

KASHMIR Sentinel

Let Truth Prevail

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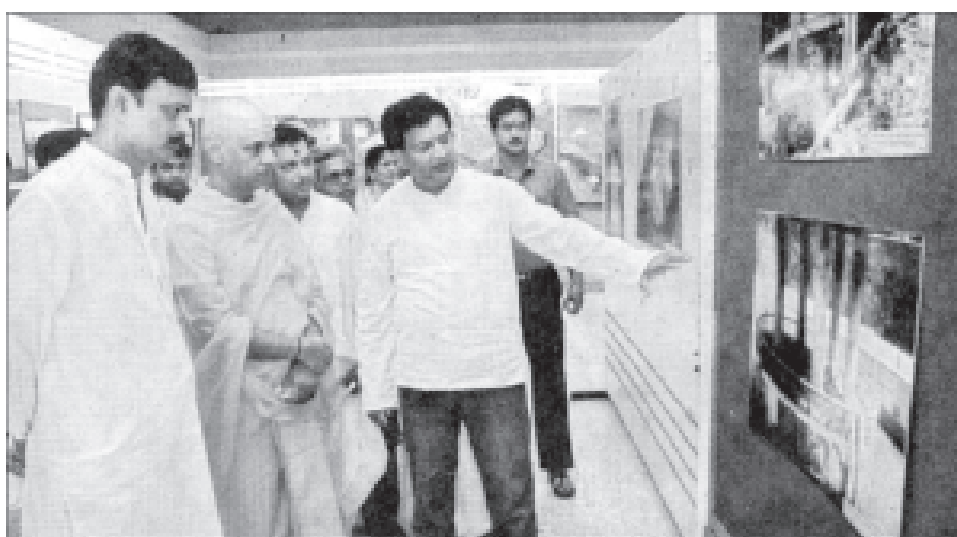
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'Sakshaatkaar' moves Maharashtrians

By Special Correspondent

Maharashtra has been home to many nationalist and Hindu renaissance movements. People of Maharashtra have never been found wanting whenever there has been a nationalist call. It was this state first which felt that Kashmiri Pandits-the frontline victims of terrorism in Kashmir need of be cared for. The Maharashtrians opened their educational institutions to the students of the Displaced Pandit Community. For the past 18 years the Maharashtrians have been expressing full solidarity with Displaced Kashmiri Hindus.

This state too has been the victim of terrorism. There have been frequent attempts to target Mumbai the financial capital of India. Islamist groups particularly SIMI involved in terrorism have spread their tentacles in different parts of Maharashtra. Spectre of terrorist threat looms large over the state. **Hindu Jan Jagrut Samiti**, a wing of **Sanatan Sanstha**, a leading religious body, has been involved since 1996 in spreading national awareness and sensitising com-



Dr. Ajay Chrungoo, Chairman Panun Kashmir, conducting Acharya Kishorji Vyas & Dr. Durgesh Samant at 'Saakshaatkaar' Pune. --KS Photo

mon people to the threat of terrorism.

Soon after 'Saakshaatkaar' Exhibitions in Delhi and Mumbai the Hindu Jan Jagrut Samiti (HJJS) approached Panun Kashmir for staging 'Saakshaatkaar' in different parts of Maharashtra as part of its campaign to raise the awareness of people about terrorism. 'Saakshaatkaar' was shown in

Poona, Chinchwad, Darashiv and Jalgaon between 22 April to 9th May.

The exhibition became possible because of Sh Bal Apte and Prof. GC Ansani, a historian and archeologist of repute. Sh Apte, who is known as 'King of Computers in USA', left flourishing business in America to return to India to work for the nationalist cause.

Poona:

'Saakshaatkaar' -An Encounter with Truth''' was staged at the Balgandharva Kala Dalan (Kendra) in the heart of Pune city from
(Contd. on Page 8)

PANUN KASHMIR CONDOLES SWAMI SUKH RAM'S DEATH

KS Correspondent

JAMMU, June 14: Acknowledging the contribution of Saint Sukh Ram of Nagbal, Anantnag, in the preservation and protection of the shrine and serving as the spiritual guru of Kashmiri Hindus, Panun Kashmir condoled the unfortunate demise of the saint. The Panun Kashmir leaders tendered an apology to Sadhu Samaj if at all any disrespect has been caused to the saints personality wittingly or unwittingly by any member of the community and vowed to fight all those vested interests who are trying to divide Hindu Samaj by creating a wedge between Kashmiri Pandits and Sadhu Samaj. Addressing a press conference at Press Club Jammu, Panun Kashmir General Secretary Sh. Kuldeep Raina expressed heartfelt condolences to the entire fraternity of Sadhus



Sh. Kuldeep Raina Gen. Secy, Panun Kashmir, Sh. Bihari Lal Koul, Secretary Panun Kashmir & Sh. O.N. Trisal President ASKPC addressing mediapersons at Jammu

and Saints on the death of the saint and described his death as great shock to the community. Glorifying the contribution of the saint in preserving the Nagbal Shrine in testing times, Mr. Raina said, "we all consider him a spiritual guide and hero saint who kept aloft the flag of Indian civilisation in Kashmir at a place like Anantnag during most difficult times. He kept the premises of Nagbal Temple open during a time when the temple heritage of entire Kashmir valley was being plundered and vandalised".

Referring to the vandalisation and desecration of Hindu Shrines and temples and destruction of property of Kashmiri Hindus, Panun Kashmir General Secretary said that Panun Kashmir is sensitising public opinion on the issue through the exhibition-

(Contd. on Page 9)

THOSE WHO LEFT US

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

1. Smt. Reeta Ji D/o Sh. Dwarika Nath Pandita originally resident of Batpora Shopian Kmr; presently residing at H.No: 5, General Lane, Saraswati Vihar Bohri, Jammu. 1/4/2007

2. Sh. Radha Krishen Saproo S/o Late Sh. Sarwanand Saproo, R/o Village Pehroo (Gotem Nag) Anantnag Kmr; presently at Vinayak Nagar Muthi, Jammu. 1/4/2007

3. Sh Prem Nath Tickoo S/o Late Sh. Hari Ram Tickoo originally resident of Bomai Sopore, Kmr; presently residing at 28-Exchange Road Mohalla Ahata Jammu. 1/4/2007

4. Smt. Lakshmishori Kakroo wife of Late Sh. DN Kakroo, resident of H.No: 421, Lane No: 4, Adarsh Nagar, Barnai Road, Bantalab, Jammu originally resident of Ganpatyar Sgr. 2/4/2007

5. Sh. Shyam Sunder Handoo originally resident of Ganpatyar Sgr; presently residing at H.No: 868-B-2 Bitna Colony Pinjore Haryana. 2/4/2007

6. Smt. Soomawati Koul W/o of Late Sh NN Koul resident of 54-Bagwati Nagar, Canal Road, Jammu. 3/4/2007

7. Smt. Veena Mattoo W/o Sh. Manohar Lal Mattoo resident of Kralyar Rainawari Sgr; presently residing at 3174 (GF) Ramesh Nagar, New Delhi. 3/4/2007

8. Sh. Avtar Krishen Gurtoo S/o Pt. Sham Lal Gurtoo originally resident of Rehbab Sahib Alikadal Sgr; presently resident of H.No: 3, Lane-5, Sector-2, Sharika Vihar, Lower Roop Nagar, Jammu. 4/4/2007

9. Sh. Vesh Natto resident of Rainawari Sgr; presently residing at Qtr. No: 237, Indra Nagar Nagrota Camp Jammu. 4/4/2007

10. Smt. Veena Sadoo W/o Late Sh. Kaniya Lal Sadoo presently residing at Shapur Kandi Qtr. No: T3-471 (RSO) Jugial Pathankot Punjab 4/4/ 2007

11. Smt. Shahshi Bhat W/o Sh. Sham Lal Bhat of Danow Bogond Kulgam Anantnag, Kmr; presentiyat M.O. Qtrs. MCD Dispencery Madanpur Khadar, New Delhi 4/4/2007

12. Sh. L.K. Wali S/o of Late Sh. Gopi Nath Wali resident of H.No: 175, Lane No: 7, Shakti Nagar, Jammu. 5/4/2007

13. Smt. Dhanwati W/o Sh. Nand Lal Koul oiginally resident of Village Sonium presently residing at Durga Nagar, Sector-1, Lane II Jammu. 5/ 4/2007

14. Smt. Kanta Zutshi W/o Sh. Som Nath Zutshi resident of Bagadachi Kralyar Rainawari, Sgr; presently residing at H.No: 417 Sector-21 Panchkulla Harya. 5/4/2007

15. Smt. Lalita (Shanta) Raina wife of Sh. Chaman Lal Raina originally resident of Sheshyar Habbakadal Sgr; presently at H.No: 22, Lane-1, Shakti Nagar, Jamu. 6/4/2007

16. Sh. Triloki Nath Peer S/o Late Nilkanth Peer resident of Narparistan Sgr; presently at H.No: 1 Lane 5, Bhavani Nagar Gole Pully Talab Tillo. 6/4/2007

17. Smt. Somawati W/o of Late Sh. Mehswar Nath Koul originally resident of Shali Ghat Kralkhud Sgr; presently at 47-Vidhata Nagar Lane-4, Bathindi Road Narwal Bala Jammu. 7/4/2007

18. Smt. Rajdulari Parimoo (Dulla) wife of Late Sh. Lassa Koul Parimoo R/ o Shalla Kadal Habbakadal Sgr. 7/4/2007

19. Smt. Leelawati Koul W/o Late Mukund Koul of Devsar Tral Kmr; presently at Qtr. No: 337, ORT Muthi Phase-1 Jammu 8/4/2007

20. Smt. Shanta Dhar wife of Late Sh. Soom Nath Dhar originally resident of Purshyar Habbakadal Sgr; presently at H.No: 77, Shastri Nagar, Jamu. 8/4/07

21. Dr. Prem Nath Shair resident of Prem Nagar-96 Durga Nagar Sector-2, Jammu originally resident of Dadi Kadal Tankipora Sgr. 9/4/2007

22. Smt. Lalita Bradu wife of Dr. BL Bradu resident of Bradu Niwas 301-A Gandhi Nagar, Jammu 9/4/2007

23. Sh. Rattan Lal Ganjoo (Raina) son of Late Sh. Gound Joo Gajoo resident of Satya Ganjoo C-1804 Krishna Residency Opp. Sunder Nagar, Malad Mumbai (W)-64. 9/4/2007

24. Smt. Radhika Raina wife of Late Sh. Bhagwan Dass Raina (Prop. Standard Hotel) resident of 119-A/D Gandhi Nagar, Jammu. 10/4/2007

25. Smt. Kamla Koul wife of Late Sh. Janki Nath Kaul (waffa) of Rainawari Sgr; presently at HMT Colony Pinjore Haryan. 10/4/2007

26. Sh. Prem Nath Raina S/o Late Sh. Sansarchand Raina originally resident of Gosh Bagh Baramulla Kmr; presently at Roop Nagar Digiana Jamu. 10/4/2007

27. Smt. Usha Shangloo wife of Sh. PN Shangloo resident of 51-Karan
- Nagar-Ved Mandir Road Jamu. 11/4/2007

28. Sh. Triloki Nath Koul S/o Late Govind Koul resident of Delenia Baramulla Kmr; presently at Sari Rakhwelan Near Marbel Factory Gohomnasa Road Jammu. 11/4/2007

29. Sh. Maharaj Krishen Dhar son of Late Sh. Vidh Lal Dhar presently at H.No: 240, Friends Colony Sector Subash Nagar, near Kali Mandir. 12/ 4/2007

30. Sh. Dina Nath Sharma resident of Devsar Tral; presently at H.No: 687-Lane-3 Vinayak Nagar Muthi, Jammu. 12/4/2007

31. Smt. Arundati Pandita wife of Sh. Niranjn Nath Pandita, R/o village Tral Kmr; presently at Lal Kothi, Sector-2, Anuradha Puram Upper Barnai Jammu. 12/4/2007

32. Smt. Dhanwati Dhar wife of Late Sh. Maheshwar Nath Dhar of Vicharnag Sgr; presently at H.No: 191-B/89 JMC Lane-1 New Plots Jammu. 13/4/ 2007

33. Sh. Moti Lal Bakay S/o Late Sh. Balbadhar Bakay originally resident of Zaindar Mohalla Sgr; presently at 279-Patoli Mangotrian Patoli Chowk Jammu.14/4/2007

34. Mrs. Anita Saraf/Ruby Koul wife of Mr. Arvind Saraf originally resident of Bagh Jogi Lankar Rainawari Sgr; presently at H.No: 40-A. Shiva Enclave Kashmiri Colony Hirender Delhi. 14/4/2007

35. Smt. Kamla Koul wife of Late Sh. Balbadar Koul of Malmoh Magam Kmr; presently at H.No: 4 Lane No: 7, Anand Nagar Bohri Jammu. 15/ 4/2007

36. Smt. Lakshmi Shori Bhat wife of Late Sh Gopi Nath Bhat of Hawal Pulwama Kmr; presently at 22-A Block-D Ext. Sawarn Vihar Police Colony, Jammu. 16/4/2007.

37. Sh. Bansi Lal Ghasi S/o Balak Ram Ghasi originally resident of Tankipora Dadi Kadal Sgr, Kmr; presently at L-61, Street-21, New Mahavir Nagar New Delhi. 16/4/2006

38. Sh. Piyare Krishen Tiku S/o Late Sh. Sarvanand Tiku resident of Vivek Nagar, Near Mes Filter Plant, Railway Road Udhampur. 17/4/2007

39. Sh. Prithivi Nath Durani originally resident of Kralyar Rainawari Sgr, Kmr; presently at N-39, New Palam Vihar Phase-1, Bajghera Road, Gurgaon (Haryana). 17/4/2007

40. Sh. NN Satu S/o Late Sh. Krishen Joo Sathu R/o 407, Ambphalla Jammu. 18/4/2007

41. Sh. Roshan Lal Miya S/o Late Sh. Narayan Joo Miya originally resident of Kocha Nidan Rainawari Sgr, Kmr; presently at Flat No: 45, A, Sector-1, Noida. 18/4/2007

42. Sh. Hirday Nath Peer S/o Sh. Ragho Ram Peer originally resident of Vechar Nagar, Sgr, Kmr; presently at H.No: 60, Subash Nagar, Jammu. 18/2007

43. Sh. Vijay Lakshmi W/o Late Sh. Pushkar Nath Mattoo of Sangrampura Sopore, Kmr; presently at Plot No: 12, Nund Bab Colony Lala-Da-Bagh Jamu. 18/4/2007

44. Smt. Shobawati Kaw wife of Late Sh. Janki Nath Kaw originally resident of Kralyar Rainawari, Sgr, Kmr; presently at H.No: 48, Lane-4, Adarsh Nagar Burnai Road, Bantalab Tillo, Jammu. 20/4/2007

45. Smt. Somawati Tiku wife of Sh. Som Nath Tiku originally resident of Bul Bul Lankar Ali Kadal Sgr; presently at residing at Julakha Mohalla Jammu. 20/4/2007

46. Smt. Krishna Ji Thusu wife of Sh. Jai Krishen Thusu originally resident of Tankipora Dadi Kadal Sgr; Kmr; presently at Laxmipuram Chinore Jamu. 21/4/2007

47. Sh. Keshov Nath Pandita S/o Late Sh. Radha Krishen Pandita (Nai Nawaz) originally resident of Bana Mohalla Sgr, Kmr; presently at H.No: 396, Sec-3 Gangyal Garden Jammu. 21/4/2007

48. Sh. Mohan Lal Pandita S/o Late Sh. Dina Nath Pandit originally resident of Kralyar Rainawari Sgr, Kmr; presently residing at Gawalior (MP). 21/ 4/2007

49. Sh. Bhushan Lal Raina Husband Smt. Khema Ji D/o Late Pt. Maheshwar Nath Koul presently at Qtr. No: 160, Phase-I Camp Purkhoo Jamu. 21/ 4/007

50. Sh. Janki Nath Bhan S/o Late Sh. Kanth Joo Bhan, R/o E-6, Milap Nagar, Uttam Nagar New Delhi originally resident of Bhana Mohalla Sgr, Kmr. 21/4/2007

EDITORIAL

Ghosts of Dixon

Sir Owen Dixon, the UN mediator on Kashmir, visited the Valley in May 1950. Even after five decades his ghosts continue to haunt Kashmiri politicians. Sajjad Lone's recent outburst, lapping up Dixonian proposals and subsequent attempts to whip up communal and parochial passions, bear eloquent testimony to it.

The maverick Australian judge was drafted by Anglo-American bloc as part of its intervention to impose an imperialist solution on Kashmir. He had a simple brief---facilitate delinking of strategic Kashmir valley from India and put control of J&K's immense water resources at the disposal of Pakistan, a client state of Anglo-Americans. Dixon showed little regard for India's grand experiment in federalism and its vibrant democracy.

For nearly five decades Dixon's proposals remained under wraps. What was given out publicly was that the UN mediator had proposed limited plebiscite for Kashmir valley under a UN sponsored plebiscite administrator. It was not revealed what he had suggested about the strategic Doda district. This district, rich in forest wealth and having great tourism and Hydroelectric potential, had for all purposes remained a part of Jammu province. In terms of social demography the two communities are almost evenly balanced. New light on Dixon's mission in 1950 reveals that Dixon had conveyed to Pt. Nehru and other Indian leaders that his definition of Kashmir valley was Valley proper plus an area that linked tehsils of Rampur and Riasi and was adjacent to Kashmir. That suggested Chenab as the boundary. Pt. Nehru had unambiguously rejected Dixon's balkanizing proposals.

In mid-1990s when J&K was reeling under crossborderterrorism,a US think-tank Kashmir Study Group that has active collaboration of Pakistanis and Kashmiri jihadists brought out discredited Dixon's proposals from cold storage and repackaged these as Kathwari\Livingstone plan. Since then different US think-tanks have been peddling these formulae as 'solution' to Kashmir.

In early 1999 when under American pressure NDA govt. started secret diplomacy with Pakistan ,the main thrust of the Pakistan proposal was that rivers should be used as the basis for resolving conflicts between India and Pakistan, including the issue of J&K.Pakistan advocated using Chenab river as the border.Syed Salahuddin,the head of the jihadist UJC and Sardar Sikander Hayat Khan,POK Premier are on record having said that 'Kashmiri jihadists were in reality fighting for Pakistan to enable it to gain control of Kashmir's water resources'.

In Sept.-Oct.2004 Musharraf floated a plan that was akin to the old Dixon plan. The most striking element in the Musharraf plan was to project Jammu,Kashmir and Ladakh on the Indian side as a set of five, instead of three regions. That would entail dividing Jammu into sub-regions roughly along the Chenab River.

The Dixon\Kathwari\Musharraf\Chenab plan have common objective----dilution of Indian sovereignty over Kashmir valley and Doda district; creation of a sovereign\semi-sovereign Islamic state of 'Greater Muslim Kashmir' closely aligned to Pakistan and Muslim arc; putting J&K's water resources at the disposal of Pakistan.Religious-cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus in Kashmir valley and numerous massacres in Muslim-dominated areas of Jammu province to force a demographic change have been part of the conspiracy to implement Dixon plan.

Instead of countering Dixon plan, the mainstream regional parties have been pursuing negative politics. Be it the 'Autonomy' demand of National Conference or 'Self-rule' formula of PDP ,the essence is same----dilution of Indian sovereignty over Kashmir and weakening Kashmir's constitutional relationship with India. Both the parties have been making attempts to break Jammu's cohesive plural identity and reinforce the communal faultlines within the Jammu reign. Proposals by RAC, a committee sponsored by NC, to create Chenab and Pir Panjal regions in Jammu province are the consequence of this mindset.

The nationalistic forces in J&K have raised a powerful demand for political re-organisation of the state to put an end to the existing political and economic inequities and reverse religious-cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus. Perverted minds have been trying to project the political re-organisation and the Dixon plan as synonymous. The aim is to negate the patriotic demand.

The Dixon Plan calls for dilution of Indian sovereignty over Kashmir, while trifurcation\quadrification demands raised by the nationalistic groups demand greater Indian sovereignty and closer constitutional links with India. The Dixon Plan makes religion as the basis for division of the state, the trifurcation demand opposes religious basis for reorganization. Panun Kashmir does not demand a 'Hindu Homeland'. It is the demand of a community which has been thrown out through a process of religious-cleansing.Panun Kashmir advocates creation of a dispensation in Kashmir valley ,where there is full flow of Indian constitution and where all Kashmiris irrespective of caste\religion can live without the fetters of retrograde\discriminatory Article 370.How can this demand be termed communal? It is time India's strategic community realises the immense potentiality of the nationalistic demand for political re-organisation of J&K state to counter the balkanizing Dixon Plan. Time has also come for the Indian political leadership to exorcise the ghosts of Dixon.

LETTERS

Banaras Hindu University

Sir,

It was fantastic to read Social History Page '**Banaras Hindu University and the Kashmiri Pandits**', in May 2007 issue of **Kashmir Sentinel**, by Mr G.K Gurutu.

He has done a lot of homework and he is right that Sh. Shivnandan Lal Dhar was Registrar, Pt. Iqbal Narain Gurutu was the pro-Vice Chancellor of BHU in 1941-42.

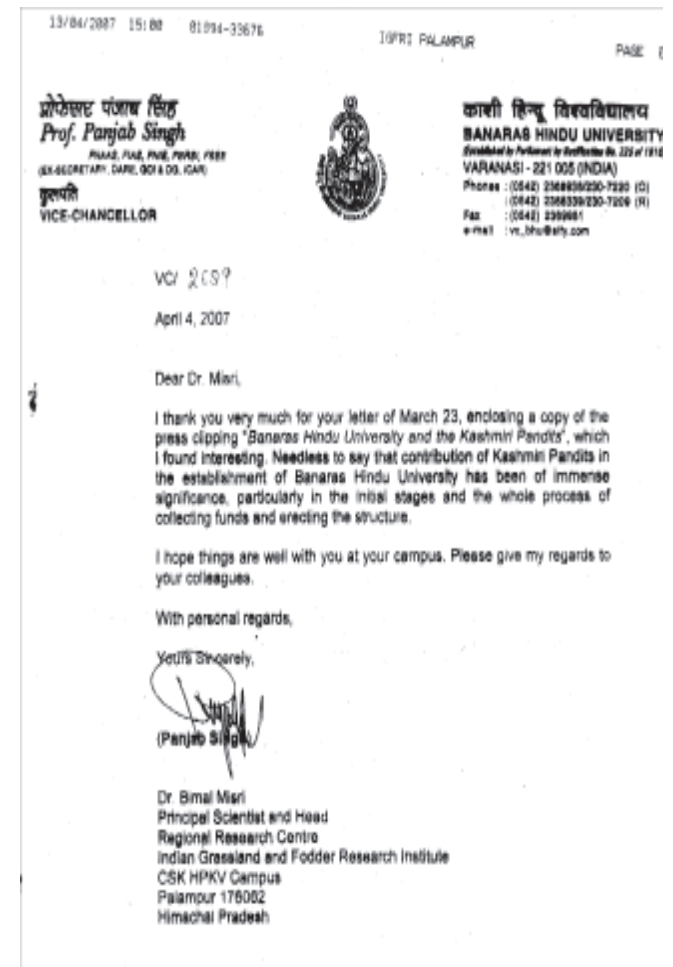
My father Late (Prof.) Jagan Nath Kaul (ount) did his M.A. in English in that era and he joined S.P. College as a Lecturer in 1943.

I also remember, as my father has told me, that Late Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, the great Scholar-Philosopher, ex-President of the Republic of India, was the Vice-Chancellor in 1941-1942 of B.H.U. In that era Dr. Janki Nath Hakim did his Ayurvedic medicine from B.H.U. and brought Ayurveda to J&K State.

Kashmiri Pandits and Banaras Hindu Univesity had a special bond in education. It has produced great luminaries among KPs, so obviously we are all proud of them.

My special thanks to Mr. G.K. Gurutu.

