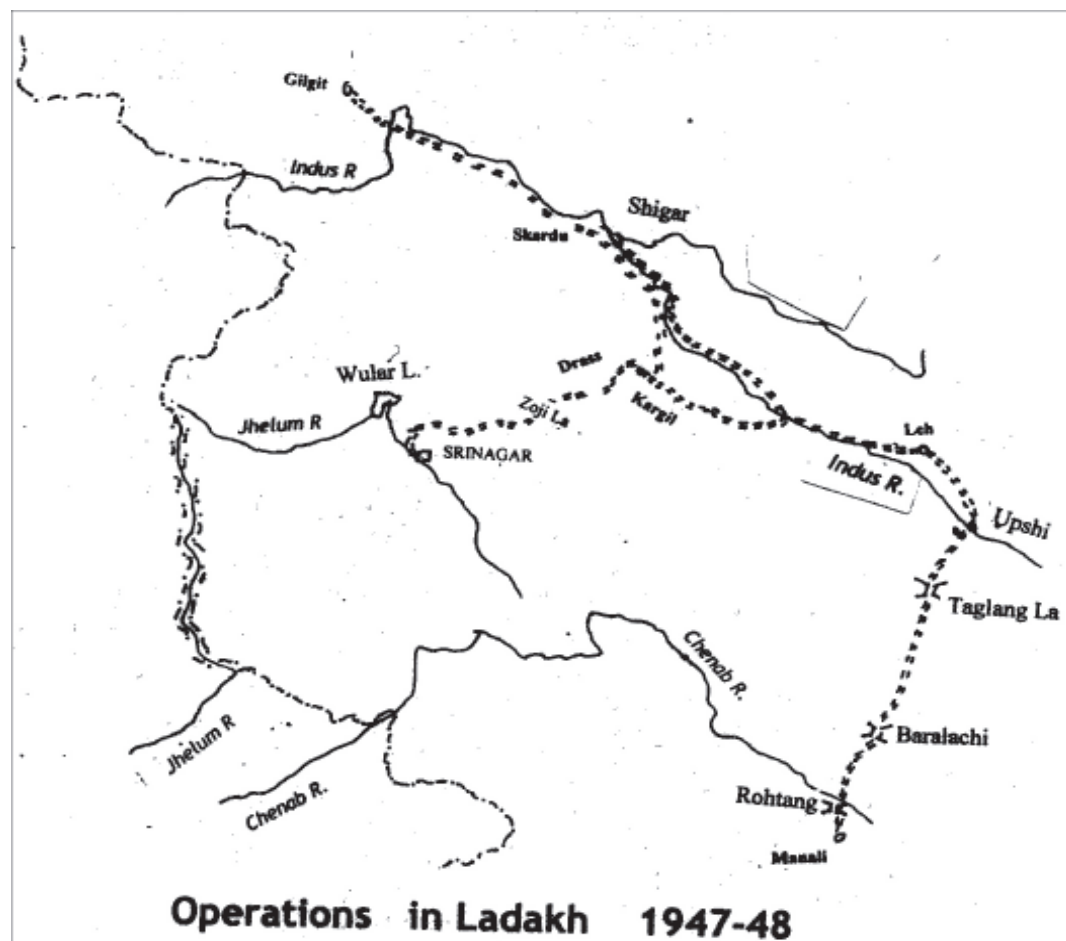
On March 3rd 1948 after a few days the Skardu fort was encircled by the enemy, its commander signaled to 161 Inf. Bde in Kashmir Valley that about 500 armed men and about 200 porters had arrived from the direction of Gilgit and after halting at the outskirts of the fort proceeded in an easterly direction presumably towards Kargil. The information was also confirmed by a wireless intercept and was passed to the State Govt and it

Vietnam in early fifties.). Col. Bewoor suggested that since Lahaul was situated contiguous to Ladakh it would be worthwhile to ask these officers if they would go with their men to Ladakh and organize its defenses. In his talk Lt.Col Bewoor did not use persuasion nor did he try to minimize the difficulties or dangers that would have to be faced and only available route was via the Zojila Pass over the Great Himalaya Range which was covered over by 30 to 40 feet of Snow. He asked the young officers to consider the matter carefully and also assured them that no adverse opinion would be held against them if they expressed their inability to undertake the task.

Within a few moments Prithi Chand and Khushal Chand appeared before the Brigade and Battalion Commanders and announced that they would go to Leh. Immediately volunteers were called from 2nd Dogras. In addition to all the Lahaulis many Dogras also volunteered. After a careful medical examination and aptitude tests about 50 men were selected and given possible training about loading and unloading of ponies step cutting etc. Requirements and transport limitations of the volunteer force were very carefully scrutinized and nothing was left to chance. Besides the arms carried by officers and men about 150 additional rifles and their ammunition meant for equipping the Ladakhis was added to the baggage. The party later designated as Leh detachment assembled at Baramula and equipped with items like Gilgit boots, snow goggles, Gloves Fur lined jackets etc which were available in Srinagar markets provisions etc were transported to Sonamarg by motor transport. Local ponies which had been procured with difficulty joined the detachment marched with it to Baltal.

After establishing camp at Baltal avalanches were created by beating of drums and bursting of crackers in the stillness of night for three days after which Prithi Chand signaled to Barmula that it was ready make the attempt to cross Zoji La. After about 48 hours another signal was received that the crossing of Zoji La was accomplished without a casualty and the column was setting out for Kargil on way to Leh. From Kargil they were accompanied by the state forces detachment on their march to Leh. Prithi Chand and his men reached Leh without encountering the enemy. The rifles and ammunition were distributed among suitable young men who were given a hasty training Defensive

(Contd. on Page 9)



have been minor resistance at Skardu by the weak battalion of J&K State forces and a small detachment of the state forces at Kargil. The blatant act of aggression was more for the odious for the fact that people of Ladakh were most peace loving and totally unarmed in consequence were incapable of offering any resistance other than verbal protests. The timing chosen by the enemy for the Operation Sledge was ideal for them and its success was assured, as no help could be sent from Kashmir to Ladakh, because Zoji La Pass remained blocked with snow till May nor there was any airstrip at Leh or any other place in Ladakh. For the enemy the door to Leh was open and success was almost certain.

The commander of State Forces garrison at Skardu being under heavy pressure from enemy and had no choice but to concentrate his force inside the fort and placed the troops as well as civilians including women and children on minimum ration scale.

ally dwindling would adversely effect the physical condition of his disciplined troops. It was under these circumstances that the commander planned to send of small batches of women and children with escort parties at night to escape detection and when these parties were away from Skardu he would withdraw his main force and fight a rearguard action up to Kargil where together with the Kargil detachment he would hold the enemy advance towards Zojila and eastwards. There was no other alternative to this withdrawal plan. It was not the request of a coward but a brave and capable soldier, but in spite of the strong recommendation of 161 infantry brigade his position was not unfortunately appreciated by the HQs JAK Force and he was ordered to fight to the last man and last round. The inevitable happened. The Skardu Garrison held on with no sign of relief of troops or supplies and was forced to surrender by September 1948 after exhausting its

was resolved during a meeting that something would have to be done to save Leh from being attacked as Ladakhis were completely unarmed and any attack on Leh would have repercussions from the Buddhist World. But to do what remained unresolved, as to get to Ladakh from the Kashmir Valley at that time of the year was considered to be an impossibility.

Lt.Col.G.G. Bewoor Later General and Chief of Staff, Indian Army who had taken over command of 2nd Dogras from Lt.Col. U.C.Dubey (later Maj. Gen. and GOC 25th Infantry Division Rajouri mentioned that 2nd Dogras during its service as a territorial battalion had enlisted a number of Lahaulis and men from upper reaches of then Punjab Hill states were still serving with the battalion including two officers Captains Prithi Chand (later Brigadier Prithi Chand) and Khushal Chand (later Col. Khushal Chand a very popular figure from Lahaul who subsequently died in an air crash in

OPEN LETTER

Please act to prevent Imminent Financial Crisis

**Smt Sonia Gandhi
President
Indian National Congress Party
24 Akbar Road, New Delhi
November 21, 2007**

Dear Congress President,

As the United States grapples with recession, the Joint Economic Committee of the US Congress began taking stock of the Bush administration's policy decisions, including the Iraq Occupation and expenditures and growth-sapping hidden costs thereof. Associated Press reported on 14 November 2007 that "hidden costs such as interest payments on the money borrowed to pay for the wars, lost investment, the expense of long term health care for injured veterans and the cost of oil market disruptions," stood at US \$1.6 trillion.

Not factored in these, are "hidden contributions" to the US, of \$50 billion in treasury support activity and additional monetarist support of \$2 billion in interest subsidies, made available by secret ally India.

It is time, we in India, took stock of these surreptitious moves by the Congress led UPA government to support and subsidise the Occupation-of-Iraq efforts of the United States; all the while keeping parliament and the nation, in the dark.

This startling reversal of time honoured Congress policy, whereby the late Rajiv Gandhi stopped even the refuelling of American warplanes in Mumbai during the first Iraq War, is made worse by the conspiratorial violations of statutory provisions of monetary and fiscal discipline.

The implementation of this conspiracy against Indian interests is being supervised by Ambassador David Campbell Mulford of the United States, whose connection with the Stock and IPO scams as Chairman International of Credit Suisse First Boston (CSFB) are on record. Unfortunately, this connection was glossed over by the government of India, despite evidence that Ketan Parekh merely duplicated the methodology of CSFB's Frank Quattrone; Parekh was arrested and credited (wrongly) of being the mastermind, while CSFB officials were allowed to go scot free! Interestingly, the directions passed after investigation by SEBI, against the Ketan Parekh Group and Credit Suisse First Boston (I) Securities Pvt Ltd (a wholly owned subsidiary of CSFB and reporting to then Chairman International David C Mulford at the London office) are identical, "Debarring the entities from undertaking fresh business as Merchant Banker/Stock Broker."

Even more significant, in today's context, is the well documented role of David Mulford and his chum Domingo Felipe Cavallo, an American acclaimed economist, bureaucrat, Central Bank Director and Minister of Economy of Argentina (track record sounds somewhat familiar).

The American inspired (should one say ordered?) dollarisation of the Argentinian Peso in the 1990s, in the name of keeping inflation in check, backfired and the debacle only increased Argentina's indebtedness. Then Domingo Cavallo was elevated to Minister of Finance riding on the back of US and World Bank-IMF acclaim. His first decision on the day he became Minister was to invite his friend, the redoubtable David Campbell Mulford

Chairman International of CSFB, to arrange a debt-swap. Within half an hour of this meeting Mulford had arranged the \$29.5 billion great Argentinian debt-swap! Interest earnings apart, Mulford walked away with \$125 million in commissions for lead manager CSFB for sewing up the deal!

Interestingly, almost an identical policy initiative is being followed in India today. RBI Governor Yaga Venugopal Reddy has not called his policy dollarisation, but he has effectively pegged his rupee to a nearly fixed parity with the dollar and is spending a fortune in hard earned Indian income (approximately 6% of our GDP) to keep supporting and buying the US dollar and maintain this near fixed parity.

Like Cavallo, RBI Governor Yaga Reddy, Finance Minister Palaniappan Chidambaram and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh are all citing the twin goals of low inflation and a weak rupee despite the reality of huge foreign investment inflows and our open capital account norms. Daydreaming by these three so-called great economists apart, pursuing these twin contradictory agendas is impossible and therefore wrong in principle. Even an undergraduate student of monetary economics will attest as much. When a mistake of this magnitude is deliberately unleashed on an economy, there will be costs.

In the Cavallo-Mulford Argentinian experience, the costs have been described thus by wikipedia: "Domingo Felipe 'Mingo' Cavallo (born July 21, 1946) is an Argentine economist and politician. He has a long history of public service and is known for implementing the Convertibilidad plan, which fixed the dollar-peso exchange rate at

1:1 between 1991 and 2001, and the corralito, which restrained savers from withdrawing their own money from bank accounts and was followed by the December 2001 riots and the fall of President De la Rúa."

Finance Minister Chidambaram would have us believe that economic theory notwithstanding, he has achieved the impossible: a weak dollar, low inflation and an open capital account economy with immense absorption of foreign investment. He pretends to do so by cooking up inflation figures, a fact which even illiterates can attest to. But we shall rely instead on the evidence of the RBI Governor Y V Reddy who admits that the present dispensation of Wholesale Price Index (WPI) and Consumer Price Index (CPI) calculation "renders the assessment of inflationary pressures difficult which, in turn, complicates the process of monetary policy formulation." Does this admission mean that the entire Monetary Policy of the triumvirate of great economists is based on inaccurate assessments?

The principle cost of flawed monetary policy in the recent past has been that growth has slowed down and unemployment has increased. The government's 3 month lag in putting together statistics will reveal this in January 2008, but workers made redundant in the agriculture, textile, handicraft and BPO sectors, already knows as much.

Growth has been curtailed by a flawed monetary policy which has seen interest rates soar despite global financial capital begging for deployment in the Indian economy. The paradox is that there is a surfeit of money but it has become too expensive. High lending rates of banks are driving small entrepreneurs away from new ventures. Caps and ceilings on external commercial borrowings (ECBs) motivated by flawed policy or blatantly anti-national designs, is forcing big business to forego expansions and new ventures. In short the government has done everything in its power to turn around India's growth story into recession misery. What can be the motivation behind this?

Assuming that the triumvirate of economists running this country aren't abject idiots, the only rationale could be swapping some of the US's recessionist troubles by absorbing them in the growing Indian economy. Significantly, that is precisely the assurance that Ambassador Mulford gave to the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "Just as Indian products and ser-

vices have done well in the United States market, a vibrant growing, Indian economy should be a magnet for increased US exports and investment. This can happen if the pace of economic reform in India gathers steam. It will happen if India accelerates its willingness to open its markets to greater foreign trade and investment." Going by policy initiatives, this is the precise reforms agenda of Dr Manmohan Singh and Mr Chidambaram.

In line with Ambassador Mulford's stated policy, huge quantities of US investment are flowing into India and the government is doing everything to absorb these funds; rather than impose curbs on inflows, the government of India is spending a fortune to sterilise the additional liquidity through the flawed Market Stabilisation Scheme (MSS) regime.

On 1 November 2007 The Economic Times reported "India's receiving huge capital inflows. These dollar inflows are mopped up by RBI instead of being allowed into the forex market directly, to keep the rupee, which has already appreciated by about 12%, under check. This keeps dollars relatively scarce and pricey in terms of rupee. However, to keep rupee exchange rate at a certain level, RBI injects additional rupee currency into the system, feeding the existing liquidity overhang. Then to suck out this liquidity, RBI opts for sterilization, which entails mopping up excess liquidity by issuing securities. The dollars that RBI had bought from the market are invested in US treasuries.....The apex bank, which has bought over \$61 billion from the open market since January, has had to sterilise a lot of liquidity (local currency) released into the system. It loses about 3% on such sterilization efforts - the difference between what it earns on deploying reserves in mainly US treasuries and the interest it pays in the domestic market for sucking out liquidity through the issue of government securities."

Thus Government of India's irrational 3 to 4 per cent subsidy to foreign capital inflows helps solve the US Treasury's problem of capital flight, while lining the pockets of the army of American funds which rotate money by dumping US Treasury securities and buying 3 month or longer Indian securities; while RBI buys near-zero-yield short-term US securities which the entire world is now off-loading. The net offloading of US Treasuries by almost all foreign Central Banks from mid July to the first week of September stood at \$48 billion;

it could have been worse but for white knight RBI stepping in!

