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Panun Kashmir expresses strong concern over encroachment of Pandit property in Kashmir

KS Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 14: Panun Kashmir has expressed strong concern over the policy of attrition being pursued by the state administration vis-a-vis Kashmiri Hindus.

This was stated by Panun Kashmir leaders at a press conference in Jammu today. Panun Kashmir leadership charged that there were glaring instances of administrative/institutional connivance in divesting Kashmiri Hindus from their properties, shrines and businesses. The frontline organisation of Kashmiri Hindus alleged that residential property and shrine lands of Kashmiri Hindus were being grabbed relentlessly through forcible and fraudulent means. It also highlighted the role of state FSL which reportedly had given a contradictory report on the fraudulent grab of the property of a displaced Kashmiri Hindu. Charging grab of property Panun Kashmir leaders presented case studies of Mrs Bindroo, Mr Pyare Lal Tickoo, Sh. Moti Lal Kaul, Sh. Mohan Lal Pandita etc. Some of the victims of the property grab-Sh. Pyare Lal Tickoo, Sh. Moti Lal Koul and Sh. Mohan Lal Pandita were also present at the press conference.

"A process which was started by Mufti Mohd. Sayeed regime and continues ruthlessly even today is more alarming. Under this process Kashmiri Hindu property is



Panun Kashmir leaders addressing media persons in Jammu.

being taken over without the consent of owners for so-called public utility purposes. In the instance of this kind,"there is no parallel in history of independent India. Panun Kashmir leaders charged.

Mr. Kuldeep Raina, General Secretary Panun Kashmir said that Govt. was dithering over the passing of Temples Protection Bill. "This has given an opportunity to free booters to grab and encroach upon the Kashmiri Hindu Shrines," Mr. Raina alleged. He added, "Even cremation grounds and Holy Springs are not being spared".

Mr. O.N. Trisal, President All Kashmiri Pandits Solidarity Conference said the state government was pursuing an anti-Kashmiri Pandit agenda. "This was reflected in non-redressal of Pandits' deprivations," he added. He said that HRA and CCA were being denied to Displaced Employees. Mr. Trisal alleged that Kashmiri Pandit youth were being denied employment and said that the administration was trying to cre-

ate defections in the Displaced Community on the issue of Bifurcation of Ration Cards.

Panun Kashmir also expressed strong concern over non-reimbursement of rent for Pandits' houses occupied by security forces in Kashmir. It also raised the issue of non-reimbursement of core fund for critically sick members of Displaced Community.

The leaders charged that instead of addressing the problems of Kashmiri Hindus the communally motivated sections in the state administration have devised another stratagem to humiliate the Displaced Pandit Community. Changing nomenclature of 'Leave Salary' to 'Idle Wages' reflects the extent to which the state government is hostile to Kashmiri Hindus.

Panun Kashmir demanded that 1) all encroachments, whether forcible or fraudulent, should be removed. A special Tribunal headed by a sitting judge of Supreme Court should be constituted to give relief to the victims and punitive action

be taken against the encroachers. 2) Every type of discrimination against Displaced Kashmiri Hindu Employees should be done away with. 3) HRA and CCA should be immediately released with retrospective effect. 4) In the Bifurcation of cards the divisive policy should be stopped forthwith. 5) No Kashmiri Hindu property should be taken over by the State Govt. without the consent of owners. 6) All genuinely needy persons living outside the camps should be allotted the Quarters. 7) Immediate release of Core Fund for the Health Care. 8) Immediate scrapping of 'Idle Wages' nomenclature. 9) Immediate release of Special Employment Package for 20000 Kashmiri Pandit youth.

It reiterated the demand for setting up of Ministry of Rehabilitation at Centre to look after Kashmiri Hindus. Senior Panun Kashmir leader Mr. S.K. Kitchloo was also present at the press conference.