--Dr. Sunil Kaul
New Delhi



Sir,

After reading Sh. G.K. Gurtu's well-researched article on contribution of Kashmiri Pandits to Banaras Hindu University every Kashmiri Pandit would feel proud. However, Sh. Gurtu has not mentioned anything about the Kashmiri Pandit alumni of Institute of Medical Sciences, an affiliate of BHU. It would be of interest to your readers that two senior medical consultants did their super-specialisation from this Institute after 1990. Dr. Suresh Saraf, a native of Rainawari (Srinagar) is a leading Urologist at Jammu, while Dr. Satish Pandit, a native of Kulgam (Anantnag) is a noted Paediatric Surgeon at Panipat.

--Kuldeep Raina,
Jammu

PK expresses strong concern over non-allotment of Qtrs. at Muthi

KS Correspondent

The metaphor 'From frying pan into the fire' so aptly describes the life of the Pandit refugees in the Camp Muthi II. These refugees were lucky to escape from the targeted violence of terrorists in Kashmir but they are dying by inches in the hell that has come to be called Muthi Phase-II Camp.

This camp was started in 1991-92 when the state administration constructed 500 rooms (11X12 ft) with dome shaped roofs to house Pandit refugees. 492 families were allotted 492 rooms, one room to each family, irrespective of the size of the family. This single room served as guest room, study room, bedroom, kitchen etc. for that family. Even at the time of construction the experts engaged by the state administration had warned to the government that the life of these rooms would be at the maximum 7 years.

Hardly a year or two after the construction, the domes started leaking during the rains, putting

refugees.

Whenever the refugees brought their tales of woe to the state authorities the attitude of the latter was not only one of indifference but it bordered on outright callousness. The hygienic conditions made camp inmates vulnerable to diaorrhoeas and various diseases. 30 families shared one latrine.

The visit of hon'ble Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh to refugee camps came as a whiff of fresh air to camp inmates. Prime Minister announced that two room sets would be constructed in place of existing slums. He also ordered that the construction be carried out in the shortest possible time. After these orders construction was started for 385 qtrs, 128 in Phase-II Camp while the rest were to be built near Buta Nagar, in Roop Nagar area.

Due to slow pace of construction Hon'ble Governor and Hon'ble CM intervened to expedite the construction. The Chief Minister Sh Ghulam Nabi Azad

nic cleansing the Pandit refugees should be allowed to shift from slums to somewhat better habitation.

The state authorities have been milking the Centre for funds in the name of Pandit rehabilitation and subsequently denying the Pandits the benefit of this. The Mufti government claimed that hundreds of Kashmiri Pandit families were willing to return to the Valley and forced the Central government to release funds to build qtrs. at Sheikhpora, Mattan and Tulmulla in Kashmir. When the qtrs. were ready, the same government told the Centre that no Kashmiri Pandit family was willing to return to Kashmir. This kicked up a controversy on how Mufti regime was hoodwinking the Centre on the issue of return of Kashmiri Pandits and the release of rehabilitation funds. Now when the two room sets are ready for refugees in Muthi Phase-II and Purkhoo, the state government says that Pandit refugees would be housed at Jagti, 18 kms from Jammu city.

The state administration's attitude on providing reasonable housing to Pandit refugees (for which the Central government has every time provided funds generously) and on other allied issues-HRA/CCA even after the grant of relief by the hon'ble High Court reflects a prejudicial mindset where the state administration continues to torpedo the relief. The dramas enacted on the issue of providing employment to the displaced Pandit youth is yet another instance of apartheid.

The refugees living in the Muthi Camp II called on Panun Kashmir Chairman Dr. Ajay Churungoo to intervene on their behalf.

Panun Kashmir made an on the spot survey of the prevailing conditions in the camp. It found



Sh. Kuldeep Raina, General Secretary Panun Kashmir addressing media persons at Jammu. Sitting on his left is Sh. Pyare Lal Raina, President Displaced Welfare Committee Muthi Phase-II

that many of the dome shaped rooms were in very bad condition and could collapse with first downpour of monsoons. Panun Kashmir team led by Sh. Kuldeep Raina, General Secretary had an interactive session with 500 refugees living in the camp.

Subsequently Panun Kashmir and the representatives of the Camp Muthi Phase-II headed by Sh Pyare Lal Raina addressed joint press conference on May 29, 2007. They demanded that the new qtrs. should be immedi-

ately allotted to the refugees living in the camp and representatives of Muthi Camp II should be actively involved in the allotment of Qtrs.

They also demanded the immediate intervention of the state Governor and CM and said that in view of the forthcoming monsoons and the bad conditions of the dome shaped rooms, the government bears the entire responsibility in case the Pandit refugees are put to any trouble in the camp.



Sh. Ratan Lal Koul an inmate of Qtr. No: E/17 Muthi Camp Phase-II pointing to the condition of roof of his Qtr. when Panun Kashmir team visited the camp. --KS Photo

the refugees to great mental turmoil and hardship. When this was brought to the notice of the concerned authorities, one expert opinion suggested chemical treatment of the dome roofs.

This too was not considered feasible. Finally, it was decided to lay a layer of coal-tar on the dome roofs. The horrible heat generated in the rooms by the coal-tar covered roof converted these rooms into infernos, affecting the physical and mental health of the refugees. If earlier the refugees had to carry their belongings from getting spoiled by the leaking downpour now they had to save themselves from getting heat strokes. It was great torture for the aged

even ordered double shift work to execute the construction. 128 sets in Phase-II Camp are complete in all respects, except for the finishing touches. Now when it comes to the handing over of the new qtrs. to the refugees the state administration has started ditheuing over the allotment of these qtrs. The refugees are sore over the attitude of the government and say that the same forces which were responsible for their religious-cleansing and for continuation of policy of genocidal attrition are behind the non-allotment of qtrs. They alleged that certain bureaucratic and political agencies were not able to reconcile to the fact that after eth-



Jai Mata Di

With Best Wishes

From

SURINDER GANDHI

Delhi

Excerpts of the speech made by Dr. Ajay Chrungoo in the Third Round Table Conference at PM House New Delhi.

"Honourable Prime Minister, Sh. Manmohan Singh Ji, Honourable Union Home Minister Sh. Shiv Raj Patil, Honourable Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. Sh Ghulam Nabi Azad, To be frank I was little surprised about the haste with which this Third Round Table Conference has been convened. You must be aware that one of the crucial working groups looking into the issue of strengthening Centre State relations has not yet completed its task and is still far away from compiling a report."

"The reports of other working groups were submitted to us only yesterday at around 10 O'clock in the night immediately after the dinner hosted by the Honourable Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad. The participants at IIIrd Round Table Conference got very little time to study these reports. I hope you will bear with us if we fall short of responding comprehensively to these reports in this conference which has been organised to discuss in detail these very reports."

"Sir I have gone through the report of the Working Group which addressed the issue of 'Confidence Building Measures', during the little time which was available to me. This group had to specifically address the issue of Employment and also Rehabilitation of Displaced Kashmiri Pandits".

"I must say without inhibition that the report which has been submitted by Mr HM Ansari in this conference is disappointing. It has failed to address the issues for which this working group was constituted, in a proper and comprehensive way".

"The report tends to trivialise substantial issues. Its recommendations are disjointed and many times trespass the specific agenda which it had to address."

"The Working Group Chairman has tended to address the issue of unemployment and rehabilitation of displaced Kashmiri Pandits divorced from the reasons which lead to the exodus and their marginalisation from all spheres of life in the state. Sir, take for example the issue of unemployment amongst the displaced Kashmiri Hindus. There has been almost a blanket ban on their recruitment in the government services while lakhs from the majority community have been provided employment under special employment packages. Former deputy Chief Minister, Pt. Mangat Ram Sharma tried to bring this issue to the fore by asking the then government that the number of Kashmiri Pandits in the government services be brought to the level as it existed in 1989, just before the exodus of Kashmiri Hindus from

Report Submitted by HM Ansari Working Group is disappointing-- Dr. Ajay Chrungoo

Valley. He repeated the same issue in the Ist and IInd Round Table Conferences. Your goodself appointed an interministerial committee which also recommended almost on similar lines. You yourself put the issue on the national agenda by putting the issue of employment and rehabilitation as one of the main issues to be addressed by the working group 'on confidence building measures', in the Second Round Table Conference. You must be aware that **immediately after the IInd Round Table Conference the State government responded not by moving in the direction of creating an employment package but by making permanent all the adhoc appointments made in Valley against the posts of the displaced Kashmiri Hindu employees.**"

"Sir, the problem of denial of employment to Kashmiri Hindus is not a mere callous aberration of the system. It is a very frank symptom of the process of exclusion unleashed by the communal forces entrenched in the government and the political establishment. At the point of gun and terrorist blackmail we were pushed out. Our properties, temples and shrines were plundered after we left. Hundreds of our temples lie in shambles after the loot and plunder unleashed on them. Thousands of our houses have been burnt and destroyed. Leftover properties have been fraudulently encroached and usurped. Through a process of distress sales our homes and hearths are being procured as normal sale deeds. I am mentioning these things only to stress that **our physical cleansing was followed by residential cleansing. And through denial of employment a form of administrative cleansing of Kahsmiri Hindus has been unleashed.** Muslim communal forces in the state do not want us to stay even in Jammu. They have launched a policy of squeeze to force our diaspora and expulsion from the state. Has the working group addressed these issues? No. To the contrary it has trivialised these issues. The working group has made recommendations on employment and upgradation of camps only in a way that further delay and proctastrination is possible. After so many debates the recommendations of the Working Group still talk about

further dialogue and discussion. Why? Our problems have been bracketed with the problems of those who have perpetrated violence in Valley? Did the chairman of Working Group look into the international perspectives and experiences on internal displacements? Recognising the dire necessity of addressing the issue of internal displacement, United Nations Human Rights Commission assigned the task to the Representative of Secretary-General on Internally Displaced persons in 1992. Several years of study by a group of experts under the auspices of this representative took place. The Representative on Internally displaced persons after being requested to develop an appropriate 'Normative framework' recommended drafting of 'guiding principles' rather than a convention which he suggested would have taken 10-20 yrs to conclude. Sir, 30 Guiding Principles were spelt out. Did the chairman of the Working Group look into these guiding principles before making recommendations for displaced Kashmiri Pandits?"

"Experts of international repute have likened the response to internal displacement to a tripod, with relief, development and protection each forming a leg. Sir government response has so far only concerned itself only with relief aspect and that too in a half hearted way. Concept of protection, and development is absent from the conceptual framework of the government approach. So the government response to internal displacement of Kashmiri Hindus stands almost without legs."

"We cannot devise the concepts of protection, development and even relief, if we do not try to understand and identify the forces at play in the state who perpetrated genocide on Kashmiri Hindus and are hell bent upon their expulsion from the state. The chairman of the Working Group has ignored this aspect totally. Principle 1 of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement affirm that internally displaced persons enjoy in full equality the same rights and freedoms under international and domestic law as do other persons in their country and stresses that such internally displaced persons shall not be discriminated against in the enjoyment of any

rights and freedoms on the ground that they are displaced. Successive governments have denied Kashmiri Hindus employment and set into place a process of blatant discrimination which is the violation of the basic rights and freedoms and the principle of equality."

"Sir, in the context of rehabilitation the successive state governments have followed a policy of symbolic, coercive return. They have relied on a process of enforced deprivation and denial to force the Hindus to return and submit to the will of dominant opinion in the Valley. The State government visualises the return by relocating the camps in Valley one way or the other. Principle 14 of the Guiding Principles on Internally Displaced Persons reaffirms the right of every human being to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his or her residence and then specifies that for internally displaced persons this includes a right to move freely in and out of camps and settlements. Successive state governments while building tenements for displaced persons in certain parts of Valley have ignored the entire spirit of this principle. Simply creating a set up for persons whose physical security is under threat at a place only neglects their protection needs. Relocating camps in such places where their security is threatened and where they cannot enjoy the basic freedoms can actually exacerbate and perpetuate their plight. It can create a false sense of security and international experts have warned against such a situation. They have also cautioned that such a process can shore up a repressive regime, create a situation of a long-term dependency and result in creating 'well-fed dead.' Working Group recommendations appear to be totally ignorant about such perspectives."

"Sir, State government attitude on return continues to border on a perspective of forceful repatriation. We all know how backlash massacres of Kashmiri Hindus in Kashmir Valley were triggered by such return campaigns. International experts have always stressed to look into the refugee law by analogy while developing a framework of the return for internally displaced persons. They have stressed the need to adhere and uphold the

principle of non-refoulment which provides protection for refugees against forced return to a situation where they would be at risk of persecution or physical harm. The reference in the Working Group recommendation on return and rehabilitation is devoid of any sensitive understanding of the critical issues involved."

"Sir, I have repeatedly come across the views of Muslim leaders on the displacement of Kashmiri Hindus in the Round Table Conferences and the Working Group meetings. Today also some of them have spoken on this issue. They want our return because Kashmiriyat has to be repaired. They want the return of teachers and doctors because Kashmiri Muslims want them. Always and everytime when they speak they only discuss Kashmiri Hindus in terms of their utility. And almost always they avoid to discuss the issue of the destruction of a community. It is most unfortunate that the Working Group recommendations emphasise the need to recognise the right of our return and not to ensure our right to live in Kashmir."

"Sir, Kashmiri Pandits have been subjected to genocide. And we want its comprehensive and permanent reversal. Creation of Panun Kashmir as we have many times stressed is the only way to ensure such a reversal. Government wants to avoid to address the basic issue of genocide and deal with peripheral and superficial issues. It is for these reasons I think that I should not endorse the recommendations of the Working Group dealing with these issues. And I feel it my responsibility to dissociate myself from these recommendations."

"This Working Group has not addressed the issue of Terrorism at all. In fact it has chosen to describe this heinous crime against humanity as militancy. Under the heading 'measures to improve the condition of the victims of militancy' the Working Group on confidence building measures recommends foremost the measures like developing mechanism in which responsibility for specific human rights violation can be fixed and derelict officials identified and prosecuted. It appears that the chairman of the Working Group identifies human rights violation by the government agencies as the foremost concern. It also appears from the recommendations that the militancy in Kashmir is primarily the result of government action or government action is in fact the real militancy in the state. Terrorism as a human rights issue with all its implications seems to be a peripheral concern. Another main recommendation under the same head is the reviewing and revocation of Armed Forces Special Powers Act (Disturbed Areas Act). It is the primary impingement on the

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Peace-Process— Ideological Moorings

Dr. M.K. Teng

The Muslim separatist movement in Jammu and Kashmir in various forms it assumed from time to time, during the last five decades of the Indian freedom, has espoused the claim of the Muslim community to reconstitute the State into an Islamic polity. Kashmir dispute has its roots in the struggle of the Muslims of India an Islamic state, which enshrined a separate freedom for them, on the basis of religion.

The Muslims in the British India and the Indian Princely States refused to accept that they formed a part of the Indian nation. They insisted upon their claim to a separate nation. The separate homeland of Pakistan was conceived by its founding fathers as an Islamic state, which would enable the Muslims in India to realise their Islamic destiny.

The incessant efforts of the Indian political class, unable to break away from its liberal-reformist moorings, and still in search of the means to legitimise its rootlessness have caused much harm to the process of political development in India as well as impeded the integration of the Muslims in the political culture of India. The Muslim League which spearheaded the Muslim movement for Pakistan in the British India and the All India States Muslim League, which led the Muslim movement for Pakistan in the Indian princely States visualised expression of the consolidation of the Muslim power in India. The Muslim people of India formed part of the Muslim Ummah, and an expression of its unity. Muslim commitment to the unity of the Muslim Ummah was a negation of the national power of the Indian people. Muslims did not recognise any national power, which did not form a subsidiary part of the Muslim Ummah.

The Muslims in India supported the struggle for Pakistan unequivocally and rejected the ideological commitment of the Indian people to the national identity of a United India, the Indian struggle for freedom underlined. The partition of India was not foisted on the Indian people by British, as the Indian political class continues to claim, even half a century after India was freed from the British colonial hold. The partition was wrought by the Muslims. The civil war and wanton violence, which the Direct Action campaign the

Muslim League launched in August 1946, broke up the national consensus on the unity of India, that permeated the outlook of the Indian National Congress. Gandhi had not prepared the Indian people to face a civil war. His prescription of passive resistance, left the field open for the Muslim League to break up India.

The Muslim League leaders and the leaders of the States Muslim League, which coordinated the Muslim struggle for Pakistan in the princely states, committed themselves to the realisation of an Islamic State of Pakistan. Mohammad Ali Jinnah made no mistake about the ultimate objective of the struggle for Pakistan.

The Muslim League leaders made no mistake about the separate freedom they sought for the Muslim nation of India. The Muslim 'nation' of India, they averred was the continuation of the history of the Muslim power in India, which formed a part of the history of the Muslim Ummah. The Muslims in India, the Muslims League leaders claimed, were not a part of the Indian nation, which spread over the civilisational frontiers of India. The Muslims in India were a separate ethnic identity of which the history, social culture, political outlook and religion, drew their content from Islam and its history in India. The gospel of redemption, which formed the basis of all Semitic religious ideologies, did not admit of coexistence of religions. The expression Jinnah gave to his outlook about the commitment of Pakistan to enable all people of Pakistan to live in freedom, irrespective of their faith, in his inaugural address to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, did not reflect his intention to repudiate the Muslim commitment to an Islamic state. Indeed, the Muslims believed as they do believe now, that the Islamic order of society does not conflict with the freedom of all people, irrespective of their faith. For Jinnah the Muslim state was not a theocracy. For him the Muslim state of Pakistan was the expression of the Muslim political power in India. The very concept of Pakistan, which Jinnah was instrumental in forging underlined the recognition of the geographical boundaries of the Muslim India as well as the continuity of its history. His claims to the Muslim majority provinces of the British India and the Muslim

majority princely States as well as the Muslim ruled princely states for Pakistan, was based upon his acceptance of the continuity of the history of the Muslim Ummah in India. Jinnah, ac-



companying Liaquat Ali Khan, met Mountbatten after the partition plan was given final shape. Mountbatten told Jinnah that partition had given the Muslims, a broken country far smaller than they had claimed. Jinnah looked straight at the Viceroy and then told him in resigned words that they would have accepted desert of Thar, if that was what their were given as their homeland.

From 1947 to 1953, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah insisted upon the exclusion of Jammu and Kashmir from the guarantees for rights of freedom, the Constitution of India envisaged and claimed the right of the Muslims to redefine the rights and freedom of the people of the State. He stated with the enthusiasm of a religious preacher that the theological imperatives of Islam provided adequate guarantees for the protection of the rights and freedom of non-Muslim population of the State. The exclusion of the State from the constitutional organisation of India by Article 370, was based

upon his insistence on a separate structure of rights which satisfied the aspirations of the Muslims. In fact, in the meetings of the National Conference leaders led by him with the Indian leaders and the members of the Negotiating Committee of the Constituent Assembly of India, he claimed a separate freedom which the Muslims would demarcate for the people of the State on the basis of the Muslim majority character of its population. It is not fairly well known that when Nehru refused to deny the rights and freedom to the people of Jammu and Kashmir embodied by the Constitution of India, which he cried in pain, had been evolved by the Constituent Assembly with pride, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah threatened to resign from the membership of the Constituent Assembly. The crisis which broke up the first Interim Government in the State in 1953, grew out of the conflict between the Muslimisation of the State and the rights and aspirations of the Hindus and the other minorities, the Buddhists and the Sikhs in the State. Forty-three years later, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, a former Pradesh Congress President, besides being a former Home Minister of India and a former Chief Minister of the State, pleaded for "one country, two systems" in the first Round Table Conference on Kashmir held by the Indian Government in 2006. The Muslims of the State, followed the same ideological commitments-a separate freedom for Jammu and Kashmir, organised on the basis of one country, two systems, pattern in India. The Indian Prime Minister has, of course, very apologetically expressed the inability of the Indian Government to accept

any change in the existing borders of the State and yet agreed to carry the peace-process forward. Would that lead to the conclusion that the Government of India is ready to recognise the right of the Muslims of the State to a separate freedom by political arrangements such as the "one country, two systems" envisages or the exclusion of State from the Indian political organisation underlines or the modifications in the existing provisions of Article 370, proposed by the Congress Party, embody. It is a moot point how the Government of India would adjust the demand for demilitarisation, and joint management that Pakistan has been pressing for and pro-Pakistan political flanks like the Hurriyat-Conference are insisting upon, to the re-location of power denominations in order to ensure the Muslims a separate freedom on the territories of India. The peace process has reached a state, where the Government of India has to decide whether it accepts the exclusion of Jammu and Kashmir State from the secular political organisation of India and Jihad as a component of the peace-settlement with Pakistan and recognises the precedence of religion and the Muslims in the state and society of Jammu and Kashmir. It has also to decide whether it has the mandate from the Indian people to accept Jihad, as the legitimate right of the Muslims in Kashmir, to foster political change. So far, the terrorist groups, waging Jihad in the State, have not shown any inclination to accept a settlement with India, which does not underline the integration of the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir, with the struggle of the Muslims Ummah for its ascendance into a world power of polar strength, Pakistan envisions.

SHRADANJALI

Bansi Lal Saraf son of Late Mahadev Ram Saraf was born in July 1938 at Batpora Shopian, Kashmir. His father was a Govt. teacher who provided good education to his children. After completing his schooling, he joined Government Polytechnic College Srinagar. He joined Government service in 1958 as an Overseer in Irrigation and Flood Control Department. During his service in this department he executed several projects of national importance including Ravi Bridge on National Highway between Madhopur and Lakhanpur, Sangam Bridge over Jehlum between Bijbihara, Srinagar, Lar Canal Ganderbal and many others. Later he was transferred to Power Development Department of the state and executed Bemina Grid Station Batmaloo, Major Receiving Station in south Kashmir.

During Kashmir turmoil, the family shifted to Jammu and established afresh at Sanjay Nagar. He retired from Govt. service in 1996 at the age of 58 years. He used to undertake regular pilgrimage to various holy places in the country. He was very fond of trekking and gardening. He breathed his last on 18th May, 2007 after a brief ailment. He is survived by his wife Veena Saraf, two sons Surinder Saraf and Suresh Saraf and a daughter Saroj wife of Dr. Ajay Churungoo, Chairman Panun Kashmir.

Panun Kashmir & Kashmir Sentinel offers heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.



Bansi Lal Saraf

Pakistan's Existence: A need or a burden?

By Syed Jamaluddin

Regardless of the fact that the advocates of two-nation theory have finally realized after half a century that the division of United India was not a good idea for international peace, there is a need to correct mistakes. India's democratic strength for the last 59 years has proved that its existence was fully justified. On the contrary, **Pakistan emerged as a failed state for one single reason that a country which was founded by assembling almost eight different nations in the name of Islam, was unable to justify its existence.** Since its formation, Pakistan has been a country full of conspiracies, discrepancies, controversies and corruption. Pakistan could not prove its worth as a state and remained just a piece of land occupied by certain opportunists who turned the entire country into their personal property.

The military rulers of Pakistan captured power of this country on numerous occasions thereby proving that the country was not founded for welfare of people liv-

ing on its soil but for the beginning of a new era of fascism under the disguise of Islam. Fascism is a religious conception in which man is seen in his imminent relationship with a superior law and with an objective will that transcends the particular individual and raises him to conscious membership of a spiritual society. Whoever has seen in the religious politics of the Fascist regime nothing but mere opportunism has not understood that Fascism besides being a system of government is also, and above all, a system of thought. Pakistan, therefore, became an example of such Fascism. The military dictators turned the country into a paradise for looters, corrupt politicians, greedy bureaucrats, incompetent administrators, uneducated reformers, militant jihadi groups, religious cults, bogus scholars and above-the-law intelligence agencies.

The so-called democracy which prevailed for almost 13 years out of 59 years of its existence in Pakistan produced sophisticated looters of national wealth who used new mechanisms to deprive the country

from standing on sound footings. Similarly, the so-called politicians of the country who were rather farmers-turned politicians or businessmen-turned politicians or retired-army-personnel-turned politicians controlled the fate of this country. Such people called the shots. The result is very visible that **Pakistan has now become a danger to the entire humanity.** Had it been a matter limited within the jurisdiction of Pakistan, there would have never arisen any need to raise any voice, but, the situation is worse than that.