Thus we exported the Indian growth story to the US enabling them to add 166,000 jobs in October, while we imported the US recession laying off some 2 million workers. Making matters worse, we squeezed credit availability to unleash stagflation in our economy.

How did this come to pass despite the stringent safeguards in our system of government? Fraud, deception, violation of statutory provisions: in short, the Market Stabilisation Scheme (MSS): whereby the RBI violated the Reserve Bank of India Act 1934, which does not allow RBI to accept interest bearing deposits from Commercial Banks or to indulge in any form of speculative activity.

Governor Reddy and his colleagues have been pretending that the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that they signed with the Government of India on 25 March 2004, authorises them to flout the provisions of the RBI Act 1934. Since the government of India itself cannot overrule the Act without following due constitutional amendment process, the MOU is nothing more than evidence of wrongdoing and intent to subvert constitutional safeguards.

Governor Reddy and Finance Minister Chidambaram are liable to judicial answerability for this misdeemeanour, in the light of the loss of investible funds to the Indian economy to the tune of over 200,000 crore rupees; and additionally, for the effective interest subsidy to the US government to the tune of 8,000 crore rupees.

As admitted by US Congressmen themselves, every last disputed dollar of the burgeoning US Federal Debt is ending up financing the US Occupation of Iraq. Political ramifications of this rupee 8,000 crore subsidy in calendar year 2007, to an imperialist war which is widely opposed by the Indian public, will only be judged by future elections.

In his address to the All India Congress Committee (AICC) on November 17, 2007, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh admitted that the Development that we want is not materializing; yet the political economist in him glossed over this and changed tack to secular politics.

The Finance Minister was more forthright on September 13, 2007 when, for once, he admitted that the biggest economic problem before the country is that though gross investment is rising, production is falling!

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Democratic National Conference's Role In Kashmir Politics

Question: What precisely are your differences with Bakshi Sahib and his party?

Answer: Our differences with Bakshi have a long history. These differences arose while we were working together. We were acutely conscious of some grave defects in the functioning of the National Conference Organisation and the administration. These defects grew to a proportion where they threatened to undermine political stability in the State. But the dominant group inside the National Conference led by Bakshi Sahib took up a position of obstinate defence of all the weaknesses and defects in the organisation and the administration. A group of people dominating the ruling party is utilizing state power to establish its monopolistic control over the economic and political life of the State to the detriment of the common people. In pursuit of this aim, this group is resorting to blatantly undemocratic practices of usurping the civil liberties and lawful rights of the people.

This contradiction between the interests of a particular group and the aspirations of the common people developed inside the National Conference particularly during the course of the last two years. The dominant group acted in violation of all the agreed decisions and policies and subordinated the interests of the National Movement to its own narrow and selfish interests. Although it swears by the Constitution, yet in actual practice it is using its authority to mutilate it. All our

Soon after the launching of Democratic National Conference, the Correspondent of Janta, Mumbai, Mr Balraj Puri interviewed Sh. GM. Sadiq, President of DNC. It was published in the issue dated 6 April, 1958. We are reproducing the same with due acknowledgement for our readers.

—The Editor

persistent and sustained efforts to resolve the contradiction failed due to the refusal of Bakshi Sahib and his group to give up authoritarian methods and reform themselves. They failed to give a clean, honest and efficient administration to the people. This led to the emergence of our party as a democratic opposition wedded to the objectives of our National movement.

Q: Are these differences also of an ideological nature?

A: Our differences with Bakshi Sahib assume an ideological nature in so far as he acts in defence of the interests of a particular exploiting class that is thriving on official patronage.

Q: If some of your objections to the functioning of the ruling party are met, will you consider the question of rejoining it? Or, you will still try to fill the role of a democratic secular opposition?

A: The functioning of a democratic secular opposition is the only guarantee for the growth of a healthy democratic atmosphere in the State. The "emergency" atmosphere prevailing within the State for the last ten years has considerably stunted the growth of democracy here. While any improvement in the functioning of the ruling party is welcome, there is no question of our rejoining it. We shall continue to fulfil our role as a democratic opposition.

Q: Have you any differences with the Home and Foreign policies of the Government of India? Are you fully satisfied with its Kashmir policy?

A: We are in general agreement with the Foreign policy of the Government of India. In the sphere of Home policy, while we appreciate the aims of economic development and construction, we can have our differences over methods and details. For example, we would like the Government of India to introduce radical agrarian reforms on approximately the same lines as we have done in our State. Broadly speaking, we are satisfied with the Kashmir policy of the Government of India except where it has failed to pay sufficient attention to internal affairs of the state with a view to improving matters and eliminating factors that impede the growth of a normal democratic life.

Q: Is it true that one of your senior members, Shri GL Dogra said in an interview that ideologically he had always been a Congressman and proposes to remain one?

A: I am not aware of any such interview. However, if Shri GL Dogra has given expression to these views, he is free to profess his ideology as a Congressman and will continue to have a place of honour in our organisation.

Q: If an offer is made by the

All-India Congress Committee to accept the Democratic National Conference as one of its regular branches, are you likely to accept it?

A: This is a hypothetical question. Anyway, if such an offer is made, it shall receive the most serious consideration of our party.

Q: Can a Communist become a member of the DNC and are they being admitted into it? Has any person enrolled himself as a member of your party who, to your knowledge, claims to be a Socialist, a Gandhite or a Humanist? If so, will you please furnish such names?

A: No such question has arisen so far. But, a communist who subscribes to our policies and programme can enrol himself as a member of our party and work for it. There are many members in our party, some in leading positions, who claim to be Socialists, Gandhites or Humanists. A list of names will be too long to be included in this interview, but if you like I could send some of the names separately.

Q: Can you please describe the ideology of your party in just a general manner, preferably, if possible, in terms of existing "isms" and how far and in what respects does that differ from that of main political parties of India?

A: The broad ideology of our party is Socialist. The

programme of New Kashmir itself is a Socialist programme and in the Constitution of the state recently some of us were in the Government. Unfortunately, this did not find favour with Bakshi Sahib and instead gave rise to unfounded suspicions.

Q: Is there any truth in the allegation that yours is a sponsored opposition-sponsored by the Government of India to deal Sheikh Abdullah administratively as well as politically?

A: This is a slanderous allegation. The formation of the Democratic National Conference party is an entirely local phenomenon. After the adoption of our Constitution which has the State's accession with India as its cornerstone, and which embodies the basic principles and objectives of our National movement, the growth of a democratic opposition pledged to the defence of the Constitution was a historical necessity. This reminds one of the origin and role of PSP itself. We shall, however, welcome all the steps taken by the Government of India with a view to promoting a healthy democratic atmosphere in the State. But we shall at the same time criticise it where it fails to intervene to check the undemocratic practices of the ruling party. As a party of the Republic of India, the State deserves the attention of the Centre, particularly because of the special conditions obtaining here and the personal defects of the leadership of the party in power.

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positions were prepared near a bridge east of Leh and when the enemy duly arrived met with serious reverses due to determined resistance, refrained from attacking Leh.

In the meantime two companies 2/4 Gurkha Rifles accompanied by Sherpa mountaineers including the famous Tenzing Norkay who had been dispatched from Manali by the Western Command of Army joined Prithi Chand and his gallant men after crossing the Passes of Rohtang, Bara Lacha and Tanglang La ranging in heights from 13,500 to 17,300 Ft. Thus Leh was saved it was the outcome of a great deed which have few equals in military history. It called for unbound determination, courage and stamina and these qualities and more

were amply demonstrated by the defenders who took the first shock of the attack, the two gallant officers and men of the 2nd Dogras.

But Leh remained isolated from Kashmir Valley by occupation of Kargil and Zojila Pass by Pakistanis. An attempt was made in late May 1948 to relieve/reinforce Skardu Garrison but the State Forces troops which moved out under the command of Fakir Singh made very little progress against determined enemy resistance and withdrew. As already stated Skardu Garrison was forced to surrender after exhausting its food stocks and ammunition by September 48. The Pakistanis had pushed up stream from Gilgit-Skardu south eastwards and were only a few miles north of Leh. They had also occupied Kargil as well as Zojila

Pass. The enemy forces from Kargil Zojila area could be withdrawn when the winter snows closed the passes and together with reinforcements from Gilgit could be used to bring pressure on and possibly liquidate the limited troops defending Leh. Pass.

CONTINUATION

Pakistanis had deployed a couple of mountain guns on commanding heights at the Zojila pass against which infantry assaults proved failures and resulted in heavy casualties.

Maj.Gen K.S.Thimaya who had taken command of the newly formed Shri Div (later designated as 19th Infantry Division) had only about few weeks before the winter snows blocked the pass. Field guns of the artillery were not effective due to limitation of their elevation angles. The divi-

sional commander decided to use tanks to neutralize the mountain guns and concentrated first in improving the road leading from Baltal towards the pass. The road was improved and completed in about 1 month time by Madras Sappers and Miners. In the meantime seven Honey Stuart tanks of the 7th Light Cavalry were dismantled at Jammu transported to in camouflaged trucks reassembled at Sonamarg. Simultaneously 77th Infantry Brigade comprising a battalion of Patiala State forces, 1/5 Gurkha Rifles and 1st Battalion of Rajput Regiment under Brig. K.L.Atal was also assembled at Sonamarg. The D Day was fixed for 4th Nov 1948 but early morning of that day it started snowing and to many it looked that operation would not materialize. But since Cease fire under the auspices of United Nations was round the corner Gen. Thimayya decided to go

ahead with the attack the tanks moved slowly uphill and places were virtually pushed by Infantry and towed by powerful weapon carries and out of seven only two tanks reached the pass and silenced the mountain guns in less than half an hour Rajputs stormed the pass and Gurkhas mopped up the slopes.

The enemy was taken completely by surprise and when they reported to their senior that they were attacked by tanks, the seniors disbelieved them. Without pausing the leading troops reached Kargil. The Leh Garrison also moved towards Kargil, the enemy was completely beaten and retreated north westwards to Skardu. The road / bridle path from Kashmir to Leh was secured.

***(The author has remained a Geologist of repute and is based in Jammu)**

MUZAFFARABAD-1947-II

HOW I LIVED UNDER OCCUPATION FORCES



By Bishamber Nath Sapru

RAIDERS had moved ahead after looting Muzaffarabad. Total anarchy prevailed. Schools, Hospitals did not function. We survived on begging. On one occasion we broke open a government godown and brought a big bag of rice to our place.

Yaqoob:

One day when all the Pandits used to live jointly there was a knock at the door at 9 PM. We had sat for dinner. Sham Lal Labroo had just kept aside a morsel for the dog. I got up to open the door. Three raiders faced up to me to ask if the Headmaster was there. They ordered him to accompany them. Sham Lal muttered '*Hari Har*' and felt sure his day of doom had arrived. As Sham Lal came out he recognized Yaqoob, a goonda element in the company of 3 raiders. We left our dinner and awaited the sound of firing shot. An hour passed with no sound of firing shot being heard. Sham Lal returned alongwith a big bag of rice on his back. We hugged him. He narrated that Yaqoob had failed repeatedly in Matric exams. But now had an offer of job in the Forest Department. For this he required a certificate. Sham Lal said, "I gave him a certificate that he had passed Matric in first Division". In lieu of that Yaqoob gave him a bag of rice.

After sometime we (56 Kashmiri Pandits) were ordered to move to prison, where other members of the minority community were held as captives. 40 of us obeyed the orders. Those who obeyed the orders included Prem Nath Nehru, Shamboo Nath Thalchoor, Tarachand (BA) Wagam etc. Kalu Khan my sav-
iour took seven of us—

Sarvanand Thalchoor, Sukhdev, Kashi Nath, Jia Lal Misri (Medical Asstt.), Jagar Nath Misri (Customs), Dina Bhat of Rohama and myself to a small house of a Goldsmith, where there used to be a Girls Primary School.

Last time when the members of the minority community had been put in jail soon after the invasion it had been a horrible experience for them. They had remained there for 10 days. Raiders were all the time looking for young ladies. The father-in-law of a lady had been shot dead when he tried to resist attempts of raiders to abduct his daughter-in-law. She never came back. Outside the jail groups of raid-

take shelter with his family till the danger was over. He asked them to move immediately under the cover of darkness. **It was Kacho's foresight and compassion for fellow human beings that saved Pandit ladies from lustful eyes of raiders.**

Kacho's message had reached us also since we lived quite near to the prison. In the morning we had gone to get turnips. While we were returning we heard firing. All the houses of minority community were open, unlocked. We entered the compound of a house which probably belonged to a Vakil. Besides us 30 other males and females (of minority community), had taken

lady had concealed some gold but the raiders had found it out. We were subjected to humiliation throughout the day. Another raider snatched away my shoes. It did not fit him well. He pulled out a dagger and loosened the heel. Shoes were of Flex quality. The raider felt happy now. As reward he offered me roasted moong, with the other hand he thumped my back so hard that virtually my breath stopped. People in prison were also looted.

Langar Organised:

By evening there was some relief. Ladies who had taken shelter in Kachoo Ali Mohammad's house returned to their families the following day. That day raiders were not seen anywhere in Muzaffarabad. A sort of calm prevailed. Master Abdul Aziz, who had gone into hiding at the time of attack, resurfaced. He asked people to assemble in maidaan, raising slogans of 'Sher-i-Kashmir Ka Kya Irshad, Hindu-Muslim-Sikh Itihad'. All members of the minority community including Kanshi Ram, Dipti Ram, leading traders of the town came out. A special Langar (community kitchen) was organized. There was no idea that raiders would re-enter Muzaffarabad. For the first time since attack we had a good meal. Langar had prepared rice, turnip and potato. Master Abdul Aziz and Abdul Salam had organized the function.

2-3 days later one night we were woken up with the sound of 'crich-crich thak thak'. 552 heavy armoured vehicles carrying raiders and Pak armymen were moving towards other side of Kishenganga-Ramkot-Brarkot. We lost all hope of returning to our homes. Shortly before the attack I had written a letter to my family, saying, "A frontier onslaught is expected. But you need not worry. Our Dogra army is fully prepared to give them a befitting reply". My elder brother, Pt. Sham Lal Sapru would show this letter of and on to people and express regrets over my not leaving the town

well in time. After the attack also many Kashmiri Pandits, including Pt. Kashi Nath Rangaroo had fled to Kashmir. Rangaroo had asked me to run away. I had refused, telling him, "What will be the fate of Master Shamboo Nath Dhar and two handicapped children".

The raiders after re-entry into Muzaffarabad were specifically enquiring about people who were associated with National Conference and Sheikh Abdullah. Pak army men made searches and said people like Master Abdul Aziz, Dipti Ram and Kanshi Ram were engaged in propaganda against Pakistan. Regular Pak soldiers killed many members of the minority community around this time.

Tarachand Wagam:

Tarachand W a g a m was appointed as n e w ' W a z i r Wazarat' (Deputy Commissioner). Little rations was also supplied. All this was a propaganda ploy. Radio Pakistan was broadcasting repeatedly '*Kashmiri Pandit Ko Wazir Wazarat Banaya Gaya Hai, Ek Aur Kashmiri Ko Judge*'. (A Kashmiri Pandit has been appointed Wazir Wazarat, while another Kashmiri has been made judge). Ashiq Hussain, a Shia from Safakadal, who already was a Sub-Judge in Kashmir had come to Muzaffarabad. He was appointed as Judge.