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

1. Smt. Jai Kishori Koul W/o Late Sh. Hirday Nath Koul of Gouripora Rawalpura Sanat Nagar, Sgr; presently residing at H.No: 64 Sector-4, Pamposh Colony Janipur, Jammu. 28/9/2007
2. Smt. Shobhawati Bhat W/o Late Sh. Jagar Nath Bhat of Gond Chakpura, Bagati-Kanipura Kmr; presently residing at H.No: 475, Sector-IIInd, Vinayak Nagar, Muthi, Jammu. 28/9/2007
3. Smt. Somawati Zutshi W/o Late Sh. Prem Nath Zutshi of Nai Basti Anantnag, Kmr; presently residing at 785-A Opp. Shakti Academy Janipur Jammu. 29/9/2007
4. Smt. Rattan Rani Drabu W/o Sh. H.N Drabu originally resident of Drabiyar Habbakadal Sgr; presently residing at Kothi No: 317, Phase-I Mohali Chandigarh. 29/9/2007
5. Sh. Shamboo Nath Koul S/o Late Sh. Gawasha Ram Koul, R/o Sona Masjid Rangunath Mandir Sgr; presently residing at 129-Ganesh Vihar Lowre Muthi, Jammu. 29/9/2007
6. Smt. Sumitra Ji (Mohan Rani) W/o Sh. Triloki Nath Bhat of Kullar Phalgam Kmr; presently residing at H.No: 81 Opp. Govt. Middle School Vishwakarama Lane New Plots Jammu. 29/9/2007
7. Smt. Prabhawati originally resident of Mohalla Kocha Nidan Rainawari Sgr; presently residing at B-128, S-2 Ramparastha Colony Gaziabad (UP). 29/9/2007
8. Sh. Mohan Krishen Koul of Dantar Anantnag Kmr; presently residing at H.No: 21, Lane No: 2, Udheywalla Bohri Jammu. 30/9/2007
9. Smt. Lalita Koul W/o Sh. Makhan Lal Koul of 84-Bagh Jogi Lankar Rainawari Sgr; presently residing at H.No: 939/A Opp. Blocks Govt. Qtrs. Subash Nagar, Jammu. 30/9/2007.
10. Smt. Tulsi Devi W/o Late Sh. Gopi Nath Raina of Chinigund Verinag Anantnag Kmr; presently residing at Transport Nagar Migrant Camp (GSI) Jammu. 30/9/2007
11. Sh. Jawahar Lal Peshen S/o Late Sh. Anand Raina R/o Tikkre Kupwara Kmr; presently residing at SRA-49-C, Shipra Raveera Indrapuram Gaziabad (UP). 30/9/2007
12. Sh. Bishambar Nath Rayu (Koul) originally resident of Dadikadal Tankipora Sgr; presently residing at 442/B, Housing Colony Janipur, Jammu. 30/9/2007
13. Smt. Raj Dulari Charagi W/o Late Kashi Nath Charagi originally resident of Budgair Ali Kadal Sgr; presently residing at Nangal Road, New Overhead Tank Katra Jammu. 30/9/2007.
14. Sh. Bushan Lal Raina (Razdan) S/o Late Sh. Lassakak of Salia Anantnag Kmr; presently resident of 357, Sector-4 Gangyal Jammu. 1/10/2007
15. Sh. R.K. Hakhu S/o Pt. Isher Bhat Hakhu of Malyar Habbakadal Sgr; presently residing at C-42, Cosmos Floors Ardee City Sector-52, Gurgaon. 2/10/2007
16. Sh. Piaray Lal Gulla S/o Late Sh. Kanth Ram Gulla R/o Bagi Sundar Bala Chattabal Sgr; presently residing at H.No: 148, Lane-6, Kabir Nagar Poonch House, Jammu. 2/10/2007
17. Sh. Makhan Lal Munshi S/o Late Sh. Dina Nath Munshi R/o 56/70-Patel Nagar Lane-2, Talab Tillo, Jammu. 3/10/2007
8. Smt. Pushpa Rani Misri W/o Late Sh. Raja Pushkar Nath Misri of Mohalla Radio Station, Ward No: 6, Poonch Jammu. 6/3/2007
9. Smt. Sushma Koul W/o Tej Kumar Koul R/o 235-15 Patel Nagar, Talab Tillo, Jammu. 5/10/2007
10. Sh. Sushil Koul S/o Sh. Badri Nath Kaul of Village Soibugh Distt. Budgam Kmr; presently residing at Govind Nagar, Sector-3, Gole Gujral Jammu. 5/10/2007
11. Sh. Vijay Kumar Bhat S/o Late Sh. Makhan Lal Bhat of Wadwan Budgam Kmr; presently residing at Krishna Nagar, Miransahib Jammu. 5/10/2007
12. Smt. Kamlawati Koul W/o Late Sh. Maheshwar Nath Kaul R/o Abul Wana Hirman Teh. & Distt. Shopian Kmr; presently at Muthi Camp Phase-IIInd Qtr. No: 83/F Jammu. 6/10/2007
13. Smt. Uma Shree W/o Sh. Nath Jee Pandita R/o Checki-Vessu Anantnag Kmr; presently residing at Dhar Road Sattani Udampur, Jammu. 6/10/2007
14. Sh. Soom Nath Thusoo S/o Late Sh. Sirkanth Thusoo of Karihama Kupwara Kmr; presently residing at H.No:6, Zero Lane Anand Nagar Bohri Jammu. 7/10/2007
15. Sh. Kanwal Krishen Jalali S/o Late Sh. Vish Nath Jalali of Rainawari Sgr, Kmr; presently residing at Trikuta Nagar, Ext. Jammu. 7/10/2007
16. Smt. Shobawati Bradoo W/o Late Sh. Sham Lal Bradoo originally resident of Zaindar Mohalla Sgr; presently residing at C/o Dr. V.K. Gupta Mohalla Top Sherkhania, Jammu. 7/10/2007
17. Sh. Omkar Nath Pandita S/o Late Kanth Ram R/o Tachloo Shopian Kmr; presently residing at Trilokpur Gole Gujral, Jammu. 8/10/2007
18. Dr. M.K. Bhat S/o Late Dr. SC Bhat originally resident of Karan Nagar Sgr; presently residing at 36-A, Tirath Nagar Talab Tillo, Jammu. 9/10/2007
19. Sh. Dalip Kher S/o Late Sh. BN Kher of 89, Jawahar Nagar Sgr; presently residing at 83-Postal Qtrs. Sector-17, Noida. 9/10/2007
20. Sh. Chaman Lal Moza R/o 49-Ext. Subash Nagar, Jammu. 10/10/2007
21. Sh. Sham Lal Dhar S/o Sh. Neel Kanth Dhar of Badiyar Bala Sgr; presently residing at Ajmir Rajasthan. 10/10/2007
22. Smt. Nancy Dhar W/o Late Sh. Mohan Lal Dhar original resident of Budgam Ali Kadal Sgr; presently at H.No: 20, Lane No: 2 Roop Nagar Enclave Jammu. 11/10/2007
23. Smt. Harmali Bhat W/o Late Sh. Dina Nath Bhat, R/o Malmoh Magam Kmr; presently residing at Qtr. No: 459, Migrant Camp Nagrota Jammu. 11/10/2007
24. Sh. Bushan Lal Munshi S/o Late Sh. Gopi Nath Munshi R/o Mallapora Habbakadal Sgr; presently residing at 78, Gobind Nagar, Talab Tillo, Jammu. 11/10/2007
25. Sh. Makhan Lal Dhar S/o Sh. Parkash Joo Dhar original resident of 390 Jawahar Nagar, Sgr; presently residing at Qtr. No: 2311-B SBI Colony, Sector-42 Chandigarh. 12/10/2007
26. Smt. Asha Ji Raina S/o Jawahir Lal Raina of Hanand Chawalgam Anantnag, Kmr; presently residing at Qtr. No: 150, Mishriwalla Camp, Jammu. 12/10/2007
27. Sh. Arjan Nath Pandit S/o Late Sh. Srikanth Pandit R/o Umangari Anantnag, Kmr; presently residing at H.No: 63, Shankar Nagar Salian Talab Udampur. 13/10/2007
28. Sh. Hira Lal Peshin S/o Late Sh. Arjna Nath Peshin of Nunner Budgam Kmr. 13/10/2007
29. Smt. Sheela Parimoo W/o Late Sh. Makhan Lal Veshin of Karan Nagar, Sgr; presently residing at B-25, Sector-6, Noida. 14/10/2007
30. Sh. Jawahir Lal Thusoo S/o Late Sh. Sarwanand Thusoo originally resident of village Gotangoo Kupwara Kmr; presently residing at H.No: 17, Lane-4, Surya Vihar Patta Bohri, Jammu. 15/10/2007
31. Smt. Danwati Tickoo W/o Late Sh. Ram Chand Tickoo originally resident of Bhagwanpora Verinag Kmr; presently residing at H.No: 114/2 Block-A, Roop Nagar Enclave Jammu. 15/10/2007
32. Smt. Shobawati Pandita W/o Late Sh. Dina Nath Pandita, R/o Tral Kmr; presently residing at H.No: 20, Lane-1, Block-A Roop Nagar, Jammu. 16/10/2007
33. Sh. Dalip Koul S/o Dr. G.L. Koul (Rais) originally resident of Nazuk Mohalla Anantnag Kmr; presently residing at C-75, Om Nagar Udhewalla Bohri, Jamm. 16/10/2007
34. Sh. Kashi Nath Koul S/o Late Padam Nath Koul, R/o Bana Mohalla Sgr; presently residing at 101, Amit Nagar Muthi, Jammu. 16/10/2007
35. Smt. Kanta Devi W/o Sh. Shamboo Nath Jotshi R/o Bagh Jogilankar Rainwari Sgr; presently residing at H.NO: 270-M, Durganagar Sector-2, Jammu. 16/10/2007
36. Smt. Indrani Koul W/o Late Sh. Amar Nath Koul originally resident of Mohalla Kah Bazaar Anantnag, Kmr; presently residing at H.No: 208-A, Sector-I, Vinayak Nagar, Muthi Jammu. 17/10/2007
37. Smt. Renuka (Dhar) Koul W/o Sh. Sunil Kumar Koul of 320, Sector-17, G, Vasundhara Gaziabad (UP). 17/10/2007
38. Smt. Shanta Ji W/o Sh. Sarwanand Bhat originally resident of Khee Jogi Pora Kulgam Kmr; presently residing at H.No: 229, New Plot Jammu. 17/10/2007
39. Sadhvi Ratni Misri D/o Late Sh. P.N. Misri erstwhile resident of Maletch Bagh Zaindar Mohalla Sgr; presently residing at Shalimar Garden, UP. 17/10/2007
40. Smt. Krishna Dhar W/o Sh. ML Dhar originally resident of Karfali Mohalla Sgr; presently residing at 7, B/2 Shiva Enclave Sector-2, Pamposh Colony Janipur, Jammu. 18/10/2007
41. Smt. Neha Pandita W/o Moti Lal Pandita R/o Trahpoo Achabal Anantnag Kmr; presently residing at Muthi Camp Phase-1st, Qtr. No: 392, Jammu. 18/10/2007
42. Smt. Krishna Dhar/Pran Lata W/o Sh. ML Dhar R/o 7-B/2 Sector-2, Shiva Enclave Pamposh Colony Janipur, Jammu. 18/10/2007
43. Sh. Shamboo Nath Kachroo S/o Late Sh. Krishan Lal Kachroo originally resident of Mangalpora Anantnag Kmr; presently residing at Lane No: 11, Guda Keran Barnai Bantalab, Jammu. 19/10/2007
44. Smt. Sham Rani Koul W/o Late Sh. A.N. Koul of Sheelteng IInd Bridge Habbakadal Sgr; presently residing at H.No: 47, Lower Laxmi Nagar, Sarwal. 19/10/2007
46. Smt. Devki Koul W/o Late Sh. Gopi Nath Koul, R/o Sheshyar Sgr; presently residing at 25-JD Gupta Colony Khirki Ext. Malviya Nagar, New Delhi. 20/10/2007
47. Smt. Arandati Razdan W/o Late Sh. Jagar Nath Razdan originally resident of Batyar, Alikadal Sgr; presently residing at Manish Bhavan Wazir Lane, Bohri Jammu. 20/10/2007
48. Smt. Pooja Malla W/o Sh. Suraj Malla originally resident of Bagh-e-Mehtab Sgr; presently residing at 83 IInd Floor Ashoka Enclave Part-III Sector-35, Faridabad. 20/10/2007
49. Sh. Roop Krishen Koul S/o Late Sh. S.N. Koul, R/o Lane-6, Block-B, Roop Nagar Enclave Jammu, originally resident of Danwari Chattabal Sgr. 20/10/2007
50. Smt. Rattan Rani Koul W/o Late Sh. Shankar Nath Koul originally resident of Manzoo Martand, Mattan Anantnag, Kmr; presently residing at D-49, South Ext. Trikuta Nagar, Jammu. 20/10/2007

EDITORIAL

GEELANI'S BLUFF

SYED ALI Shah Geelani, the extremist leader of fundamentalist Jamaat Islami in a recent statement asked the Pandit community to 'return' to their homes in the valley. Unlike past, this time Geelani did not add the caveat that Pandits on their return should join the jihadi terrorist movement and denounce Security Forces. However, the pro-Pak leader insisted that Pandits should prefer to stay with local Muslims in the valley and not reside in special security zones.

Geelani alleged that vested interests made Pandits flee the valley under a 'conspiracy'. He even claimed that 'militants never did any harm to Kashmiri Pandits nor would they ever do'. Geelani is known for pro-Pak and pro-Jihadi views. Syed Salahuddin, the leader of Hizbul Mujahideen and terrorist conglomerate, United Jihad Council, based in Pakistan, once described Geelani as "leader of the movement"

Dropping caveat on Pandits' return does not indicate any change in Geelani's views on Pandit Question. If his interview to the local press is seen in totality there are ample indications that he continues to oppose Pandits' return by loud-mouthing Goebellian lies on ethnic-cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus.

Who else than Geelani and other leaders of his ilk should be blamed for this wholesale cleansing? Jihadi and secessionist movement, strongly endorsed by Geelani, suppressed all forms of religious and political dissent and engineered a brutal religious-cleansing to build an exclusivist Theo-fascist society. Hundreds of members of Pandit community were done to death through selective killings by JKLF, Hizbul Mujahideen and other outfits of "freedom (jihadi) Movement". What did Geelani do to denounce these killings? When Geelani harangues 'militants never did any harm to Kashmiri Pandits' he can be given latitude for the lapse because amnesia is a known entity in old age.