Today's Pakistan has turned into a typical Fascist regime without any ideology. The President of this country wears an army uniform, the Chief Justice of its Supreme Court is treated like an ordinary clerk and pushed on the road by local policemen, the Intelligence agencies rule the country and function beyond any legal boundaries, the so-called religious scholars have become preachers of radical Islam through brainwashing techniques with an aim to produce terrorists, bureaucracy has become a tool in the hands of those

who use money to do what they want, foreign policy is nothing but pretence and false statements, economy is based on assumptions and above all, this country has gained nuclear power through backdoor.

The whole world has become vulnerable to terrorism. The question is who is masterminding such terrorism? Who is providing all possible support to terrorism? Who is creating terrorist minds? Who is a threat to international peace? The answer is very simple.....Pakistan. Pakistan's religious groups are responsible for masterminding the international terrorism. The Tablighi Jamat has been busy for the last 75 years in producing brains who hate Non-Muslims and as such the militant Jihadi groups based in Pakistan are nothing but "fruits" of such brainwashing techniques used by Tablighi Jamat since long. Similarly, support in terms of financial and otherwise is coming from state-owned intelligence agencies. Creation of Taliban and Al-Qaeda are glaring examples of such support by the Pakistan-based intelligence

agencies. World's most wanted man is considered as a "Guest" on the soil of Pakistan. Now that Pakistan has nuclear power, is it not correct that entire humanity is vulnerable to any possible disaster? A country which is possessed by forces which are not answerable to any one and which is beyond any legal system is indeed a great threat to the entire world. Pakistan has, therefore, become a burden. This burden needs to be off-loaded by way of its disintegration. Pakistan should be divided into 5 parts or more to crush the terrorist network which has gained its deep roots in present geographic form of Pakistan. My book titled "DIVIDE PAKISTAN TO ELIMINATE TERRORISM" advocates necessity of Pakistan's disintegration.

An Independent Paktoonistan, Baluchistan, Sindhudesh, Jinnahpur and Punjabistan will prevent the current nourishment and spread of terrorism from the soil of Pakistan.

**The author is a Pakistani living in Europe.[Source---SAAG]*

Visiting Tulzapur—A dream come true

By Kuldeep Raina

I am very grateful to Dr. B.A. Kathare, a senior dental surgeon at Dharashiv (Osmanabad), who hosted us during our stay at Dharashiv for informing me about the sacred of Tulzapur and Ghatshilla.

The sacred shrine of Tulza Bhagwati is located at Tulzapur, 25 kms from Dharashiv. As per local folklore the goddess is consort of Lord Shiva. The place where shrine is located is the place where the Goddess ap-

ered to be 'Puranpeeth', the other two **Puranpeeths** being—Renuka Mata at Mahur in Nanded district and **Mahalaxmipeeth** in Kolhapur. **Sapt Shrungi Devi** shrine in Vani district (Nasik) is regarded as **Adha Shaktipeeth**

Another place near Tulzapur is Ghatshila—the place where Tulza Bhawani told Lord Rama the way through which Ravana abducted Sita. The Shila on which Lord Rama stood while listening to the Goddess still stands.

Lakhs of devotees visit Tulzapur shrine on the day of *Navratra*, walking bare feet hundreds of kms. The shrine is managed by 16 families of non-Brahman Maratha *Purohits*, called in popular parlance **Kadams**. The *Purohits* are not forbidden from taking meat. '**Bali**' is done at Tulzapur as per Shakhta tradition. The tradition seems so similar to ours in Kashmir.

It was great honour for us to be allowed to visit the shrine at the time when Tulza Bhawani gets ready for Abhishek. The 16 *Purohits* asked us to make a presentation on rise of terrorism in Kashmir. They assured full solidarity with Displaced Kashmiri Hindus



Tulza Bhawani.

peared to Shivaji Maharaj and presented divine sword to fight the Mughals. Tulzapur is consid-



(L) Ghatshilla Shrine. (R) PK leaders paying obeisance at the Shrine.

--KS Photo

Hindu Jan Jagrut Samiti (HJJS)

Besides 28 districts of Maharashtra this nationalist body is active in seven states, which include Karnataka, Goa, Haryana, Rajasthan, UP etc. Its Maharashtra chapter is headed by Dr. Virinder Tawade, while its national spokesperson is Dr. Durgesh Samant. The latter is a well-known author and has produced three volumes on Kashmir. HJJS works under the guidance of Dr. Jayant Balaji Athvale, Chief of Sanatan Sanstha. The Sanstha brings out a daily, weekly and monthly, titled 'Santan Prabhat' in Maratha. These editions have circulation in lakhs. The Sanstha also publishes regularly excellent quality literature on Hindu religion.

The HJJS ran recently successful campaigns against two bills introduced by Maharashtra government—1. Temples Take Over Act and 2. Superstitious Act. It described it as uncalled for interference and expressed apprehension about the offerings made at the Hindu shrines after takeover would be used for purposes other than protection and maintenance of shrines.

'Saakshatkaar' moves Maharashtrians

(From Page 1)

April 22 to April 24. 200 exhibits at the exhibition were displayed in four sections. The first part showed the camp life of displaced Kashmiri Pandits, the second showed the destructed shrines, the third part depicted the killings, while the fourth part focussed on the residential cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus.

The exhibition was inaugurated on April 22 by Swami Govind Dev Giri Maharaj (formerly known as Acharya Kishore Ji Vyas). Sh. Sanjay Godbole, Chief of Sant Seva Samiti, Dr Durgesh Samant national spokesperson Hindu Jan Jagrat Samiti Prof. GC Asnani a historian, Archeologist of eminence Dr Ajay Chrungoo, Chairman and Panun Kashmir were among panelists. The speakers said that they had heard about terrorist campaign in Kashmir but it was through **'Saakshatkaar'** they learnt about the gravity of the situation and the different dimensions of the terrorist campaign. Sh Manohar Joshi, former Chief Minister of Maharashtra who visited exhibition on April 23 said **'Saakshatkaar'** was a **'Margdarshan'** on how to build national response against terrorism. 'Thousands of touching moments frozen in time' was how visitors to the photo exhibition described their views about the pictures which showcased different facets of religious cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus in Kashmir.

Poona has been home to thousands of refugees from Sindh in 1947. Through sheer hardwork this community has done exceedingly well and is contributing to the nationalist cause. Sindhi visitors said that by and large they knew what ethnic cleansing meant and the hardlife the victims had to undergo in its wake. However, they expressed there was one glaring difference-Sindhis turned refugees in the wake of country's partition but Kashmiri Hindus had become refugees in their own country. That was the most unfortunate aspect, they added. Expressing solidarity with Kashmiri Hindus, they asked organisers: You tell us what can we do for refugees. Many visitors sobbed. Majority of the visitors said **'Saakshatkaar'** made them aware how serious has been the genocide of Kashmiri Hindus. They enquired why the government has tried to suppress this genocide when the country was involved in the battle against terrorism. Visitors further expressed that what should have been the task of the main national parties-BJP and the

Congress was being done instead by Panun Kashmir and Hindu Jan Jagrut Samiti. They told the organisers that 'Panun Kashmir was doing a monumental work, which would definitely contribute to nationalist awareness on terrorism and common people will get sensitised to the dangers posed by terrorism'.

Sh Sanjay Godbole, a noted Art Collector and an archeologist of repute said, "The education campaign needs to be taken down to the Taluka level. Politicians at the helm need to be asked what have they done in battle against terrorism and for its victims. Why they take people for granted?"

Referring to the fight against terrorism, Prof Asnani quoted Swami Vivekananda to tell people 'Arise, Awake and not stop till goal is achieved'. Sh. Ninad Bedkar, a reputed historian said **'Saakshatkaar'** has exploded many myths about the so-called Kashmir dispute. He said the exhibition would help in script-



Dr. Virender Tawde and Dr. Ajay Chrungoo during the Sakshaatkaar at Pune.

Kashmir was late with the project. School and college students, who visited exhibition in big numbers expressed strong solidarity with Displaced Pandit Community' expressing willingness to help Kashmiri Pandit refugees.

Nearly 35,000 residents of Poona visited the exhibition. The local organisers had done their ground work well. The *Sadakas* (activists) of HJJS had been involved in door to door campaign.

at Pune and other places was to sensitise the national opinion about terrorism. Dr Tawade informed the media that this exhibitino will be organised at different places in Maharashtra for which publicity was already on.

Chinchwad (Pimpri)

This town is located 30 kms away from Poona. The venue of **'Saakshatkaar'** was Gharishastri Sabhagrah, Shridhar Nagar. Exhibition was

seventy thousand handbills had been distributed. Local TV Channels had been regularly carrying ads on the exhibition, which was supplemented by Sanatan Prabhat ads.

The exhibition received wide coverage in Marathi Vernacular press. However, barring few exceptions, the national English media played cool, indicating how-combating terrorism and caring for its victims was such a low priority for it.

Earlier on 20th of April 2007, Panun Kashmir Chairman Dr. Ajay Chrungoo and Dr. Viren Tawade, President HJJS addressed a press conference at Press Club Pune. Dr. Chrungoo while addressing the media persons said that the purpose of holding exhibition

the objectives of **'Saakshatkaar'**. Then there would be formal inauguration. The press conference at Chinchwad was jointly organised by HJJS and Journalistic fraternity of Chinchwad. The main theme articulated by Panun Kashmir General Secretary Sh Kuldeep Raina at the press conference at Chinchwad and other places was that terrorism had become a national problem and there was need for a national response. Since Kashmiri Pandits bore the brunt of terrorist violence in Kashmir they wanted to share their experiences with other people of India so that they can preempt terrorism in their respective areas through alertness and better perception. Sh Kuldeep Raina pooh-poohed the approach where people of one state did not bother about terrorism outside their state. He said this attitude of people was responsible for weak united national response to terrorism. Panun Kashmir General Secretary said **'Saakshatkaar'** was a significant step in this direction to correct this negative thinking. He asked the people of Chinchwad to deliberate on why an entire community has faced wholesale religious-cleansing and why the state authorities continue to be in denial mode over it, especially when small issues have been made national issues. He said the objective of Panun Kashmir was to build a national response to terrorism. He highlighted the plurality and diversity of J&K where aspirations of the majority people ran counter to those of a section of Kashmiris. Sh Raina lamented that Article 370 is considered sacrosanct and said reorganisation of the state was the only way out to remedy the situation. Quadripartition of J&K, with creation of Panun Kashmir was part of this reorganisation, he added.

A galaxy of speakers spoke to 600-strong audience at Chinchwad. The main speakers were Sh Sunil Chincholkar, a leading Dharmacharya, Sh Sharad Upadhyay, Nagar Sevak (Municipal Councillor), Sh. Krishnaji Ranjane Maharaj, President Workari Samaj, Distt. Pune, Sh. Gian Dev Patil, Dr. Durgesh Samant. Sh. Chincholkar, who had specially come from abroad to attend the exhibition, decried sidelining of Hindus in the country by the government.

Since the venue at Chinchwad was comparatively smaller all the exhibits could not be displayed here. People of



Sh. Kuldeep Raina speaking to the audience during inaugural ceremony of Sakshaatkaar at Dharashiv.

ing right history about terrorism and ongoing crisis in Kashmir. Sh Shriyaak of Abhinav Bharat had a specific query: Why Panun

At all entry points in the city there were big hoardings. Besides this there were 250-300 banners and 3000 posters, nearly

on display from April 28 to April 30. At every place the organisers would have a pre-inauguration press conference to explain

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‘Saakshatkaar’ moves Maharashtrans

(From Page 8)

Chinchwad told organisers that 3-days were not enough for exhibition and demanded that exhibition should be shown at other places also. Panun Kashmir organisers had a surprise for them here. Maharashtrans have a tradition of laying Rangoli at every function. An extremely decorative Rangoli for Panun Kashmir was laid at the venue of exhibition. Panun Kashmir leaders had a interactive session with Arya Samaj of Chinchwad.

Dharashiv:

Since the exhibition at Dharashiv was scheduled from May 1, an advance team of Dr. Tawade and Sh. Kuldeep Raina left on 29th April evening for Dharashiv. The team of Dr. Tawade and Sh. Kuldeep Raina alongwith Sh. Miland Patil senior advocate and former BJP MLA Dharashiv addressed a press conference at Dharashiv Dr. Tawade & Sh. Kuldeep Raina took stock of other arrangements regarding photo-exhibition. Replying to one of the questions during the press conference Mr Raina said that through *Saakshatkaar* we are unveiling the truth before the nation and if it is a sin to speak the truth we will continue to commit the same in future as well.

‘Saakshatkaar’ was on display from May 1-3 at Ramkrishan Paramhans Vivekanad College. Speakers at the inaugural ceremony included besides Sh. Kuldeep Raina, Sh. Ramchand Ranganath Rao Garade, Vice-President of Bar Council of Maharashtra and Goa, Sh. Venkatesh Habire, Editor *Dainik Sangarh*, Advocate Milind Patil ex-President of Bar Council Dharashiv, Dr. Virender Tawade and Prof. Ramesh Dapke, Principal, RP College, Dharashiv was the chief guest. *Saakshatkaar* at Dharashiv witnessed an unprecedented flow of visitors. In Dharashiv Sh. Miland Patil organised an interactive session between Panun Kashmir leaders and Bar Council Dharashiv at the auditorium of Main Sessions Court. Panun Kashmir General Secretary Sh. Kuldeep Raina interacted with the lawyers.

The entire team of HJJS Sadaks bade good bye to PK team. It was an emotional separation for PK team at the time of its departure of Jalgaon during the mid night of May 3rd, 2007.

Jalgaon:

This town, formerly a part of Nizam's Princely state, is approached by a 12 hour journey in bus from Pune. Sardar Patel is a hero for his role, in integrating

Hyderabad and foiling Nizam's diabolical designs.

This town is in northern Maharashtra *‘Saakshatkaar’* concluded at Jalgaon, where the exhibition was on display from May 6-8 at Valabh Dasswalji Auditorium. Sh. Vinay Panwalkar, Spokesperson HJJS Jalgaon, Dr. V Tawade and Sh. Kuldeep Raina addressed the

plicitous demand of demilitarisation, apathetic attitude of State authorities, renaissance movement etc.

Unprecedented response to *‘Saakshatkaar’* at Dharashiv and Jalgaon was not surprising. Locals are quite apprehensive about the threats posed by the terrorist organisation, Students Islamic Movement of India

Day, 14th September-Martyr's Day and 28th December-Margdarshan (Homeland) Day. For this Panun Kashmir leadership thanked HJJS. Sh Kuldeep Raina, General Secretary PK said they can never forget the role of Maharashtrans in helping them, when they took initiative in offering reservations to Displaced Kashmiris in professional col-

were busy. The publicity material could be seen upto 20 kms away from the venue of the exhibition. She Praveenji, a dedicated Sadak covered all the exhibitions, making travel of PK leaders comfortable.

Sh Kuldeep Raina was all praise for the role played by Smt. & Sh. Ashok Koul (General Secretary KP Sabha Pune) alongwith their whole family, Sh RP Karnail and his family, Prof Vaishnavi, Kashmiri Pandit students at Dharamshiv, Smt. & Sh. Vijay Kumar Kachroo, Smt. & Sh. Sunil Gigoo and their entire family Dass family, Sh RN Monga, Sh Sant Kumar Bhan and Mrs. Jaishree Bhan, Members of Abhinav Nirman Pratisthan-Vikram, Sameer and others, and Dr. Abhi Ram Dixit in making *‘Saakshatkaar’* a great success. At Dharashiv despite their busy study schedule Kashmiri students came to paste exhibits, they were joined by their fellow students from Bihar and Himachal Pradesh. Panun Kashmir leaders. Sh Kuldeep Raina, Sh SK Handoo and Sh. Virender Kaul were moved by the simplicity, honesty, dedication of local organisers. Highly qualified people, irrespective of gender, were all the time concerned with one objective—to make *‘Saakshatkaar’* a success.



Sh. Manohar Joshi former Chief Minister of Maharashtra being taken around the Exhibition at Pune.

press on May 4. Inauguration was held at Jain Mahila Community Hall. The prominent speakers included Sh. Yogeshwar Upasini Maharaj, Sh. Mangesh Ji Maharaj of Shri Ram Temple (main shrine of Jalgaon), Amdar Eknath Rao Khade, BJP MLA, Advocate Aneh Mehnaale, Dr V. Tawade, Sh Khada spoke about destruction of cultural symbols of Hindus in Kashmir by terrorism. Sh. Yogeshwar Upasini Maharaj is a national Dhamacharya and renowned scholar on Hinduism. Sh Mangesh Ji Maharaj, a saint of great humility, leads the Ramnavmi Yatra in which lakhs of people participate. This annual festival is held at Shri Ram Temple Shrine. Sh. Mangesh organised an interactive session between PK leadership and the civil society of Jalgaon. PK leaders were publicly felicitated at the function. Sh Mangesh Ji, who had participated in Kashmir Ekta Yatra, made stay of PK organisers comfortable. People volunteered to host PK organisers in their home. PK leaders were guests of a leading Brain and Spine surgeon Dr Sanjiv M. Huzurbazar at Jalgaon. Mrs. Hazurbazar, who is one of the leading gynecologists of Jalgaon, felicitated PK and HJJS activists. On 6th of May PK leaders made a presentation at the meet of prominent citizens of Jalgaon. The leaders deliberated on such issues-denial mode on religious-cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus, dimensions of terrorism, pitfalls of 'peace process', du-

(SIMI) in these towns. Visitors braved the 45-46° heat to see *‘Saakshatkaar’*. Next day, they would bring their families. One of the visitors, a class 9th student Miss. Bhavna Rajendra Patil wrote in the visitors book "The PK activists are the Vivekanands of Kalyug When an individual in the local administration tried to create hurdles for the exhibition the strong response of Jalgaon put him on defensive.

Overall 'a lakh people visited *‘Saakshatkaar’* at Pune, Chinchwad, Dharashiv and Jalgaon. At the instance of visitors the exhibition time had to be extended by 2 hours-upto 10 PM. Captions for exhibits in Marathi were so artfully prepared by Mrs Jayshree Bhan. Daily news about exhibition was put on internet same day, with meticulous documentation.

Request came from Net users in England and America to bring *‘Saakshatkaar’* to their areas as well. A unique feature of *‘Saakshatkaar’* was that political leaders across the political spectrum were conspicuous by their absence, while common people demonstrated unprecedented enthusiasm. The organisers explained that they not get proper venues for the exhibition due to non-cooperation of administration.

To express their solidarity with Kashmiri Hindus HJJS adopted three days of KPs' exile in their annual alamanac having membership of 20 lakhs. These days—19th January-Holocaust

leges. Now when day to day problems have eased a bit Panun Kashmir has once again approached people of Maharashtra to contribute in the nation's fight against terrorism, he added. Sh Raina also thanked local organisers for their generous hospitality. He recalled how 150-200 Sadaks were all the time

Panun Kashmir Condoles Swami Sukh Ram's death

(From Page 1)

Saakshatkaar--throughout India. "Anantnag Nagbal is one amongst few shrines and temples that have been saved from the onslaught and contribution of the saints including Saint Sukh Ram cannot be ignored in this regard", he added.

Mr. Raina said that Panun Kashmir is in contact with Shankarcharya Shardaapeeth and Swami Madhav Dasji to defuse the situation so that attempts to divide the Hindus are frustrated. Sh Raina added that separatist and communal forces in Kashmir are engaged in a nefarious conspiracy to dent the new support structure created by Kashmiri Pandits in exile. He said that Kashmiri Pandits will ground the attempts to create wedge between Sadhu Samaj and Kashmiri Pandits or Hindu Samaj and Kashmir Pandits of which the later is a part.

Highlighting the bravery of Swamiji, Panun Kashmir Secretary Sh. B.L. Koul said that Swami Ji braved a number of kidnappings and not less than 18 grenade attacks in his effort to preserve the shrine. "Sadhuji not only kept the Nagbal Shrine open but also was instrumental in frustrating the attempts of encroachment of nearby Gautam Nag Shrine", he added.

Decrying attempts to create a wedge between Kashmiri Hindus and Sadhu Samaj, Mr B.L. Koul said, Kashmiri Hindus, including Pandits of Anantnag, have long history of serving the Sadhus and seeking spiritual guidance from the Sadhus.

Terming the report about suicide as stunning, Mr Koul said that the matter is sub-judice and the organisation does not want to comment on the issue. Mr BL Koul said, "If at all any disrespect has occurred to his personality on behalf of any member of our community wittingly or unwittingly, we tender our unqualified apologies to the Sadhus and Saints".

Sh. O.N. Trisal, President ASKPC, said that Sadhus and Saints have been visiting Kashmir from times immemorial and Pandits have always been serving them with reverence and seeking their spiritual guidance. He referred to visits Adi Guru Shankaracharya and Swami Vivekananda in this regard. Mr Trisal condemned attempts vested interests to divide Hindu Community. Vowing not to allow anybody to disrupt the unity, Panun Kashmir leaders reaffirmed that Hindu Society is united despite, the diversity it has nourished over the millennia.

Given below is the speech delivered by Dr. Durgesh Samant, National Spokesperson of the HJJS on the occasion of inaugural function of the exhibition at Balgandharva Natyamandir, Pune from 22nd April 2007 to 24th April 2007.

Firstly, Let me narrate you an incident that occurred two months ago. We had conducted a camp at Sambhajinagar (Aurangabad), two months ago. It was a two-day camp conducted for members of the Warkari sect and certain other ardent Hindus. The objective of being that few people in the society who wish to contribute their bit should know all aspects of Hinduism, and the various problems that it faces today. The first topic we had presented was **‘Problems faced by Kashmiri Hindus’**. We had an exhibition prepared by **‘Foundation against Continuous Terrorism (FACT)’** depicting the difficulties faced by Kashmiri Hindus and the terrorism in Kashmir at the same venue. Incidentally a displaced Kashmiri Hindu Shri. Bhat had come to see the exhibition. I took him to the aforesaid audience and told him that if you say something it will be better. This platform is for you. You can take all the time you need and open up your heart to the audience. Shri. Bhat and his father narrated the history of Kashmir, change in circumstances and the happenings in Kashmir.

About such photo exhibitions, in some places, we were questioned about why we are doing all this? What is the need for it, etc? We said ‘You see the photo exhibition and then ask yourself this question.’ Any one, in whom the viewing of that moment does not stir a heartfelt response, should question if he is human at all. Such is the reality. Such a person should ask himself if he is worthy of prostrating before any deity in the name of being a Hindu.

Today, let us introspect, let us honestly ask ourselves - why am I witnessing this situation? What is the cause? Who is responsible for it? Can I publicly declare these causes without fear? If I cannot because I do not have the courage, then there is still something for me to achieve in this life. Am I doing anything to bring about a change in this situation? You ought to look within yourself for the answers to these questions even as you take a look at the exhibition. At many places the exhibitions about the mass murders of the Jews by the Nazis are there. Perhaps we Hindus do not want any reminders of unhappiness, we try to keep them under wraps, and let go of the bad memories - this is wrong.

In 2005 to commemorate its 601 year of liberation, Auschwitz

‘Satya ka Sakshaatkaar’ makes all Hindus introspect! - Dr. Durgesh Samant



Dr. Durgesh Samant -National Spokesperson Hindu Jan Jagrut Samiti.

International Committee invited German Chancellor Shroder. Speaking on that occasion. He said that all these events are a part of our national identity, and we will never forget them. If we wish to protect culture and human values, we should constantly remember how they were trampled upon. Only then can we safeguard culture and human values. He went on to further say that the Happenings in the Auschwitz camp leave no doubt about the existence of the devil. The devil is not a political or scientific entity; yet, witnessing such episodes should leave us in no doubt of its existence.