Prem Nath Nehru:

Prem Nath Nehru, who had one child with him, was playing with pebbles (raintfali) with his child on the roof terrace. The shine of pebbles caught the attention of a raider. The raider abused Nehru, accusing him of 'showing direction to Indian aeroplanes to attack raiders. Indian Army was regularly bombarding Pak army positions in Muzaffarabad, The Raider took PN Nehru to the Judge Ashiq Hussain. Nehru had been his teacher in school days. The raider told the Judge, '*Yeh Jenab Ishara Hindustan Ke Jahazon*' (Contd. on Page 11)



A view of Muzaffarabad Town from the Fort.

ers would rape women in full public view. At times there would be gang-rape. Only few ladies returned to their families after abduction and rape. There were instances where ladies were killed after rape.

Kacho's role:

Kacho Ali Mohammad (who later rose to be a Minister in J&K cabinet) was Asst. Commissioner in Muzaffarabad. He had his family with him. He had reports that Indian Army had pushed back raiders and had a feeling that Maharaja will rule over Muzaffarabad again. One night at 4 AM he reached out to Kashmiri Pandits in prison and informed that Raiders were retreating from Kashmir. He cautioned them the raiders on reaching Muzaffarabad would treat Pandits in general and their women folk in particular badly. He suggested that all Pandit ladies (who numbered 10-12) could

shelter here. A raider came and asked me to hand over 'Zar' (money). I replied that I had nothing. Pointing towards my coat he ordered me to hand it over to him. Groups of raiders in turns took away my shirt and pant also, leaving me in trousers, underwear and shoes. Three ladies were gang-raped in front of us, while other 5-6 who resisted were dragged out. They were let of after being raped.

Raiders got a good booty of cash and gold here. Another raider thrashed me when I told him I had no money. I was forced to part with my pay-Rs 52. Out of this I had spent 1 anna on Revenue stamps, another 4 annas on cigarettes. After handing over this the raider asked me to pull down my trousers. He wanted to check if I had anything more anywhere. The raiders subjected the people to such indignities following an incident. A



Tarachand Wagam

How I lived under occupation forces

(From Page 10)

Ko Dikhata Hai (Sir, the man is giving direction to Indian planes'. The judge virtually woke up from his seat to say to the raider, **Acha Ishara Karta Hai. Mein Isko Sazah De Doonga. Tum Jav** ('O' he is showing direction. You go. I will punish him). After the raider left the Judge tendered his apology to his teacher and added, 'I have landed in hell. I was under the impression that Pakistan would be a good country. This temptation had brought me here'. Ashiq Hussain asked Nehru if his family was with him and whether he had enough rations. Nehru told him that he had his wife with him and survived on begging. The Judge asked his teacher to take a big bag of rice. Nehru carried it to his place on head.

All the 'captives' would spend the day going for begging to the neighbouring villages. Some villagers moved by our plight would display kindness, while others would abuse. One day the 'Captives' ransacked a Hospital. Sarvanand asked me to pick up a big bottle of Pot. Permanganate and mercurochrome. When it became a burden to carry he suggested that I put the mercurochrome bottle concealed in a ditch so that it could be carried later on.

The place where we lived now had plenty of looted cattle of the minority community. All doctors of the town had either fled or had been killed. Sarvanand was the only available medical practitioner. Local people had been complaining of palpitations due to Taeniasis. Sarvanand after examining the patients would direct them to me. He was 'Doctor', I was his compounder. While directing them he would say, 'this patient is my own man', to flatter them. I would put 2 crystals of Pot. Permanganate in water and serve it as 'Mixture'. We would advise them to keep fast and take only pre-boiled water. The patients would get relief. Fasting otherwise also helps. My additional charge as 'cook' helped me, better diet was now available. It was our good luck that we did not fall ill.

One day while I had gone for begging with Janki Nath Wangnu and Jagdish, a local from Muzaffarabad a group of 10-12 raiders accosted us. They de-

manded 'Zar'. The raiders had received information about our 'hideout'. 3 of the Raiders remained here. They lined us up. The other raiders went to a house, located somewhat higher up. The raiders broke open the door of that house. 3 raiders who were with us thought that other raiders had looted the house and carried the booty. To join the looting spree they left us and ran away to join other raiders' group. The sound of the collapsing door had produced such a crackling noise that we stood confused as to what had happened. Janki Nath virtually froze at the place he was standing. Jagdish got a nightmare that a bullet had hit his chest. He showed his chest to me.

After this incident Janki Nath Wangnu, Prem Nath Nehru and his sick wife went to stay at Kuhoodi, 12 kms. Away. Sham Lal Labroo was still in Muzaffarabad.

Usman:

70 days had elapsed since the attack. Sarvanand was fed up with the difficult life we lived every day. He said that he knew the way to Kashmir. We left one day quite early in the morning, taking roasted maize along with us. All seven of us passed through numerous hills, at times descending and then ascending. After walking for 1½ day we reached a place where one Usman met us. He had been suffering from Venereal Disease and Sarvanand had cured him successfully. On seeing Sarvanand Usman wished him warmly. He asked Sarvanand, "Are you fleeing. This way does not lead to Kashmir, it goes to Banu (Pakistan)". We felt heart-broken. Trying to win his trust Sarvanand said, "But, you are here. Everytime I remember you and remain worried about your health". Sarvanand took Usman to one side to examine his penis and exclaimed 'God has been kind'.

Usman was a criminal. He asked us to stay with him. He had looted 5 buffaloes belonging to Sikhs. He took us to his house located on a hill meadow. Usman lived there with his sister. She would keep on looking at me. Usman would feel irritated. He would keep me all the time busy fetching water for his buffaloes.

6 days passed. Hospitality was now becoming a burden for him. One day he told us, 'winter has set in. Our rations are depleting. Now Muzaffarabad is quiet. A Kashmiri brethren of yours has been appointed as Ration Officer to supply rations to you. It is quite cold here. It is better you go back to Muzaffarabad'. We had little clothing with us. It was bitter cold here.

Usman's house was quite close to Banu-Kohat. It took us 2 days and one night to reach back to Muzaffarabad. He accompanied us for half of the journey and had given us maize bread and salt to tide over the journey. While bidding us fare well he was courteous enough to give us detailed instructions about the path we had to take to reach Muzaffarabad.

At 11 AM we reached Muzaffarabad. We decided to meet Pt. Tara Chand Wagam first. On seeing us he broke down, saying, "Now I am officer here". He was living in Isfandiyar's house and shared food from their kitchen. One day Isfandiyar made a proposal to him, suggesting marriage of his (Tarachand's) daughter with Ismail Shah, son of Isfandiyar. This weighed heavily on Pt. Tara Chand's mind. All the time Tara Chand worried about how to save his 17-year old daughter from this forcible marriage. Tara Chand made a proposal to me. I told him I was married and had a daughter.

Ismail-the baker:

We shifted back to the school lodge where we had stayed earlier. I resumed my twin job as cooking master plus compounder. We had little peddling to protect ourselves from bitter cold. A single tarpaulin served as quilt for seven of us. We would shiver in cold. One day I overheard one of my colleagues complaining to Sarvanand about me that "Vishnath did not go for begging and does not come out of kitchen". I felt bad. There was a Muslim baker, Ismail nearby. He was a Kashmiri who had settled in the town. Without cigarettes I was feeling out of place. These were not available. I used to go to baker's shop to smoke chilm (pipe). He was quite friendly and would not object. He made an offer, "O' Sheikh you work with me. You will not have to pay anything for food and smoking to-

bacco here". This whole mohalla was of Kashmir-speaking Muslims.

The day I overheard a colleague complaining about me the same morning I went to Ismail. He asked me again if I would like to serve him. I replied in the affirmative. As my clothes had been taken away, a jute bag served as my shirt. This was true of all of us. The baker offered me an old shirt, probably his personal one or that of his son. My job was to prepare dough for the bakery. I lived with Ismail's family. After two days Ismail hesitatingly told me, "O" Sheikh I want to tell you something. The people have come to know that an infidel was rinsing the flour in the shop". Ismail's sales had been affected. He however, told me that whenever I needed anything-bread/smoking chilm I could rely on him.

Two days absence had perturbed my colleagues. They had made searches for me. When Sarvanand met me on roadside he burst out "where were you?" I replied firmly, "I will no more stay with you". He said, "What face I will show to your mother when we will reach Srinagar?" Sarvanand was my neighbour in Kashmir. I narrated the whole story to him. He felt sorry and said the complainant was a child who could hardly understand what misery we are passing through here. I was back at my job-cooking food and dispensing Pt. Permanganate crystals for Taeniasis. As cooking master my job included fetching water from Kishanganga flowing nearby. Our residence was near its bank. To reach the river bank I had to make way by pushing corpses to one side. One evening while I was going to the stream with Gagar (Pitcher) an incident horrified me. Two raiders had caught a member of the minority community. After asking him something they shot him dead. Since I was too scared to pass via that way till 9 PM I was still on the river bank. My colleagues had tense moments.

I was terribly scared of bullet injury. I had watched Pala Ram and others being shot dead. The bullet injuries left ugly wounds, with fat protruding out of the wound.

Conversion:

I reached my residence at 10

PM. Wali Mohd. Mir, the Goldsmith had returned from Peshawar. He spoke Kashmiri and suggested to us that we should follow other members of the minority community who had changed their religion.

Next day all seven of us went to the nearby mosque. On its gate we saw Master Abdul Rehman. He was an Arabic teacher in my school. He had a sword with him. When I expressed desire to change my religion he asked if I was doing it under compulsion. I replied in negative and added, "Maulana Sab, we get everything, rations and live without any difficulty. So the question of compulsion does not arise. I am changing my faith willingly". There were two Moulvis sitting around a table. Master Rehman introduced me to one of the Moulvis as his teacher colleague. Rehman once again asked me if my decision was under compulsion. I reaffirmed that there was no compulsion.

Under my serial number was written—Bishamber Nath Sapru Sabika Naam. Then new name was asked for me. I suggested Gh. Nabi. Address too was added. Same day Tara Chand also underwent conversion. 10-15 locals were watching. We were served yellow rice, sweet meat (sheerin), dates and surnai-bugle was blown. Raiders had already removed my sacred thread when they searched me for 'Zar'. Almost everybody was living in Muzaffarabad with changed faith. I also erased my tattooed name from right forearm and drew crescent on Left hand with ink.

Pt. Tara Chand Wagam's new name was Mohammad Tariq. One day he developed fever. Medicines were not available. Sarvanand would treat him with boiled water. All the while Tara Chand was muttering 'Durgiyay. 15 days later he passed away. We buried him near a mosque. A Moulvi came to read Jenaza. His daughter and son Srikrishan came with Red Cross.



Pt. Shri Krishan,
son of T.C. Wagam

(To be concluded)

Prof. Madhok hardly played any role

Sir,
Raider's Invasion-New Revelation" by PN Raina based mainly on the testimony of Prof. Madhok which is far from the truth. The novel authored by Prof. Madhok is totally misleading. For instance Brig. Kashmir Singh **was never Chief of Staff of State forces not even in officiating/acting capacity.** After Maj. Gen. HL Scot resigned as chief of Staff of the State Forces Brig. Rajinder Singh took over in acting capacity as Chief of staff, as the senior most local officer of the State Forces Brig. Gansara Singh was deputed as Governor of Gilgit Agency when latter was returned by British to Maharaja in June 1947.

Col. Narain Singh-officer commanding of the 4th J&K Infantry **was advised by his fellow officers** to replace his two companies of Punchi-Mirpuri Muslims by Dogra or Gurkha troops keeping in view the desertions of the Muslim troops of the State Forces at Mirpur, Bhimbar and other places along Jammu. Pakistan border. Col. Narian Singh rejected the advice and expressed that he had more faith on his Muslim troops than on the Dogras. But unfortunately as the world knows he paid a very heavy price for it. Prof Madhok, Dr. Atri, Banot and others hardly played any significant role in the matter. After Dussera Durbar was concluded on 25th of October the lights went out in Srinagar and message was received from survivors of taken force of state troops who were fighting a gallant rearguard action between Uri and Baramulla that Maharaja under advice left Srinagar the same night by road and reached Jammu on 26th morning from when he acceded to India and asked for military assistance which was made available at Srinagar next day i.e. 27th October at 9.30 hrs. It is also far from the truth and **ridiculous to believe that authorities in Srinagar learned about the Pakistani attack on Domel to Muzaffarabad on 22nd October from Harish Banot who travelled from Srinagar to Muzaffarabad and back on a motorcycle the same day.** The fact is that after the Pakistani attack on Domel-Muzaffarabad a few Dogras who managed to escape the slaughter by slipping through the cordon moved back along the road to Srinagar and reaching a **civil telephone and informed the Headquarters of J&K State Forces as to what had happened at Domel-Muzaffarabad on the morning of 22nd October.** A Dogra Havildar, one of the few who survived even after joining Brig. Rajinder Singh's force at Uri met me in a remote village of Riasi in 1954 and narrated to me the events which took place at Domel-Muzaffarabad on 22nd October and heroic rearguard action fought by Brig. Rajinder Singh with his small force between Uri Diwan Mandir. That Mehar Chand Mahajan expressed that Indian Troops were expected any moment while closeted with Maharaja, Brig. Kashmir Singh and Prof. Madhok also does not stand scrutiny as Maharaja had not acceded to India how did his Prime Minister Mahajan expect Indian troops to come to the rescue of J&K State.

It is a cock and bull story that Maharaja Hari Singh cancelled his visit to Bhimbar on 20th October while he was on tour of Jammu on the basis of information supplied by Madhok. The fact is that Bhimbar had fallen much earlier immediately after which Maharaja had appealed to Maharaja of Patiala for military help who obliged by dispatching an infantry battalion to Jammu and a mountain battery to Srinagar too meager a force to alter the situation in J&K State at that time, however both were in place by 15th of October.

Prof. Madhok and the author of the article seem to have taken the readers for a ride by stating that there was a great shortage of arms, ammunition with state forces as Rawalpindi-Srinagar road was closed and about only one company of Infantry was available at Srinagar at the time of Pakistani sponsored aggression. There was no shortage of rifles, light automatics, ammunition and grenades, however medium machine guns and mortars were somewhat short. As is known several battalions of J&K Militia were raised and equipped with weapons of the State forces, as for personal there were 1854 able bodied officers and men of the state forces including many veterans of second world war present in Badami Bagh cantonment out of which 500 were Mirpur-Punchi Muslims and the rest being Dogras, Gurkhas and Sikhs.

The novel seems to have written with the sole object of glorification of self and RSS who hardly played any significant role in Kashmir Valley in 1947.

I spent about ten hours in discussion with Prof. Balraj Madhok on a train journey from Bhopal to Delhi in 1979 and found he was not aware of many happenings of the period and there was not much depth/logic in his arguments.

The other article **"Pak Invasion Looking Back** is quite interesting as it comes from a journalist of repute. I intend to point out most humbly that (i) Col. DR Rai commanding officer 1st Sikh was killed on 31st October and **not on 2nd November** itself between Sangrama and Baramulla when he was covering withdrawal of one of his leading platoons which had come under very heavy fire from hills south east of Baramulla.

(ii) The first convoy by **road arrived in Srinagar by the afternoon of 7th November (and not for the next three days following 3rd November as stated in the article)** comprising 6th Rajputana Rifles, 2nd Dogras a squadron of 7th Light cavalry and misc. detachments and supplies. Only a troop of 7th Lt. Cavalry under Major IS Rikhe had arrived on the afternoon of 6th November.