Kashmiri Pandits of Sangrampora, Wandhama, Telwani, Nai Sarak and others who stayed back were foolhardy to trust 'assurances' doled out by different separatist leaders. They had to pay a heavy price for it. Those who do not learn from history are condemned to repeat it. No Kashmiri Pandit who has undergone the experience of past two decades and retains some sensitivity can even remotely think that Pandits can live again in Kashmir on assurances of separatist lead-

ership or even the civil society. The latter continues to harangue that Pandits were made to flee under a well-planned conspiracy by the then Governor Jagmohan.

Geelani's statement was given wide coverage in the valley press. Even few toadies in the Pandit community were quoted to hail Geelani as a 'Secular Messiah'. They were made to denounce "special or security zones". Why is Muslim leadership opposed to 'Security Zones' for Displaced Kashmiri Hindus? A leadership or sections of civil society which not only remained indifferent but even tacitly connived in religious-cleansing of Pandit minority, cannot be expected to voice opposition to security zones on secular grounds. They oppose official security for Displaced Kashmiris because they know it too well that the persecuted Pandit minority would be loathe to return in conditions of insecurity. Secondly, even if some members return they would remain at the mercy of anti-national elements, waiting for another round of ethnic-cleansing to happen.

Geelani or for that matter other separatist leaders have a compulsion to drop the old caveat on Pandits' return. Even while doing everything to stall return of Kashmiri Hindus they cannot afford to take a public stand to justify it. There is global censure of Kashmiri separatist movement and the civil society on the issue of Pandits' religious-cleansing. Kashmiri Pandits' success in keeping alive the political visibility on their genocide, exposing the duplicitous character of Muslim communalism during the Roundtable meets and subsequent recognition by GOI that Kashmiri Pandits were a key factor in solution to Kashmir have made secessionists of different hues and communalists in Kashmir jittery. Devising new stratagems to hoodwink national and global opinion and search for 'Pandit faces' to counter legitimate aspirations of Kashmiri Hindus has become a compulsion. Geelani's acrobatics on Pandits return are to be viewed in this context.

Displaced Kashmiri Hindus can be expected to return only when Central Govt. creates durable security, economic and political frameworks for their rehabilitation, taking into consideration the causes of religious-cleansing and institutionalized discrimination pursued against them by successive state govts. since 1947. Kashmiri Pandit organizations have done well by calling Geelani's latest bluff.

LETTERS

A rare strotam

Sir,

Please refer an article on Sharadapeetham written by Sanjay Godbole in the issue of December 2007. We are happy to note strotam from the article. Actually we were trying to find it which was not available so far.

We shall be highly obliged if you publish complete strotam in praise of Goddess Sharda. Please let us know also about the poet who composed it. No doubt it is a historical strotam.

—K.D. Tiwari

Barra-7, Kanpur

Kashmir Sentinel:

Well Done

Sir,

I am a keen reader of *Kashmir Sentinel* and over a period of time I got convinced that this magazine is truly living to its name. The issues especially the thematic ones which you publish from time to time are a precious treasure for the future progeny. The dedicated well learned people involved with this magazine deserve all praise. Well done. Keep the Good Work going.

—Ajay Kaul

Rehari Colony, Jammu

Real Feast

Sir,

Reading *Kashmir Sentinel* is a treat. Your latest issue of Feb 2008 has correctly reflected the situation vis-a-vis Pak sponsored terrorism and America's new strategy in Middle East.

More over the interview of Dr Ajay Chrungoo has redoubled my faith in struggle launched by Panun Kashmir. The archival articles covering the aspects of aesthetics, tradition, society, heritage, history and the book review was a real feast.

—B.L. Raina

Topsherkhania
Jammu

Pakistan has not abandoned Crossborder Terrorism-II

By KS Correspondent

No change in Pak intentions: General assessment among security experts and security agencies is that decrease in levels of violence in J&K is not due to any change in Pakistan intent. Reports say that Al Qaeda camps in Waziristan and Dir district of NWFP have half a dozen camps run by Kashmiri outfits. LeT and JeM cadre were being imparted training in suicide-bombing and making explosives by Arab and Uzbek trainers. Same reports say that the cadre of these outfits were fighting alongside Taliban. Another report quoting Army sources said that around 150 or 200 LeT terrorists were reportedly waiting to cross over into J&K. Pakistan is sending terrorists into India on legitimate Pakistani passports. This fact came to notice when 4 terrorists of a Lashkar-e-Toiba cell were arrested in UP Counter-terrorism officials say the Lashkar's large-scale use of Pakistani passports was intriguing, given Pakistan's claim that it was making efforts to distance itself from terrorism directed at India. There are also credible reports that say that over 3000 youth from J&K (mostly from Kashmir Valley) were undergoing or imparting training in camps in Pakistan with. Dreaded terrorist Mushtaq Latram is said to be the coordinator of these camps. Security agencies have already cautioned the government not to walk into the trap of allowing these youth free passage, particularly at a time when assembly elections were around the corner and terrorists in disarray. Some separatists-friendly politicians in Kashmir have been raising this demand to appease separatists.

A report quoting Military Intelligence said that ISI was inducting Pathans from southern Afghanistan and northwestern Pakistan to make up for the losses Hizbul Mujahideen has suffered recently. Some of the terrorists nabbed recently by security forces give enough indication about the Pak intent. On February 15 two Kashmiri terrorists hailing from Kulgam were nabbed from Narwal Fruit Mandi in Jammu by security forces while they were negotiating a deal for purchase of a car to trigger a blast in Jammu city. The terrorists, as per police, had been deputed by HM operatives based in Kulgam and had been asked to contact couple of Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF) activists. The arrested terrorists revealed during interrogation that there was huge flow of fake currency to terrorist outfits to take care of food, shelter, purchase of vehicles and making payments among terrorists and families of terrorists killed. Terrorists were exchanging fake currency with some busi-

nessmen-with terrorist links.

On February 21 a CRPF jawan Mudassir Yousuf R/o Botengo, Sopore, posted at Newa was arrested for terrorist activities. He was carrying an IED with a timer device for blasting it in Pulwama. This had been given to him by Hizbul Mujahideen 'commanders'. Early this month five overground workers travelling in a TATA Sumo were arrested on the outskirts of Doda town while smuggling a consignment of arms from Qazigund to Doda. As per police these were to be delivered to LeT 'Divisional Commander' Shabir Itoo, operating in Gundna, Bharat (Doda). Two months back they had smuggled Rs 2 lakh Hawala money to two LeT operatives in Doda.

Security agencies believe that new Pak Army Chief General Kiyani was maintaining status quo as far as Pak army's role in militancy was concerned. Lt. Gen. ML Naidu, Vice Chief of Army staff has said that "the Pakistan army and the ISI have ordered a 'tactical freeze' in J&K in view of the unstable internal security situation in Pakistan. The Pakistan army's grand strategy of wresting Kashmir from India and "bleeding India through a thousand cuts" has not changed; only the tactics have changed as the Pakistan army, is itself bleeding profusely from self-inflicted wounds". Also, sleeper cells were lying low and waiting to strike at a more opportune time. Assembly elections in J&K are due to take place later this year. After the recent success achieved by security forces, the morale of terrorists is low and self-preservation is a major motive.

Kanchan Lakshman, Research Fellow at the Institute for Conflict Management, in a Strategic review notes:

"Pakistan's intentions remain unchanged; its terrorist reserves are intact; Islamist terrorist groups have established some autonomous capacities for operation, independent of Pakistani state agencies; and the South Asia and wider Asian region teeters on the brink of spiralling instability. In the long war against Islamist terrorism, the partial relief in J&K would well prove the calm before a rising storm".

Decrease in Levels of Violence:

Decrease in incidents of terrorist violence can be attributed to many factors:

Changes in capacities and compulsions in Pakistan:

Due to involvement in FATA and other violent areas Pakistan's capacity to sustain past levels of terrorism in J&K has diluted. Nearly 85000 of its troops are battling Al Qaeda-Pak Taliban combine in FATA. Paki-

ferred major reverses due to focussed counterinsurgency operations. During 2007, eighty-seven terrorist leaders were neutralized. Top leadership of all the three terrorist groups active in J&K-HM, LeT and JeM was eliminated. The Hizbul Mujahideen, which suffered loss of 179 top cadres since 2003 is in disarray. IGP Kashmir SM Sahai has said that Hizb faces a similar situation as JKLF faced in 1994.

The terrorist groups are finding it difficult to find replacements of their cadres at different levels.