In spite of these incidents from the past repeatedly haunting us, behaving as if we have not heard of it, understood it, or seen it, is the biggest delusion. On 19th January 1990, it was ordered at various places that all Hindus should leave Kashmir. It was publicly declared and advertised in the newspapers and the entire Hindu society had to leave Kashmir. Those Hindus made a great sacrifice. In order to save their religion, with their own hands, they cut their ties with their land, their memories, and their childhood and relocated themselves to other places. In one sense, it is laudable that even today, such remarkable sacrifices are made for the sake of religion. But, in another sense, we should be ashamed of such happenings. We ought to be saddened that we have been reduced to this condition. Are we calling this a cultured world or an uncivilized one? And what is the reason for the Hindus in a Hindu predominant nation to be reduced to this state?

I explained to you the reason why such exhibitions are held all over the world. After seeing this exhibition, you too should feel that these pictures should always remain in our sight and in our mind. Only then is there any possibility of us doing anything to protect Hinduism.

The question arises about how these things were happening so openly on such a large scale, ? Atrocities were being perpetrated of such

magnitude and what were we doing? How did news of these events not reach us? If it did, why was the gravity of it not conveyed to us? Why didn't we wake up? One of the reasons was that those who understood the matter did not speak of it. They behaved as if they had noticed nothing, heard nothing and understood nothing and the fruit of this continues from 1990 till 2007.

The destruction of the lineage of the Hindus that took place over there is spreading beyond that particular area. Terrorism is knocking at our door. The mass media has not played its role. Remember that the media that we trust did not inform us of these atrocities to its fullest extent. Do not harbor any faith that they will do so in the future. We have to gear up to spread this information

ourselves. If these conditions have to change, each of us has the responsibility of utilizing our capabilities completely.

Often, I meet people who express a different point of view or provide fresh insight about such problems. I often ask them why they don't write it out and send it to any newspaper. Take up writing with the conviction that at least one person will read it. If we are unable to do this, we can never develop the mental strength to resist terrorism.

While publishing Sanatan Prabhat, we do not bother about how many copies are sold. We concentrate on the fact that the thought to be presented is of paramount importance. Because even if we accumulate a large number of readers, but if they do not get a clear idea, the number has no value. But if you keep

impressing on society pure thoughts, and point out the road ahead, what is right and what is not, the numbers will swell. Most importantly, the clarity of thought is a guarantee of reaching the goal. Seeing this photo exhibition should awaken in us thoughts of what we are going to do in this regard. Draw some inspiration from it. This photo exhibition will remain in Pune City for a few more days. Later, it will be held at Pimpri - Chinchwad too, followed by Dharashiv and Jalgaon.

If even 5 relatives of each person can be motivated to at least come and see this exhibition, it will be worth all the painstaking efforts of Dr. Ajay Chungoo and his volunteers. This photo exhibition is a result of their great sacrifice and will definitely cast an impression on your soul.

Report Submitted by HM Ansari Working Group is disappointing

fundamental rights-the report (Contd. from Page 5) suggests. How terrorism tears apart the civil society, destroys fundamental freedoms and creates a civil society which acts as a sanctuary for violence has not been the concern guiding the recommendations for helping the victims of militancy.”

Sir, we have seen how big powers have used human rights as a vehicle to intervene and subvert the independence of those countries who came out of the colonial yoke and won freedom. With imperial motives such countries devised a selective paradigm of human rights which concerned itself primarily with state abuse and excesses. It appears our own govt has the same paradigm of human rights. Entire human rights concern of the government seems to be aimed to generate a selective state specific sensitivity. It is an apologetic and masochist approach. Sir, Universal Charter on Human Rights clearly and unambiguously states that human rights should be upheld by the state, organs of the society and the individuals. Nothing so far has been done to sensitise the civil society about the menace of terrorism. There has been no education of the organs of society whatsoever as to what are the implications when terrorism takes roots in a civil society. People need to be told why terrorism cannot be justified whatever be its value basis and motivation.

Organs of the society need to be sensitised so that they mobilise civil society against terrorism. Process of accountability needs to be created for those organs of society which legitimise terrorism, glorify it or act as indirect abettors”.

“Government has chosen to fight terrorism tying its one hand. I am sure if people are adequately educated about the crippling strains terrorism, generates on the law and order situation it will widen the moral space for government action against terrorism. The excesses which get committed during state action will then be placed in proper perspective while government disciplines its own instruments to stop excesses. In such a way public over-reaction will be minimised.”

"Sir, the government has time and again talked about the dangerous situation at the ground created by terrorism. It has talked about subversion of government agencies by the terrorist sympathisers. It has talked about the atmosphere of intimidation at the ground. How can local enquiry commissions operate fairly in such an atmosphere. Can a witness or an evidence which is in favour of government or security forces muster courage and voluntarily put forward its views to the enquiry commissions. The security forces penalised for human rights violations have yet to get a fair trial".

"Sir, the recent campaigns

unleashed in Kashmir valley on custodial killings, Afzal Guru verdict and demilitarisation are aimed to reduce the moral space for state action, demonise the state and present Kashmir as an occupied territory. Out of more than one thousand and five hundred alleged cases of excesses by the security forces and other government agencies more than 95% have proven to be false. Have we ever tried to look into as to who rakes up these false allegations. What is the motivation of such forces? What are their resources? The campaign on Afzal Guru has been no less than a contempt of Supreme Court. Why does government prefer to remain as a mute spectator to overground secessionist campaigns? The working group dealing with issue of militancy has chosen to broadly ignore these issues. It is intriguing that the recommendations of the Working Group on confidence building measures emanate from a paradigm which is alien.”

I have chosen to speak briefly on the recommendations of only one Working Group for the reasons already explained.

I once again reiterate that I dissociate from the recommendations of the Working Group on confidence building measures”.

Thank You.

Dr. Ajay Chungoo
Chairman
Panun Kashmir

By Raman Kumar Bhat

Crisis in Kashmir continues to defy solution, not due to complexity of the problem but because the Indian political leadership has allowed itself to become prisoner of myths, assiduously promoted by the vested interests inimical to Indian interests in Kashmir. Such expressions- 'Maximum autonomy, short of secession', 'Sky is the limit', 'dialogue within the framework of *Insaniyat*', 'borders are irrelevant', 'we have to give something to Kashmiris to address their alienation and accommodate their aspirations', etc. indicate how the separatists and their apologists in Indian civil society continue to dictate the discourse on Kashmir.

Kashmir problem has three dimensions one, it is part of nonsecularisation of Indian Muslim Community. If in Kashmir it manifests as secessionism, elsewhere it presents as cultural separatism. Legacy of two-nation theory, pursuance of religious identity politics by the Valley's political leadership, rise of Jamaat Islami as a significant force and the impact of global Pan-Islamism have not left Kashmiris untouched. These processes have acted as a brake on the process of secularisation in Kashmiri Muslim society. How a weak secular society be a willing partner in secular nation-building? Many solutions that are being flaunted would ultimately strengthen communal consciousness in Kashmir and further deepen alienation. Kashmiri alienation is actually the manifestation of a weak secular consciousness.

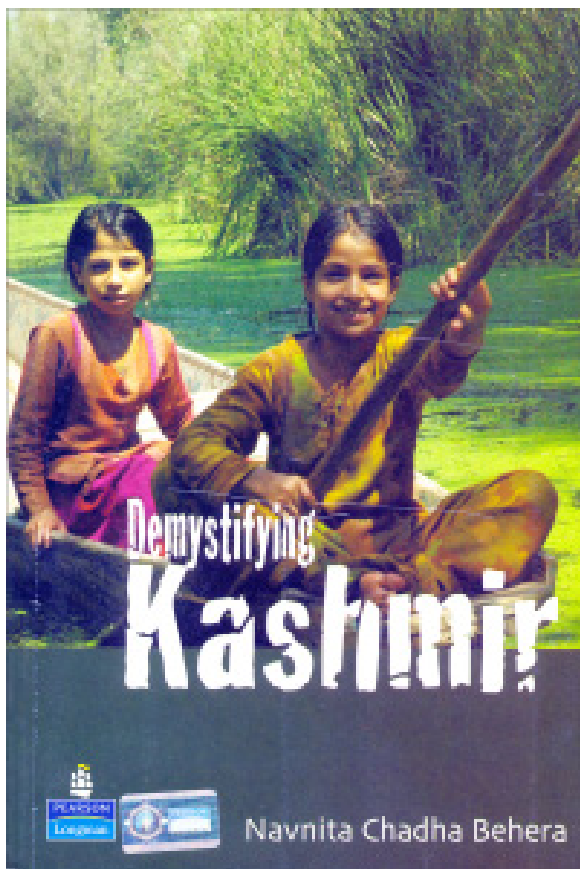
The second dimension is the issue of crossborder terrorism, directly sponsored by Pakistan. As long as Pakistani Military-Civil oligarchy continues to visualise Pak security in terms of bleeding India how can there be peace with Pakistan. Whatever may be the compulsions for the latter to remain engaged in 'peace process', there is as yet, no evidence about a paradigm shift in Pakistan's approach. Countering Pakistan's proxy war adequately and building strong deterrents to immobilise internal support structures of subversion in Kashmir remain India's best options. Weak signals emanating from Delhi that India was willing to accommodate Pakistan and Kashmiri separatists 'for the sake of eternal peace' would convey that terrorism pays.

Lastly, it is the internal dimension that has received little attention, both by the scholars as well as the Indian political leadership. Kashmir has been projected as a problem between Kashmiri Muslims and the Indian state. Plurality of the state, where other communities strongly opposed to secessionism outnumber Kashmiris, is overlooked. J&K is treated as a homogenous entity and Kashmiris as a monolithic group. In the past the Central government would reach a settlement with a section of Kashmiri leadership and leave the people of state to their own fate. This only worsened the situation. By addressing the internal dimension the Centre can facilitate the return of peace but also help keep external interference at bay.

'Demystifying Kashmir', authored by Navneet Chadha Behera breaks new ground by dissenting from the myths woven around Kashmir imbroglio over the past two decades. The book's main value lies in that it tries to grapple with the internal dimension in a way that has never been attempted before. The author makes two profound statements. One, 'the deeply plural character of J&K society is at the heart of the secessionist movement in the state and helps to account for secessionist demands as well as failures'. Secondly, Chaddha warns that while addressing the alienation of Kashmiris, one should not lose sight of the political aspirations of other communities as well. She says, "They had a great deal to do with the failure of the Kashmiris' secessionist agenda in the 1950s and the 1990s and are a critical factor in shaping the future peace process". Since 1947 the Valley leadership has been successful in manipulating a political dispensation that has effectively marginalised non-Kashmiri regions of Jammu and Ladakh, besides Kashmiri Pandits and Gujjars. This has weakened the nationalist response in the state. The Centre has been more willing to listen and accommodate the interests of Valley's political elite. Even today, be it the issues of delimitation of constituencies or the solutions that are being peddled the patriotic groups continue to receive the raw deal.

Navnita Behera has quoted extensively from history to show how Kashmiri leadership has been pursuing hegemonist and sectarian policies. She remarks that the National Conference had sought the status of an autonomous republic in the Indian Union to safeguard and nurture the interests of Kashmiris. But reversing the logic in J&K Kashmiris the majority community were

'Demystifying Kashmir' explodes many myths



reluctant to share political power with Jammu and Ladakh...**"Sheikh Abdullah was not prepared to concede to Jammu and Ladakh those very rights and privileges that he himself had demanded from the Indian state, which were not to be interpreted as a step towards separatism but as a 'mutual accommodation of each other's viewpoint'".**

The Constituent Assembly (dominated by NC) had created a unitary state with a clear concentration of powers in the Valley through **disproportionate representation** in both the constituent Assembly and the State Assembly. In 1951 in 45 out of 49 seats Praja Parishad contested the nomination papers were rejected on flimsy technical grounds, **"thereby subverting the democratic process and denying Jammu a voice in shaping the future political system"**.

Secondly, constitutionally and politically the state had no systems of checks and balances. The slogans of despotic regime—"one party," 'one leader', turned "Parliamentary democracy, resting on the principle of majority rule, into a 'Kashmiri rule.' Chadha remarks, **"The Unitary state structures and parochial policies of the NC government favoured the Valley in political, economic and administrative matters, leaving Jammu and Ladakh feeling neglected and marginalised, and prepared to seek separation from the Valley"**.

Breaking up the Hindu-majority district of Udhampur, Opposition to rehabilitation of refugees from PoK, imposition of Urdu in Jammu and Ladakh, closing down of Sanskrit Research Department etc. by the Sheikh Abdullah regime soon after 1947, have been quoted to show how NC pursued sectarian politics. Ladakh too bore the brunt of communal governance. Chadha records, **"The studied indifference of the state government in transferring Zaskar to Leh tehsil was in marked contrast to its willingness to grant Doda the status of a separate Muslim-majority district in the Jammu region"**. No allocation was made in the first budget for Ladakh's development, the region had no separate plan until 1961. Sheikh Abdullah began differentiating between the "Muslims and non-Muslims of the State"—**'It is the Muslims who have to decide accession with India and not the non-Muslims as the latter have no**

place in Pakistan and because their only choice is India..."Chadha observes," His conception of the Kashmiri identity had changed from "the people of J&K state" to mainly the "Kashmiri Muslims".

Institutionalised discrimination against Jammu and Ladakh forced these regions to raise demands for regional autonomy. **Instead of responding to their legitimate grievances, the Valley leadership "sought to undercut the political base of groups demanding regional autonomy by creating alternative political alignments along communal lines"**. The author indicts 'secular, progressive', GM Sadiq regime for sowing seeds of communalisation in Ladakh in 1960s. She says, "to scuttle this movement (for regional autonomy), Chief Minister GM Sadiq promoted a new leadership of lamas by favouring Kushak Thiksey over Kushak Bakula and at the same time promoting the Muslim leadership of Kargil over the Buddhist leadership of Leh...Sheikh Abdullah's decision to divide Ladakh into 2 districts in 1979—Leh and Kargil-created yet another communal faultline in Ladakh, between its Buddhist and Muslim identity" Chadha dismisses Hill Council, saying it has failed to adequately address local issues.

The author has situated political assertion of regional identities in a historical and sociological perspective. On the issue of Displaced Pandits she exposes the RAC (Regional Autonomy Committee) appointed by NC government in 1996 by arguing, **"The committee simply disregarded the Pandit's demand for Panun Kashmir without offering an alternative strategy or framework for redressing their grievances and securing their social, cultural, economic and political rights"**.

Initially, though Gujjars gained political prominence when Sheikh Abdullah tried to rope in the Muslim majority districts of Rajouri and Poonch and the Kashmiri-speaking Muslims of Doda into a "Greater Kashmir" in the late 1970s. Patriotic Gujjar community was then given short shrift by Kashmir-dominated State governments. ST status was not given to them until 1991. As a result, Gujjars are now entitled to representation in proportion to their population in the legislature, local self-governing institutions, government services, and professional and technical institutions. Since Gujjars live in hilly areas, the community can be given effective representation only by carving out Gujjar dominated areas as **Hill Constituencies**. Their demand for reservation of constituencies, to which they are entitled, is also not being acceded to. The Gujjars fear threat to their interests from patronisation of Paharis by Valley leadership.

The author has done good homework to expose the designs behind the demand for Autonomous Hill Council for Chenab region. She remarks, **"Critics view the demands for councils by the Muslim-majority districts of Rajouri, Poonch, and Doda as part of a larger plan to break Jammu's plural identity and reinforce the communal faultline within the Jammu region"**. Their claims are in part driven by the desire to undermine the influence of the Gujjar and Bakkarwal leaders in the region. Perhaps that is why the Gujjars do not support the demand for an Autonomous Hill Council for Rajouri and Poonch".

Chadha is scathing in its indictment of NC government appointed RAC—"the committee sought to protect only the "Muslim interests" to the total exclusion of other ethnocultural, ethnolinguistic and ethnoreligious minorities. While it was ready to lean backwards to accept the demand of Jammu region's Muslim minority for separate provincial status, it did not even mention the demand of the Hindu minority in the Valley-Kashmiri Pandits- for a Panun Kashmir...Nor did it take notice of the Zaskar Buddhists long-standing demand for these areas to be brought under Leh's administration. Likewise, it glossed over the fact that Doda district had a significant Hindu minority alongside its Muslim (58%) majority and made no provision for safeguarding the minority's political interests".

Arguing that attempts to superimpose communal boundaries would be divisive the author visualises solution **'in providing a responsive government, rather than a sharpening the communal boundaries'**. Strongly advocating that power sharing be inclusive, Navnita Chadha recommends that **'It is imperative for the Central government to reach out to the minority communities in the peace process and ensure that their political interests are safeguarded in any final settlement'**. It is too early to say whether Round Table Conference would deliver anything to non-Kashmiri groups and other minorities. Anyway, 'Demystifying Kashmir', is bound to provoke debate on strategic blunders the Indian political leadership continues to commit in Kashmir.

Q: What decisions Maharaja took soon after General Janak Singh assumed the Office?

SS: Maharaja's govt sent telegraphic requests to GOI at New Delhi and the Govt. in waiting of Pakistan at Karachi requesting them to agree to Stand Still Agreement with J&K Govt. This agreement was to enable J&K State to receive from either government the services, the commodities and essential supplies being received hitherto. Karachi responded readily to this request. On 12th August J&K Govt. announced a 'Stand Still Agreement' with Pakistan government to be formed two days later. New Delhi's reply was that an authorised representative of Maharaja's government may be sent to New Delhi for detailed discussions to agree to Stand Still Agreement. There is nothing on record to indicate whether any reply was sent by J&K Govt. and the matter never got finalised.

KS: What was the Impact of 'Stand Still Agreement' in general?

SS: As for as the lives of people were concerned absence of Stand Still Agreement with New Delhi did not affect general public. All essential supplies like Petrol, Oil and Lubricants, Food Grains, Sugar, Salt, Textiles and the like were supplied either from or through the area that became Pakistan (via Rawalpindi). Similarly, all essential services like Posts and Telegraph, Telephones, Banking etc. were also directly connected with areas which formed Pakistan. Only currency which was British currency, was a matter concerning public which was being supplied by New Delhi.

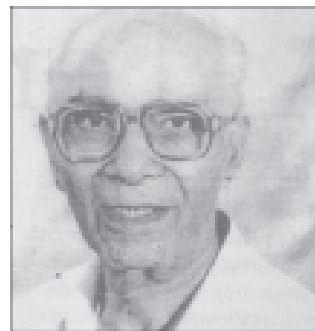
The only all-weather link of State of J&K with British India was through Jehlum Valley to Rawalpindi which also was the rail head for Kashmir Valley. There was the only rail service with J&K, connecting Jammu Tawi with Sialkot which later became part of Pakistan. There was no all weather road connecting Jammu Tawi with Kathua, on the border between J&K and Punjab (British India). A dusty Kaccha road linked Jammu and Kathua. On it an irregular 14 seater passenger bus or a truck used to take more than 14 hours from Jammu to Kathua, at times it would take more than two days.

It is obvious that Pakistan government took advantage of these facts of connectivity or lack of it. One reason for Pakistan's prompt decision to agree to a 'Stand Still Agreement' could be that she wanted to make J&K totally dependent for all essential supplies on Pakistan and then use it as a weapon for coercion and intimidation against Maharaja to accede to Pakistan.

KS: There was perhaps no definite document on Stand Still Agreement. How did 14/15th August impact on J&K?

SS: There is no written down 'Stand Still Agreement' anywhere. Only copies of telegrams may be in

Sati Sahni— A Conversation-IV



Shri Sati Sahni is one of the most esteemed members of Journalist profession in J&K. In a career spanning six decades, he has combined high professionalism with deep integrity. As a War Correspondent he holds the rare distinction of covering four major wars--1948, 1962, 1965 and 1971. Sh. Sahni has also been an ace photographer. His rich collection of photographs would be envy of any top person in the profession of photo-journalism. As a respected and veteran member of the profession he continues to guide and inspire new and upcoming Journalists. Sh. Sahni has not only been a witness to an era, he has also been an active participant in many events. His ringside view of many events would be valuable for students of contemporary history of J&K. His publications include 'My Dismissal' and 'Kashmir Underground'. Kashmir Sentinel had a detailed conversation with Sh. Sati Sahni (SS). We are publishing here the fourth part of the Conversation. The 1st, IIrd & IIIrd part of Conversation were carried in Kashmir Sentinel issues of September 2006, December 2006 & May 2007, respectively.

--The Editor

archives. On 15th August, 1947 there was neither hoisting of India Tricolour in Srinagar nor celebrations of any sort were organised. Instead on 14th August on the day on which Pakistan came into being Pak flag was ceremonially hoisted over General Post Office (GPO) building, situated at the Bund at Srinagar. The spectators saluted the flag. I was one of the spectators present. GPO also housed one Telegraph office which technically was being looked after by State Telegraph Office. Telegraphic system or Telephone Exchanges within the State of J&K were under State government. Present CTO building was built in 1960s. After accession there was administrative transfer, it became part of All India Service.

KS: Pakistan resorted to economic strangulation and attacks in border areas through its irregulars. Was this aimed at coercing Maharaja into acceding to Pakistan?

SS: The period of uncertainty started in Srinagar since the flow of supplies became irregular from Pakistani territory. Scarcity of commodities was felt in the market. The railway link with Jammu had been stopped, only limited quantities were being allowed to be transported from Rawalpindi to Srinagar. Petrol, Diesel and Kerosene rationing was started in early September. Scarcity of sugar and salt was discernible, although rations of foodgrains were available normally through the ration depots of the State government on family ration tickets called by locals as 'Chendi'. This led to hoarding in every household and the rates of essential goods started soaring. In the meantime under a well thought out strategy Pak government started economic squeeze of J&K to put public pressure on Maharaja to accede to Pakistan. In this connection two factors are worth noting. Alongside economic strangulation the demobbed residents of Poonch and Rajouri area from the British Indian Army were provided arms and given direction to create law and order situation in the areas of Jammu province adjoining Pak territory. The situation was created where there was insufficient

police force in those areas, so personnel of the State forces had to be deployed to protect the lives of the common people and the property of the state. The J&K State forces had just 11-12 thousand persons in uniform, which was less than a regular division. This had to take care of vast areas of Maharaja's territory from Gilgat to Kathua and from Karakoram to Muzaffarabad. Brig. (later Major General) HL Scott was Chief of Staff of State Forces on 15/8/47. Due to exigencies of requirement or may be on account of other reasons he divided the state forces in smaller numbers like penny packets, dispersing these along the border with Pakistan. The dispersal was such that at no place these forces would have been able to hold any determined attack. It seems that there was a design behind this because at no place where attack of unruly rebel elements was launched the State forces detachments were able to defend the general public or even themselves. In a period of 49 days 57 incidents were reported from the State border with Pakistan in Jammu province. These reports used to be received by the Army Headquarters at Srinagar and a copy was passed on to the District Magistrate, Srinagar (Sh.. MK Dhar) who was also Governor of Kashmir province. Copies of these reports were made every evening and personally delivered at the residence of Kunwar Nichint Chand (Maharani Tara Devi's brother), who used to stay at Durga Nag. He was expected to deliver them personally to Maharaja every night. It was certain that the Maharaja was kept informed with the developing situation day after day but it seems he was helpless. On 22nd September Brig. Scott submitted a detailed report about the situation along the border with Pakistan. This report painted a very bleak picture of the situation. It hinted at large-scale incursions soon expected from across the border. Intelligence

reports had been received of large scale preparations across the border.

KS: How the pressure was being built on Maharaja to decide the question for Accession either way?

SS: The situation was deteriorating day by day. Pressure was building on Maharaja Hari Singh for reconciliation with NC leadership and secondly, to take a decision once for all to accede to either of the two dominions. On surface it was a letter of apology written by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah to Maharaja Hari Singh expressing his loyalty to his person and to his dynasty. The other were the circumstances building up both at New Delhi, Srinagar and Jammu. Muslim Conference became active and on 22 September at a special one day convention it passed a unanimous resolution asking Maharaja Hari Singh to accede to dominion of Pakistan. This convention was presided over by Ch. Hameedullah Khan, Vice-President of J&K Muslim Conference and also leader of Muslim Conference Legislature Party in Praja Sabha.