(iii) The enemy was enticed to rush to Srinagar by tactfully withdrawing 1st Sikhs to outskirts of Srinagar and on the morning of 7th November was routed as Shalteng by couple of infantry battalions and troop of armoured cars and air support. **No heavy artillery was used nor was available in the valley at that time.** The Patiala mountain battery though located near Srinagar was not operational for want of Dial sights.

--M.M. Munshi, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu

PN Raina Replies

In the writing of history like or dislike for actors involved has to be eschewed. EH Carr, the noted historian, in his classic 'What is History' makes a profound statement when he remarks 'There can be no impartial history it can only be nearer to the truth'. In his dislike of Prof. Madhok, Shri MM Munshi has missed the context of my review article **'Raider's invasion-New Revelations'**. He has also taken liberties with facts. Though my article is essentially a review of Prof. Madhok's novel, yet I have made good use of Prof. Madhok's other books on Kashmir and have personally contacted some characters in the novel to have the veracity of facts dramatized in the novel. Many of the characters, which include Sh. ON Kak and Sh. Harish Bhanot, are still alive, Prof. Madhok's novel **'Jeet Ya Haar'** was first published in 1956 and reprinted in 1988. There has hardly been any refutation of the claims made by Prof. Madhok.

For the sake of record the points raised by Sh. Munshi need clarification:

1. It is true that technically Brig. Rajinder was chief of Staff of State Forces. **The reference to Brig. Kashmir Singh as 'Chief of State Forces' has been made in a different context as he was incharge of overall military decision-making in the State Forces.** On 13 September, 1947 Maharaja had requested for loan of the services of Lt. Col. Kashmir Singh Katoch (son of Major-General Janak Singh, the State's Prime Minister) of the Indian Army to act as the Military Adviser to the Maharaja (**Durga Das, Patel's Correspondence Vol I. p.37**) Major K.Brahma Singh, a military historian of repute in his much-acclaimed **'History of J&K Rifles 1820-1956'** writes:

"Colonel Katoch took over the appointment that was created after the services of Major General HL Scott were terminated on 21 September."

General Scott was relieved of his duties on 24 September to be sent on leave till the termination of his term on 1 November. **In what capacity Col. Katoch took over from General Scott?**

2. Col. Narain Singh, officer commanding of the 4th J&K Infantry and Domel was quite adamant in replacing two companies whose loyalty was under doubt. Mr. Munshi does not mention the names of 'fellow officers' who had advised Col. to replace his two companies. As per Major Brahma Singh Maharaja himself is believed to have specifically asked Col. Narain Singh as to how he felt about a section of his troops Maharaja was equally aware that the section of his troops whose loyalties were under question were already fighting the Pakistanis in the Mirpur area and **'non too badly'.** **So who were the people putting pressure on Maharaja to ask Col. Narain Singh about the loyalty of his troops?**

3. Mr. Munshi says, 'It is also far from the truth and ridiculous to believe that authorities in Srinagar learned about the Pakistani attack from Harish Banot who travelled from Srinagar to Muzaffarabad and back on a motorcycle the same day'. He also makes a claim to have met an unnamed Dogra Havaladar at Riasi in 1954. The Havaladar as per Mr. Munshi had escaped from Domel-Muzaffarabad by slipping through the cordon and moved back along the road to Srinagar and "reaching a civil telephone and informed the Hqs. of J&K State Forces as to what had happened at Domel-Muzaffarabad on the morning of 22nd October itself.

Nowhere in my write-up have I said that authorities in Srinagar learned about the Pakistani attack from Harish Banot. Also I have not written that Banot travelled to Muzaffarabad and came back to Srinagar the same day. I have only said, **"At Uri he (Banot) learnt about the raiders' attack and returned to Srinagar in the evening.** Infact, there is no reference in my article on how State authorities learnt about the attack.

Mr. Munshi is again wrong when he claims that the said Dogra Havaladar was the first to inform Hqs of J&K State Forces about the attack on the morning of 22nd October itself. It was Col. Narain Singh himself who informed the Hqs. The official history **'Operations in J&K 1947-48'** says:

'Before Domel fell, Lt. Col. Narain Singh had been able to inform Srinagar over the wireless about the massive enemy invasion' (p.22) Major K.Brahma Singh attests:

"The news of the invasion was first received at Srinagar on the morning of 22nd October when the officer commanding 4th Battalion spoke to the duty officer at Army Hqs on wireless and informed him of the catastrophe that had befallen his troops. The Battalion Hqs. was at the time under attack by the enemy and Col. Narain Singh could not pass anything beyond an urgent request for reinforcement, before going off the air".

"The first news of the invasion was received mid-morning of 22nd October, when Col. Narain Singh of 4 JAK spoke over the wireless to Capt. Nasib Singh, a staff officer at Army Hqs...An hour later, another message was received to the effect that the officers' Mess was under fire...There was another period of silence; in the early afternoon the 4 JAK wireless set opened for the last time: **"The Co has gone towards the lines-We are being fired at from all directions-I am going to destroy my set"** (p 189)

4. Mr. Munshi asks 'as Maharaja had not acceded to India how did his Prime Minister Mahajan expect Indian troops to come the rescue of J&K State'. Ever since the attack began the Maharaja's government was engaged in serious negotiations with the Govt. of India regarding sending of Indian troops. Diplomacy on sensitive issues is not conducted in public. As Prime Minister of J&K State Mr. Mahajan was definitely in know of things. If he knew on the intervening night of 23/24 October that 'his govt. expected Indian troops soon' it does not sound surprising.

(Contd. on Page 19)

Tales and Legends of Garoora, Chittibandhi and Tantraypora-II

By Upendar Ambardar

ABOUT one and a half km. away from the village Aragam lies **Garoora** village on its western side. Garoora is a combination of two Sanskrit words, '**Garoo**' and '**Rah**' meaning the path or track of spiritual and religious guide. The village lore says that an accomplished ascetic named Shankpaul used to do religious penance at the nearby hill-top. He had twelve hundred disciples, who had exceptional devotion and faith in him. In order to carry water required by 'Garu' for his day to day religious rites, all the twelve hundred devotees would queue in a line from the hermitage at the hill-top upto the 'Garu Nag' lying in the near-by Wular Lake.

As per a belief, the 'Garu-Nag' is said to be the deepest part of the Wular Lake. In recognition of the extraordinary reverence and devotion for the 'Garu', the way was called 'Garu Rah', meaning Garu's path. With the passage of time, the very 'Garu-Rah' became the present day Garoora village. The elevated part of Garoora village has a pious and sacred spring known as '**Zaen-Mattan Nag**', meaning being equivalent to the famous holy Mattan spring of Anantnag (Kashmir). The 'Zaen-Mattan' spring is believed to be invested with divine qualities and properties. It is a big spring with a radius of about 14-15 feet. About six hundred years back it had seven temples, made of chiselled stones of variable sizes, Sikander Bhutshikan, the Muslim ruler of Kashmir is said to have demolished six temples of the 'Zaen-Mattan' spring complex, while destroying the seventh temple, blood is said to have flowed-out from it mysteriously. The King is said to have been startled and frightened at the sight of this. This is how the seventh temple escaped the fanatic ruler's wrath and fury.

The chiselled stones of those demolished temples are believed to have been transported to 'Zainalank', the man-made island in the Wular Lake for the construction of a temple for the 'pooja' of Shriyabhat, the famous minister of the Kashmiri King Zaina-ul-Abidin. In addition to the temple, Budshah is said to have built a mosque at Zainalank. The state government has presently constructed a water reservoir at the holy 'Zaen-Mattan' spring and the surviving seventh temple now remains hidden in the reservoir construction. The holy spring is presently being used to supply water to the village Garoora and its adjoining areas. Garoora village has about 2,500 Muslim families but no Kashmiri Pandit resided in the village at the time of their

forced migration in 1990.

Chittibandhi:

Adjacent to Garoora, is the village of Chitti-Bandi, which means a place having plentiful untanned or light coloured soil. A big stream runs through the village. Its main inhabitants are Gujjar families. In addition to them, about a dozen Kashmiri Pandit families resided in the village at the time of their migration in the year 1990.

The Pandit families of Chitti-Bandi were those of **Sh. Kashi Nath Bhat**, **Sh. Shivji Bhat** (presently at Bohri, Jammu), **Sh. Ved Lal Bhat** (presently at Nagrota Migrant Camp), **Sh. Jia Lal** (presently at Udaiwalla, Bohri, Jammu), **Sh. Pyare Lal** (who runs a medical shop at Jammu) and **Sh. Mukund Lal Bhat**. All of them were agriculturists and orchardists, some of them were also state government employees. The village Chitti-Bandi has a small Shiv temple by the side of a big stream called '**Boed-Koel**'. All the Pandit families had their houses in the vicinity of the said stream. A holy spring also existed near the temple. Chitti-Bandi is about a half Km. from Aragam village. Paddy forms the main crop of the village, while as apples, pears, cherry, peaches and walnuts are the major fruit bearing trees.

Tantraypora:

Adjoining the village Aragam at a distance of half a km is the village of **Tantraypora**. The village is adjacent to the cremation ground. A majestic Chinar tree growing near the cremation ground is even today called as '**Tantar-Boien**'. In earlier times, Pandits well versed in tantric religious rites are said to have resided here. The earlier name of the village is said to have been '**Tantarpur**', the name which proclaims its past Hindu legacy.

Brar:

The village Brar is about 1½ kms from Aragam, while as Gund-Dachan village lies at a distance of about 2½ km from Aragam. No Kashmiri Pandit family lived in these villages.

Pandits of Aragam and adjoining villages celebrated a festival at the harvest time. A few freshly cut rice panicles hung at the upper part of the main house door were believed to ensure good harvest in the succeeding years. It used to be celebrated with a sumptuous and lavish meal, comprising of mutton and water fowl preparations.

Another agriculture related festival in vogue was known as '**Bal-Kadun**'. In it cooked rice along with a cooked fish piece kept at the barrier of the paddy field either on Saturday or Tuesday was thought to guarantee protection to the crops from the pests and diseases.

Wular Lake

Many fables and legends are also associated with the Wular Lake, which is the largest fresh water lake in Asia, being 16 km. long and 9.6 km wide. The presiding deity of the lake is known as '**Wular Raz**'. The lake is said to have countless springs and the main spring is known as '**Neel Nag**'. It is regarded as the deepest part of the lake and is supposed to be in a state of turbulence always. No boatman (hanji) even today dares to take his shikara across this part of the Wular Lake. The folklore says that the presiding deity of the lake known as 'Wular Raz' has his residence in the deep depths of the 'Neel-Nag'. As per a legend, a saint in bygone ages is said to have weaved a rope continuously for twelve years.

He is said to have dropped this rope tied to a grinding stone in the Wular Lake to ascertain its depth but it is thought to have failed to touch the lake's bottom. Another legend says that centuries back, a sage endowed with tantric and supernatural powers once decided to take 'Wular Raz' into his custody. A boat was engaged for the purpose and an oil lamp was lighted by him in the boat amidst elaborate tantric rituals. He is said to have plunged into the 'Neel-Nag' area of the Wular Lake after instructing the boatman to ensure continuous lighting of the said oil lamp. The ascetic is said to have successfully emerged out of the lake along with the 'Wular Raz', who was then kept in confinement in the concealed part of the boat. The ascetic is believed to have dived again in the lake to capture the rest of the family members of the 'Wular Raz'. In the mean time, the Wular Raza enticed the boatman with the promise of unlimited wealth if he extinguished the oil lamp. Tempted by the greed, the boatman extinguished the lamp. As fall-out, the ascetic lost all his supernatural powers and failed to emerge out of the lake.

Taking advantage of it, the Wular Raz (the presiding deity of the lake) dived back to be in his abode at the bottom of the 'Neel-Nag' of the lake.

Instead of the promised wealth, the boatman encountered a heap of charcoal floating on the surface of the lake. Feeling betrayed and cursing his luck, he took a handful of charcoal in his fire-pot for burning purpose. He rowed back to his home. Next morning to his surprise, the charcoal in the forepart had turned into gold.

The '**Neel-Nag**' and the '**Garu-Nag**' (locally known as a 'Gor-Nag') are supposed to exist at the extreme ends of the lake. As per the folklore, the river Vitasta is said to be the spouse of the Wular Raza.

Another legend connected with the lake says that hundreds of years back, a boat carrying a bridegroom got stuck-up near the 'Neel-Nag' part of the lake. The bridegroom pleaded and requested 'Wular Raz' to permit his Shikara to sail through and promised to offer his spouse. After his return from the marriage

ceremony the bridegroom failed to keep his promise. As expected the Shikara failed to move forward from the 'Neel-Nag' area of the Lake. Realising his mistake, the bridegroom offered his just married spouse to the waters of the Wular Lake. Shortly afterwards, to everybody's surprise the bride emerged from the depths of the lake dressed-up in the celestial attire.

Even today, no bridegroom can afford to annoy the 'Wular Raza', the presiding deity of the lake while sailing across the lake. He without fail has to take off his turban and keep the accompanying sword aside while crossing the Wular Lake. People even now pay, salutations and obeisance to the 'Wular Raza' whenever they happen to pass by the lake.

According to one more legend, the present site of the Wular Lake is believed to have been a flourishing city of affluence by the name of **Sandimat Nagar**, well before the Christian era.

Its inhabitants were so engrossed in the materialistic and worldly pursuits that virtuous values and deeds were given a go-bye. A sage advised the natives of Sandimat Nagar to correct their wayward ways, otherwise he predicted an enormous calamity for the city. Excepting for a potter, none paid any heed to his sane advice.

The potter not only entertained him but also gave shelter to him in his home. Out of gratitude, the sage of his supernatural powers turned the potter's clay wheel into gold. He also asked the potter to abandon

the city and also cautioned him not to look back while moving-out of the city. Next day, as advised the potter along with his family fled from the city to seek shelter in the nearby upland ridge. Immediately afterwards, the entire city was engulfed by enormous amounts of water. Notwithstanding the warning of the sage, the potter looked back compelled by

the incoming screaming cries of the city inmates.

To his surprise and horror, his fabulous and marvellous city had turned into a vast lake, which is now known as the Wular Lake. As the potter had failed to honour the promise not to look behind, half of the gold turned potter's wheel reverted back to clay part.

The ridge where the potter is believed to have taken shelter is even now known as **Watlab Sanger**.

The legends, tales and fables continue to be an integral part of our rich oral history.

They are proud relics of our past, though the degree of believability in them may vary. They need to be preserved and protected so that they do not fade away into obscurity.

*(The author is a noted Researcher on Kashmiri Folklore)



A view of Wular Lake in 1981 from Srinagar-Bandipor National Highway



A close-up view of Wular Lake in 1981.

THE SHARDA TEMPLE OF KASHMIR

By Sanjay Godbole

Prior to independence, Hindu Pandits were settled in great numbers, in the Northern areas of Kashmir. Sharadi is a small village in Northern parts of Kashmir, which was famous for an ancient temple of Goddess Sharada. A Kashmiri Pandit family headed by Thusu Ladarwani was settled in this village. This Thusu family was compelled to migrate to Srinagar from Pakistan occupied Kashmir (POK) and again due to the terrorists and their activities, had forcibly to shift to Jammu and stay in a transit camp there.