Shift in Strategy:

There is a shift in Pakistan's strategy in fomenting Crossborder terrorism at two levels:

***Dispersal of terrorism outside J&K and creation of 'Indigenous terrorism in Indian heartland.'**

***Creation of a United political voice within J&K in its favour.**

Dispersal of Terrorism outside J&K:

Pakistan sponsored Islamist terrorists are increasingly focussing on the Indian heartland. Escalation of ULFA and Maoist terrorism also reveals ISI dimension. On February 11 a 'peace

broker' between the Centre and banned outfit ULFA, Lachit Bordoloi was arrested in connection with an alleged plot to hijack an Indian Airlines aircraft from LG International Airport in Guwahati to Pakistan. His name came up during interrogation of a ULFA terrorist. As per Stratafor ULFA Chief Paresh Barua has business operations throughout India, Bangladesh and Persian Gulf. This includes Hotels, Consulting firms, driving schools, tanneries, Departmental stores, Shrimp trawlers, Travel agencies, Investment companies, Soft drink factories. Reports say that following setbacks in J&K ISI has directed LeT and Jaish-e-Mohammad outfits to coordinate activities with ULFA to escalate subversive violence in Assam, Nagaland and Manipur.

Maoist activities have been noticed even in such areas like Delhi, Uttarakhand and Kolkata. A report published in **Indian Express** (29 January, 2005) said 16 police stations in New Delhi have been declared prone to 'Maoist infiltration'. The threat has

forced the security apparatus to set up an anti-naxalite cell in the capital.

The confessions of a high-ranking Maoist, Somen, arrested recently from Kolkatta's outskirts has sent alarm bells ringing in West Bengal. He revealed that the Maoists were planning strikes in many urban centres in Bengal and have built up strong bases inside Kolkata. The Maoists have also succeeded in infiltrating various educational institutions.

On March 1, 2008 Uttarakhand police arrested two Maoists from Lalkuna and Nanakmatta towns in the state. IGP Kumaon range said the arrested Maoists were planning to target certain important installations, including banks, police stations and other government offices in Uttarakhand.

Security agencies are still groping in dark about exact contours of ISI-Indian Maoists nexus.

It is the Islamist terrorism in the Indian heartland that has attracted much attention. Islamists have been targeting in particular south and western India, besides UP. In 2007 nearly 140 civilians were killed in various terrorist attacks in different cities -Varanasi, Lucknow and Faizabad in Uttar Pradesh, Ajmer, Hyderabad and Panipat. Cadres of two major Islamist outfits-Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) and **Tabligi Jamaat** have been found involved in terrorist activities and in setting up sleeper cells. HUJI and LeT outfits are active in terrorist activities in Indian heartland. J&K is gradually emerging as a launching-pad for terrorist attacks across India. Investigations into terrorist attacks reveal that each of these attack had a linkage to the Kashmiri Jihad in terms of human and logistics support.

Explaining the reasons for the shift in strategy to focus on heartland, **Kanchal Lakshman** observes:

"This shift in the pattern of violence from J&K to other locations offers Pakistan great 'deniability and also enables it to harness the grievances-real and perceived-among the Indian Muslims..."

The LeT outfit has been able to enlist Indian Muslim youth to orchestrate attacks across India. Unlike earlier, when ISI was targeting semi-literate Muslim youth of madrassas and poorer sections the cadres joining the Islamist terror outfits now are software and engineering professionals from upper middle class. These youth subscribe to Al Qaeda ideology.

ISI has been cultivating selective politicians, particularly in UP, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra who provide tacit logistic support for setting up

(Contd. on Page 5)



Security forces rescuing lambs during a gun battle in Chewdara, Beerwah, Kashmir.

Pakistan has not abandoned Crossborder Terrorism-II

(Contd. from Page 4)

sleeper cells. Uttar Pradesh is emerging as new battle ground for Islamist terrorists. According to **South Asia Terrorism Portal** there were 57 incidents of terrorist subversion in UP between April 2001 and 2008. 34 out of 70 districts have been identified as affected by terrorist subversion.

Experts agree that ISI's strategy in focussing on Indian heartland have a larger objective. Kanchan Lakshman notes:

"ISI's strategy of 'using disenchanting Muslim groups in one area (Mumbai and Gujrat for instance) has the 'domino effect' of creating or inspiring equally violent groups elsewhere in the country, so that a potential for large-scale violence is steadily built up". He refers to the interrogation report of a terrorist arrested in 2002 in the Kashmir Valley which said that the Indian security forces will encounter organised Islamist terrorist movements in various cities of UP and across the Hindi heartland within the next few years. Lakshman warns, "In the proximate future, the Jihadi network will look to gradually transform political dissent into a violent form of political polarization and subversion in a number of additional theatres within India".

Another reason for ISI's focus on enlisting greater number of Indian Muslim youth is to create 'homegrown terrorists' so that Islamist insurgency in Indian heartland is projected as an 'indigenous' one. This would serve the purposes of 'plausible deniability'. If these indigenous terrorists in India are able to serve the subversive interests of Pakistan over the next few months Pakistan may be able to enact deception of ordering 'closure' of some India-specific Jihadi terrorist outfits. This would help it to cut the number of its own citizens sent into Indian for executing acts of terrorism.

Allabaksh, a strategic expert locates another factor in ISI's design to 'indigenise' terrorism in India. He says, "It can run on its own steam in the unlikely event of the exporting nation actually forced to dismantle the entire edifice of its officially sponsored terror business."

3. Creation of United Political Voice in its favour:

Two decades of terrorist violence has led to some fatigue among the local populace in Kashmir. Credibility of terrorists and overground separatist outfits is at its lowest since eruption of Islamist insurgency in 1989-90. International isolation, domestic instability, decimation of Jihadi ranks in J&K and Indian resistance to succumb to Pak blackmail has convinced Pakistan that even short-term tactical concessions are not pos-

sible. To keep the pot boiling Pakistan is endeavouring to raise a united political voice in its favour. It has initiated a process to engineer unity among various separatist outfits, including two factions of Hurriyat. Kanchan Lakshman observes, "The objective appears to be to gradually transform the predominantly terrorist movement into a more wide-based movement of political extremism, backed by calibrated terrorist operations, to secure a stronger position at the negotiating table and achieve what has not been possible on the ground through terrorism alone".

Kashmiri separatists/terrorist

because of its being the state based party will ceremoniously highlight the pre-53 status for the state. In the forthcoming elections in Indian Kashmir tacit blessings of Pakistan would fix upon NC. Pertinently, neither militant nor political means would be pressed on to obstruct the impending elections in Indian Kashmir by the separatist parties. However, the demand for freedom and tripartite talks will remain on the political charter of APHC. Additionally, the squeals of Pakistan Foreign Office will continue to ask for the implementation of UN resolutions and claim supporting Kashmiris by political,

Malik. 1993 constitution emphasizes "right of self-determination" as basis to settle Kashmir issue and calls for tripartite talks.

PoK Prime Minister, Sardar Atiq Ahmed Khan, terrorist conglomerate United Jihad Council and Laskhar-e-Toiba have publicly endorsed unity move. Shabir Shah said that participation of UJC into tripartite talks in future was inevitable. Intriguingly, PDP and NC have called for direct talks between Hizbul Mujahideen and Centre. On February 5 LeT expressed its support to the exercise and asked all separatist leaders in Valley to wind up their individual outfits and unite under one umbrella to

model praised by him earlier, welcomed 4-point formula of Musharraf, offered truce on some conditions, banned use of IEDs, welcomed unity but described Shabir Shah's decision to join Mirwaiz's Hurriyat as a 'hasty' one. Salahuddin is linked Kashmir Jamaat Islami and Hizbul Mujahideen. Patron of Kashmir Jamaat Islami, Sheikh Ghulam Hassan went a step further saying while Jamaat Islami would appeal for boycott but would not enforce it. Hussain added that for Jamaat Islami elections have "lost relevance".

To build up tempo for political extremism against India APHC-Mirwaiz has been bringing stridency in anti-Indian activities. It has raised demand for transfer of remains of Maqbool Bhat, has been orchestrating massive funeral gatherings at the killings of terrorists, irrespective of their being locals or foreign mercenaries; staged caged protest on alleged harassment of former terrorists and their families, called withdrawal of Special Powers to Armed Forces. Mirwaiz Umar has said that he was opposed to status quo in J&K. He endorsed 4-point formula of Musharraf and declared that Hurriyat would not seek solution with constitutional framework of India.

Two fundamentalist/pro-separatist organisations--Jamaat Islami and Jamaat Ahli Hadis while endorsing unity did not join APHC-Mirwaiz and called for restoration of 1993 Hurriyat constitution. Two pro-Geelani groups--Dukhtaran Millat and Majlis Itihaadul Millat dubbed unity move as a drama. Yasin Malik too is cool to the idea.