From Delhi it was Congress party which had suggested time and again that to meet the emerging situation in Kashmir in light of perceived threats from Pakistan Sheikh Abdullah and others facing trial for treason may be released without condition. It was early September. Sheikh Abdullah was in jail in Baderwah. He was transferred to Badami Bagh around middle of September, restrictions were relaxed soon after his shifting to Badami Bagh. He was finally released on 29th September from detention.

On 1st October he addressed a massive public meeting at Hazuri Bagh, later renamed as Iqbal Park. I had the opportunity to listen to his speech. He said three important things. One, 'We should sink our differences to face the situation'. Secondly, 'the first priority was to gain people's rule'. And lastly, 'which country to accede to people's government will take that decision'. One thing which came out clearly in his speech was his commitment to

secularism, socialism and total opposition to two-nation theory. Two days later he went to New Delhi.

On 4th of October Sheikh Abdullah addressed a press conference where he reiterated his stand on accession, secular politics and representative government.

KS: Maharaja Hari Singh changed Major General Janak Singh as well as his Chief of State forces, Brig. Scott.

SS: As events were moving quite apace after Sheikh Sahib's release Maharaja Hari Singh was not too happy with the handling of situation either on military front or on the administrative front. Major General Janak Singh was replaced by Mr. Justice Meherchand Mahajan, who assumed office on 15th October, 1947. After Brig. Scott's report of 22nd September the Maharaja also replaced Brig. Scott as Chief of Staff of State Forces with the next senior most officer Brig. Rajender Singh. Maharaja made personal request to Shri Mahajan, asking him to take over as new Prime Minister of J&K State.

Soon after demitting the office Brig. Scott went over to Rawalpindi to report to Pak headquarters.

KS: There was Dr. Taseer Mission to Kashmir. What it was all about?

SS: In the first week of October Sheikh Sadiq Hassan, President of Provincial Committee of Muslim League, Punjab and Dr. MD Taseer arrived in Srinagar and stayed for 3-4 days. Among others they had two long meetings with Sheikh Sahib. 1st meeting was preliminary, the second one was long. The purpose behind their visit was to meet politically important individuals including those in NC and Muslim Conference, in the administration and among intellectuals to find out the mood of the people, the attitude towards Pakistan and to create situation for Kashmir's accession to Pakistan. It was learnt then that Taseer who had been friendly with Sheikh Sahib in earlier years had turned from a liberal intellectual into a Muslim League ideologue. He tried

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Sati Sahni—A Conversation

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to pressurise Sheikh Abdullah to join forces with Muslim Conference and visit Lahore and Karachi for detailed negotiations. It seems Sheikh Abdullah lost his cool when Taseer repeatedly wanted to have an assurance from him that he would throw his weight behind Kashmir's accession to Pakistan. Sheikh Abdullah stuck to his ground that people's government will ultimately decide about accession. Reports in Pak press then had quoted Dr MD Taseer as saying "Sheikh Sahib, Time is running out. If you don't listen to us we will use other means". Sheikh Sadiq and Dr. Taseer hurriedly left Srinagar for Lahore to report to Muslim League High Command.

KS: Col. AB Shah was also sent to Kashmir.

SS: On 17th October the Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan deputed Col. AB Shah, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs to Srinagar to meet Maharaja and his Prime Minister, MC Mahajan. It was learnt that he had brought with him the Instrument of Accession drawn up by Pak government for J&K's Accession to Pakistan. All that was left for the Maharaja was to put his signatures with date on it. The meeting between MC Mahajan and Col. Shah was not very pleasant. Maharaja declined to meet Col. Shah, fearing that he may be forced to put his signatures on it. Meantime Pak government invited Prime Minister Mahajan to Karachi for firming up relations between J&K on one hand and Pakistan on the other. It seems on return of Col. Shah the die was cast. Pak govt, including its *Governor General, Mr Jinnah* were impatient. Since all preparations had already been made in case Col. Shah's mission failed, early on the morning of October 22nd invasion of J&K started at Domel. At that time it was not Muzaffarabad but Domel which was militarily important. Simultaneous attacks were launched at many places in Jammu province as well.

KS: Why did State Forces fail to counter the Pakistani invasion?

SS: At Muzaffarabad, Kohala and Domel only one depleted battalion of State forces under Col. Narain Singh was stationed, this battalion consisted of Muslim personnel and officers. Their loyalties had already been won over by Pakistan. Col. Narain Singh's 4th battalion was stationed at Domel, which was also battalion headquarters. This battalion had 50% Muslim and 50% non-Muslim personnel. When Pakistan attacked the Muslim component of the battalion revolted and joined forces with invaders within first two hours. Col. Narain Singh was killed but before he died he was able to send a wireless message to Srinagar State Forces Headquarters about the

Pakistani invasion and the estimated strength of the enemy. Although officially no details came out of what happened in Domel and Kohala during the first 60 odd hours of the invasion. Reports gathered from the soldiers and the civilians who escaped killings and massacres spoke of barbaric behaviour of Pakistani invaders—mostly tribals under the command of regular army officers.

KS: Brig. Rajender Singh gave tough fight to Pak invaders. How did it help?

SS: After pillaging Muzaffarabad and occupying Domel the invaders proceeded towards Garhi. They used motorised transport to travel along Jhelum Valley Road and also proceeded along the two mountain ridges on either bank of river Jhelum, thus providing cover to the main attacking forces. By the evening of October 23rd the invaders had come close to Uri and reports reached New Delhi from Srinagar about the Pakistani invasion and the progress they had made up the Jhelum Valley towards Baramulla.

On 23rd itself Maharaja Hari Singh ordered the Chief of Staff, Brig. Rajender Singh to take all the available force at Srinagar and proceed to Uri to hold the enemy at bay. Maharaja's orders were "hold the enemy to the last man, to the last bullet". The Brigadier could gather no more than 150 individuals who were transported to Baramulla and as far as possible towards Uri. They took positions in and around Uri. On 24th evening, the day of Dussehra late in the evening the city of Srinagar was plunged into darkness. Rumours swept the city that Pakistanis had captured the Mahura power station. It transpired that they had not captured it that night but one of the Pak artillery shots had damaged major part of the power house.

The going off of the only power station should normally have resulted in panic in Srinagar but a stoic calm prevailed. Perhaps the general public did not realise the magnitude of danger. That night in New Delhi it was learnt later full report had been received about Pakistani invasion, the strength of the invaders and the imminent danger to Baramulla and Srinagar.

KS: How did New Delhi react?

SS: But New Delhi was in no position to come to the assistance of Maharaja or his government

because it was not part of Indian dominion and Pakistan could have objected to any Indian assistance as invasion of 'Independent Sovereign J&K State'.

Maharaja Hari Singh was advised by New Delhi to take a decision about accession to India if he desired Indian assistance for defence of J&K State. An emissary was sent to meet the Maharaja in Srinagar since the Maharaja had expressed desire to discuss details of the Instrument of Accession. We learnt a day later that Meherchand Mahajan had accompanied VP Menon back to New Delhi the same day. VP Menon informed New Delhi about the gist of his talks with Maharaja.



The Historic Domel Bridge.

A hurried meeting of the Defence Committee of Gol was called. It was decided to send back Mr. Menon to Jammu to get Maharaja's signatures on Instrument of Accession. One significant fact is overlooked that Maharaja and his family did not "leave Srinagar in panic or out of fear". He was advised by Mr Menon to leave Srinagar that very night for Jammu because of the fear that if Pakistan invaders were able to reach Srinagar before Indian help could reach Srinagar Maharaja would have been forced to accede to Pakistan. On the morning of 26th October the Maharaja and his family had reached Jammu. Mr VP Menon accompanied by Meherchand Mahajan reached Jammu by Air. Shortly later, VP Menon flew back with the Instrument of Accession signed by Maharaja Hari Singh and a covering letter addressed to the Governor-General of India, Lord Mountbatten. Later in the evening of 26th of October the Defence Committee of Gol recommended acceptance of Accession of J&K to Indian dominion, clearing the way for troops to be sent to defend J&K State against aggression from Pakistan.

KS: How was Srinagar finally saved?

SS: On the night intervening 26/27th of October, a massive and a highly efficient mobilisation was organised and from dawn of October 27th the Indian troops were flown

to Srinagar. In Jhelum Valley the Pakistan invaders had overcome the resistance of brave detachment under the command of Brig. Rajender Singh, killing literally every individual including the acting Chief of Staff of the State Forces. This happened on the night of 25th October and 26th October.

The triumphant invaders advanced along the road, entering Baramulla around midnight of 26th/27th October. The rearguard action of small band of gallant soldiers of Brig. Rajender Singh had gained four days of precious time to enable the Indian troops to reach Srinagar in time to prevent its occupation by Pakistanis. For this supreme sacrifice Brig. Rajender Singh was awarded posthumously MahaVir Chakra, the first one to receive in Independent India.

KS: Baramulla suffered the worse.

SS: In Baramulla, a town of 14 thousand inhabitants the Pak invaders instead of pushing on to Srinagar got busy in killing and looting of the local population including Muslims and lost the golden opportunity of capturing Srinagar. Eyewitnesses reported later that over ten thousand persons were either killed or escaped into nearby forests from the Pakistan invaders. One of the most gruesome stories that we were told ten days later was of NC political worker, Mohammad Maqbool Sherwani.

KS: How was Sherwani killed?

SS: He used to travel between Srinagar, Baramulla and Sopore 2 or 3 times every day to keep NC leadership at Srinagar posted with the latest information and situation. After Pakistanis occupied Baramulla Sherwani was captured and was asked to lead a small force avoiding inhabited areas towards Srinagar. On learning about the intentions of invaders he declined to assist them. He was ordered to be killed. Sherwani was tied with ropes to an electric pole outside the local cinema hall, Pak tribals and soldiers pumped 14 bullets into his body killing him on the spot. He, however, refused to respond to the Pak call to shout 'Pakistan Zindabad'. This was told to Bakshi Gh. Mohammad by Sherwani's brother on liberation or Baramulla, which took place on 7th of November.

KS: What circumstances led to the formation of Emergency administration?

SS: After departure of Maharaja Hari Singh for Jammu all traces of administrative control in Srinagar seemed to evaporate. It seemed there was virtually no administration in control in Srinagar between 26th October and 31st of October. It was put quite graphically later that the Kashmir administration was picked up from Lal Chowk by NC leadership. This leadership virtually took control of Srinagar from the moment the Maharaja departed for Jammu. NC leadership under the command of vice-president of the party, Bakshi Gulam Mohd. had taken charge and were operating from the building of Palladium Cinema Hall in Lal Chowk. For three days i.e. on 27th, 28th and 29th of October the population of Srinagar kept staring at the skies throughout the day, because the planes bringing the troops used to land, deposit the troops and fly back for another sortie. This heartened the local residents who felt relieved that the danger of occupation by Pakistani troops and the general massacre was averted.

Since before acceptance of Instrument of Accession an informal understanding between Gol and the Maharaja had been arrived at to galvanise the people in general in defence of J&K State, it was agreed that a people's representative government may be formed.

Consequently, on 31st October an 11-member emergency administration under the leadership of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah came into being. The oath of office was administered to Sheikh Sahib in Secretariat building at Srinagar. The incongruity of Meherchand Mahajan continuing to head the government as the Prime Minister of J&K is incomprehensible. This duality lasted till March 15, 1948 when Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and members of his cabinet were sworn in as the proper government of J&K under J&K Constitution by the Maharaja. Shri Meherchand Mahajan went back to New Delhi, same day.

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Swami Ji -The Man and the Legend

It was sometime in 1958 our family came in contact with a saint of great merit, Paramhans Swami Poornanandji Saraswati. He was staying at Shesharma, a village on the outskirts of Udaipur district. He hailed from Kashmir. It was on our intense persuasion he agreed to stay with us.

Swamiji came from the well-known Dhar clan of Safakadal, Srinagar. He was born on 21st August, 1912. Few details are available about his family and the circumstances in which the family left its homeland. He had erased his original name from his horoscope. According to Prof. DK Bhatt of Udaipur university, who knew Swamiji intimately, the latter's father had held a high position in J&K State's revenue bureaucracy. He had good access to the ruler, Maharaja Partap Singh. When Swamiji was 10 days old, his family was involved in some dispute with their neighbours. They had to leave Kashmir and landed in Lahore. An influential member of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's clan was able to help the family return to Kashmir and get their property back. Swamiji's mother, sister and younger brother finally settled in Mumbai. When his mother died she had willed that the property of the family be divided equally among the three children. This was objected to by Swamiji's brother. Swamiji gave his share to his sister. As a revolutionary and as an ascetic Swami ji talked little about his personal life.

In 1922 some Kashmiri families were on Bharat Braman to visit different holy places. Swamiji, a student of 3rd standard then, too was in this group along with close elderly family member. The pilgrims also visited Omkareshwar on the bank of Narmada, near Khandwa. There is a famous seven-mother goddess temple (of Varahi, Chamunda, Brahmini, Vaisnavi, Indrani, Kaumari and Maheshwari). These temples are visited by people in large numbers throughout the year. At its Dheodi Ghat was an ashram of Govindanand Saraswati. On seeing Govindanandji Swami felt deeply impressed and expressed desire to stay at the ashram permanently. He made request to Govindanandji to take him as his disciple. To this Govindanandji

Kashmir has produced great sons, many of them remain unknown to the people. It has been our endeavor to trace out details about these outstanding Kashmiris. Recently, we got in touch with Razdan family of Udaipur. Paramhans Swami Poornanandji Saraswati, a freedom fighter used to stay with this family. Kashmir Sentinel had a detailed conversation with Dr. Tej Razdan, a scion of this family. We are reproducing this conversation for the benefit of our readers.
—The Editor

replied, "I make Gurus, not disciples." The precocious child replied, "Then make me a guru." Govindanandji told the close relative of the child, "Please tell the father of the boy that the child feels like staying here and as and when his father wishes to take him back he can do so."

Diksha :

Diksha started with Trikal Sandhya and Gayatri Purushacharan during the day. During night the students had to recite KALI beej MANTRA. The discipline was quite rigid, the boys had to take self cooked meals once a day and attend to every work themselves. Swamiji's other companion was Karim, a muslim by birth. When someone suggested to Govindanandji to give new name to Karim, he objected saying, "Karim is one of the Beej shabad of Maa shyama" hence no need to change the name. The Guru was closely linked to Holker Princely family of Indore.

After the formal training was over, Govindanandji asked Swamiji and Karim to jump into the struggle for India's freedom. Indore was a centre of revolutionary activities those days. Infact, the British govt. had implicated another Kashmiri Pandit, Jagar Nath Zutshi, a medical student in King George Medical College, in infamous Indore Conspiracy Case. It is not known whether Swamiji had any links with Zutshi's group, but he attended Tripuri session of Indian National Congress as a follower of Netaji Subash Bose. The latter had contested in this session for Presidentship against

Pattabhai Sitaramaya. Both Nehru and Gandhi opposed Bose. In his address Nehru said, "If Subash Babu becomes the President then all of us would be holding swords." Such a state-



Paramhans Swami Poornanandji Saraswati.

ment infuriated Swamiji and he lost his cool and brandished his pistol at Nehru. Seth JamnaLal Bajaj intervened and pleaded to Swami ji to calm down. The latter retired to his camp. In the evening Bose went to Swamiji and asked him, "Do you know what would have been the consequences had you pressed the trigger? Swamiji shot back, "It could have taken the life of Jawahar." Bose said, "Pt. Nehru is also our brother." Swamiji angrily asked, "Are we your enemy then?" In anger Swamiji threw away his pistol and other revolutionary paraphernalia at Bose. Bose was re-elected as Congress President.

Revolutionary activities :

Swamiji came to Bombay. Bose went to persuade him to join the revolutionary movement. A new group had been formed with its base at Midnapore.

Swamiji, Karim and some Laxmi were active members in Bose's new group. This group was operating all over the country. Swamiji's main role was to ferry arms, received from Germany, to different places in the country. His area of operation included Bombay, Mhow, Indore, Bhind, Morena, Agra, Delhi, Lahore, Peshwar and had warrants in 5-6 states. Swamiji was in active contact with princes to enlist their support for revolutionary freedom struggle and mobilize financial support from them. How and when Swamiji came to have alias of "PSPS" (Paramhans Swami Purnanand Saraswati) no details are available. Soon Swamiji became a legend for his activities. He used to travel on a motorcycle, (5HP BSA

with no shockers and springs) to different parts of the country. One day he was on way to Indore from Bombay. As he neared a chowk, 30-40 kms short of Indore, British Police engaged him in an encounter. Swamiji was hurt as a bullet pierced his right shoulder. He kept on driving motorcycle till he reached the fort before Indore. The guards on duty recognized him and sent a word around that PSPS was injured. He was taken inside and the gate was closed. The British had no idea about his whereabouts. Swamiji remained as the guest of Holker Ruling family under the care of RajVaid. It was here that he acquired knowledge of Ayurveda. For five years Swamiji's centre of activity was Indore.

Once Swamiji shot dead a senior British Officer in a train near Amritsar. The police cordoned

off the Railway station. Swamiji and his group managed to move out by riding their mobikes over railway bridge sleepers. They were helped by some Bijli Pahalwan to escape from Amritsar. On another occasion in Calcutta a British officer was killed. The officer used to visit a tawaif. The revolutionary group wanted to teach him a lesson. Though Swamiji was expert in scaling pipes, since the pipe was 1½" in diameter he could not scale it to reach the officer. A lady member did the job and the British officer was targeted. Once while returning from Burma to Calcutta in a Japanese ship they were sighted by the police when they were still 5 kms away from Calcutta. The revolutionaries jumped in to sea and swam across to Calcutta.

Many of INA members after the end of WWII went underground to escape trials by the British Govt. Swamiji went in to hiding in Assam. During his stay in Assam he did Bhairvi Sadhna. From here he moved to Sankaracharya Math in Nepal. There he met another legend Swami Kaidarh Puri ji and stayed with him for some time. Some believe he had stayed in Tibet also during this period. In 1949 Swamiji shifted to Udaipur. He met here one of his companions, probably Keshav Mukherjee at Pali, Rajasthan. Keshav was also staying underground. Swamiji asked him, "Tumhara khana pina to chal raha hai? (Are you able to sustain yourself)" Keshav recognized Swamiji and said, "O'PSPS how are you here?" Swamiji asked him if he had any problem he could stay with him. Many legends grew about SWAMIJI. One of these was that he carried a wireless set in his watch. He had given his watch for repairs. Some political worker instigated a CID Inspector to investigate it. The Inspector came to Swamiji for inquiry. Swamiji told him that he should tell his officer that his file was in Red Fort and cited number of the file also. He told him that the particular file would tell him everything about him. Swamiji was pro-Sovietland Pro-German but anti-American.

Shesharma Days: Before coming to Shesharma village, Swamiji had been staying at 2-3 different temples in

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Swami Ji -The Man and the Legend

(From Page 14)

Udaipur. At Shesharma temple he constructed a room for himself. It was here that he immersed himself in occult science research. He served in Panchayat Dept. as a store-keeper and was scrupulously honest. He disposed off cases quite promptly and displayed nationalist sentiment. This was the period when Late Mohan Lal Sukhadia was the Chief Minister. Some of his loyalists wanted a favour from Swamiji which the latter refused. Soon after, Swamiji was attacked by six goons while he was on his way to home from office. The goons carried swords and spears. Swamiji too gave them good thrashing. Later, they set his room on fire after few days. My father on hearing this went to see Swamiji and with great effort persuaded him to stay with us. It was probably 1956. Swamiji's attire was quite peculiar. He wore pheran with rope around the neck. He had pick cap (Kanwati) or British cap on his head. Swamiji used to tie four rows of Kaladar pasana (sort of a belt) around his waist with a big knife fixed in it. He wore strong ankle boots. The staff he carried had a steel ball at one end, while at the other end there was a spear. Swamiji looked a giant in disposition. He was a good cyclist too.

During his Shesharma days a

tough called Ladu Pahalwan had struck terror in Udaipur. . He used to stay in Khasodi. A sadhu lived nearby. One day Ladu threw a bottle of wine at Sadhu's hermitage. The sadhu narrated his tale of woe to Swamiji. He was infuriated and went to accost Ladu. Swamiji grappled Ladu and abused him, "O'Ladu why are you troubling Sadhu. Uptil now you were living on fish in the lake. Now these fish will live on you. . "Swamiji pulled him down on the bank and sat on his chest, put knife on his throat. This brought Ladu to his senses. He apologized to Swamiji and made peace with sadhu. Ladu was to confess later that he could not free himself from Swamiji's grip.

Scholarship:

'Swamiji was fluent in Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu, English Marathi and Bengali. His unpublished work includes:

1. Compilation of Durga Saptashati: This manuscript has complete 700 slokas commentary.

2. Srividyanav Tantra: This volume was worked upon by Swamiji while he was at Shesharma. It took him 6 months, working for 14-16 hours a day. An old lady Kesarbai alias KC looked after his food. The decoding of Srividyanav tantra. Swamiji worked out details of sunrays and correlation with Chakras. . Swamiji said rays changed every 4 secs. and their number is 21600 in 24 hrs. . This

work is in Sanskrit. He used to be seated on a moda and used 18-20 rims of paper on these calculations.

3. Mantrodhar of Kamkala

kali and Guhya Kali from Mahakalsahinta: In this Swamiji has elaborated the mantra of Kamkala and Guhyakali in 363 pages and 2418 pages respectively. It is said that in these mantras some words had been removed and or distorted at places. The Kamkala and Guhyakali mantras were thus incomplete. Swamiji worked out these distortions and filled the inadequacies. For work on Guhyakali he received inspiration from NathYogis.

4. Kamkala kali mantra: Swamiji also had elaborated on Kamkala mantras.

Usually Swami ji used to do Sadhna in night and used to keep the present Grah as sakshi for his sadhna. Once keeping Buddha Grah as sakshi for his Sadhna he said if he delays his sadhna by 3 mts. then he can go in total trance keeping Budha Grah as Sakshi. He was of openion that Buddha is 3 mts. behind the schidule as mentioned in all the Panchangs in India. He insisted Trajectory & timings of rise & setting of Buddha is 3 mt. late. The difference of 3 mts. would make Panchang unreliable. Later on Nasa, as per a report in Times of India, had also come to same conclusions after three months of Swami ji gave his openion based on his Sadhna. .

In his last years Swamiji was working on Holy Quran and The Bible but because of failing eyesight due to ARMD he could not complete these. He restricted himself to only Path-Puja and stopped all writing work. Throughout night he would be busy with puja. He would say that he used to receive divine orders to work on different subjects. Swamiji would say that mantras in Hinduism had to be charged first through recitation. He used to solve difficult questions in the night through Puja. . Swamiji had equal respect for all religions.

Swamiji practiced Sandhya in the evening and used to turn beads the whole night. As per Dr. Bhat he had the offer to become Sankaracharya but Swamiji politely declined the offer.

Swamiji even while sitting at home would be aware about ev-

everything happening outside. He would never talk about his family or personal life. Swamiji abhorred superstitions and charlatanism. He would say, "Any day you feel happy is an auspicious day." He hated clergy and godmen. Swamiji, however, believed in spirits and would suggest to lit some incense to turn these away. Swamiji would always tell us to lit agarbati on right corner while entering home. He had premonition about his death. He died of intracerebral haemorrhage and was buried a samadhiin mudra near cremation ground on 06-10-1996.

Srinagar Visit: Swamiji visited the place of his birth, Kashmir 2-3 times, once in the company of Trakroo family. He visited Tulmulla also. Somewhere in its vicinity he happened to meet a Muslim saint who was a devout shaivite. This saint had good collection of books on



Smadhi of Swami Ji

Shaivism. Swamiji had his lunch there. He was able to locate one of the rare books in this saint's library.

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Swami Ji's works

TO OUR READERS

To commemorate 60th Anniversary of India's Independence Kashmir Sentinel is bringing out a Special Number, with **National Security Challenges** as the theme. The next issue of *Kashmir Sentinel* will appear on 15th August, 2007. We also invite our readers to send write-ups on the above theme. These should be neatly typed in double space and should not exceed 1500 words.