At present, Shri Shambhunathji Thusu from this family is ninety four year old and possesses an exceptionally remarkable memory. He is well versed in Urdu, and Kashmiri language. Shri Shambhunathji provided me a map in Urdu prepared by him, giving details of the "Sharda Temple". He has successfully retained many memories, about the "Sharda Temple" right from 1920 A.D. Shri. Shambhunathji reiterated that there was no idol of the Goddess Sharda in the temple, but there was only a stone plinth, admeasuring six feet long, seven feet wide and one and half feet high. "Just outside the temple, not very far, was a Shivaling. (i.e. symbolic idol of Lord Shiva). The devotees worshipped at both the places.

Shri. Shambhunathji was born and brought up in Shardi and he spent his prime youth there only. His family owned a business there. He aptly recollects the fair held at Shardi in the month of Bhadrapada (the sixth month according to Hindu Calendar) on the eighth day of Shukla Paksha i.e. a fortnight of rising moon.

He makes a mention of the briefings by a scholar in History from "Shardi", about the assistance rendered, by a Gaud King to the "Sharda Temple Complex". The village Shardi is situated at a distance of 130 Kilometers from Srinagar and 140 k.m.s. from Muzaffarabad. This place, presently, has the following postal address in Pak occupied Kashmir. (POK).

Village Shardi, Tehsil Atta Mukam, District Muzafferabad.

Since olden times, the village Shardi was renowned for the following two things

1. temple of Goddess Sharda, and
2. Sharda Peetham (Centre for Advanced studies)

Prior to the partition, a fair was held at village Shardi in the month of Bhadrapada and on the eighth day of the Shukla Paksha, and devotees from all over India, flocked the place in thousands, for receiving the blessings of the Mother Sharada deity. There is a place called "Tikkar" at a distance of one and half kilometers from Kupwara, in Kashmir. From here, there is a short cut for going to Shardi which measures 40 k.m. Many Pilgrims treaded this path only.

Prior to the partition of India, many Kashmiri Pandit families were settled in "Shardi". Those professing as priests and traders had their shops and establishments in the near vicinity of the Sharda Teerath. Besides, many saints, ascetics

and their associates/disciples and their servants also lived there.

Shri. Pradeep Kaul, from Srinagar, informed that every scribe offered his writings to Goddess Sharda, for obtaining her blessings. The following alleged legend in this regard runs as follows. The Kashmiri Scribes, kept their Bhurjapatra manuscript covered in a platter overnight, in front of Goddess Sharda, for obtaining her blessings. If the pages of writings remained undisturbed, it was taken for granted that the works had the blessings of the Goddess. If, however, the pages of the works were found sifted, the works were considered as disapproved by the Goddess.

Presently, the Sharda Temple lies within POK territory and one has to travel from Muzaffarabad to Thitwal - 80 K.M. from Thitwal to Karna-20 k.m., from Keran to Dudhe Niyal - 24 km, and from Dudhaniyal to Shardi-16 K.M., to reach Shardi.

Prior to 1947, some travellers went to "Udi" from Barahmulla, and then from "Udi" to Shardi, via Muzaffarabad. In Shardi, the Sharda temple is on the right bank of river "Krishnaganga". At this spot, there is a confluence between river Madhumati and river Krishnaganga. In Sanskrit, the word Sharda denotes both Goddess "Saraswati", and Goddess "Durga". An old styled, stringed musical Instrument called "Veena" is also addressed as "Sharda". The Kashmiri Pandits, rever this Goddess Sharda as a symbol of strength. The brief history of "Sharda" in Kashmir is as follows.

"Kashyapmir" aka Kashmir means the Land of "Kashyap: Rishi the ascetic. Kashmir was a home of erudites and scholars. Here was an University of the extremely learned Pandits and philosophers in all branches of knowledge. The epic, Mahabharata, refers to Kashmir as "Kashmir Mandal". Ancient History of India describes that there was a temple of "Goddess Sharda" in Kashmir also. There was a centre for providing education, Sharada Peetha had four doors facing four direction. The southern door was always closed and no one from South ever entered from this door. "Shankaracharya" in 8th cent A.D. opened this door and entered the Centre. He defeated all the scholars there and won the highest hierarchial position of Acharya. An ancient volume "Shakti Sangam Tantra" has a stray reference to "Sharda complex". The volume describes Kashmir as a Land from Sharda Complex to "Saffron mountain" Keshara Parbat extending upto 50 yojana.

At present, in POK, the valley of river Krishnaganga lies at a distance of 125 k.m. from Muzaffarabad towards North. It is now being addressed as "Neelam Valley" by Pakistani authorities.

The village "Shardi" lies in between Gurej and Karna: the two places in Neelam valley. At Shardi, wreckaged remains of the temple of Goddess Sharda can be seen. One can reach Shardi within 4 hours from Muzaffarabad. The following are the lines from the verse of "Goddess Sharda" (residing in Kashmir) in praise of her

Prior to Division of Kashmir in last century Mr. Bamzai, a Kashmiri Pandit, has very aptly described the Sharda Temple had the main girde of 22 feet dia. It had an entrance door in the west. The other entrances had



A view of Sharda Temple (PoK)

नमस्ते शारदे देवी काश्मीरपुरवासिनी ।
त्वामहं प्रार्थये नित्यं विद्या ज्ञानं चे देहि मे ॥
अक्षरसूत्रकुंजधरा पारापुस्तकधारिणी ।
मुक्ताहारसमायुक्ता वाचि तिष्ठतु मे सदा ॥
कुंबुकंठि सुतोय्रोष्ठी सर्वाभरणभूषिता ।
महासरस्वतीदेवी जिह्वायै संनिवेशपताम् ॥
या श्रद्धा धारणा मेधा वादेवी विधिवल्लभा ।
भक्तजिह्वाग्रसदना शमादि गुणदायिनी ॥
नमामि यामिनीनाथ लेखालंकृतकुंतला ।
भवानी भवसंताप निर्वापण सुधानदीम् ॥

arches over them, and these arches were 20 feet in height. The main entrance had foot steps. On both sides of the porch, there were two square shaped pillars, 16 feet high and 2'6" x 2'6" in sectional size. Carved out of a solid stone Block. The construction inside the temple was very plain and unadorned. The temple was situated on a hillock, on the right bank of river Madhumati". The rectangular sanctum had 63 foot steps, each 9' wide. The name and fame of this Sharda Teerath was well spread throughout ancient India.

Kalhan, the famous Historian, who wrote "Rajtarangini has given a reference to "Lalitaditya" of the eighth's century. He says, disciples of the Gaud King had come all the way from Bengal to Kashmir to pay a visit to this Sharda Mandir.

Alberuni, the famous traveller of the 10th century has made a mention of this "Sharada Mandir". He narrates "After traversing the interior portion of the valley of Kashmir, one reaches the Bolair Mountain, which is mid way between "Ladakh" and "Gilgit". Many pilgrims come here for receiving the blessings of Goddess Sharda". Alberuni further states that this "Sharda

Teerath is equally famous like Som Nath of Gujarat, the Vishnu Temple of Thaneshwar, and the Sun-Temple of Multan.

"Bilhan" Pandit the famous author of the Later half of the 11th Century has also made a mention of the :Sharada Teerath". Though settled in South India over a long period, "Bilhan" has dedicated all his Literary works to Goddess "Sharda".

Between the period 1088 A.D. and 1172 A.D., an erudite, Shri Hemchandra had completed his "Prabhav Karta" a voluminous treatise. Under the auspices and patronage of King "Jay Singh" of Gujarat, he

was required to compile a volume on "Grammar". So, king Jay Singh deputed his representative to Kashmir, and made available to Shri Hemchandra a manuscript of the subject of grammar, from the Library of Sharda Teerth. This enabled Shri. Hemchandra, to complete his treatise called "Hemkandra" (Siddha Hemkandra). This amply proves, how the name and fame of the library of "Sharda Teerth" was well-known in ancient India and as to, how abounding was the Library of "Sharda Peeth".

Historian Jon Raja has made a reference, as to, how Sultan of Kashmir Zain-ul-Abidin visited this place in 1422 A.D.

Abul Fazal has also made a reference to this place. The stone crafted Sharda Mandir, he adds, a beautiful temple at that-is situated on the bank of river Madhumti (Krishna Ganga). Gold was often found in the river basin here. A fair is held here, on the eighth day of every month of the (Shukla Paksha) fortnight of the rising moon. After the Mughals, the Dogra regime assumed power in Kashmir and the then Collector of Muzaffarabad, Col. Gundu repaired the temple and provided a new ceiling made of wood. He got fixed an annuity for the priest of the temple, under the orders of Maharaja Gulab Singh of Kashmir.

The Northeast province of our vast country India is Kashmir. Kashmir has its own style of temple Architecture. This style was developed, during the reign of King Lalitaditya (724 A.D.) and in 9th Century reached its Zenith, during the regime of Avantiverman. There are a few ancient temples in Kashmir. Among these, the Rudrash temple at Ludo, the sun-temple at "Martand" and the "Shankaracharya Temple at Srinagar are conspicuously famous. Generally, a temple in Kashmir has two parts, a square sanctum and a porch in front of it. These structures have centres and subcentres of Learning associated with them.

Experts opine that the pillars and columns of Kashmiri temples compare favourably with those of Derrik style. There is an expansive courtyard around the temple. This an-

cient Sharda Mandir is in (P.O.K.) today and has nurtured all the Salient features of Kashmiri style of Architecture.

Yograj Razdan and Mr. Ratan Kaul made available this rare photograph of Sharda Mandir from Sharadi. It is at their instance, it was available to me.

Kashmir, in olden days, was a centre for education, pursuit of knowledge and studies of various sciences. That is exactly why, Kashmir is also called Land of Goddess Sharda, City of Goddess Sharda and Sharda Peetham (University).

The famous Chinese traveller, Hue-en-tsang visited Kashmir in the year 632 A.D. and lived there for almost two years. His notings assert that at Shardi, there are Pandits who are exceptionally brilliant, endowed with perspicacious wits and acumen and are genius in the real sense of the term. There is a narrative, regarding Goddess Sharda in Hindu Scriptures. When Pandits refuse to perform the sacred thread ceremony of "Shandilya" the son of ascetic "Vashishta", he (Shandilya) under instructions of his father, went to Kashmir, to offer his services to Goddess Sharda. He bathed in the water tank near Sharda temple and got his body, transformed into radiant gold, afterwards, he, by the grace of Goddess Sharda obtained accomplishment and became famous as Shandilya Rishi the ascetic.

The Sharda Shastranam Stotra is a canticle depicting Goddess Sharda as follows :-

Goddess Sharda is "Sheeladevi" (A Goddess in stone) she sits on a stone seat and has a pleasantly smiling face. Her form and appearance resemble those of Goddess Parvati (Wife of Lord Shiva). She holds a Sword in one hand. Her eyes are glowing and radiant like the Sun, the moon and the god fire, she is the Supreme controller of all the three "Lokas" (According to Hindu Mythology, there are three lokas i.e. worlds swarga (the heaven) Mrutya (the Earth) and Patal (the under world). She has six arms and sports the sacred thread of Yagyopavit Shandilys, the ascetic. Her devotees are blessed with the eternal light from the outer world.

The members of the Gujar and Pahadi Communities, residing in the nearby area of the "Shardi" village had an abiding and unalienable faith in the sheeladevi shakti peeth (a source of power). They offered cow's milk and cereals and other agricultural produce to Goddess Sharda. In the recent times, Swami Nandlalji a famous Yogi (a hermit) from Kashmir had his hermitage near the Sharda temple, and his disciples were both' Hindus

This is how the imposing and magnificent history of Goddess Sharda for a few centuries in the post goes. The following lines from a Sanskrit canticle are enough and sufficient to stress the importance of the history of Goddess Sharda.

भगवन् या महादेवी शारदाख्या सरस्वती ।
काश्मीरस्या स्वतपसा शाण्डिल्ये नावतारितां ॥
तस्यानाम सहस्र मे भोगमौलैक साधनम् ।
साधकानां हितायै वदत्वं परमेश्वर ॥

By Deepak Budki

I had recently shifted my office out of the valley as it was practically impossible for me to work there and do justice to my work. At last the orders had been received from above. Accommodating so many people as would fill a three storied building was a difficult task. After a long search a departmental building located right on the railway station and having some spare capacity, though still not sufficient enough, was identified.

I collected all the officials and gave them a long pep talk on how to adjust to the new surroundings and adapt to the changed circumstances. This called for their utmost dedication and sacrifice. They were not to expect the same facilities as were available to them previously. With faces crestfallen and future uncertain they readily agreed.

We lost no time to set our house in order. As for myself I chose a small room facing towards the railway platform. I personally supervised the decor of my room. On one side of the room facing the entrance door the office table and the chair were placed while on the other side the sofa set which had been shifted from the valley was adjusted. A large sized photograph of Mahatma Gandhi was hung on the wall opposite the window facing the platform. Through the window you could see a large tract of fallow land extending beyond the platform across the rails with urchins defecating besides the bristly cacti, stray cattle bracing the scorching heat in search of food and the dogs scavenging the garbage. The scenery was totally different from the one we were used to in the lush green valley beyond the Pir Panchal ranges. There was no cool breeze blowing in the mornings, no cold water piped down from the Cheshma Shahi, the eternal royal spring and no cool shadows under the majestic Chinars to rest underneath. It was a different world altogether.

A few glass panes of the window had been broken and nobody attended to them because there were other important things to do. Often hot and dusty winds would blow through them and produce burning sensation on my cheeks.

One day while I was sitting in my chair I spotted a sparrow with a dry twig in its beak darting down from the blue expanse above. It sat on the window-sill for a while deep in contemplation and then flitted

THE NEST

across the room to deposit the twig behind Gandhiji's photograph. Then came another sparrow with piece of straw in her mouth and followed suit. Sometime in the past, God alone knows when they had agreed to live together and build a nest for themselves. A nest -where they would spend an entire season together, mate, lay eggs, hatch them to see young ones popping out their tiny beaks, and feed them till they would take to their wings. They flew time and again in search of more such material and kept depositing the same behind the photograph unmindful of my presence. I watched them for a long time and appreciated their skill and patience.

The sparrows too seemed to have migrated from some far off uncongenial place and were eager to cohabit since the monsoon was fast approaching. While watching them I felt that building a nest was as instinctive as eating, breathing or drinking for the whole animal world.

Day in and day out I saw these two sparrows building their nest straw by straw. They collected dry twigs, pieces of bark and straw, cotton wool, fallen dry leaves and feathers from places far and near and brought them into the room with a sense of elation and anticipation. Many a time they sat on the window-ledge and looked towards the nest with eagerness and urgency. In the process, more often than not, they forgot their own food. The very idea of a comfortable nest with their offspring protruding their tiny beaks evaporated whatever tiredness they had felt and this made them redouble their efforts. As a result it dawned upon me that it was not only the human beings who dreamt of a sweet home but birds too enjoyed the idea of a nice home of their own.

The two weavers kept weaving their nest meticulously with all finesse, intertwining the warp and the weft made of dry grass blades and straw. They used the cotton wool and the animal hair for cushioning the nest and to give it a soft touch. Simultaneously, they started to live in the nest though their efforts to embellish it still continued. I had become accustomed to their presence and with the passage of time had lost interest in these harmless creatures.