APHC-Mirwaiz has said that it would open its offices in all the districts of J&K and Delhi to "create awareness on Kashmir and for interaction with leaders in India". It also said that APHC was not averse to elections for referendum. Some separatist friendly lobbies in Delhi have been floating demands to bolster separatist leadership. They have been calling for holding separate Round Table Conference for separatists. Reports coming from the Valley say that separate groups would be putting up many independent candidates in the forthcoming assembly elections in the state with an aim to influence the new government for seeking major tactical concessions. Decrease in level of violence has another political objective for separatists. Through friendly politicians demands are being raised for unilateral ceasefire, free passage to Kashmiri youth in Pakistan, demilitarisation, compensation to families of Jihadis killed. These demands are aimed at helping terrorists to re-group. It remains to be seen how UPA government would call this bluff. (concluded)



Separatist leaders in Kashmir trying to rake-up anti-India Sentiment.

outfits are increasingly relying on other means like mass protests, influencing viewpoints through coercion of the local media, prevailing on bar associations to file human rights abuse cases and nudging some of the political parties to carry forward the agenda of separatism. Altaf Qadri, a political analyst based in New York attributes the unity drive to 'sinking peace process' between India and Pakistan! He assigns other factors also--proactive role played by Musharraf is no more going to be there and secondly, the time was not appropriate for seeking solution as per Pakistani desires. India wields more clout and power than Pakistan and no country would like to displease India in view of its emerging economy. He notes, "To retain reigns of the movement (separatists) and strategic imperatives as opposed to India in explicit control the new growing alliance will have a loose form of organisation but with decentralized leadership. These political parties would demand for any solution that it outside Indian constitutional framework". He adds: "On the other hand, most likely the National Conference

moral and diplomatic means".

Series of events that started unfolding since January last put larger Pakistani game in perspective. Shabir Shah, head of separatist Democratic Freedom Party joined Mirwaiz Umar faction of Hurriyat Conference on January 14. He proposed six point formula for unity, including restoration of 1993 constitution. The latter rejects scope for bilateral talks, dialogue and solution to Kashmir within Indian Constitution. Shah had been expelled from Hurriyat Conference in 1996 for meeting Frank Wisner, the then US Ambassador. APHC had boycotted the meeting.

Two years back APHC-Mirwaiz was recognized by Musharraf as the real Hurriyat. This had irked Syed Ali Shah Geelani, who heads the extremist Hurriyat faction. Recently, Geelani declined twice invitations sent to him by Pakistan embassy. On February 4, 2008 Pakistan High Commissioner, Shahid Malik himself went to see Geelani to win his support for unity. Geelani put two conditions--Stopping dialogue with Delhi and restoration of 1993 Hurriyat Constitution. He left happy after his meeting with

"fight" for Kashmir cause. For the first time in 15 years there was Tele-address by Geelani and Shabir Shah to a Jamat-ud-Dawah (LeT) Conference on 'Kashmir Solidarity' Day on February 5, 2008. Senior Dawah leader Hafiz Abdur Rehman Makki while welcoming Hurriyat unity also called for inclusion of Yasin Malik. Gen. (Retd) Hamid Gul, former ISI Chief and public supporter of Dawah said that "liberation" of Kashmir was not possible till US left Afghanistan.

UJC chief Salahuddin, a terrorist leader based in Pakistan is making attempts to return to Kashmir to play a "role on lines of Geelani--an adamant anti-India voice in the Valley". He has claimed threats in his life in Pakistan. In a significant statement in line with new ISI strategy Syed Salahuddin in an interview with Mohammad Islam, editor of Kashmir News Service said that terrorists would target neither political rallies nor candidates or voters". He added, "those willing to take part in the polls are free to do so. The guns would only act when the security forces would use them". Salahuddin has also disowned 'Save Kashmir Movement', rejected Irish

Our Hopes have been shattered, says Dr. Ajay Chrungoo

KS: Where does Panun Kashmir as a movement stand today?

AC: Panun Kashmir as a movement is more relevant today than it had ever been at any time during the past 17 years. Infact, for the first time since independence Kashmiri Hindu politics is under focus at national & international plane. Panun Kashmir's consistent and patient work has started yielding results. Influential think-tanks at national level, working on Kashmir, are realizing that any settlement on Kashmir would remain an elusive dream unless Kashmiri Hindus' issue is settled as per the aspirations of Kashmiri Pandits. This is a major achievement.

KS: What are Panun Kashmir's engagements at the national and state level?

AC: There are three dimensions of Kashmir problem. One, Indian sovereignty is being challenged not only by Pakistan /Terrorists (through crossborder Terrorism and diplomatic bluff) but also by certain vested interests in the Indian civil society and neo-secessionist political lobbies in Kashmir. Attempts are being made to create conceptual and political space for forcing India to dilute its sovereignty over Kashmir through models like 'shared/joint sovereignty (Trieste/ Andorra models)', 'Greater Autonomy', 'self rule', so on and so forth. All this will lead to an autonomous Islamist Kashmir where there will be no place for nationalist groups and religious minorities. Secondly, there is the issue of ethnic-cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus and other Hindu groups in Jammu region. Lastly, Terrorist regimes are trying to hold Kashmiri civil society hostage to their diktat. Terrorists have suppressed all forms of political dissent through violence. Those who stood up to the terrorists have been brutally slaughtered and humiliated in a way that would put civilized societies to shame. Communalisation and Talibanisation campaigns too are influencing Kashmiri society and polity.

Panun Kashmir is trying to sensitise people at the national level to the dangers to Indian national security from crossborder and 'homegrown' terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism. We are also telling the nation that policy of 'secularism being divisible' (secular policy outside Kashmir and communal one in Kashmir) will not work. If the only Muslim majority state of India cannot tolerate a small Hindu minority what would be the message for building secularism as an ideological foundational principle for Indian nation-state. This argument has started making impact. Kashmiri political leadership which has never treated Kashmiri Pandits as equal partners in society is feeling jittery. Attempts to seek 'Pandit faces' to counter legitimate aspirations of Displaced Kashmiris stem from this compulsion.

Panun Kashmir is succeeding in bringing home the point that the dilution of Indian sovereignty over Kashmir would not only imperil Indian unity but would also strengthen communal and secessionist forces in the state. How would Kashmiri Hindus remain secure in a place where Indian control would be weak and communal-secessionist forces rule the roost?

Lastly, we are impressing upon that unless we counter communalism and fundamentalism and eliminate terrorist regimes Kashmiri

society would remain handicapped in formulating genuine aspirations. Any solution which advocates compromise with communalism and separatism in Kashmir would be self-defeating.

KS: What has been the impact of Panun Kashmir at the community level?

AC: Kashmiri Pandit community thinks that the political visibility on its genocide has been possible solely because of efforts of Panun Kashmir. There is a Pandit question today because there is Panun Kashmir movement.

Panun Kashmir has made a radical departure from traditional Pandit politics where leadership settled for few crumbs or personal favours through compromise with Muslim Communalism. Social and political awareness in the Pandit community has undergone a sea change. **Today Kashmiri Pandit community is seeking concrete frameworks for reversal of its genocide. Panun Kashmir perspective is visible even in cultural**

and social responses of the community. Even credible NGOs are seeking opinion of Panun Kashmir. By evolving a survival doctrine that would stand the test of time Panun Kashmir has helped the community break its isolation and shed psyche of defeatism. We believe this is vindication of the ideology of Panun Kashmir.

KS: There is a view that Kashmiri Pandits should have their own political party as all political parties have failed the Pandit Community. Do you endorse the view?

AC: There can be no two views that all political parties in the state-NC, PDP, Congress, Communists etc. have publicly shown that interests of Displaced Pandit Community do not count in their political strategies. We do not agree that floating a political party of its own is a solution to this political exclusion. 'Political Party' slogan is based on a premise that Pandits have a strong vote-bank which can be translated into legislative strength. This slogan is dubious and aimed to mislead Pandit community. **An illusion is sought to be created that even without reversal of genocide Displaced Pandits would continue to enjoy political rights.** We have two strong objections against the 'Political Party' slogan- One, there is no solid votebank of the community. In the past this

This is the concluding part of the Conversation with Dr. Ajay Chrungoo, Chairman Panun Kashmir. The 1st part was published in our previous issue.

—The Editor

has suffered further through dispersal and manipulation of our electoral roles. Even in Habbakadal constituency our voting strength is shown as 11 thousand, way down from 22 thousand. More than 60% of voters in Habbakadal constituency today are shown as non-Hindus. So, where is the votebank?

If the attempt is to show that Pandits support

democratic process that also sounds a dubious exercise. Pandits have always cherished the ideals of democracy. We ask how our electoral participation is going to make a difference to us if our genocide is not reversed. We believe gimmicks of 'political party' slogan has a sinister dimension too. It is a diversionary exercise, aimed at trivialising Kashmiri Pandits' problems and his permanent re-

habilitation. The basic objective of this exercise is to convert 'issues' of the community into 'non issues' and vice-versa. We would not be surprised if there was connivance of the local establishment in this. Peddlers of this slogan are those people who have always been fence-sitters and have no record of doing any credible work in the community. Their attempts to keep Pandit community's interests hostage to communal leadership in Valley would not succeed.

KS: In the past there was demand for 'constituencies in exile' also. What are your views?

AC: Panun Kashmir believes that political rights for the community will flow from constitutional reorganisation of the state which would take care of interests of all sections of people in the state. 'Constituencies in exile' is a communal demand, based on communal ghettoisation of the community. We reject the demand with the contempt it deserves. On one hand, the vested interests who raise political party slogans or demand 'Constituencies in exile' base these on communal principle but dub Panun Kashmir, which seeks unfettered flow of Indian constitution, as communal.

KS: Jamaat Islami and Hurriyat leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani recently said that

Kashmiri Pandits were welcome to return to Kashmir and have nothing to fear from. Earlier, he would rant that Pandits would not be allowed to come till they joined the separatist movement. To what do you attribute this change?