--Editor

--Editor



Unpublished works of Swami Ji

Kashmir: Roots To Offshoots-I Tales and Legends of Aragam (Bandipore)

By Upender Ambardar

The legends, fables, oral history accounts, tales of supernatural spirits, heresy stories and stories of tutelary forest spirits etc. are deeply rooted in the traditional historical and cultural opinions of a place or a region. They are passed on to the posterity mostly orally and form a connecting link between the past and the present times. They sometimes become narratives of a particular place and it's people. They may possess elements of divinity and supernaturalism, though they may not be evidenced by documentary and supporting facts. They usually have an element of mystery and may possess a legendary pull and fascination for the native people.

In a plain speak, they can be said to be based on diverse emotional offshoots and legacy of centuries of faith and belief.

Aragam is an obscure picturesque village nestled in the lushness of the green foliage, being located about 50 kms from Srinagar on Srinagar-Bandipore route. Now a part of the newly carved-out Bandipore district, it is at a distance of five kms. from Bandipore town and about twenty five kms. from Sopore. Aragam mainly comprises of plain lands and is surrounded by wooded mountains on three sides, locally known as Animbar, Fakhnar and Lungmarg forests. The village derives its name from a riverlet which flows through the village. Adjacent to the lungmarg forests is a vast stretch of imposing grazing ground called 'Ziasun'-which is a lively ambience of pastoral life. The surrounding mountains support majestic pine and Deodar forests, whileas wild walnuts, chinar, willow and popular trees can be spotted everywhere in the village lands. Paddy constitutes the main staple crop of the village though isolated pockets also support maize and oil seeds.

Aragam also has substantial stretches of orchards bearing apple, pears, cherry, walnuts, and almond fruit trees. The village has about 2,000 households, out of which about ten were Kashmiri Pandit families; the rest being Muslims. All the Kashmiri Pandit families prior to their forced migration in 1990 were

agriculturists and orchardists with livestock forming an additional source of income. Aragam has a high literacy rate with most of the Pandit families serving in Government departments.

The family of late **Sh. Tika Lal Tikoo**, who was a head munshi in the forest department during Maharaja Hari Singh's time is a well-known family of the village. He had three sons, namely Sh Dwarika Nath Tikoo (agriculturist), Sh. Manmohan Tikoo, an ex-servicemen of the J&K light infantry and Sh Chaman Lal Tikoo, who retired from the BSF. The family of **Sh. Divram Tikoo** (agriculturist) likewise had three sons, namely Sh. Rattan Lal Tikoo (M.A, M.Ed) being first position holder in M.Ed) who served in the state education department, Sh Girdhari Lal Tikoo (a retired employee from the J&K Secretariat) and Sh. Kanya Lal Tikoo (M.Sc. Physics) a senior Lecturer in the State Education Department. Another Pandit family was that of **Sh Gulab Ram Raina** (agriculturist), who had two sons namely Sh. Somnath Raina (a retired police inspector) and Sh. Manmohan Raina, who worked in the Block Development Office. The remaining Pandit families were those of **Sh. Shamboo Nath Nehru, Sh. Madhusudhan**

Nehru and **Sh. Shyam Lal Nehru**, all of them being real brothers. Their children Sh.



Late Sh. Ved Lal Tikoo of Aragam Village.

Bushan Lal Nehru and Sh. Ashok Nehru served in the state departments. In contrast to the Tikoo families, the Nehrus are not original residents of the village. They are said to have migrated to Aragam village about two centuries back from Naroo village in tehsil Kishtwar of Doda district. The village Aragam has been a witness to three plunders locally known as 'Baem Loot', 'Pathan Loot' and 'Qabali Loot'. The 'Baem' were ferocious war tribe men of the frontier areas, who are said to have resorted to loot and plunder hundreds of

years back.

During the Qabali tribal raid in 1947, the Kashmiri Pandits of Aragam could save their skin as they fled to the adjacent mountains. But in the nearby Bandipore Kharpora town, nine members of a Kashmiri Pandit family of Sh. Sansar Chand Sadhu (Choudhari) were brutally murdered by the tribal men. They were lined-up in a row and subjected to a hail of bullets. Late Sansarchand nicknamed as Chowdhari was a well-known trader of his time, whose business interests extended upto Gilgit. He used to trade in 'Kishmish', dates, hazle and cashew-nuts business and in return would send Kashmiri spices to the frontier province.

As per the village lore of Aragam, about two and a half centuries back, a Kashmiri Pandit namely Sh. Gash Ram lived here and was endowed with spiritual powers. Besides being a known agriculturist, he had about nine hundred livestock. He had acrimonious relations with Akal Bhat, who in order to settle scores with him invited the professional tribal plunderers called 'Baem' to Aragam village.

To escape from the wrath, Gash Ram packed off his two daughters and two sons to the neighbouring place, while the remaining two sons along with

their entire livestock took shelter in the Lungmarg forests. They hid themselves in the mountain cave, which even today is now as Gash Ram's hut. Gash Ram was caught and as punishment he was suspended from a tree by means of his skull hair-luft (chaog).

Astonishingly, he survived the near-death ordeal. Later-on he was handed-over to a executioner for being killed. He bribed him by giving an appreciable part of his cattle and in the bargain got a lease of life. Sh. Gash Ram had five sons--Sahaj Ram, Prakash Ram, Raja Ram, Siraj Ram and Balram. Among them late Sh. Raja Ram and Sh Sahaj Ram had saintly disposition and possessed exceptional spiritual powers. Both of them were ardent devotees of **Sagar Raz Bhairav, the presiding deity of the village Aragam.**

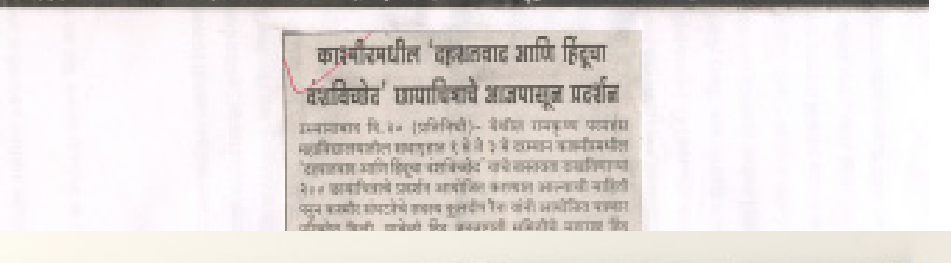
As per the village lore, both the brothers would enter into divine communion with Sagar Raz Bhairav. To ensure wrinkle free smoothness of the turban cloth, both Raj Ram and Sahaj Ram would hold it in their hands till Sagar Raz Bhairav tied turban on their head. On special occasions, they would keep offerings of food in a thali for Sagar Raz Bhairav. The thali would immediately vanish from sight and it had to be collected afterwards from the adjacent cremation ground obviously after Sagar Raz Bhairav had accepted the offering. The village cremation ground (Razbal) was about a hundred yards away from their residence. Adjacent to it was a piece of land where Raz-Kath the sacrificial religious offering of sheep was performed in honour of the presiding deity of the village. This piece of land is even now known as 'Rajun', signifying the ownership of it to the saint Raj Ram Tikoo. An attempt made sometime back by a native Mohammad Tilwani to cultivate it made him bedridden for a couple of months.

It was seen as an expression of displeasure and annoyance shown by Sagar Raz Bhairav. The latter regarded as the presiding deity of the villages of Aragam, Garoora, Brar, Chittibandi, Gund, Dechan, Tantraypora and vast area extending right upto the Wular Lake.



A view of Aragam Village.

(Contd. on Page 19)



Sugar and Spice and all things nice



By Parineeta Khar

The bride and the groom were just out of the precincts of the courtroom. They had successfully got their already-solemnized marriage registered. Relief and elation dominated the atmosphere. Parting gifts, Algaath and cash were being distributed. I was being counselled to discard my selected saree for something more colourful and pretentious, as the occasion demanded. It was the wedding reception of my son and his new bride. The evening was one of rejoicing and feasting.

Amidst the array of occupations and engagements, while I pray for an extra pair of eyes, ears and arms, my brother hands to me the little gadget, "Call for you."

Now who calls me on my brother's phone? "Who could this be?" I mutter under my breath. Am I not already a bundle of nerves? I barely lisp a hoarse "Hello". The caller is some Mrs. T. No, I do not have any friend by that name. The voice on the line gets animated and a little aggressive.

"Aire stupid", her address sounds intimate, Nobody referred to me with such familiarity any more.

"Arre Phetir.....this is U Kaul." Oh my God! Yes, I know, she lives in Delhi. My legs buckle. I slump on to a sofa. Some forgotten and long unused recess of my brain is activated. I am thrilled. Meanwhile, I get admonishing looks from family. Was time not precious enough to waste on phone calls from, a phantom friend!?

"Please come, do

come.....", I implore. I give the location of the venue and hang up, only to be engulfed by a thousand waves of urgent attention.

I reach the venue, my eyes probing the crowd, searching for a familiar face. But I must be out of my wits, for the face can certainly not be here. I am looking for a bespectacled face with two longish pigtails, on a lanky girl's body in white slacks and Kameez. That is how U looked in college.

I am escorting my new daughter-in-law, our respective hearts fluttering, hers with apprehensions at being on the threshold of a strange life ahead, my own out of unforeseen times ahead.

I entrust her to her love-my son, her place is beside him.

I walk past two standing figures and then suddenly two strong hands grasp my nape like the arms of an octopus. "Arre Pagal ladki..... you mad girl".

The nasal baritone assaults my auditory sense! When was it that somebody last called me a girl?

The grip loosens; I turn and hug the towering figure U, the sweet companion of my teens. The journey of the years has left its mark on her face, but eyes behind the glasses as lively as ever. A second figure erects herself beside her and challenges my memory.

"Now who am I?" I try to recollect that gang of twelve in women's college, Srinagar/

This is fine, graceful middle aged woman. She removes her gold-rimmed spectacles but my brain cells fail to associate her with delicate, narrow waisted, cream and peaches complexioned H. How could this dignified matron be her?

"Your eyes have been scaled over with the newly attained status of a mother-in-law," rebukes U. H adds "No, the fact is that she is completely engrossed in her own world, the years prior to her marriage have faded into oblivion.....isn't it so?"

I have no answer. In a flash, my memories rush back to the long lost days of youth. My jaws are locked, I am not able to apologize. My head reels; I have not slept well for ten consecu-

tive nights, my body can't take this ecstatic shock

But the gentle taunt nudges me towards a reunion I have been longing for. I hold their hands and we settle down on a sofa. U is a cousin of my first cousin's wife. The knowledge of my son's marriage in Delhi had been carried to her. The upshot of the whole thing was that they seized the opportunity to meet me, the long lost friend.

Was I touched? Yes and certainly overwhelmed. We were meeting after thirty-one years. The conversation that followed was akin to that meaningless chatter of teenage girls sitting on the freshly mowed lush green lawns of Girls College. It was a continuation as if there had been no interlude of thirty-one years. The music played by the DJ, the clatter of crockery, the greetings thrown by the guests at each other, formed only the background score to this drama of lost and found. This moment.....I am once more an eighteen year old, standing in the ring of noisy girls.

We did not brag about the achievement of children and husbands; neither was any allusion made to our households and absent careers. Each of us strived to slip into the garb of carefree girls to peep into our past.

"Hey..... it seems Prof _____ is in Hyderabad.

Do you still get a scolding from him?" and without waiting for my reply, both of them related the incident when he had thrown my books out of a window during class; the hard bound Chemistry textbook had hit a gardener working on a flowerbed. We laughed and clapped our hands in mirth. To get the feeling was sheer physical delight!

"Remember, how twelve of us would enter the class, after every girl was seated and then occupy the recesses of the windows?" The English teacher had named us The beautiful dozen. "We are no-beauties now.....Alas!"

I sighed.

But they were no patients of melancholia at this moment. While me and my friends were merrily roaming around the now-

forsaken corridors of youth and enjoying the bygone idiosyncrasies of our teachers and friends, my family was not really comfortable. They gave me nasty looks grudging my moment of relaxation at such a time. "Hey, what if I call my husband?" H suggested with gusto, "You know....I have told him a lot about you" she added.

"Like what?" I wondered what remarkable feats I had accomplished. "You were quite popular in university", U quipped knowingly, though she herself had enrolled in Aligarh university. "But most of the time I was either engaged or married" I said wistfully.

"I was present for your wedding, I gave finishing touches to your make up; somebody had put blotches of eye shadow on your eyelids". We guffawed again on my unskilled ways at decking up.

The word marriage jolts my senses to the fact that I am the hostess.

"Why don't you have something to drink?" I call one of the waiters and discover my husband observing my uncanny behaviour; totally lost in insignificant chatter. He beckoned me with a finger. I beckoned back at him. He promptly obliged; more to disentangle me from this hypnotic hold of my friends than because I called him over. He gave his trademark dimpled smile, greeted them politely and very gently, he poked my ribs-They will be here any moment." He meant our new relations-our daughter-in-law's family.

How could I be so tactless? They deserve all our attention and reverence - this fresh relationship, who had handed over their dearest joy to our care; their daughter was now the grace of my house, the better half of my darling. "Why don't you have something?" I offer again to my friends. But they have hardly come to savour the delectable feast. Their only object being to revive a spark of youth, dead in the ashes of worldliness. I leave for a while and come back to see if they have helped themselves to some eatables.

"How is your husband?" H asked, taking the benefit of his absence. "He is fine" I replied casually. "Arre Phetir.....We are not inquiring about his health. Tell us.....how is he as a husband a human being?," U explained. Had they expected me to enumerate his merits or display a passionate outburst- 'Of! I worship the very earth he treads upon'? I have no clue. "Oh, he is like any other husband.....you see.....All men behave like six year olds with their wives." We giggled again.

"Six year old boys," I ventured to explain, "now sweet, now mean. One moment very hungry, next moment they lose their appetite; sometimes tenderly caring but never sharing..... They want everything for themselves, their way. And yes, prone to throwing tantrums at regular intervals." They were grasping the truth of my observations, and were reminded of my fiery write ups, I had given every 'gang member' at the end of our session in college. "I still have your write up". He said lovingly. I was thankful but I could laugh no more.

"Do you still write?" "Yes sometimes", I reply with a sombre tone. "We know you have written some books", they let out but not with emotion. "Hey.....

Do you still sing?" "No", I whispered. Now there is a knot in my throat, my eyes misty.

"Remember you used to give a full throated lusty rendering of Bindu..... Gulabi Raat Gulabi. And they giggled, all I could manage was a chuckle.

"I can't sing now my lungs are deflated. My sinuses make my notes like croaks" and we laughed again at this helplessness of advancing years.

Then somebody tore me away from my temporary Utopia. I owe the guests some attention, won't they feel slighted? Yes, I admitted my callousness. But the overpowering feeling of escape and freedom has mesmerized me and I am drawn back to my friends. In the milieu of bustling guests, video cameras, gifts and

(Contd. on Page 19)

Sugar and Spice and all things nice

(From Page 18)

colourful attires, I was not able to locate them. My eyes are again trying to trace the dear faces that had brought back the whiff of an assuaging breeze and I wanted to let it touch all my senses and drink in the essence.

They have their plates and I join them. I don't eat, my desire is to fill my ears with that care-free laughter, enjoy that uninhibited conversation which is refreshingly natural.

No reservations of social bindings, no artful repartee, no guarded questions and no diplomatic answers. Words came in a flow of lucid currents.

"How come your son has less hair than your husband?," asked U. "Stress- he left India when he was barely twenty one.....", I am a fond mother again. "Do you mean your husband leads a stress free life even after being

married to you," teases H. We laugh again. We talk about our children; all proud and protective mothers. It was a pity we have mothered three pairs of male offspring, otherwise an alliance could be fixed then and there.

Then U made a remake in her typical candid yet tactless manner "Oh! There are marvellously turned out glamour dolls all around. They all look just out of Ekta Kapoor's K serials." H was always a sensible girl. She checked U with a little "Don't be silly.....They all are her close relatives"

"I observed that she stands out.....though nothing less of a Plain Jane" U added and I retorted, "Hey!.....you dare call me a Plain Jane,". This was more a high pitched shriek and several heads turn. I hardly cared. My present and future had hazy

outlines. At the spur of this sweet moment, that nostalgic past intoxicated my better senses.

We talked about *Veena ke Ande*- one of our friends whose egg curry in a picnic became her permanent adage. And more giggles followed. We did not make any references to unpleasant events which other friends had suffered. There was not even a passing reference of widowhood, bereavements suffered by one of the friends, neither was there a mention of the end of marriage of another one. Was it a deliberate omission? We talked and giggled, but alas! They had noticed that the cauldron of my family's patience had run dry; they decided to leave.

Later, I realized in our excitement we had not even exchanged contact numbers. I shoo my girl-

hood away and again assume the frescoed existence shaded with the colours of bashfulness, piety and responsibility.

I wonder how and when I had imprisoned the little girl inside me in a fort of values, morals, duties, constraints and sacrifices; surrounded by an uncrossable moat of virtues and a strong sense of doing right. Who had, I still wonder, indoctrinated into me this perpetual sense of morality? Must I only do right!! My teenage friends had perhaps been sent by an agency which desired me to throw the cloak of dignity and stature away and enjoy myself for some moments. I looked at the debonair young and naively beautiful face of my daughter-in-law and my young son, eagerness personified. At this moment he is all ears and eyes for his new bride. When the novelty of the relation wears out, the romantic lover would become

a demanding husband. I wish this little girl is able to retain a little fragrance of this girlhood tightly stored up in her fists, so that thirty years from now, when she is engulfed in the suffocating smoke of pressing responsibilities, she retires to a remote corner, to inhale from this stored up freshness and gets rejuvenated. I pray that my boy is no impediment in letting her be the symbol of the nursery rhymes' definition of little girls—

—————'What are little girls made of- sugar and spice and all things nice "

Let the ponderous fatigue of married life have no place in their lives. Let her existence be only sugar and spice and all things nice.

*(The author is a noted short-story writer. Her two collections—'On the Shores Of Vitasta' and 'We were and we will be' received rave reviews.)

Tales and Legends of Aragam (Bandipore)

(From Page 16)

The **Late Tika Lal Tikoo**, a direct descendant of the said family was also a man of spiritual pursuits. Being a great devotee of the village Bhairav himself, he had immense faith and reverence for him. He was said to converse with the Bhairav in his dreamful state during night as strange and ununderstandable discourse could be heard near his room. The villagers believed that late Sh. Tika Lal would often be spotted in the village cremation ground (Razbal) in his astral form in the company of Sagar Raz Bhairav and his associates. It came to light when a Muslim lady inadvertently stepped inside the village cremation ground in search of her lost cow. She was bewildered to spot late Sh. Tika Lal sitting in the company of persons supporting white cloaks (pheran) and white turbans.

Due to his spiritual powers, late Sh. Tika Lal was quite popular in the village Aragam and its neighbourhood as a spiritual healer for he could successfully cure persons afflicted with various ailments like infectious boils, jaundice, headache, high fever and those possessed by evil spirits. Once a neighbour, Mr Ghulam Rasool Bhat's daughter

Shama got possessed by an evil spirit. She was taken to a local Muslim priest for cure. After having failed to drive-off the evil spirit, the Peer suggested Shama to be taken to Tika Lal for cure. On hearing his name, the civil spirit is said to have communicated not to bother Sh. Tika Lal as he would leave Shama's body provided her father promised to make an offering of turmeric rice at the 'Razbal'. Sh. Tika Lal departed from this world in July 1990. The Pandit community of Aragam also became the victims of the militants' fury in 1990, when the wife of Sh. Kanya Lal Tikoo namely, Mrs Girja Tikoo (Babli) was killed by the militants. She was a laboratory assistant at Govt. High School, Trehgam. (Kupwara). At the height of the militancy she was abducted and subsequently killed when she had gone to collect her salary at Trehgam.

On her way back, she had to make a night halt at Tikker village in the house of her childhood female friend. Tikker was also incidentally her parental village. She was kidnapped by her friend's militant turned kins. She was taken to an adjacent electric saw-mill and mercilessly cut into two halves upto her chest by the

electric-saw and her dead body was later-on thrown near a bridge in Tikker. This brutal slaying sent a chilling message to the Pandit families of Aragam and the adjoining villages, who were left with no alternative but to migrate from their ancestral homes in order to save their honour and skin.

The village Aragam has an ancient temple by the side of a holy spring, which has a Shivaling and a stone idol of the Goddess Parvati. The village temple complex has plenty of willow and popular trees. Another village holy spring called 'Brari Maji Hund Nag' has one kanal of land attached to it, which abounds in majestic chinara trees. The villagers irrespective of their caste and creed would offer the milk of their first delivered cow to the holy spring out of reverence for it.

About four kms away from the village Aragam is a hillock known by the name of **Shank Paul**. A hermit of the same name is said to have done hard penance here hundreds of years back. It had a few pious springs in its vicinity, some of which have now dried-up. The village lore says that any unholy misdeed committed in the area would result in instant

rainfall in earlier times.

A well known Muslim saint and Sofi poet, Lala Sahib Aragami was a native of Aragam village. He lived upto the year 1984. In one of his Kashmiri couplets, the poet eulogises the virtues of a Kashmiri Pandit,

"tan darith.....tah zahnar".

In another Kashmiri verse, the said poet exhorts a Kashmiri Pandit girl to have unrestrained devotion for her God as her favourite deity i.e. enshrined in the stone idol itself,

"Bata Koori Vate Kanie Manj Chuai Dai,

Karee Pooja, Yinai Mushravak Lai."

Likewise being a devotee of the Goddess Parvati, he expresses his reverence for the Goddess in the following lines,

"Haran Doh Gaie Praran Yaeti Parvati Lo,

Sonihaer Paad Yaepaar Trav Lotie Parvati Lo".

A single Kashmiri Pandit family of Sh. Manmohan Nath Tikoo, an agriculturist and an ex-serviceman still resides in the village Aragam. One of his sons Sh. Rattan Lal Tikoo is presently working as a government teacher there, whileas the second one Sh. Rajender Tikoo who has done Diploma in weaving and

tailoring is a migrant at Batal-Ballian, Udhampur Migrant Camp. The Isht Devi of Tikoo families of Aragam is Tripur Sundri and her birthday called 'Tikchoram' is celebrated on Magh Shukla Paksh Chaturthi by offering turmeric mixed rice and goat's liver (Tahar-Charbvan) to the family deity. The Kashmiri Pandits of Aragam and the adjoining villages used to celebrate all the religious festivals with the usual religious fervour prior to their forced migration from Kashmir.

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The Role of Lucknow Kashmiri Pandits

Title: *Lucknow Ke Kashmiri Pandit*. R.K.T.
Author: Dr. B.N. Sharga
Published by: Dr. Vasudev Sharan Agarwal, Sanskriti Sansthan, 13 Shivaji Marg, Lucknow.
Price: Rs. 50/-

Diversity of a region is its beauty. It enriches the cultural tapestry of the place and fosters toleration. Lucknow, a historic city, has been home to many communities which came from afar and made it their permanent abode. Hundreds of Kashmiri Pandit families, gifted with mastery over Persian and excellence in soldiery, settled here during the past two and a half centuries. No wonder, Lucknow emerged as the biggest diaspora of Kashmiri Pandits. The immense contribution made by these people in all walks of life, be it administration, judiciary, education, literature, culture etc., makes history of Lucknow incomplete without them.

Prof. Shailendra Nath Kapur, who teaches Ancient History at Lucknow University, has embarked on an ambitious project to sensitise Lucknow people to their pluralistic heritage. Through a series of publications on the different facets of the city, Dr. Kapur has introduced a new genre in popular historiography. The first publication deliberated on the contribution of '**Banga (Bengali) Samaj of Lucknow**'. The second one dealt with the '**Lucknow mohallas and their glory**,' Dr. BN Shargas '**Lucknow Ke Kashmiri Pandit**', the publication under review, is the third in the series. Its beautifully laid cover carries the picture of **Bada Shivala**, the oldest shrine of Lucknow Kashmiri Pandits. This shrine, built by Pt. Zind Ram Tankha in 1780, is located at Rani Katra, Lucknow.