Nature rewarded them soon thereafter with bounteous monsoons. The atmosphere was filled with the songs of Koel and the croaking of frogs. There was romance everywhere. Young maid-

ens riding on the swings welcomed the showers. Not to be left behind, the he-sparrow started petting and necking the she-sparrow with his small tiny beak, often expanded his wings as wide as possible to impress his sweetheart of his majestic presence and after assuring himself that his female partner was ready to receive him rode on her back while twitching his tail. For both of them there could be no better moment of ecstasy as this one.

After some time I had to proceed on leave for about a week and could not keep a track of these two tiny lovers who had taken refuge in my room for making love. My room remained close during the week. The two lovers had their heyday in my absence. No watchful human eyes pursued them any longer. There was no human interference whatsoever and apparently that they had a real good time. They had possibly thought that I had abandoned the room forever. They sat wherever they liked, on the blade of the fan, on the writing table or on the chairs. Twigs, straw and feathers had been strewn everywhere and the room had been littered with offensive smelling faces of these birds.

After having spent the week on leave I was eager to join my office, and therefore, reached my office early in the morning. Nobody had yet come to the office except the chowkidar and the sweeper. I asked the chowkidar to open my room. As I entered the room I was horrified to see its condition. There were pieces of straw, feathers and twigs strewn everywhere. Worse still the two birds had defecated at many places and their excreta stuck to the upholstery of the sofa and the chairs besides the glass top of the table. I watched helplessly and did not know how to react. Slowly the anger welled up inside me and I was besides myself with rage. I immediately called the sweeper and ordered him to clean the room. As if that was not enough, I asked him to remove the nest from behind the photograph. Shortly thereafter the sweeper reported to me that the nest had a few eggs inside it and it would not be proper to throw them away. He was too religious to think of destroying a nest having eggs in it. I could notice from his face that he was reluctant to carry out my orders and therefore did not press for the same as it could hurt his religious sentiments. So I took it upon myself to remove the nest

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Deepak Budki is a renowned Urdu short story writer. He started writing short stories in 1971. His first short story "**Salma**" was published in the *Daily Hamdard*, Srinagar. One of his short stories '**Rezyey**' was televised by Doordarshan Srinagar. In 1976 he qualified for Indian Postal Services and thereafter gave up writing short stories for almost twenty years. 1996 saw the rebirth of the writer., ever since he has published more than sixty short stories which have been published in the leading magazines of Indo-Pak subcontinent, United Kingdom and other countries where Urdu is read and understood. His short stories have been translated in Hindi, Telugu and other countries where Urdu is read and understood. His short stories have been translated in Hindi, Telugu and Kashmiri as well. His two collections of short stories, '**Adhoore Chehre**' and '**Chinar Ke Panje**' have been published in 1999 and 2005 while "**Zebra crossing per Khada Adami**" is expected to be released shortly. Budki is a big name in Urdu literature. A few leading magazines have brought out special issues in his honour.

The author's short stories have received rave reviews from such leading luminaries of Urdu—Sultana Mehr, Waris Aalvi, Harcharan Chawla, Syed Zafar Hashmi, Anwar Sadeed. The deftness and the artistry with which Budki weaves his short stories has been much appreciated. His stories, which paint the agonies of humanity, make the reader to sit back and ponder over where the society has gone wrong. In a rare compliment **Prof. Qamar Rais** writes:

"The short stories create a unique and individualistic impression which is not seen in other contemporary writers. Whether it is 'Amma', 'Mange Ke Ujala' or 'Chinar Ke Panje' every story has something to think and ponder about".

In 2006 Deepak Budki sprang up a surprise by coming out with a book of critical essays and Reviews—"Asri Tehreerin-Tanqueedi Mazameen Wa Tabasura". The book makes a critical study of works of Manik Tala, Gulzar, Dr. Brij Premi and Virender Patwari, all contemporary short story writers. The famous prose writer '**Kaiser Tamkeen**' of Britain describes Budki's work on Manak Tala as good as a dissertation. The author is a master artist, with flair for Urdu calligraphy.

from behind the photograph and throw it out of the window. The tiny eggs broke open as soon as they fell on the ground and the fluid in them oozed and spread over the surface. The chowkidar and the sweeper kept looking helplessly. So did the Mahatma from behind the glass frame.

I left the room for the sweeper to clean it and mop the furniture and as soon as he reported completion, I returned and took my seat in the chair and started disposing of the office files.

Almost after an hour the she-sparrow came flying from the heavens above with a grain of wheat in her mouth which she wanted to share with her mate in the exclusivity of her nest. She sat on the window-sill for a while with her eyes radiant with hope and promise. She flew straight towards the photograph but to her dismay could not find her nest there. She kept hovering around the place in utter disbelief and distress not knowing what had be fallen her sweet home. All her dreams had been belied and plans shattered. In deep anguish and frustration she flitted across the room unmindful of the rotating fan above. She had simply gone mad. In one of the rapid moves her body struck the fast moving

blades of the fan and within moments her wing was torn into pieces, the feathers scattered on the floor and she herself fell dead on the floor.

Then came the he-sparrow with mirth and joy writ large on his face and sat on the window-sill. As he peeped into the room all his happiness evaporated like ether and he became sullen at the sight of his companion. He too flew towards the photograph to find for himself what was in store for him. Shocked and bewildered he darted down to his partner and hovered over her dead body for a long time with the expectation that she may hear his call and wake up. But that was not to be. His mate was silent as a stone. He was now convinced that she would not hear his call nor would the destroyed nest be rebuilt. Dejected, he flew back and sat on the window-sill where he kept brooding for sometime. He had lost his mate, his home and his offspring to my wanton desire. His life had become desolate and held no promise for future.

Quietly, he gathered his courage and flew away into the vast blue expanse towards the milky horizon never to return and I watched him in horrified silence.

Siva Sutras and Lal Vakhs painted

By Special Correspondent

Saivism, as a philosophical credo, has remained integral to the social and spiritual life of Kashmiris for over a millennium and a half. Kashmir Saivism is also called '*Trika Sastra*' as it is based on three postulates-Siva, Sakti and Nara. The texts

tions depending upon the spiritual evolution of the interpreter'. Each Siva sutra is loaded with a spiritual-philosophical formulation. Saivism has left a rich legacy. Poetry of Lal Ded, Nunda Reshi and some sufiana poets is indicative of this. Saintess Lal Ded, the pioneer of Kashmir language was a renaissance figure

and his community out from their homeland. As an anguished Kashmiri he gave vent to the agonies of losing homeland in his artistic expressions. In his quest to build cultural anchors to counter religious fundamentalism, now sweeping the Valley, Gokal Dembi conceived a project '*Rishi Tradition of Kashmir*' in early 2005. He took a refreshed study of the poetry of Lal Ded and Nund Rishi in general and the aspects of visual imagery in Kashmiri mysticism in particular. At Prof. Zaffar's instance Dembi in his project--**painting of Rishi Tradition** started with visual representation of Siva Sutras and Vakhs of Lal Ded as these happen to be one of the basic texts of Kashmiri Rishi Tradition. Govt. of India awarded him a Senior Fellowship to facilitate his work in this direction.

Gokal Dembi after working on the project for two years held an exhibition of his painted work at Kala Kendra Jammu from November 30 to December 7, 2007. The paintings include visual representation of 32 Saiva Sutras and 13 Vakhs of Lal Ded. Paintings have been done on acrylic. It is first time that Siva Sutras and Vakhs of Lal Ded have been painted. Before this we had visual depiction of some *tantras* by another Kashmiri painter late

GR Santosh.

Commenting on Dembi's work artist Rajender Tiku observes:

"With his experience as a painter and understanding as a seeker, Gokal Dembi transcends the barrier of mere interpretation. Instead he comes

sual impact of its own".

He adds:

"Though it must be difficult to visualize the import of Siva Sutras, and perhaps that is why Gokal Dembi begins with use of human form as a convenient, perceptible and meaningful element with a tried and accepted connotation as a visual. Since



The lighting of the traditional lamp at the inauguration of Exhibition.

of Saivism called *Agama*, as per local folklore, have been revealed by Siva. The basic Agama of the Trika Sastra is *Siva Sutras*. According to Prof. MH Zaffar who teaches philosophy at Kashmir University '**The Siva-Sutra read like aesthetically structured riddles which radiate divine beauty and charm and are capable of many interpreta-**

who through her spirituality and poetry brought the Saivite message closer to the common Kashmiri.

Gokal Dembi, a master painter from Rainawari (Srinagar) has rendered yeomen service to Kashmir's culture by painting Siva Sutras and Vakhs of Lal Ded. The rise of militarised Islamic fundamentalism forced Dembi



At the inaugural function-Seen in the picture are from (L to R) Dr. Rafiq Masoodi, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Dr. Amitab Mattoo & Sh. Gokal Dembi

forth with strikingly impactful works with immaculate detail and a vivid meaning imparted to each and every division in a particular space, the picture, a shape entrenched in that division, a colour applied and finally the overall effect created. No matter based upon a particular sloka, each painting evolves into an independent entity with a vi-

Siva Sutras also are essentially meant to understand and apply the possibilities of spiritual upliftment and thereby the extreme liberation, the figurative elements become even more pertinent and effective. It is all a phenomenon with an intrinsic character to support realisation beyond visible and tangible".

Please act to prevent Imminent Financial Crisis

(Contd. from Page 8)

The problem is that RBI has been hijacking investment into the MSS account. Under these circumstances, the economist triumvirate can be absolved of guilt only if they admit to never having realised that Ambassador Mulford was leading, nay ordering, them up the garden "path; but then, there will be competence issues.

Immediate action, may help avert a deepening of recession in the Indian economy. The stock market has begun its slide. Interest rates are going up. If these trends continue, people's faith in the system will erode and soon the circumstances of Argentina 2001, or of the South East Asian crisis will be visiting the streets of our country.

This open letter hopes to alert all Indians to the nature of the calamity which is overtaking us. Suspending MSS operations is a first step, but even this will not absolve India of the liability of the 250,000 crore rupee debt-bubble which we have run up in the last 18 months.

Ordering a detailed investigation into this scam and relieving its perpetrators of the reins of the nation and the economy is a necessary second step to retain investor confidence and people's goodwill and faith in the system of governance in India. If the present leadership doesn't do this, posterity surely will; and if Domingo Carvallo's fate is anything to go by, it will not be forgiving.

Given the seriousness of the impending financial crisis that our government has been lured or duped or connived-with to unleash, a reworking of the polity, RBI, and foreign policy is immediately required.

As Congress President and Chairperson of the United Progressive Alliance, you are the only individual who can make the necessary corrections in time. It is an onerous responsibility and your tryst with destiny. For the sake of one billion Indians, please act.

Yours sincerely,

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Kemu's 'Shah Pathar' staged at Abhinav Theatre

By Our Correspondent

Sh. Moti Lal Kemu who pioneered the rebirth of Kashmiri folk theatre '*Bhand Pathr*' is known to give surprises. This time he has come up with '*Shah Pathr*'. The play was staged at Abhinav Theatre on November 27. It was written and directed by Kemu himself.

The play written in 1993-1994 revolves round the story of Sultan Budshah who applied balm to the wounds of hounded out Kashmiri Pandits. It is said once Budshah fell acutely ill due to a boil. Kashmiri Pandits were in hiding due to strong religious persecution of Budshah's father, Sultan Sikandar the iconoclast. When the Hakims attending on Budshah failed to cure him, the queen sought help from different quarters. Ultimately, Shriya Bhat, a leading Hakim, who too was in hiding, was taken to the King for administering treatment. Soon the King got well. As token of grati-



A scene from 'Shah Pathr'

tude Budshah asked Shriya Bhat what he desired. The latter, as the true son of Kashmiris, demanded only one favour--**End to the policy of religious persecution.** The King granted it. A new chapter began in the life of persecuted Pandits. It appears '*Shah Pathr*' has been written to send a similar message at a time when the predicament of the writer's community is virtually similar. Sh. Kemu said the objective of the play was to apprise the younger generation of

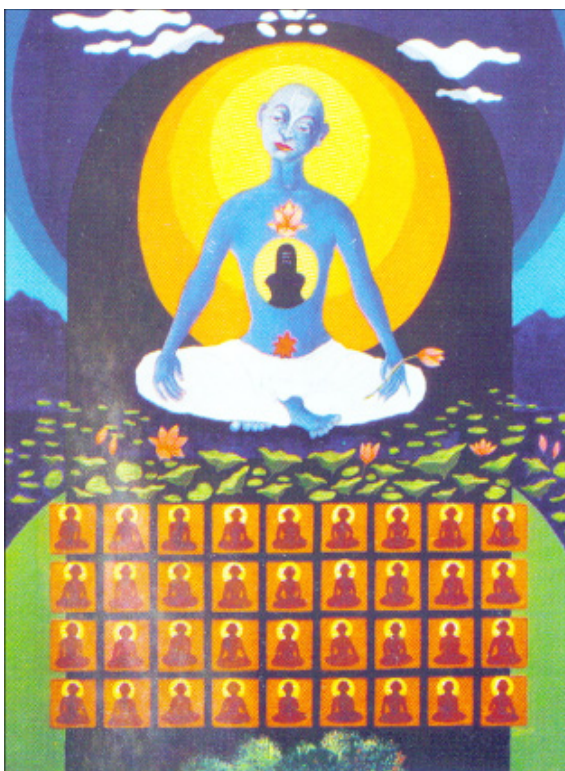
their traditions of Kashmir.

The play was production of 30-day Kashmiri Theatre workshop conducted by Natrang in collaboration with Mr. Kemmu for Displaced Kashmiri boys and girls. The artists who participated in the play included among others-Sameeta Raina (Maskara), Chandji Kaul (Sultan-e-Kashmir), Bhasha Sumbli (Begum), Priya Raina (Gopali), Manoj Bhatt (Shriya Bhat etc.).

EXHIBITION-2007: PAINTINGS OF GOKAL DEMBI ON SHAIVISM AND LAL VAKH



Lal Vakh



Shivsutra

Citation of SAFMA May 2007 Award **Tribute to South Asia's "Cultural Ambassador"**

The Honourable Shri Sanjay Godbole.

You stand out as a versatile scholar in today's communication revolution, who reveals to us how the delicate ties of culture, reflected in our languages, literatures and the arts, have always bound the world together, even in periods when not many historical sources were available.

Your vision of history has transcended the conventional cataloguing of conflicts and coups, and the chronology of dynasties. You have honed your skills to relate closely to the people, the times they lived in and what they spoke, wrote, used and consumed.

You have the magic gift of reaching out smoothly over centuries of history, and entering into the very lives of people of the time, assessing their attitude, their values and the human condition. Your painstaking research and investigations into their artifacts and archives, sketches and relics, earthenware and metal vessels, have recreated for us even epochs wiped off from the palimpsest of time and history!

A living embodiment of your single-minded and magnificent obsession to converse with the past is your well-preserved Museum and Library of over 2,000 precious and rare books

and exhibits at home. No wonder they have earned honourable mention in the **Limca Book of Records!** Your



Sh. Sanjay Godbole

wonderful collection of books, precious manuscripts, rare paintings and photographs of Pune and other cities; terra-cotta vessels and some ancient musical instruments reveals your eclectic approach to the study of history.

Because of your special interest in the evolution of West Asian culture, and your abiding love for the Persian and Urdu languages, you have written seminal research articles on the nomadic Gypsy and Baluchi tribes of the area. Your documentary films (and short-film *Naseem-e-Punah* in Persian) along with evocative photographs of artifacts in your history museum in

Pune, have received appreciative notices in West Asian cities of Teheran, Kabul, Istanbul and Turbat.