AC: There is no change of heart so far as Geelani is concerned. His ideological and political views, which endorse ongoing fundamentalist-secessionist movement, have no place for peaceful coexistence religious minorities. At the same time of important changes have taken place during the past two years to which Geelani has to respond by devising new stratagems to hoodwink public opinion.

In the internal dialogue process i.e. in Round Table and Working Group meets, different dimensions of Muslims politics are getting exposed. Kashmiri Pandit perspective was effectively projected and well received. This has implications for local Muslim politics vis-a-vis Hindus of state, for country as a whole and for global peace. Muslim separatist leadership is under international pressure to explain its stand on Kashmiri Hindus-their ethnic-cleansing and rehabilitation. At the same time separatist leaders and even sections of mainstream parties do not want to address problems of Kashmiri Hindus and reject religious pluralism.

To escape international opprobrium they seem to be working on two strategies-one, to say publicly they are not opposed to Pandits' return, while doing everything to stall it. Secondly, the separatists and elements friendly to them in the political establishment are targeting few Hindus still holding on in Srinagar. During the past 17 years these Kashmiri Pandits in Valley have been pushed to penury and destitution. Who is facilitating interactions between the separatist leadership and few hundred Kashmiri Pandits in Valley and to what end? Soon after this engagement there were demands that "Pandits Temples/Religious institutions should be put under the care of Auqaf Trust" and "We appeal to the separatist organisations to help protect our identity and rights". These two strategies are to be seen in a broader ISI strategy in which there is a shift in thrust. Pakistan wants to build a strong united political extremist voice in Valley, which is stridently India. Engagement with Pandits serves many purposes-acquire secular legitimacy for anti-national platform and countering Pandits interests by creating 'Pandit faces'. Reports say that lot of money is being spent on this exercise. This engagement has acquired urgency soon after GOI started internal dialogue process and recognized Kashmiri Hindu factor as an integral part of the problem.

KS: What has been the response to this engagement?

AC: The Kashmiri Pandit community sees through this game, which is aimed at creating a strong anti-Indian platform. Kashmiri Pandits are patriots and would not even remotely support something that harms country's interests. They also hold fast to the view that 'symbolic tokenism' advocated by Muslim communal establishment can be no substitute for reversal of genocide. Pandit opinion is more consolidated today than at any time.

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Kashmiri Pandit families shifting to the security zone in Sheikhpora, Budgam

votebank was destroyed through political gerrymandering of the electoral constituencies. After our uprootment this

support democratic process that also sounds a dubious exercise. Pandits have always cherished the ideals of democracy. We ask how our electoral participation is going to make a difference to us if our genocide is not reversed. We believe gimmicks of 'political party' slogan has a sinister dimension too. It is a diversionary exercise, aimed at trivialising Kashmiri Pandits' problems and his permanent re-

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PK HOLDS ROUND TABLE INTERACTION WITH Media, members of Community

Sentinel Correspondent

NEW DELHI, Feb 24: Panun Kashmir held a round table interaction with media persons of displaced Kashmiri Pandit community. The PK leaders highlighted the challenges faced by the displaced community and stated that the venture had been organized to come closer, learn from each other and contribute to the cause of nation and Kashmiri Hindus.

Dr. Shakti Bhan, **Chairperson Daughters of Vitasta**, welcomed the media persons and introduced the subject of the meeting. She emphasized the need to correct distortions and stated that Panun Kashmir has to promote the national cause in J&K state, make allies and friends who would support the displaced people in their struggle to get Panun Kashmir.

While the first half of the meeting focused on the role of media in today's world, the second half included a role of Jammu and Kashmir media viz a viz current political situation in J&K.

Sh. Vijay Tikoo, Vice Chairperson PK, advocated reorganization of the J&K state with carving out of a homeland for the Kashmiri Pandits on the North and East of river Jehlum. Kamal Wangnoo, secretary, PK -NCR-New Delhi said that his organization demands that seven lakh displaced Pandits including those who were forced to leave Kashmir in past be settled in the homeland so that they can live with dignity and honour.

Panun Kashmir chairman, Dr Ajay Chrungoo said that the Kashmiri Pandits putting up any where in the world are committed



Some of the participants at the Round Table Conference at IIC New Delhi

to continue their struggle for a separate homeland in the Valley. He emphasized that Panun Kashmir had relentlessly campaigned to correct the national vision about Jammu & Kashmir and articulated the real dimensions of the Islamist terrorism and its genocidal impact on Kashmiri Hindus. "Over the years we have realized that subversive forces operating in all spheres of life including the opinion making institutions have crippled the nation's response to the challenges in Jammu and Kashmir" he stated and explained how the loyalties of the citizens of India were being purchased to promote the separatist cause.

The PK leader asked, "Why did it take so long for the government to realize that what-

ever has been happening in Kashmir was never a freedom struggle? Why does the government and the establishment shy away from accepting the fact that Kashmiri Hindus have been subjected to genocide? Why does the government construct a genesis for Kashmir problem divorced from reality of an unfolding Jihad?"

Dr. Chrungoo emphasized that in an age of information, Press and Media persons have a responsibility to report events in the correct perspective and not to give in to sham ideologies and a secularist habit of hiding facts. "Active advocacy of what is right and active contestation of what is wrong and false, is the only way to defeat subversion. We have invited you here to join us to become active advocates of

the issues which Panun Kashmir promotes" said the leader.

Shalinder Aima, Editor, Kashmir Sentine gave a brief account of Panun Kashmir philosophy and ideology. He stated that Panun Kashmir's political vision emerges out of a civilizational paradigm and connects it to a modern world view of liberal and pluralistic ethos. He lamented how the Indian state and political establishment invariably have been engaging Muslims through proposals and formulae which essentially are a compromise with Muslim communalism. "This compromise is always being projected as the victory of Indian secularism. All this is happening because of a very well defined process of an ideological and institutional subversion. It is in this environment that Panun Kashmir has to struggle for not only the rights of the displaced Hindus of Jammu and Kashmir but also for correcting the national discourse on Kashmir", he stated.

The meeting was attended among others by senior Kashmiri Pandit media professionals, including Sh. Manohar Trakroo, Sh. A.N.Dhar, Sh. C.B. Koul, Sh. Ramesh Bhan, Sh. B.N.Betab, Sh. Ramesh Khazanchi, Mrs. Asha Khosa, Sh. J.L. Raina, Sh. Rakesh Khar, Sh. Siddharth Zarabi, Sh. Rockey Pandita and Sh. Sanjay Kaw.

The first session was also attended by eminent Kashmiri Pandit Nephrologist from New York, Dr. Nirmal Mattoo, and his associates from US and Canada. Among others who contributed were Dr. Shashishekar Toshkhani, Prof. G.L. Pandita, Capt. S.K. Tickoo, Prof. M.L. Raina, Sh. R.N.Naqib, Sh. K.L. Zutshi, Sh. Ashok Khusoo and Sh. Ashok Ogra.

Our Hopes have been shattered, says Dr. Ajay Chrungoo

(Contd. from Page 6)

KS: What has been the role of mainstream parties?

AC: The role of mainstream parties, to say that least, has been disappointing. Soon after GoI recognized Kashmiri Pandits as a crucial factor in Kashmir problem there was a rat race among different Muslim-dominated parties to create 'Pandit faces' to counter Panun Kashmir demand. Kashmiri political leaders have been orchestrating a campaign that Pandit community was in disarray, with divided leadership. Round Table meets exposed this campaign as a farce. During these meets while Pandit leaders spoke in a unified voice Muslim leadership reflected sharp divisions not only between different parties but within individual parties also. This was true of NC, PDP, Congress etc. So far as 'toadies' factor is concerned you can have them in every community. There are no more than 1-2 dozen such individual among Pandits whole role in the past and recent past has thoroughly discredited them in the community. It is Panun Kashmir only which defends community's interests and carries its mandate.

KS: Dr. Farooq Abdullah said recently that NC would appoint a high level group to study 'What Pandits want'. He also alleged Mufti Mohammad Sayeed's hand in 1986 communal violence against Pandits. Please comment.

AC: Dr. Farooq Abdullah has never been consistent in his statements. We would like to ask him if Mufti Mohammad Sayeed's hand was there what did he and his government do all these years to initiate probe into it and take action. NC has been making right noises while in opposition. When it was in power its resolve was not to tackle any of Pandits' problems. So far as Mr. Omar Abdullah is concerned he did try to address some of the issues. This has not gone unnoticed. In Geneva Dr. Abdullah blamed Jamaat Islami for Pandits' religious-cleansing. After Wandhama massa-

cre he said Kashmir Pandits cannot go back and described massacre 'as an act of ethnic-cleansing'. Yet on other occasions he blames Jagmohan for it. What else can you call it other than politicking? Not only NC but other parties as well refuse to accept the reality of ethnic-cleansing as point of departure for framing policies to end Pandits' ongoing genocide.

KS: How has coalition government responded to Displaced Kashmiri Pandits' problems during the past 5 years.

AC: The only gesture so far has been that 250 quarters have been allotted to the refugees. Even this took the government one year after the quarters were ready. Govt's own officials had been warning repeatedly that any delay in shifting refugees would be bad in view of the conditions of the old dilapidated quarters.