Dr. BN Sharga is a distinguished scion of one of those Pandit families who made Lucknow their home. Though age has taken toll of his health, yet he remains agile to pursue the forbidden terrain—digging out the buried past of the Pandit families, from their roots in Kashmir to the places of their new settlement. Dr. Sharga's task has not been easy. Despite the ethnic pride which many of these old Pandit families display they are reluctant to get recorded the history of their clan. They do not come forward with clan details, the rare photographs and the documents which they have preserved over decades. Dr. Sharga has no institutional support to carry on such an arduous endeavour. At times, he feels bitter over the stark indifference of his fellow Kashmiris. Yet it does not dampen his enthusiasm. As a

social historian Dr. Sharga may at times be short in methodology but his unique quality i.e. **passion for history** makes him an outstanding researcher. Not many Kashmiri Pandits can rival his immense contribution to Pandits' social history.

A monograph puts many limitations on the author. Dr. Sharga has done his job well to provide an excellent resume of history of Lucknow Kashmiri Pandits. It would be enough stimulus for more ambitious researchers to bring out a comprehensive volume on this subject.

Kashmiri Pandits started entering Avadh at a time when this province of Mughal empire had its capital at **Bangla**, which subsequently attained fame as Faizabad. During Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula's time Lucknow had remained his capital for some time. This brought some of the Kashmiri Pandits serving in Royal Army to Lucknow. They included Daya Ram Mattoo, Atma Ram Kitchlu, Chaturbuj Ganju, Daya Ram etc. Since the Royal Cavalry used to be stationed near Rani Katra, these Kashmiri Pandits started living at Rani Katra mohalla.

In 1775, the 4th Nawab-Asaf-ud-Daula shifted capital to Lucknow from Faizibad. Majority of Kashmiri Pandit families came to Lucknow during his reign. Since they formed a sizeable group and settled at a place, living together there as a community, the place came to be called **Kashmiri Mohalla**. Many of the *havelis*, built around 1775-1780, still stand, and bear distinct influence of Mughal/Iranian architecture. In those times Purdah system was in vogue among Pandit ladies. This too influenced the architecture. All these havelis were interconnected with one another to allow free movement of Pandit ladies through blind alleys, without the need to step outside their havelis. To keep alive the Kashmiri ambience in course of time these Pandits brought their family *Purohits* and cooks as well. Dr Sharga has served useful information on them.

Nawab Asaf-ud-Daula was a munificent patron. This attracted many Pandits to come directly from Kashmir to Lucknow. Pt. Bishan Nath Taimni (Kaul), a rich shawl trader from Sopore, came to Lucknow during his rule. He built a big haveli to run his flourishing trade. It came to be known as Reshamwali Kothi, and was located at Chauptiyon. Distinguished members of Taimni clan include Gulab Rai, Ganga Ram, Shri Ram, Kedar Nath, Kuldeep Prakash, Iqbal Nath, Jagdish Prakash. Shri Jagdeep Narain has not only excelled in soldiery Taimni from where he retired as Major General but is also an excellent scholar. He has one of

the finest libraries and takes deep pride in his ethnic identity. The Taimni clan has produced as many as 11 IAS officers.

Nawab Asaf-ud-Dila appointed Kashmiri Pandits to high posts. Pt. Gauri Shankar Kochak was put incharge of Royal mint at Chauptiyon. Security and management of Jagir of Royal Queen Shamsul Nisa was entrusted to Shargas—Laxmi Narain Kaul and



Prof. Dr. B.N Sharga

Niranjan Nath Kaul. These Sharga members served in Royal Cavalry and distinguished themselves in military skill, Chivarily and courage. Pt. Dila Ram Madan was a senior official in Asaf-ud-Daula's army. His son Pt. Dina Nath Madan later served as Finance Minister of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Bhaskar Ram Tickoo was a wealthy shawl merchant in Lucknow. His nephew Dewan Nand Ram Tikoo subsequently became ruler of Kabul. Pt. Bhola Nath Kao was a high official in the reign of Asaf-ud-Daula. Such was his prestige that Nawab would himself visit Kao's Kashmiri mohalla residence to meet him. Bhola Nath's descendant Pt. Rameshwar Nath Kao became a legendary figure in national security in independent India.

Dr. BN Sharga has meticulously documented the story of Kashmiri Pandits who reached good positions in administration during the Nawabi rule. He claims that prestige enjoyed by Kashmiri Pandits was due to their fair complexion and resemblance in physique to members of Iranian nobility. A rough estimate puts the number of emigre Kashmiri Pandit families around this period of one thousand. They lived in various mohallas—Kashmiri Mohalla, Katra Bijan Beg, Toph Darwaza, Chaupatian, Rani Katra, Javai Tola etc.

A Pandit family—'Gogai' came to settle in Lucknow from Gwalior. Pt. Shamboo Nath Pandit, the first Indian to be appointed as Judge hailed from this Gogai clan. Pt. Tika Ram Dar had his own printing press during the times of Nawabi rule. In Wajid Ali Shah's time royal procla-

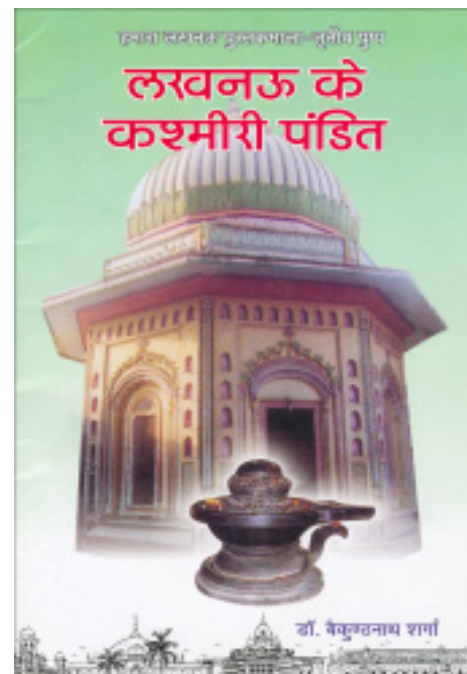
mations and other books used to be printed here. Tika Ram remained loyal to Wajid Ali Shah, even when Britishers put the Nawab under house-arrest in Calcutta. He ran an underground campaign against the British, but had to migrate to Benaras subsequently.

The Nawabi era (1775-1856) was a period when Persian and Urdu culture reached its Zenith. There was hardly any Kashmiri Pandit family which did not have one or two poets. Since many wrote compositions anonymously, their names have not come down to us. Prominent among the poets of this period were Pt. Daya Shankar Kaul 'Naseem'. He was trained by the greatest poet of the time—Kh. Haider Ali 'Atish'. During Asaf-ud-Daula's reign **Firangi Mahal** emerged as a centre of Islamic and Persian-Arabic learning. Pt. Beni Ram Mubai, a scholar of repute in Persian and Arabic, taught languages in this centre.

As a true researcher Dr. Sharga does not feel shy in projecting the dark side of his community members. Some Kashmiri Pandit officials had not only imbibed good nawabi culture but also fell on bad ways. They began frequenting Kothas. Two of them eloped with women from the Royal harem. Mehtab Rai Gurtu ran away to Calcutta, while Chaturbuj fled to Kabul.

British Rule:

In 1857 Avadh became part of British India. Kashmiri Pandits were among the first to take to study of English language and modern education. This opened up vast opportunities for them in the new administration. Any student who came out of the portals of canning college would get appointed as Deputy Collector, Munsif or sub-judge. The first Land settlement of Lucknow was carried out by the British soon after they took over Lucknow. Pt. Daya Nidhan Ganjoo was appointed as first Tehsildar. Kashmiri Pandits were quite upright. Pt. Har Sahay Bahadur was sub-judge in Farukhabad in 1878. One morning he had gone to see his superior judge, Saunders at his residence. The latter rebuked him for coming so early. Bahadur returned the compliment by giving him 3-4 slaps on his face. The sub-judge was dismissed by Lt. Governor. Bahadur filed a case against the government and went to Kashmir where Maharaja Pratap Singh made him a



judge. Bahadur took the case to London Privy Council and won it. He also claimed damages. Pt. Jagat Narain Mulla resigned from council of ministers IN protest against Jallian Walla Bagh massacre.

Many Kashmiri Pandits joined the national movement against the British. Dr. Atal was a member of Kotnis Medical Mission to China. Prithvi Nath Chakbast was a disciple of Gandhi, while Triloki Nath Chakbast was closer to Subash Bose.

In the field of culture Pt. Shiv Narain Bahar took lead by establishing the first club '**Jalsa-e-Tehzeeb**'. He also launched '**Mursala-e-Kashmir**' journal. Lucknow Kashmiri Pandits produced outstanding poets/men of literature—Ratan Nath Sarshar, Daya Shankar Kaul Naseem, Brij Narain Chakbast, Tribhuvan Nath Hijr. They attained global fame. Brij Krishan Kaul Bekhabar brought out two volume anthology on Kashmiri Pandit poets in Persian-**Bahar-i-Gulshan Kashmir**, which was published by Jagmohan Nath Raina Shauk and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. Rajnath Ragu, Ramchandra Narain, Yashodra Katju and Asha Tiku excelled in film world.

In medicine Dr. Shyam Nath Chak, who graduated from King George Medical College, Lucknow, broke records of all time. He was first cardiologist of India. The other well known medical practitioners from among Pandit community were—Dr. Tej Narain Bahadur and Dr. Hari Har Nath Hakku. Dr. Kishen Lal Nehru was Medical Supdt. of Lucknow Medical College.

Dr. Sharga has profiled the contribution of Lucknow Pandits after 1947. This makes '**Lucknow Ke Kashmiri Pandit**' a basic source material for any serious study of history of Kashmiri Pandits.

R.K.T.

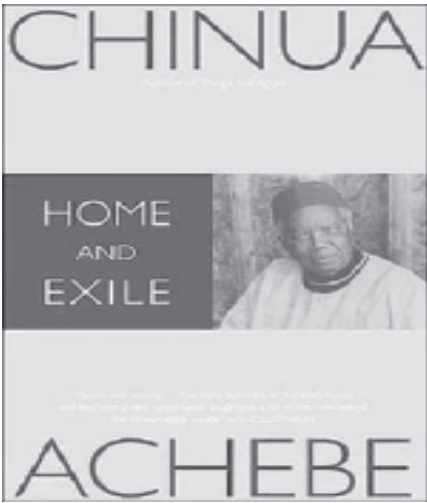
Literature as a weapon against colonialism

Review by Tej N. Dhar
Home and Exile
by Chinua Achebe. Anchor Books,
2001. Pages 115. \$ 10.

Chinua Achebe has already established his rightful place in the world of letters. Apart from writing influential novels, poems, and short stories, Achebe has also written ground-breaking essays. Without being unduly loud, flashy, modish, or controversial, he has emerged as a critic of seminal importance, and has exercised considerable influence in shaping our response to post-colonial literature.

Home and Exile is his most recent book of essays, a published version of three lectures he delivered at Harvard University in 1998. They have a strong autobiographical flavour, because Achebe looks back on the significant moments of his literary journey right from his childhood days in his home in Nigeria to his present state of exile in the USA.

The volume begins with Achebe's life with his parents in their village, where his father returned after doing missionary work at several places. Since the home was under "imperial fire," his reflective gaze provides a clear picture of what it meant to live in a colonial setting. He contests misconceptions about Igbo people by calling them a nation and not a tribe. In pre-colonial times, Igbo villages and towns obeyed no king and no central authority; they were uniquely positioned to enjoy perfect autonomy, which was lost to them only after colonial powers



imposed their ways on them — a clear rebuff to historians who wrote about their barbaric and undemocratic ways.

Achebe's encounter with Joyce Carey's work is well known by now. His re-telling of the incident, however, makes us understand that the likes of Carey exercised power over the minds of Africans because of their "absolute power over narrative." Basing their work on the "tools of trendy scholarly fantasies and pseudo-sciences," even the best of them created a shattering image of the inferiority of the African race, for which they deserve to be censured. This helped Achebe to understand that the innocence of literature is a myth, and one has to see its political implications with adult, mature eyes. However, he does not plead for any special theory of reading, certainly not the trendy post-colonial variety, though some of its proponents have used his writ-

ings in support of their views.

Achebe asserts that writers have not merely to write back to the Empire but also to fight it with spirit and conviction. He says that writers have to combat the "stereotypes of malice" contained in the writings of Europeans about Africa, which left people with a "badly damaged sense of the self." The process of colonisation did not stop at exercising political control over people; it aimed at damaging their psyche by colonising their stories. The job of the post-colonial writer is to rescue narratives from the pernicious control of the colonials, by writing their versions, and thus asserting "the curative power of stories." With loving care and a sense of satisfaction Achebe traces the rise of the new African writing, and expresses his warm appreciation of the writers' attempt to use their skill and imagination for erasing the misrepresentation of their people and infusing a sense of pride and a spirit of confidence in them.

Achebe's greatest strength lies in his being firmly rooted in his soil and with his people, even though he is not always among them. He disparages writers who uphold the idea of universalism in art, because it virtually implies accepting and imitating western culture and civilisation. Africa does not need "copycats but those able to bring hitherto untold stories, along with new ways of telling."

Because of his concern for one's place and clime, of pride in one's cultural moorings, Achebe is critical of writers, even the ones with firm reputations, who do not respect this: of Buchi Emecheta, who self-avowedly minimises her

"Africanness" to do well in the global market; of V. S. Naipaul, for writing dark and unwholesome books on India and Africa, which Achebe considers "pompous rubbish"; of Salman Rushdie, for saying that "literature has nothing to do with a writer's home address." Quite understandably, Achebe writes warmly and approvingly about R. K. Narayan, because he "invested in India; he did not take himself out."

For the same reasons, Achebe does not approve of "expatriation and exile as intrinsically desirable goals." These may be fashionable, but may not produce good writing. Implicitly, he also suggests that the Empire has not to be fought with mere words, with verbal pyrotechnics or flourishes of style, but with one's strength, which derives from one's place and culture.

To sum up, Home and Exile is a very readable, wise, and fruitful account of Achebe's growth as a writer of uncommon sanity and exceptional clarity, which sets him apart from both European and non-European writers. He affirms the importance of the narrative as a powerful weapon of defiance, but stresses that it has to bear the imprint of a writer's social and cultural bearings and not of spurious and fashionable ideologies of western supermarkets. He is particularly hard on deracinated intellectuals whose espousal of universal culture and values does not augur well for the future of less privileged societies, because it threatens them with new and subtler kinds of colonialism.

By Sanjay Godbole

Kashmir is the most picturesque (full of scenic beauty) valley in the whole of the world. This province is situated on the West side of the Himalaya mountain range. Though the Southern part of Kashmir is relatively plain and even, in the Northern part of Kashmir, there are high mountain ranges, scaling heights, upto 2460 meters above mean sea level. On the North West side of Kashmir is Gilit and Hindu kush mountain ranges are extensively spread in the nearby region. The highest peak in Kashmir is in the Karakorum mountain range. The Meru Parbat, as referred to in Hindu Scriptures is situated in Karakorum pass. Since ancient and Historical times, this province had trade links with other provinces by the "Silken route".

Afghanistan, the neighbouring country of Kashmir, has been exporting gems and other precious stones for last several centuries. There is a "Lapis" figure, crafted in the year 1500 B.C. in Egypt. The idol presently is in Vienna Art Museum of Austria. This "Lapis" stone had been exported from Afghanistan. During several excavations, beads of various colours have been reported in Pakistan. This fact throws light, as to how the gems and the precious and semi precious stones were functionally put to use, since times immemorial, as a tradition in vogue. Pakistan occupied Kashmir is a hot topic of discussion in the International Political forum. This part of Kashmir however, is now being critically studied for the gems and the precious stones found here and all the aspects of these treasures are being studied and analysed from geological survey & research angle. These

Gems and Jewels In Pakistan occupied Kashmir (POK)

discoveries of the precious stones in Kashmir are of relatively recent origin. It is also conclusively observed that the rock formations in the region of Kashmir have not been geologically studied to that degree of details, as those in Afghan region.

A few years back, in the Northern part of Pakistan, some shepherds accidentally came across some stones with greenish tinge; being unaware of the identification as to the value and importance of those stones, these were utilised for some other odd ends. Afterwards, these stones proved to be real emeralds. In 1999, the geological survey of France carried out in this region an extensive explorative exercise, to prospect the possibility of mining for emeralds. Some legendary stories of emeralds from Peshawar in Pakistan are also popularly famous.

That part and parcel of land, which is under control of Pakistan, has since been divided into two sectors 1) "Azad Kashmir", and 2) Northern areas, by Pakistan authorities. The maximum quantity of minerals mined in Pakistan have been discovered from this area only. The famous gemological journal of the United States - Lapis international in its illustrated catalogue, has furnished detailed information about the potential stocks of the precious

stones and gems, lying hidden in Pakistan occupied Kashmir.



Sh. Sanjay Godbole.

In Kashmir, the Krishnaganga river valley and Sharada Temple are indicative of the ancient culture existing there once upon a time. This day a gem called Neelam (Blue sapphire) is found in the mountains near Krishnaganga valley. About a century ago, a Delhi Bound traveller from Kabul had accidentally found some specimen of Neelam (Saffire) due to falling of crags (Land slide). The (sapphire) of Kashmir is adjudged as the best and of Supreme quality in the whole of the world. There is a verse,

which describes the qualities of the Neelam of Kashmir. *Nihal Bhi Kar De Aur Sataye Bhi Buri Tarah Purnima ki Khili Chandani Mein Nilam Ki Tarif.* The mountains near "Shonthar" and "Colejandar the two villages in (P.O.K.) have the reserves of Neelam. It is on account of the occurrence of Neelam, the "Krishnganga" river valley is newly christened as "Neelam Valley".

"Hunza" is an important city in (P.O.K.). Though the presence of "Ruby" was discovered here during the British regime, the mining operation did not commence then. From 1997 the mining operations, under the expert guidance of a British Scientist, "Richard Hughes"

were begun. The ruby from "Hunza" occurs in the faults in the white calcite rock, and some times the ruby crystals get cracks in them. These rubies are used for making ornaments and for carvings of small size in Pakistan.

Second reserve of Ruby Stones is struck at "Nangimali" in (POK). "Nangimali" village is in the north side of Muzaffarabad and can be reached after travelling for three consecutive days. This a small village, mostly populated by peasants. Here there are mountain ranges scaling heights of 4400 meters. In these mountains there is a "Ruby Belt" which measure 1.8 K.M. long. Nangmali Ruby shows similar characteristics as those found in Burma, Myanmar. The Nangmali Ruby is having a dark red colouration and specimens upto 5 Carrats by weight have been met with here.

Apart from Rubies, an orange coloured crystal is also found here. This crystal has unique and distinctive characteristics and is found in Kashmir alone and no where else in the world. So it was christend as "Kashmirin" by experts from the West.

The gemological laboratories of the United States have made analytical tests of all the precious stones and semi precious stones of Kashmir. An illustrated catalogue of all the precious stones of Pakistan was duly published at "Tuscon" in the United States of America, These precious stones, Gems and Jewels of Kashmir were duly exhibited in American International exhibition and also in Europe and these are grabbing attention of all admirers of gems and jewels.

*(The author is a noted Archeologist based in Pune.)

Chronology of Events--April 6-May 31, 2007)

- Apr 6:

The gunbattle at Bijbehara ended with the killing of a terrorist, while two others managed their escape. Three terrorists were killed in Nishat area of Srinagar. Body of a youth was recovered from a nallah in Kalaroos. A tragedy was averted by detecting an IED at Digdol on Jammu-Srinagar National Highway. Two soldiers were injured in a grenade blast in Rajouri. Terrorists managed their escape in an encounter at Malikpora Tilogrih, Bhallesa.
- Apr 7:

Police said that the three terrorists killed in Nishat were planning *fidayeen* attacks, 10 OGWs were arrested and several LeT and Al-Bader hideouts busted in Kashmir. Terrorists killed a person in Baramulla. Siachen talks end without any agreement on troop pull-out.
- April 8:

Six Bangladeshis were killed and 11 others arrested from Border villages in Arnia sector. BSF repatriated a mentally unsound person to Pak rangers. Police today seized 50,000 fake Indian currency notes, printed in Pakistan and smuggled through Delhi-Lahore bus, and arrested a person in this connection Hitting at his coalition partner-PDP, Sh GN Azad said that advocates of demilitarization were unaware of the ground reality. A HM commander surrendered before troops in Bhaderwah, Doda.
- April 9:

A Pakistani was killed and nine others-7 Bangladeshis and two Pakistanis-arrested along Indo-Pak border in Jammu sector. 40 kg RDX and other arms and ammunition were recovered at Thanala, Bhaderwah. 108 cross LoC in Poonch district.
- April 10:

One person was killed and 10 others wounded in a grenade attack at Batmaloo, Srinagar. After arrest of two terrorists, Pulwama police claimed that they were hunting for some terrorists who were in the process of leaving the country on a specific mission. A terrorist was arrested and three IEDs defused in Doda district. HM plot to repeat Kulhand at Thanla was foiled by the surrender of a terrorist and subsequent recoveries by the forces. As much hyped Karvaan-e-Aman completes 2-years, visitors number goes on decreasing.
- April 11:

Two bodies, including the body of Abdul Rahim Wagay who had been missing senior October 2006, were recovered from Pulwama and Srinagar. A civilian injured in a grenade attack, succumbed to his injuries. Two terrorists were arrested in Pulwama said it had and five others with fake currency worth Rs 2500 were arrested from Sangrampora, Patan. An Army jawan committed suicide at Sangrama. Lashkar asked Huriyat factions to Unite. While the foreign secretary expressed India's readiness for CBMs and n-doctrine with Pak, GoC Northern Command said that sea route was being used for infiltration and with 1500 terrorists in action, Army could not go back to barracks.
- April 12:

Four ultras, including a Congress worker and his wife were arrested while a fidayeen managed to escape as police foiled a plot to kill CM at Ramban rally. A colonel and a SSP were among 11 chargesheeted in a fake encounter case. 82 cross at Kaman Post.
- April 13:

Five top terrorists were killed in an encounter at Navapachi, Doda. A civilian was injured in a grenade attack at Karan Nagar, Srinagar. A soldier was found dead with gunshot wounds in his camp in Uri. A Pakistani youth was repatriated to Rangers.
- April 14:

Dreaded terrorists Pinto Malik of Littar was among two terrorists at Wahil Nowgam in Shopian-Kulgam belt. CRPF jawan, fired upon by suspected terrorists at Batmaloo, succumbed to his injuries. Three recruits were rescued from HM captivity at Navapachi, Doda. The mobile phone of Haseena gave more clues in the assassination plot of the CM. Defence Minister oppose troop withdrawal from J&K.
- April 15:

Security forces killed two terrorists in Shopian while terrorists beheaded a civilian in Pulwama and caused injury to a soldier with an IED blast at Palhalan, Pattan. Two LeT terrorists were killed and one injured in an encounter at Upper Dandi Bhaderdwah, a jawan was also injured in the encounter.
- April 16:

Two IRCON engineers survived an attempt on their life as their body guard died when terrorists attacked them at Naina Bhatpora in Pulwama. Elsewhere in Valley, three terrorists were among eight persons killed in terrorist related violence. A terrorist and a civilian were killed and another civilian rescued in an encounter in Judi Bagda forests in Gandoh, two terrorists escaped from the encounter. Defence Minister Mr Antony said that Pak must end terror for success of talks. A CRPF jawan committed suicide after critically injuring two of his colleagues in a camp in Pulwama.
- April 17:

Two bodies were fished out from Jhelum. A HM terrorist was arrested in Pulwama. A Army jawan committed suicide in Kandi area of Rajouri. The CM asked for easing travel restrictions across LoC.
- April 18:

A HM Commander was arrested in Doda. The names of two girls surfaced in Kalakote massacre. JKLF leader announced launch of Safar-e-Azadi from May 6 while turning down Delhi's invitation.
- April 19:

One person was killed and two others injured in firing incidents in Sopore. Two dozen terrorists surrendered before forces in Uri sector after their return from PoK. An Army jawan survived while his three family members were injured as terrorists struck at his house at Harni, Mendhar. Hashim Qureshi announced his decision to attend RTC.
- April 20:

Two terrorists of HM were killed in an encounter in Pulwama and one more was arrested in Sopore. A HM terrorist was shot dead by LeT cadres at Kulthu Chilly, Gandoh. 19 Bangladeshis were arrested from International Border.
- April 21:

Two terrorists surrendered in Gulmarg sector on their return from PoK. A CRPF jawan succumbed to his injuries while DC Kupwara ordered enquiry into death of a woman and sanctioned ex-gratia in favour of her family. Two civilians were beheaded by terrorists in Kala Gawa forests in Budhal, Rajouri. PDP advocated safe passage to Kashmiri youth. The investigations in the missing of Election Identity Cards in Rajouri suggested that these cards our being used by terrorists to arrange passports.
- April 22:

Three HM terrorists, including deserter SPO, were killed by LeT terrorists in the hilly area of Kither, Gandoh. Two terrorists were killed in an encounter at Zainpora, Pulwama, while one more terrorist was killed and a jawan injured in another encounter in Rangwar forests in Kupwara. Syed Ali Shah Geelani addressed a rally at Idgah Srinagar in which LeT terrorists made display of weapons. LeT terrorists admited hand in Mumbai blasts.
- April 23:

Three terrorists were killed in Kashmir valley. As RTC III favoured increased cross LoC movement of people, goods, BJP alleges that RTC was discussing Musharraf's agenda and disassociate from Leh observed a bandh in support of Union Territory demand.
- April 24:

A terrorist wounded his brother-in-law in a bizarre incident at Shamaswari, Srinagar. A LeT terrorist was arrested in Baramulla. Three Bangladeshis was arrested in Ramgarh sector.
- April 25:

Police claimed to have foiled another bid to kill CM at Bandipore rally as they arrested a LeT terrorist Showkat from Srinagar, two more terrorists were arrested subsequently. A terrorist was killed in Kupwara three terrorists, including a Pakistani, were arrested in Kashmir valley. A LeT terrorist was found dead near his house at Mahore. Two terrorists looted cash and jewellery from a house at Baljarala, Rajouri. Six Hurriyat leaders of Geelani faction were detain in Srinagar, while a Pakistani and two Kashmiri terrorists were arrested in New Delhi. 69 cross sides at Kaman Post.
- April 27:

Three suspects were arrested in Rajouri. Geelani, Shabir Shah were among six separatists puts under house arrest. Amidst regular arrests of Bangladeshis, an arrested Bangladeshi computer engineer admitted helping 700 Bangladeshis exfiltrate.
- April 28:

Three terrorists were killed in Doda. One person died and 53 others received injuries in a grenade attack at NC's rally at Pampore. A body was fished out from Jhelum. A youth, alleged to be an informer, was attacked by terrorists at Kaloosa, Bandipore. Three LeT terrorists were killed in Doda. The CM said that there would be no amnesty or leniency to ultras. After BJP, Panun Kashmir denounced RTC joint declaration.
- April 29:

Four terrorists were killed in an encounter in Kupwara. Terrorists gunned down a civilian in Damhal Hanjipora. A terrorist was killed in Budhal, while a JCO died of accidental fire at Kalakote. Prominent counter insurgent Papa Kishtwari was arrested. An Army officer claimed that Pak army was preventing surrender by terrorists.
- April 30:

Two CRPF and police cops were injured in three grenade attacks triggered by terrorists. Geelani called for a shut down on May 5. Three Hurriyat leaders were lodged in Kot Bhalwal Jail. Arms and explosives were recovered from Doda and Poonch districts.
- May 1:

Police claimed to have solved many terrorists strikes, including the attack on Mirwaiz and Hurriyat Hqrs, by arresting a woman and 12 "out source" terrorists. A SPO was killed in an encounter in Handwara. A terrorist hideout was busted in Thathri, Doda. US designated HuM, JeM and LeT as terrorist outfits.
- May 2:

An Al-Badar terrorist group was reportedly trapped in an encounter in Kupwara. WG favour Rs 5 lakh relief for kin of militancy victims and return of Kashmiri youth from Pak. Advocating a free economic zone for J&K, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed said that government was considering self-rule for J&K.
- May 3:

An OGW was arrested in Doda while a Bangladeshi was arrested in Nikki Tawi area of Jammu. Addressing a seminar, Governor Lt. Gen. SK Sinha opposed troop reduction and making LoC irrelevant.
- May 4:

A top HM terrorist Riyaz Deva was killed in an encounter at Khalhar, Anantnag. An Army jawan was killed in an encounter at Bapora-Aragam, Bandipore. Terrorist made an unsuccessful attempt to target a convoy as the grenade exploded without causing any damage. Pak national was arrested in Ramgarh sector. MHA team visited Talwara camp.

(Contd. on Page 23)

(From Page 22)		
May 5:	Five exfiltrators were arrested in Kashmir valley. Security forces busted a hideout and recovered arms and ammunition at Doodaban, Handwara. Police seized a stabilized IED. Geelani blame Pakistan for misfortune of Kashmiris. Defence Minister Mr Antony said that Pak will have to demarcate AGPL in Siachen.	
May 6:	Three persons, including a girl, were injured as terrorists lobbed a hand grenade at a Congress rally at Nanil, Anantnag. Terrorists kidnapped a Radio Kashmir correspondent from Srinagar and released him after severe beating. Terrorists snatched the rifle of a VDC member in Doda. Soldiers in Kargil and Drass to get high attitude gear like their counterparts posted at Siachen.	
May 7:	HM terrorist was killed in Doda. Troops destroyed a hideout at Richon, Drabshala in Kishtwar and seized arms and ammunition. 106 cross LoC at Chakkan-Da-Bagh. Spiritual Guru Ravi Shankar visited migrant camps at Purkhoo and Muthi and said that KPs have right to live in Kashmir.	
May 8:	A jawan was killed and four jawans were injured while the newly infiltrating terrorists managed their escape in an encounter near LoC in Machil-Keran belt. Two terrorists, and a jawan were killed in a fierce encounter at Chowgal, Handwara. Security forces recovered 165 kgs RDX and other ammunition as they busted two hideouts in Doda. A youth, arrested in connection with killing of two civilians, ended his life by slitting his throat with a knife in Budhal Police Station. A SPO shot himself dead at Roulka Picket in Kathua. Union MoS Home Mr Jaiswal said that LeT was training women militants in Pak. BJP leader Jaswant Singh took exception to the centres's 'out sourcing' of Kashmir policy.	
May 9:	While five terrorists, belonging to freshly infiltrated groups, were eliminated in two encounters in Kupwara a group of four others was reportedly trapped in yet another encounter in the same district. A civilian was killed by terrorists at Hardo Sheva, Sopore. Terrorists smashed window panes him and fired some rounds at a house at Reshipora, Awantipore. A jawan was killed and another injured in accidental blast at firing-range in Hiranagar, Kathua. Addressing a public meeting at Vilgam Kupwara, Dr Farooq Abdullah said that Kashmir can never become part of Pakistan. Yasin Malik dashes a letter to Mr. Vajpayee, calling him to own his baby-the peace process and support it. MoS Home Mr Jaiswal said that a government committee will review SPL Powers Act enforced in J&K.	
May 10:	Body of a woman was fished out from Jhelum at Hajan while another body was recovered from Puhroo. Two newly infiltrated terrorists were arrested in Kupwara. Two Pakistani terrorists admitted that terrorist training camps were still operating in PoK. 65 cross LoC on Karvaan-e-Aman. MoS defence admits surge in infiltration.	
May 11:	Four soldiers injured in fierce encounter on May 8, succumbed to their injuries. Police busted a hideout at Sherpora and recovered war like stores. A terrorist, who lost his limbs in October 2005 earthquake in PoK, surrendered before the police. An Army jawan died in an accidental mortar blast. Two local terrorists were arrested in Baramulla. Kargil observed a bandh against allotment of three council seats to Buddhist dominated Zanskar area.	
May 12:	Two terrorists, including a HM commander, were killed in an encounter at Tarzoo, Sopore. Terrorists shot dead a civilian at his host's	
May 13:	house at Gundpora, Pulwama. A major tragedy was averted as civilians found a live mortar shell at Telgam Payeen Kupwara which was later defused. A headess body of a suspected terrorist was found in Reasi.	
May 13:	Three top HM terrorists were killed in two encounters in Gool Ramban and Navapachi, Doda. A hide-out was busted at Marwah, Doda. Union MoS Commerce Jairam Ramesh opined that cross-LoC trade had huge potential.	
May 14:	A terrorist was killed in Sopore. Terrorists killed an ex-terrorist at Chanjimullah, Handwara. A seven year old boy was injured as he fiddled with an explosive device in Trehgam. Mufti Mohammad Syeed claimed that "Self-Rule" document will be made public soon.	
May 15:	Two LeT terrorists were killed in Budgam district, Two terrorists were arrested in Kupwara. Terrorists triggered a blast in Tral causing injuries to three CRPF personnel. Terrorists attempt to blow an under construction railway track was foiled in Bijbehara as forces detected the IED and defused it. A civilian was killed and his two family members injured as troops opened fire an them in case of mistaken identity.	
May 16:	Two terrorists were killed in an encounter at Brail in ;Budgam. An IED was detected and defused at Loktipora, Bijbehara. An OGW was arrested at Murran road, Pulwama; two terrorists were arrested in Trehgam. A LeT commander was killed in Thannamandi. PDF Chief Hakeem Yasin stressed on HM chief's involvement in talks, PDP patron Mufti Mohammad Sayeed said that delay in troop reduction will complicate matters.	
May 17:	A wireless operator of HM was arrested at Shah Nagri, Handwara. A terrorist hideout was busted in Trehgam. An Army jawan shot himself dead at Core Hqs. Nagrota. NC leader Mr Rahim Rather said that NC will fight all conspiracies aimed at weakening special status enjoyed by J&K.	
May 18:	Five Kashmiri exfiltrators and a HM terrorist were arrested in Kashmir valley. 17 Bangladeshis were arrested from Malabela in Akhnoor sector. India voiced concern over continued infiltration, NC President Omar Abdullah called for cease-fire and talks with HM. A terrorist strike at a mosque in Hyderabad left 12 dead and 50 wounded.	
May 19:	An Army jawan was killed in a terrorist strike in Baramulal. While one another died of mysterious gunshot wounds in Badami Bagh cantonment Police recovered fake currency notes worth Rs one lakh and explosive material from a car in Shopian.	
May 20:	Yasin Malik began his so-called "Safar-e-Azadi" from Mati Gawran, Kokernag. Expressing happiness over return of some KP families to Bumai, Sopore, Mr Soz described KPs as integral part of JK civilization. Mr Omar Abdullah opined that self-rule will divide J&K.	
May 21:	A police cop and two SPOs were hurt in a grenade blast on a minority police picket at Nagni, Kishtwar. Two Kashmiri youth were held with one million Euro in Manali. Unified Hqtrs. was informed that Multi Agency Centre has been set up to coordinate intelligence inputs amidst reports that 120 terrorists have infiltrated since April 2007.	
May 22:	Seven terrorists, a soldier and a civilian were killed in three gunbattles in Pulwama district. Arms and ammunition were recovered in two different operations in RS Pura and Gandoh. Sajjad Lone suggested J&K's trifurcation.	
May 23:	DySP Mendhar Yougal Manhas and his driver were injured as terrorists struck at Manhas	
May 24:	One terrorist was killed in a gunbattle at Sangrampatti, Kupwara. Body of a terrorist was recovered near Rambiara in Shopian. Bodies of three terrorists were recovered from upper reaches of Ramsu in Ramban. In a new twist to "Missing Persons Issue", two missing persons surfaced after working at different places outside the state; DC had even paid exgratia in favour of their families. 103 cross LoC on "Karvan-e-Aman". J&K government opposed cut in security forces.	
May 25:	Terrorists gunned down a civilian at Champal, Gandoh. An infiltration bid was foiled in Sunderbani sector. Huge cache of arms and ammunition was recovered in Darhal, Rajouri. Euro Parliament blasted Pak for HR violations in Gilgit, Baltistan.	
May 26:	Terrorists shot dead a counter insurgent in Kulgam; a soldier was killed in an IED blast in Kupwara. Two persons were found dead in Kangan. An Army jawan was killed and another seriously injured as Army foiled yet another infiltration bid in Mankote sector in Poonch. A terrorist surrendered before security forces in Rajouri. A live grenade was seized under a seat from a local bus at Doda Bus Stand.	
May 27:	Two infiltrators were killed in an encounter on the LoC in Kupwara; four others managed their escape. An IED was spotted and defused at Watter Khani, Kupwara. A HM Commander, son of a retired Zonal Education Officer, was killed in Doda. A terrorist hide-out was destroyed in Latti Udhampur. Nicholson, European Parliament's rapporteur, described Gilgat and Baltistan as black holes and opined that PoK was in chains.	
May 28:	Security forces arrested three OGWs in Rajouri and Ramban districts and recovered 10 hand grenades. Terrorists shot dead a woman in Bijbehara. Police arrested an OGW of JuM and recovered arms and ammunition from his possession. A PoK woman was released on bail by a local court in Kupwara. Mr Omar Abdullah opposed division of J&K state.	
May 29:	A terrorist and a drug peddler were arrested in Doda.	
May 30:	DySP Shailey Singh, who had many successful operations against terrorists, was killed by terrorists in Doda. Three infiltrators were shot dead while two others managed their escape in Balakote sector of Mendhar, Poonch. A LeT terrorist was killed in Bandipore. Police claimed to have arrested a terrorist Riyaz Khan of Helmatpora after his return from PoK. The family refuted the claim and said that Khan surrendered after his return on a Pakistani Passport and Indian visa.	
May 31:	A dreaded LeT terrorist and his associate were killed by police at Asthanmarg, Gool. Two HM terrorists were arrested from Marmat, Doda. Three officials were arrested for sheltering Shailey Singh's Killers. Two terrorists were killed in an encounter in Tral. Three soldiers were injured in an IED blast in Sopore. Muslim leaders resented Army move to renovate or construct shrines and mosques in J&K. POW's kin leave for Pak in hope of locating there kin in Pak jails.	

Ancient City Of Gaya Is Facing Decay

By J N Raina

It is ridiculous that most of the Hindu sites of worship, serving as a lifeline for millions of people, directly or indirectly, are surrounded by filth. They have been rendered ‘unholy’, because as the saying goes: “What is unclean is unholy”.

Several ancient temples, which are not on the radar of political parties speaking at hoarse for Hindutva, are practically dead for pilgrimage. What is regarded as holy has become unholy, because of both public and official apathy.

What exactly is in my heart of hearts bespeaks of the holy city of Gaya (Bihar), where heaps of garbage remain lying on the roads, lanes and by-lanes for months, due to administrative indifference. People are also to be blamed. They do not protest.

It was nauseating to be in Gaya, where I had been recently on pilgrimage. Gaya is one of the oldest and the most sacred cities in India, second only to Varanasi in sanctity. The city has been built around Vishnupad Temple, revered by Hindus all over the globe for centuries. The Temple is the pilgrims’ main attraction.

According to a legend, the temple has been constructed over the footprints of Lord Vishnu, on a boulder, which rises on the west bank of river Phalgu. The temple was renovated in 1787 by Ahalya Bai, princess of Indore. It is octagonal in shape, 100 feet high, with a pyramidal roof, which culminates in a single golden pinnacle, surmounted by a large gilded flag. Pilgrims visit Gaya to perform ‘pinddhan’, a ritual to pray for the souls of one’s ancestors to purgatory.

In Gaya, hardly a road-strip was visible without mounds of stinking garbage and cesspools. I was told that scavengers are not paid for months by the Gaya Municipal Corporation, which is starved of funds. As a result, the garbage keeps on accumulating, and lying on the roads, without public protest.

The Vishnupad temple is located in the heart of the old city, amidst dirty environment. The district administration pays little attention towards the problem. In hotels, mosquitoes rule the roost because of dirt and cobwebs. It is a taboo to keep the surroundings clean. Power cut is frequent. Light is erratic.

In contrast, the nearby township of Bodh Gaya wears a festive look. Foreigners from Buddhist countries, including Japan and China, visit the historic city frequently. Strangely enough, Japan has constructed tarred roads leading to Bodh Gaya, for smooth pilgrimage. It was in Bodh Gaya that Prince Gautam (who later came to be known as Lord Buddha) attained Supreme Enlightenment (Samma Sambodhi) under the sacred Maha Bodhi Tree. Bodh Gaya was known as “Bodhi Mandapa” in ancient times. Emperor Ashoka later built a

temple by the side of Maha Bodhi Tree in 250 BC and erected a diamond throne (Vajrasana) on the exact spot where Buddha saw ‘Light’ under the Tree. There he became Enlightened One.



Buddha, Bodh Gaya

This stone Buddha, measuring 20 m (66 ft) high, is in a temple in Bodh Gaya, Bihar state.

As soon as a pilgrim lands in Gaya, ‘pandas’ (priests) will be the first to greet him. When I, along with my wife landed at the Gaya Railway station from Varanasi at around 4.30 am, a dhoti-clad ‘panda’ met me at the platform itself, to offer his services for performing pinddhan. With great difficulty I avoided him by telling a lie that I had come for a different purpose. In fact, I had arranged for a priest through my contact in Gaya. I knew there would be lot of harassment from such ‘pandas’. Even when we were busy performing the ritual on Phalgu river, a group of ‘pandas’ approached us and created a scene. They wanted the pinddhan to be performed by them. They traced an old record when my father and uncle had gone to Gaya for performing pinddhan. I was supposed to get it done by them, since we are under their jurisdiction.

The Gaya administration can utilize the services of private firms for disposal of garbage. Private companies in metropolitan cities like Delhi and Mumbai earn crores of rupees by processing waste and generating energy. Garbage collection is a big business. Delhi alone generates a whopping 7000 tonnes of waste daily. I can simply hazard a guess that millions of tones of garbage must have got collected in Gaya. It is mind-

boggling.

Private firms make a lot of money in garbage business. A firm—which manages and treats waste in seven cities—bidding for Delhi’s garbage, has an annual turnover of Rs 600 crore. The Gaya administration’s turnover could be more if it takes over garbage business. Gaya Corporation can easily pay its scavengers, who had struck work for non-payment of dues. But the Gaya administration’s attention is not gripped by such novel ideas.

Nothing is orderly in Gaya. Nearly 2000 ‘pandas’ (priests), who have been performing pinddhan for centuries, are unorganized. Former Union Tourism Minister Jagmohan can play a vital role in doing away with the age-old system and removing the ills of Gaya. He can help in establishing a trust or a Board, like the one he had done in Jammu and Kashmir for Mata Vaishnudevi and Swami Amarnath Yatra. He had removed the age-old system of ‘baradaris’. Since then, millions of yatris have been visiting Vaishnodevi and Amarnath cave every year because of better system. If a new Government-controlled system is introduced in Gaya, millions of Hindu pilgrims, in spite of subsidy, can rush to Gaya and perform tension-free pinddhan. One fails to understand as to why Jagmohan did nothing for Gaya during his tenure.

Even non-resident Indians can do a yeoman service for developing Gaya as a modern pilgrim centre. Vishnupad Temple can be renovated. It is facing decay. Like Ganga Action Plan, there can be Gaya Action Plan. There can be a separate sub-plan for river Phalgu, which looks apparently dry, but digging just six inches deep yields water, sufficient to serve the limited purpose of performing pinddhan. The river is also called “Guphta Ganga” (hidden Ganga). The job of digging is done presently by young boys for a small payment of Rs ten or so.

Bodh Gaya, the cradle of Buddhism, resembles a modern township, just 11 km from Gaya, which is pretty clean and holy in true spirit. Millions of Buddhists from all over the world keep thronging there by air, train or other modes of transport arranged by private operators. Surprisingly, the Buddhist pilgrims generally avoid going to Bodh Gaya via Gaya, because of the ugly environment. While Japan and several Buddhist countries have evinced keen interest for the maintenance of Bodh Gaya, neither the Indian Government nor a plenty of Hindu organization have taken any interest in the development of the ancient city of Gaya, which has the potential of attracting millions of Hindu pilgrims. Massive funds are needed to make Gaya clean, which is infested with lot of filth and garbage.

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

Kuldeep Rana-A Memoir

Dr. Brij Premi

It was a cold Wintery evening, Srinagar was under a thick carpet of snow. The news about the demise of Kuldeep Rana carried by the evening bulletin of Radio Kashmir benumbed me. For a moment I could not reconcile that Kuldeep Rana, a handsome man with fine intellect was no more in this world.

My nostalgic memories went back to the day when I had first met Rana twenty five years back. It was a chance meeting. Prof. AQ Sarwari had introduced Kuldeep Rana to me by his real name-Janki Nath. The Professor always called him by this name, Kuldeep would feel inconvenient.

After this meeting, we began meeting quite frequently. Kuldeep Rana had rented a room in the Habbakdal quarter of Srinagar. This room became a meeting point for his like-minded friends to socialize and indulge in animated discussions. It was this small room, where Kuldeep Rana penned down many of his short stories. I had the privilege to listen to these stories from him. At times he invited criticism from me and his other adversaries, but this never impinged upon our friendship.

Both he and myself virtually chased eminent poets and writers, whenever they visited Kashmir and benefited from our interactions with them. In 1968 Krishan Chander and Salma Sidiquee visited Kashmir and stayed in the Srinagar Circuit House. We met Krishan Chander and had discussions with him which spread over three days. There was a photographic session also with him. I get emotional on seeing these photographs.

Kuldeep Rana had finished his Masters Degree and was working for Doctorate on ‘Urdu Literature after Prem Chand’. It was at the time that he received the appointment orders as Newsreader in Radio Kashmir. He could no longer pursue his Doctorate. Meanwhile, he was transferred to Delhi and stayed there for sixteen long years. Our meetings became less frequent, but whenever Kuldeep visited Srinagar he would never miss a chance to meet his friends with the same enthusiasm and warmth as before. His smile never vanished from his face. In his Coffee House interactions, he would not mind speaking a little louder to drive home his argument. People could make out his presence from a distance.

Kuldeep Rana was no stranger to me, even before Prof. Sarwari introduced me to him. I used to read his columns in ‘The Daily Khidmat’ and Sunday edition of ‘The Daily Aftab’. His writings reflected intellectual depth and brought forth new trends in literary journalism. He became a familiar name in the writers’ fraternity. It was around this time that he published his Urdu novel, which was received well. He was at the Zenith of his literary career, his new name as Kuldeep Rana was conferred the recognition.

It remains enigmatic to me how he developed taste to write short stories. His first collection titled “*Tanhaiyan*”, was published in 1967-68. The collection carried introductory comments by eminent literateurs-Professor Sarwari, Prof. Shakeel-ur-Rehman, Kamal Siddiqui and Dr. Shamir Nikhat.

He was ecstatic when a literary journal ‘Shabi-Khoon’, brought out from Allahabad, published his short story. Kuldeep Rana was a perfectionist in the choice of subject matter for his stories and selected titles with great care. He displayed keen insight into emotional and psychological dimensions of society. Human agonies and tragedies found place as a prominent theme in his stories. His other interests included depiction of nature and spiri-



Dr. Brij Premi with Krishan Chander & short story writer & broadcaster Kuldeep Rana at Circuit House, Srinagar.

tualism. Kuldeep Rana always looked impatient, a man in hurry. He had mastered well the language he chose as the medium to write his creative stories. Like Prem Nath Paradesi and Prem Nath Dhar his literary talents suffered due to full-time work in the Radio. Had he continued to live Rana would have attained greater heights in the field of literature. I salute this great craftsman of words.

**(Translated from original Urdu by Sh. SK Handoo).*