Many prestige publications in Pakistan and Iran have periodically published your well-studied articles on Pakistan. Magazines there have also published articles regarding your remarkable home library and museum, in Pune.

We, in the South Asian Forum and the Mumbai-Karachi Forum, respectfully salute a 'cultural ambassador' like Shri Sanjay Godbole, who helps so much to strengthen bonds of friendship and goodwill among people of India and Pakistan.

Sep 1:	Terrorists beat to death Mansoor Ahmed while two others escaped with injuries as they were intercepted by the former in Kellar-Rajpora forests. Police recovered body of a civilian abducted by the terrorists in Pattan, Baramulla. A civilian was injured in the crossfiring at Dogripora, Anantnag. Terrorists gunned down two SPOs at Saroti, Kishtwar. In different operations across Rajouri district, police and security forces recovered huge quantities of arms and ammunition, including 12 Rifles.	
Sep 2:	Security forces killed two terrorists at Lashdat, Kupwara and recovered arms and ammunition from their possession. A civilian was shot dead by terrorists at Gani Hamam, Baramulla. A LeT suspect, Akmal Hashmi arrested in J&K was taken to Mumbai for interrogation.	
Sep 3:	Two soldiers, including a Major, were believed to have lost their lives in an encounter at Ayatmulla, Bandipore. An Army jawan was killed and four others injured as terrorists lobbed a grenade on their vehicle at Chajroo on Mahore-Gool road. A LeT terrorist Muzamal of Bafliaz, Surankote surrendered after infiltration.	
Sep 4:	Terrorists killed two brothers, including a JAKLI Havaladar, in Tangmarg. Ayatmulla encounter ended with the death of three soldiers and two terrorists. Government ordered probe into custodial killing of one Zahoor Ahmed at SoG Camp, Bandiopore.	
Sep 5:	Police and Army eliminated most wanted terrorist Billoo Gujar at Mangal Kundi, Gool. Security forces killed two terrorists in an encounter at Hapat Nar, Anantnag. Terrorists killed a student in Sopore. Police arresed a police head constable, Mohammad Sharief in Rajouri for his terrorist links. A Kot Bhalwal Jail employee Bashir Ahmed was arrested for his connivance with the UGWs of the terrorists.	
Sep 6:	Security forces killed two terrorists in Handwara, Kupwara and arrested a terrorist in injured condition at Check-e-Charatram in Budgam. An auto-rikshaw driver was injured at Chankpora, Sopore.	
Sep 7:	Mohd. Altaf Malik alias Pinto Malik, accused of killing IRCON Engineer and his brother, escaped in a dramatic way from judicial custody. Two HM terrorists were killed at Gulshan Abad, Pulwama. Terrorists shot dead a cop in his house at Budbug, Handwara. A student, injured by terrorists earlier, succumbed to his injuries. An Afghani terrorist Ibn-e-Qasim was killed in Manjakote. Terrorists injured a civilian Kuldeep Singh in Doda. Security was breached at Bhawan as a SPO reached there with pistol.	
Sep 8:	An IED was defused in the premises of Agriculture office at Kishtwar. Kuldeep Singh succumbed to injuries. Farooq Abdullah and ML Khurana were summoned in Kandhar hijacking case. PM Manmohan Singh asked Parvez Musharraf to address issue of terrorism.	
Sep 9:	A SPO and a surrendered terrorist shot dead two SPOs and escaped after looting six rifles, wireless set and other ammunition from Police Post Chanyas, Gandoh. A surrendered terrorist was killed and his wife injured by terrorists at Checha, Kishtwar. Two terrorists were killed in Mendhar. 117 rounds of ammunition were recovered at Pali, Kathua. Terrorists gunned down auto driver Bilal Ahmed Mir who had managed the arrest of a terrorist in 2005 at Sonwar. Terrorists killed a civilian and injured another at Bandipore. Dreaded terrorist Yasin Pathan of Wazirstan was killed at Dunaro, Pulwama.	
Sep 10:	Security forces killed a terrorist in Damhal-Hanjiporta area. Terrorists targeted a patrol party of SOG killing a constable and injuring another. Two soldiers were injured in an encounter at Gujar Pati, Kupwara. A terrorist and a jawan were killed in an encounter at Manthori, Doda. Security forces busted a terrorist hide-out at Thannamandi and recovered 35 kgs RDX and nine grenades.	
Sep 11:	Security forces killed two exfiltrators in Gurez sector; a Pakistani terrorist was killed in Bandipore. Terrorists barged into the house of a PDP worker and shot at him at Hassanpora, Bijbehara. Troops recovered a huge cache of arms and ammunition at Muthul Nala in Machail sector. A major tragedy was averted as an IED was detected and defused near GMC, Jammu. A JKP team left for Punjab following the arrest of HM terrorists at Madhopur earlier.	
Sep 12:	Former Union Minister of State, Mohd. Maqbool Dar escaped unhurt in an IED explosion near Bijbehara, two persons were injured in the incident. Two terrorists were killed at Gujarpatri, Kupwara. A terrorist surrendered in Baramulla.	
Sep 13:	Terrorists killed a jawan in an attack at Lamad, Qazigund and injured a woman at her house at Iqbal Nagar, Sopore. A bride-groom was attacked by terrorists at Badamibagh, Sopore. Police busted a hawala racket by arresting three persons and seizing Rs 2 lakh and grenades in Pulwama. TADA Court in Jammu awarded 17 years RI to a militant, Abdul Noorani.	
Sep 14:	A LeT terrorist, involved in massacre of 13 members of minority community in Udhampur, was killed in a gunbattle in Basantgarh, Udhampur; a SPO and a VDC member were killed and six security personnel injured in the encounter. A civilian was injured in exchange of firing at Chitta Patta, Gandoh. A HM terrorist was arrested in Chatroo. Three live grenades were recovered from house of a terrorist at Simbal Camp, Jammu. Terrorists beheaded a photographer Shabir Ahmad Dar in Pulwama; terrorists shot at and wounded a Headmaster in Kulgam area.	
Sep 15:	A Army jawan was killed and seven others injured in a terrorist attack at Watergam. LeT 'Distt. Commander' for Udhampur was killed at Nadimarg, near Kulgam. Four persons, including two soldiers, were injured in an IED blast at Zainpora, Pulwama. A youth was killed and five members of a SPO's family were injured when a terrorist lobbed a grenade on the SPO's house at Surankote, Poonch. Security forces destroyed two hideouts and recovered arms and ammunition in same	area.
Sep 16:	A HM terrorist Mohd. Shafi, who had surrendered escaped from Chatro Police Station in Doda. Another HM terrorist surrendered in Doda. Arms and ammunition were recovered at Hill Tak, Darhal and Pangai, Thannamandi. Eight terrorists were killed in four gunbattles in Kashmir valley. Four cell-phone bombers were arrested from a car at Pohru Chowk on Srinagar-Jammu Highway. A body was recovered from Satrena forest area. Manmohan Singh and Parvez Musharraf agreed to form counter-terrorism mechanism.	
Sep 17:	Two jawans were killed and two others injured as a jawan opened firing and then shot himself in Tangdar, Kupwara. A terrorist was killed in Gantmulla, Baramulla. Two bodies were recovered in Srinagar. Security forces and police launched a massive hunt to trace stolen cars.	
Sep 18:	The Valley observed strike against the remarks of Pope Benedict XVI's. Three family members-Raju Chopra, wife and daughter, and their driver and servant were murdered at Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.	
Sep 19:	Three terrorists were gunned down at Tanta Daman, Gandoh (Doda). Security forces destroyed a terrorist hideout at Mahote, Surankote and recovered arms and ammunition. Four persons, including two CRPF personnel, were injured in a grenade explosion at Batmaloo General Bus Stand. Gujrat Police claimed to have busted LeT sleeper cell as they arrested four suspects. J&K Governor said that J&K enjoys highest degree of self-rule. Syed Ali Shah Geelani and many terrorist organizations rejected Havana declaration.	
Sep 20:	Two terrorists were killed at Ban Khour in Mahore. Three terrorists were trapped at Kotli Kalaban in Manjakote (Rajouri). A terrorist was killed and another arrested in Doda. Terrorists killed a woman Razia Begum at Bali, Gandoh and chopped offer ears of Abdul Gani at Bashi Kishtwar. Two terrorists were killed at Barpura, Baramulla. Police arrested a LeT female activist and recovered arms and ammunition, including 100 kg RDX across Kashmir Valley. Two civilians were injured in a grenade attack at Sher Bagh, Anantnag. Top LeT terrorist Aslam Kashmiri, linked to Varanasi blasts, reportedly slipped into Bangladesh.	
Sep 21:	Four infiltrators were killed in Uri sector. A terrorist was killed at Chitragam, Pulwama. A student was killed and four others, including two jawans, were injured in a grenade attack at Wahipora on Srinagar-Tangmarg road. A soldier was injured in an IED blast at Kaimoh, Kulgam; a PDP activist was injured in his house in Tulla Khan, Bijbehara. A terrorist was killed at Kotli Kalaban, Manjakote. Four of a family were killed in a blast at Loharan Da Mohalla in Hari Budha, Poonch. Hizb denied ceasefire offer and put conditions to any such offer.	
Sep 22:	A terrorist was killed at Tarzoo, Sopore. A civilian was killed by terrorists in Damhal Hanjiporta, Anantnag. A HM terrorist was arrested in Kishtwar, Doda. Bush said that Kashmir was to be settled between India and Pakistan.	
Sep 23:	A terrorist was killed in an encounter at Chitibandi, Baramulla. A HM terrorist was arrested in Srinagar. Terrorists injured three jawans at Onta Hamam, Sopore and killed a civilian at Kangan. Security forces arrested two OGWs at Pangi, Thannamandi.	
Sep 24:	Security forces foiled yet another bid of infiltration killing four infiltrators in Uri sector; two LeT terrorists and a jawan were killed in the Valley. Terrorists killed a 12th standard student Shamima Akhter of Manglogi Dalwa (Gool) for her refusal to marry a terrorist. A JeM terrorist surrendered in Marwah, Doda. Over 1000 Kashmir terrorists were reportedly in Hizb camps in Pakistan's NWFP.	
Sep 25:	Terrorists killed four civilians, including a woman in different incidents in Doda district. Forces smashed two terrorist hideouts in Rajouri and Poonch districts. A lady cop and two civilians were killed and six others injured in the Valley on the first day of Ramzan.	
Sep 26:	An Army Captain and two terrorists were killed in an encounter at Bandipore. Central government has devised multi-pronged strategy, including use of Pvt. detectives, to counter terrorism.	
Sep 27:	Terrorists carried out attacks at different places in the Valley killing an ASI and a cop and injuring 21 persons, including 14 JKP and CRPF personnel. Three women were injured as they walked over an explosive device near Ordinance Depot Khandoor, Anantnag. A 65 year old HM terrorist was killed in Ramban while three others are believed to be trapped in Gool. Police today arrested two terrorists, OGW's and five Bangladeshis across Jammu region.	
Sep 28:	Two injured in terrorist attacks yesterday succumbed to their injuries, terrorists killed a lady SPO in Kupwara and injured a chemist at Anantnag. Three people, including two police officials, were arrested as they didn't respond to the signals at Nakas on Pahalgam road. A SPO was killed and another SPO and two terrorists were injured in an encounter at Simbli, Mahore. Police arrested yet another Hawala operator Naseem Ahmed in Mendhar, Poonch.	
Sep 29:	A terrorist was killed in a group clash between HM and LeT at Neeldora, Shopian. A terrorist was killed while four others escaped in an encounter in Lolab. Police arrested 10 boys who were on their way to PoK in North Kashmir. Terrorists killed a civilian in Dess, Doda and kidnapped a village headman from Bhimdassa in Gool. A HM terrorist who had earlier escaped from Chatru PS was apprehended in Marwah. A BSF jawan shot himself dead at Sanatnagar, Srinagar; two CRPF personnel were killed and eight CRPF jawans and one CISF cop injured in an accident in Doda.	
Sep 30:	Two soldiers were injured in an IED blast on Marhama-Sangam road, near Bijbehara. A class 12th girl student was injured in a grenade attack at Pattan. Security forces recovered 50 kg RDX in Mahore.	

(Contd. on Page 19)

	Mumbai police claimed that ISI masterminded and LeT and SIMI executed Mumbai serial blasts.
Oct 1:	Two LeT terrorists were killed in Surankote while two HUJI terrorists were arrested at Khushal in Chatru, Doda. Six OGWs of terrorists were also arrested in Jammu region. Terrorists killed a kidnapped Nambardar in Gool. An Army jawan shot himself dead at Gund, Banihal.
Oct 2:	An IED was defused at Pulwama while a security jawan, a trader and two children were injured in different incidents across Kashmir valley. A civilian was repatriated in Chhamb sector. A couple alongwith child were arrested after crossing 'over LoC in Uri sector. The couple claimed that Kashmiris felt insecure in PoK.
Oct 3:	Police killed two HM terrorists at Beerwah, Budgam. Terrorists attacked house of a village headman at Chandilora, Tangmarg; they set on fire two cars of the headman. Terrorists also launched a grenade at the house of a civilian at Qamarwari, Srinagar.
Oct 4:	Four cops and a civilian killed, an encounter continued at Badshah Chowk, Srinagar. Two terrorists were killed in Ashmuqam, Anantnag. Two of a family were killed and two more wounded in Ahlan Gadol, Anantnag. 21 terrorists surrendered after crossing to this side of LoC in North Kashmir. A terrorist was hurt in a grenade blast in Rajouri, when the grenade exploded. 64 civilians of Sawara, Doda crossed over to Chamba alleging terrorist threat.
Oct 5:	The Badshah Chowk encounter ended with death of two terrorists, seven cops and a civilian. 30 people, mostly cops, were reportedly injured in the encounter. Al Mansoorian claimed the responsibility for the attack. A terrorist was killed at Surigam, Lolab. Doda police denied threat of terrorists in Sawara village and said that some of the people who migrated to Chamba were wanted in a murder case.
Oct 6:	A civilian was killed and six others injured in a grenade attack at Bus Stand Batmaloo, Srinagar. Body of a woman was fished out from Liddar river. An Al-Badr terrorist was killed at Lenipora, Bumai, Sopore and two were arrested in Anantnag. The arrested terrorists were believed to be involved in planting of bombs at the National Highway. A <i>fidayeen</i> struck at Bela Colony, Rajouri and injured a cop; the <i>fidayeen</i> was reportedly holed up. Two terrorists were arrested from Pangai, Thannamandi.
Oct 7:	Five infiltrators and two army personnel were killed in Gurez sector. Terrorists beheaded a Territorial Army recruit Mohd. Shafi Mir in Sopore. Body of a civilian Ab. Rashid Gani of Isus, Achabal was recovered from same locality; the body bore torture marks. Two HM terrorists, planning to plant an IED on the highway, were arrested from a hideout at Botingoo, Anantnag. A cop was killed and two other police personnel injured in a grenade attack on their vehicle at Moori Top, Gool. <i>Fidayeen</i> , reportedly holed up at Beli Colony, Rajouri, managed to escape.
Oct 8:	Army today foiled an infiltration attempt by killing four infiltrating terrorists of LeT in Sabjan Sub Sector in Poonch; an army jawan was killed and a captain injured in the operation. Terrorists attacked and injured a surrendered terrorist at his house at Tarigam, Budhal. Terrorists struck again in Sopore and beheaded a Dental Surgeon, Dr Mushtaq, the doctor was tortured and slaughtered with shaving blades. Three children were injured as they fiddled with an abandoned explosive device near Chittibandi, Bandipore. BJP leaders met President APJ Kalam and opposed any clemency to Guru. Mirwaiz Umar returned from USA.
Oct 9:	The terrorists not only withdrew Rs 60,000 from the accounts of the killed doctor at Sopore but also burnt his car near police station Sopore, police recovered body of a civilian Ghulam Ahmed Wani of Sumlar; there had been an encounter at his house sometime back in which two terrorists were killed. 25 kg IED was recovered from Sarthal, Doda. Army recovered huge cache of arms and ammunition from the encounter side in Sabjan sub-sector.
Oct 10:	Four Army personnel, including a JCO, and a LeT terrorist were killed and a jawan injured in a fierce encounter at Chamreh, Surankote. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said that India will give credible evidence to Pakistan about latter's role in July Mumbai blasts. Widows of martyrs of Parliament attack met President APJ Kalam to oppose clemency to Guru.
Oct 11:	A terrorist was killed at Chandial in Gursai, Mendhar. A civilian was injured in crossfiring in Pulwama. Farid Ahmed Ganai of Kralpora, Kupwara, who had gone over to PoK alongwith his wife in 1993, returned with his wife and six children and surrendered before the Army.
Oct 12:	A terrorist was killed in Kupwara while a soldier was injured in a terrorist attack in Bandipore. A major gunbattle was going on between the terrorists and the security forces in Shopian, police recovered explosives including eight kg RDX and three grenades from Nud village in Sama. A HM ultra's father was booked under PSA for sheltering terrorist.
Oct 13:	Two HM terrorists and a security personnel were killed in the encounter in Shopian. Two civilians were injured as the matador in which they were travelling was caught in crossfiring at Kanspora, Baramulla. Eight cops and nine others were acquitted in the escape of a terrorist Ghulam Rasool Shah from SMHS hospital in 2000.
Oct 14:	Four terrorists were killed in two separate incidents in Gurez and Pulwama while five people were injured. Terrorists targeted a petrol vehicle at Nadihal, Bandipore. Terrorists struck at Tandar, Gundana in Keshwan, Doda and snatched four rifles from VDC members.
Oct 15:	A SPO turned terrorist, who was instrumental in the attack on police station Ind, Gool, surrendered alongwith one another in Gool. RDX and grenades were seized in Poonch. A cop was killed and another injured as a terrorist fired upon them near Ghanta Ghar (Lal Chowk), Srinagar. Two HM terrorists were killed in different operations in Kellar, Pulwama and Matigowran, Anantnag. A Congress activist escaped unhurt as terrorists targeted his residence at Lajoora, Pulwama.