The government continues to dither on the issue of 'bifurcation of cards, employment package and other deprivations. **Ethnic-cleansing is an extraordinary situation. It requires extraordinary responses to address the gamut of genocide. You cannot allow routine parameters to address these.** Lately, there has been blatant encroachment of Kashmiri Pandits' residential and shrines property. The government is doing nothing to stop it. Influential politicians-mafia nexus is also said to be involved in it. Moreover, a new phenomenon is being seen whereby Kashmiri Pandits' property in particular is being acquired without the consent of owners for so-called '**public utility purposes**'. This is a grave situation. To rub salts into our wounds the Revenue department claimed that Pandits' exile was a self-imposed one'. Recently '**leave salary**' has been substituted by '**Idle wages**' to further humiliate the frontline victims of terrorism. **Kashmiri Pandits had a feeling that a national level party would have a national perspective where it would treat all sections of people equally. Our hopes have**

been shattered.

KS: The govt recently said that it was not averse to setting up a 'Sarda University' in Kashmir. Isn't it a good augury?

AC: We have to judge this offer in a broader context. If the government is unwilling to address any of Kashmiri Pandits' problems why should it go so far as to set up a university of this type. It is being floated as a trial balloon to hoodwink Kashmiri Pandits that their aspirations are being met. The bigger game is to use it to justify setting up of religious universities in the Valley and demands of 'greater autonomy', 'self-rule'. Who are the people in the community floating this demand of Sarda University? What is their public stand on Kashmir and Kashmiri Pandits? Answer to all this

would put 'Sarda University' proposals in perspective. There could be other motivations for the sponsors-personal benefits that will accrue from this exercise. Ideally, it would have been a nice thing to have Sarda University which would promote Kashmir's historical identity. In view of the political overtones such a university would serve no purpose. Without addressing the issue of return of Kashmiri Pandits what would be relevance of such a university?

KS: Wajahat Habibullah, a former senior bureaucrat has hinted that Kashmiri Pandits still in Valley should decide the fate of Kashmiri Pandits. He said "None of the Kashmiri Pandits in the Valley were invited (to RTC). Will the Pandits who left the Valley decide on its future or those who are still inside?" Please comment. By the way how many Kashmiri Pandits continue to live in Valley?

AC: I think you are referring to Wajahat Habibullah's interview to the **Kashmir Affairs** (a US paper). The most liberal estimates put the number of Pandits in Valley to be not more than 2800. Also, half of the members of these individual families live in Jammu while others stay put in Kashmir to look after business, property etc. Every year a number of

these families shift permanently to Jammu because of the attrition they face there. During the past 17 years neither the government nor others have taken even nominal care of them. Rather, they were being coerced to issue statements against Kashmiri Pandits and in favour of separatists. All this has been covered by the press. There have been killings also at regular intervals-Sangrampora, Wandhama, Telwani, Nai Sarak, that of Hriday Nath Wanchoo. In fact, latter's family put an advertisement in paper to show how Wanchoo was betrayed. This will give you an indication of what sort of life they were leading.

This statement of Wajahat Habibullah has to be read with the other part of the interview in which he enlogises Yaseen Malik and JKLF, which initiated the pogrom of ethnic-cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus. In the situation this nominal presence of Kashmiri Pandits lives in Valley they can be easily coerced. **Is counterposing of these Pandits to the main body of Displaced Pandits part of a larger game-plan to coerce the former to support JKLF?** It looks Wajahat's own proclivities lie with exclusivist variants of Kashmiri Muslim subnationalism. In a Working Group in which he was thrust from the backdoor he floated a proposal which would lead to communal balkanisation in Jammu. There was an earlier controversy also when he wrote a paper '**Political Economy of Kashmir Conflict**'. It received wide censure in the country.

KS: Wajahat Habibullah is an official Interlocutor on Kashmir.

AC: That is unfortunate. India is a great power in the making. A number of our neighbours and some outside powers are trying to thwart this. We are facing a plethora of national security problems. **There should be Institutional based appraisal of threats and solutions desired to maximise country's interests. This would insulate country's national security policy from politicking by individuals and political parties and also help forge a strong consensus on national security.**

CONTINUATION

Zardari's statement rattles many feathers in Kashmir

By Special Correspondent

Two major policy pronouncements by leaders of Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League (N) have taken Indians by surprise. While Indian newspapers covered these but coverage itself was low-key, with little comment.

On March 1 in a major departure from Pakistan's long-standing position PPP Chairman Asif Ali Zardari expressed readiness to set aside the Kashmir issue to focus on other aspects for improving relations with India. He emphasized that the relations between India and Pakistan should not be held hostage to the Kashmir issue and that the two countries can wait so that future generations resolve the dispute in a mature manner in an atmosphere of trust. Mr. Zardari further reiterated that he was determined to break the barriers and mindsets that deter trade between the two countries.

PPP Chairman, whose party is all set to take over the reins of the govt., made these remarks in an interview with CNN-IBN programme 'Devil's Advocate', run by Karan Thapar. Zardari's views endorsed Indian position.

Zardari said: "The idea is that we feel for Kashmir, the PPP has always felt for Kashmir. We have a strong Kashmir policy. We have always had one. But having said that, we don't want to be hostage to that situation. That is a situation we can agree to disagree (on). Countries do, we have positions, you have positions. We can agree to disagree on (the UN resolutions) everything. We can wait. We can be patient till everybody grows up further. May be the coming generation grows up even further and then let's interact as human beings and come to a position of love. Today, there are fixed notions. When dependency increases (and) we have matured enough (and) we've got trust between us, then nobody has fixed issues."

Pakistan's stated position is that Kashmir has to be tackled simultaneously along with other issues in Indo-Pak parleys. Zardari said that when bilateral relations improve, the two nations can come back and tackle thorny issues with the benefit of improved ties. He added that Kashmir issue should be set aside for a wiser generation and a better time. "As it is, it's going to be a no border world in the end", he emphasized. Zardari rejected the view that the Kashmir issue could best be sorted out while the army is in power in Pakistan. He asked, "Well, we've

had army rule for eight years. Have they solved it. I don't need to convince them, it talks for itself". He said, "I want to take (the relations) to a stage of such confidence-building that the fear factor diminishes from both angles. People-to-people contacts should be improved, then trade, interdependence of trade, if Indian industry depends on Pakistan energy and I depend on the Indian market for my product to be sold, we are both interdependent, financially integrated industry-wise."

PPP Chairman even hinted that Pakistani political establishment was likely to endorse his line on Kashmir and India in near future. He said, "I think the economical dependency that I'm talking about, nobody has really made the Pakistanis aware what position they are (in) and what they can gain. When they realise that they can change, the world will change. Economically, it's a thousand percent leap we'll get into and the benefit of the thousand percent leap is going to (have an) effect across the board." Zardari said that he would strive for political consensus on building strong relations with India by emphasizing the role of SAARC and modern technology. He added that elected leaders can carry people with them even on sensitive issues.

Zardari made following points:

1. Kashmir issue should be set aside for future generations to tackle in a mature manner in an atmosphere of trust.
2. All the barriers and mindsets that deter trade between the two countries should be broken. Economic interdependence was the key to developing harmonious relations.
3. Pak army cannot sort Kashmir issue.
4. Elected leadership of Pakistan can create consensus on this approach.

The other pronouncement came from Mr. Nawaz Sharif, Chief of PML-(N) the following day. He stressed that the new govt. in Pakistan should review the causes for the Kargil war, including the role of Gen. Musharraf, and fix responsibility for the conflict with India. The former Prime Minister recalled that the Charter of Democracy signed by PPP and PML-N nearly two years ago committed both parties to setting up a commission to review the Kargil conflict. While stressing the implementation of the charter in letter and spirit, Nawaz Sharif made no reference to Kashmir.

In the charter both parties had

committed to resolve the Kashmir issue "in line with UN resolutions." Referring to this Zardari had said, "I am not getting hostage to that issue." Nawaz Sharif's silence is significant.

Even the subsequent statement issued by spokesman of PPP, **Farhatullah Babar** to clarify Zardari's views on Kashmir said "PPP believed in conflict management and simultaneously creating a trading bloc of the two countries to improve living conditions of people of South Asia and at the same time improve confidence as a key to resolving outstanding issues. People believed that peace required patience and that confidence building measures were required to create a climate for durable peaceful relations. The PPP is in favour of normalisation of relations with India as well as enhancement of SAARC as a trading bloc."

The statements of PPP have come as embarrassment to some lobbies in India which have been claiming that "Pakistan would not settle for anything less than 'joint management' of J&K". These lobbies have been pressing for keeping Kashmir as the "core issue" and 'solving' it on priority basis. They have been emphasizing that India could 'cut a deal with Musharraf by offering unilateral concessions.' The ground reality continues to be different. Two leading dailies of Pakistan have come out with lead editorials, supporting PPP line on Kashmir (See Box). There has hardly been any worthwhile criticism of Zardari on this issue from the civil society or the political establishment.