PN Raina Replies

(From Page 12)

Only 2 days later the Instrument of Accession was signed and the airlift of Indian troops began immediately thereafter.

5. Mr. Munshi has raised doubts on intended visit of Maharaja to Bhimbar on 20th October by claiming that 'Bhimbar had fallen much earlier, immediately after which Maharaja had appealed to Maharaja of Patiala for help'. According to Mr. Munshi Bhimber had fallen by 15th October. This is not correct.

Bhimber fell on 29th October, 1947. The first official history of J&K forces titled '**Jammu and Kashmir Arms**' authored by Major General DK Palit is clear on this. He writes:

'On 29th October, Bhimber fell after a heavy attack by tanks and mechanized vehicles (p.165)....Bhimber and Munawar to the west of Akhnoor were within the area of responsibility of a squadron of JAK Bodyguard cavalry. The hostiles attacked this area on the night of 18/19 October and again on 27 October-on the second occasion supported by tanks. Although the squadron of cavalry repulsed the initial attacks, renewed pressure from the enemy made its position untenable and the horsed squadron along with the civilian population had to withdraw to Sunderbani (p.247). Late MC Mahajan has himself referred to Maharaja's tour of the Mirpur sector from 20-21 October 'to apprise himself of the serious situation' in his memoirs '**Looking Back**'. On the fall of Bhimber and the role of Capt. Gandharv Singh Manhas **Kashmir Sentinel** had carried a comprehensive story sometime back.

6. Another query raised by Mr. Munshi is regarding the non-availability of troops and ammunition. Mr. Munshi has based his assessment solely on the claims made by Brig. LP Sen (**Slender was the thread pp.38-39**), Sen's book is just a memoir, in which the author has made the claim to belittle the gallant effort of Brig. Rajender Singh. Mr Munshi has selectively ignored what the two military historians write after deep investigations and with full access to primary sources (including official documents).

About the request of Col. Narain Singh for sending reinforcement soon after the attack, Major K-Brahma Singh says 'unfortunately, there was at that time no reserve with the Army Hqs. The 8th Battalion that was being held as reserve in Srinagar had...already been pushed out to Chirala in view of the SOS call received from there during the first week of October and the Battalion that was to come as its replacement was still stuck up at Punch...Consequently, as much of the manpower as was immediately available at the Badami Bagh Cantonment was collected and formed into a strong company, supported by a section of medium machine guns and a detachment of 3" mortars for proceeding to the front and gaining the time needed for requisitioning help of the Indian Army. The company, about 150 strong consisted of 2 Platoons of the 1st Battalion, one Platoon of the 8th Battalion, some personnel of the 7th Battalion (who were then doing line of communications duties along the Baramulla-Kohala road) and most of the staff and the students of the training school (pp 233-234).

Maj. Gen. DK Palit corroborates it (pp 190)

In the morning of 23rd October Brig. Rajender Singh came back to Baramulla from

Uri to speak to Brig. Faqir Singh on phone and asked for further reinforcements. Brig. Faqir Singh promised to send another 70 or 80 men, including a section of medium machine guns and a 3 inch mortar detachment. Meanwhile, Maharaja Hari Singh took over personal command of Army Hqs in Srinagar. He ordered Capt. Jwala Singh of 1 JAK to collect whatever troops he could find in Badami Bagh barracks and proceed immediately towards Uri with a written message for the Chief of Staff- '**to hold the enemy at all costs and to the last man**'. This detachment reached Uri at 3 am on 24 October.

Which 1850 troops Sen was talking about? Infact, historians have also looked for reasons behind paucity of troops. In 1942 the mountain batteries had been transferred to the Indian Army at the instance of the British and Gopala Swamy Gyyangar, Prime Minister of the State then.

K.Brahma Singh Corroborates that the Army was facing short of ammunition (pp. 223-24). Govt. of India was approached for help and an indent for arms, ammunition and other military equipment which included that required for raising two mountain batteries was sent to Delhi on 1 October, 1947 through Lt. Col. Bhagwan Singh who had been recalled to service for raising the artillery unit. Even after the proposal was okayed by the Home and the Defence Minister the ammunition and the stores could not be released before the Pakistani invasion. K.Brahma Singh says, "The despatch of ammunition and weapons is believed to have been stalled by the British Staff officers holding key positions at Army Hqs in New Delhi. The State was, however, able to extract an assurance from the GoI that some military force would be concentrated at Madhopur, on the state's border with India, for rendering the State succour in case of need".

Whatever Prof. Madhok has written has circumstantial evidence as well. Prof. NN Raina and K. Brahma Singh Corroborate that even as early 1st week of October the State Government had enough reports about the impending invasion. K.Brahma Singh says (p.231) that by 15 October 1947 many Hindu and Sikh refugees from the NWFP had entered Muzaffarabad and were armed with the information about the raid. How do testimonies of Dr. Atri and Bhanot appear to be at variance with this? Had Prof. Madhok not be in close touch with Maharaja's govt. how would have the latter asked him to send volunteers for defending Srinagar? Mr. Munshi makes another factual error. Dusshera was on 24th Oct., not on 25th October. The question of Maharaja having left after the Mohura power house went out of action does not stand scrutiny. So where is the question of Brig. Rajender Singh's troops receiving the message that Maharaja had left for Jammu?

If putting facts straight serves to glorify a person or his organisation it cannot be helped. That is how history goes.

Lastly, Mr. Munshi makes a claim that Prof. Madhok 'was not aware of many happenings of the period and there was not much depth/logic in his arguments'. Prof. Madhok's books on Kashmir- '**Kashmir the Center of new alignments**' and '**Kashmir the Storm Center of the World**' are considered by students of Kashmir history as basic reference books. For nearly four decades Prof. Madhok remained the main Kashmir expert of his party .It must have had some basis.

Pak Invasion-Looking Back-II

KS: On 15th of November JAK Force Hqs. was shifted to Jammu under the Command of Major-General Kulwant Singh. Why was it so?

SS: Situation was worsening in Jammu region. Since September 1947 Pakistan had been making raids into Maharaja's territory. These were by armed men who belonged to Sudhan community of Poonch-Bagh area. Most of them had served in the British Indian Army. These armed men were directed and guided by Pak army officers. The latter provided them material support. This kept engaged the State Forces detachments stationed at different locations on the border.

The intensity of the raids alongwith their frequency and volume increased gradually. After the regular attack on 22nd of October it became an almost open rebellion with local hostile elements joining them. This created problems of law and order and security, especially for the minorities both in rural areas and urban settlements. The areas affected included Bhimbar, Kotli, Bagh, Mirpur etc.

KS: Rajouri's fate was worse. How was this town retaken?

SS: Reports came in that Pakistanis had overrun Rajouri on 10th of November and massacred large number of non-Muslims besides looting the town.

On 16th November a column under Brig. Paranjpe was sent out to reinforce the garrisons in Nowshera and Jhangar. In the meantime enemy had amassed a sizeable force southwest of Mirpur and was preparing for an attack. The relieving column from Jammu could not proceed beyond Nowshera. The State forces stationed in Mirpur alongwith thousands of refugees managed to break the Pakistani stranglehold and escaped towards Jammu.

On 24/25th (November) night the enemy occupied Mirpur and indulged in large-scale killing and looting. As our column could not go beyond Nowshera, Kotli could not be relieved. Meanwhile, 77 Para Brigade had been moved to Jammu area under the command of Brig. Usman. Soon preparations were made to advance towards the border. For this it was important that a strong base at Nowshera was built up. Enemy sensing this made plans to encircle and occupy Nowshera. Pakistanis mounted a major battle in which nearly 15 thousand men attacked Nowshera from three directions in first week of February (1948).

The Indian troops fought back gallantly. At the end of the battle over 2 thousand Pakistanis were killed. The Battle of Nowshera was the biggest battle in that winter in Jammu region. Pakistanis had used a mixed force-regular armymen and Pashtun raiders in the battle, with the command being in the hands of Pak army officers.

In the meantime the enemy had occupied Jhangar a vital road junction giving access to Kotli and Bhimber. So the Indian side began making preparations for liberation of Jhangar.

The Army Hqs had decided that Jhangar may be held at any cost because of its locational importance. The Brigade Commander, Brigadier Usman was asked by the Army Commander to concentrate on Jhangar and make efforts to push the enemy as far as possible.

After the plans had been approved, in middle of March Indian troops launched a two-pronged attack on Jhangar. It took them two days to liberate Jhangar, with enemy suffering heavy casualties. Re-taking of Jhangar also relieved pressure of the enemy on Rajouri. Indian Army then decided to clear the area of the enemy beyond Rajouri. A strong force was gathered on the south-eastern end on 8th April. On 13th April the enemy was thrown out of Rajouri town. The death, destruction and atrocities committed by the Pakistani occupation forces were reportedly more than what they perpetrated in Baramulla.

KS: How was Brig. Usman Killed?

SS: The Pak Army commanders had already put up a very massive price on Usman's head. Repeated efforts were made to eliminate him. Infact, at the time of partition Pak government offered him promotion of two ranks if he came and joined Pak army but he refused. Although located in Nowshera Usman had made frequent trips to Jhangar. On one of his trips while Brigadier Usman was camping in Jhangar very heavy artillery barrage was directed on the Jhangar Garrison. While Usman was on the evening of July 2, 1948 moving from bunker to bunker one sharpnel killed him on the spot. It was a great loss to the Army and the country. His dead body was flown to Delhi and buried with full state honours.

KS: There was probably a condolence meeting held in Srinagar at Lal Chowk as well? Did you have opportunity to meet him?

SS: Yes there was a condolence meeting in Srinagar on July 5. I had known Usman because of my association with his brother Subhan. I had an occasion of meeting him in Jammu in December 1947 and January, 1948. He was a simple man, a staunch follower of Mahatma Gandhi, a teetotalter, vegetarian and a votary of Khadi.

Some years ago a film documentary was made on life and work of Usman. The Army provided all logistics and a Major General was seconded for all co-ordination work. I was associated with the making of the film as only living war correspondent who had known and met him during critical days in 1948.

KS: How was Poonch liberated?

SS: In the month of December 1947 the enemy decided to capture Poonch and gathered a sizeable force to encircle it and force it to capitulate. Meanwhile, a large segment of minority population out of fear had left their homes and sought refuge in Poonch town. We were told in Jammu that there were 60-70 thousand refugees in Poonch town towards the end of December.

The Army Hqs. decided to break the siege of Poonch and decided to send a relief column



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--The Editor

from Uri across Haji Pir Pass. This column after crossing Haji Pir Pass was nearing a bridge. Since it was already dusk and from Poonch the march of the column could be sighted faintly. The defenders of Poonch feared that this was an enemy column and demolished the bridge. The relief column could not reach Poonch and was withdrawn back to Uri but a small force on foot under the command of Lt. Col. Pritam Singh (later Brigadier) was able to reach Poonch. He took command of whatever forces were there and organized the defences of the town. Col. Pritam Singh found that besides the population of the Poonch a mass of refugees had to be taken care of and

its control some dominating heights in this entire sector. A number of operations had to be launched to dislodge the enemy from these heights. Period between April and Sept. 1948 was used to secure passage for the Indian troops who were charged with the link-up. The final attempt to link up Poonch with Rajouri started with November 1948, two columns going through Bhimbar Gali and Mendhar. The main link-up was on 22nd November under the command of Major General Atma Singh. Poonch had lived under very trying conditions for one whole year.



Soldiers of the Poonch Garrison, June 1948. Maj. Gen. Kulwant Singh is seated fourth from right.

provided with food and other supplies.

Attempts were soon made to reinforce a defence effort by airdrops. Later, a heroic effort was made to land an aircraft at the makeshift airstrip. Thereafter inspite of Pakistani artillery fire the courageous pilots of the RIAF taking advantage of darkness at night used to land--bringing troops and supplies to the besieged garrison. The returning planes in a few weeks of time were able to evacuate forty thousand refugees; a massive effort indeed. Poonch siege continued till middle of June when for a few days land link from Rajouri could be established. This did not last long. The enemy after getting reinforcement was able to cut this route again. Since it was vital to have a land link with Poonch efforts continued to be made.

Following Brig. Usman's death the Army Hqs. decided to establish at any cost land link with besieged Poonch but enemy had under

In the meantime considering the importance of operations in J&K Lt. Gen. SM Srinagesh was appointed as Corps Commander for J&K on 15 September, 1948.

KS: Pt. Nehru also visited Jammu in December 1947

SS: In first week of December after the fall of Mirpur it set Delhi thinking to take-over entire Jammu belt. So Prime Minister Nehru accompanied by Defence Minister flew into Jammu on 4th of December and held a meeting at the Airport to take a final decision. The military commanders were asked to execute these orders. The meeting was attended by the Maharaja, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad. Major-General Kulwant Singh, JAK Force Commander gave detailed report about military situation along the border and likely plans of the enemy.