Shortly before Mrs. Benazir Bhutto's assassination, National Security Advisor MK Narayanan had said that India's experience with Benazir Bhutto during her previous reigns had not been good. So what makes PPP renege its earlier stand on Kashmir and Indo-Pak relations. There are two dimensions to this. One, there has been no scholarly study on PPP's role in this context. Even when it made positive gestures towards India, the military establishment stymied it. Benazir Bhutto thought that by going one up in competitive agenda (anti-India and Jihadi) she could build a larger profile for herself vis-a-vis the military. Retrospectively, it looks she was naive. She lost friends and paved way for her destruction. Secondly, there have been major developments at the regional level and within Pakistan to which Zardari and Sharif are responding.

Pakistan faces a severe crisis. There is full fledged insurgency in NWFP, with Jihadis demonstrating their reach to strike at state targets even in such sanitised cities in Punjab-Lahore and Islamabad. Pak military establishment's credibility is at its lowest. This has been accentuated by the ongoing conflict between the civil society and Musharraf on one hand and the latter's refusal to step down following defeat of his party in the recently held elections.

Secondly, Americans, who still are exploring options to coerce PPP and PML-N to back Musharraf, are losing leverage to influence events in Pakistan. By and large, Americans have not only been favouring continuance of Pakistan military establishment in power but have also been endorsing the latter's line on Kashmir and Indo-Pak relations. **Ashley Tellis** has in his recent study made startling disclosures on how the US establishment had been tacitly accepting Pakistan's sponsorship of Cross Border Terrorism against India even after 9/11.

Zardari and Sharif who have suffered much incarceration at the hands of military realise well that Pak military has tried to build legitimacy for itself by playing up Indian threat and making Kashmir as the central issue in Indo-Pak relations. **Zohra Yusuf**, Council Member of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, goes to the extent of saying, "I'm not sure if the Army even wants Kashmir." In her view, the Army fights for Kashmir for only domestic purposes.

Ayesh Jalal in her study "The State of Martial Law: The origins of Pakistan's Political Economy of Defence" observes that around the time of the 1947-48 war and shortly afterwards, while the Army's top brass was in two minds about the feasibility of a military solution for Kashmir, it used the Kashmir issue to increase its role in domestic politics and justify large arms purchases and an expanded military, which the govt. agreed to largely because of Kashmir. The Kashmir issue was the primary means by which the govt. justified a strong alliance with the US, which was not very popular at the time. The alliance helped make the military an almost impregnable force in Pakistani society. **Prof. Younus Samad of Bradford University** remarks, "Ultimately the justification for the massive defence budget is Kashmir, and the army manipulates the issue in order to defend its vested interests."

In 1957 Prime Minister **Feroz Khan Noon** had made a similar statement that Pakistan should put Kashmir on the backburner and normalize relations with India. One of the reasons for the coup (1958) was the government's more conciliatory approach towards Kashmir and India. Ayub's coming to power marked the start of tension along the cease-fire Line. Between 1988-99 Pak military actively tried to undermine the various attempts by the civilian govts. to seek accommodation with India. **Pak military establishment institutionalized ideas of militarism with two-nation theory.** Besides the military, the ISI, drug lords and Jihadi groups themselves form a powerful nexus of vested interests that have benefitted from the Jihad against India. **By de-emphasizing centrality of Kashmir issue and endorsing better relations with India on durable basis Zardari and Sharif are promoting their own survival vis-a-vis the military establishment.** The civil society, particularly in the wake of recent conflict with the military establishment, may also toe the line of Zardari. Zardari is talking of trade and economic interdependence with India in which Pakistan's energy is exchanged for Indian market and modern technology. Pakistani middle classes and the trading-Industrial lobbies will benefit from it.

Zardari's line is also in tune with realism. In an interesting study titled "From Jinnah to Jihad-Pakistan's Kashmir Quest and the limits of Realism", **Arvind Bahl** notes "Pakistan's continued quest to obtain control of the Kashmir Valley represents a case of a state pursuing an action that cannot be explained by cost-benefit analysis or the rational calculation of its national interests. **Bahl makes following points: the Kashmir Valley has little strategic significance to Pakistan.** The latter satisfied its strategic needs in the first war (1947-48) when it conquered a third of Kashmir's territory, including the areas closest to Rawalpindi, the headquarters of its army. It cut off India from Afghanistan and NWFP where there was great hostility towards Pakistan and the desire for a separate Pashtun homeland. Preventing a linkage with Afghanistan prevented India from extending its influence Westward and potentially encircling Pakistan, which Pakistan wanted to prevent. The 1947-48 war also provided Pakistan with a direct link to China and Central Asia. Even many of Pakistan's

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US LACKS CONSENSUS TO CONFRONT PAK MILITARY LEADERSHIP

By Special Correspondent

AMERICANS across the political spectrum are engaged in a serious debate on how to deal with Pakistan. Emergence of Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan as a safe heaven for Al Qaeda and revival of Taliban, particularly in Southern Afghanistan has brought urgency to this debate. The Americans have been pumping huge money into Pakistan to seek its help in countering Al Qaeda-Taliban. Since 2002 Washington has given \$ 10 billion in overt security and economic assistance and continues to compensate the Pakistani military for its counter-terrorism efforts with roughly \$ 1 billion in annual reimbursements. Americans are beginning to wonder whether Pakistan was doing its part in the 'war on Terror.' There are two views in the United States. One group wants to coerce Pakistan with varying degrees of discrimination. Second view continues to advocate uncritical support for Musharraf, the discredited military dictator.

A comprehensive study titled '**Pakistan's Record on Terrorism Conflicted Goals, Compromised Performance**' by Ashley Tellis, an influential American academic and erstwhile adviser to Under secretary of state, **Nicholas Burns**, recaptures this debate by suggesting major recommendations. Tellis also made a Testimony (based on this study) to the House Foreign Affairs Committee on January 16, 2008.

Pakistan and Taliban

A. Motivational and Institutional Complexities:

Tellis claims that Musharraf himself is strongly committed to purging both Al Qaeda and the Taliban. He says, "all senior Pakistani military officers are agreed that Al Qaeda presence in the FATA must be eliminated, **the diversity of views with regard to the Taliban is considerable.**" Tellis cites many reasons for this. He attributes Pakistan's inadequate performance to Islamabad's inability to defeat the terrorist groups, operating from its soil to many factors that 'go beyond' its admittedly serious motivational deficiencies to combat terrorism?

Initial compulsions:

Tellis says Musharraf cast his lot with US after Sept 21, 2001 attacks mainly as a result of deep fears about what US enmity might imply for Pakistan's long-standing rivalry with India, ef-

orts at economic revival, nuclear weapons program, and equities in the conflict over Kashmir, to avoid becoming a target itself in the campaign against terrorism.

Highly differentiated Counter Terrorism Policy:

Ashley Tellis states that in the 'War on Terror' Musharraf has pursued a highly differentiated counter terrorism policy. He identifies four different terrorist groups-domestic-sectarian groups, anti-Indian terrorist groups, the Taliban, and the al Qaeda.

As domestic sectarian groups, which had unexpected growth in power during the 1990s, became a serious challenge to domestic order in Pakistan Musharraf first targeted these groups engaged in violent bouts of bloodletting within the country. Musharraf was thus selective in targeting groups whose objectives were out of sync with the military perception of the national interest or those engaging in Jihadi violence within Pakistan.

The second set of groups, the terrorist groups patronised by ISI and the army as part of sponsoring CrossBorderTerrorism against India were given immunity. Two arguments were flaunted. Pakistan's participation in war on terror was intended among other things to protect its freedom of action in Kashmir. Secondly, it refused to designate terrorists in Kashmir as 'terrorists'. After December 13, 2001 attack on Indian Parliament there was some pressure from the US. Tellis observes, "The implementation of these actions... was at best half hearted and inconsistent. Consequently, to this day Musharraf has not sought to eliminate the Deobandi terrorist groups operating against India. He only modulated their activities, depending on the extent of satisfaction he derives from the prevailing state of diplomatic relations with India and the progress secured in the ongoing India-Pakistani peace process."

The third groups relevant to Pakistani operations against terrorism consisted of the Taliban- the Pashtun remnants of the regime ousted from power in Kabul. After their defeat the core Taliban leadership along with their Pak Pashtun Collaborators retreated into FATA (NWFP) in Pakistan. Taliban had been created by ISI out of the Ghilzai confederation of Pashtuns (dominant in south eastern Afghanistan) and from other Pashtun Tribes inhabiting the FATA. Musharraf deliberately avoided any targeting of

this group, particularly its senior leadership. It does not sound surprising for Pak military establishment looks to Afghanistan as part of strategy to increase its strategic depth. A client state headed by Taliban fits the game. Tellis underlines the fact that Pak military forces have apprehended far more al Qaeda cadres than Taliban operatives. He also debunks the Pakistani explanations that it was difficult to identify Taliban from Pak Pashtuns.

The fourth group-Al Qaeda had to be engaged and targeted by Musharraf for a different reason because of the consequences for US-Pakistani relations. Washington had just embarked on a ferocious campaign against al Qaeda worldwide. Tellis makes a claim that most senior Pakistani military officers were also genuinely horrified by the attacks and fearing for their own country's future." In the war against al Qaeda Pakistan helped US with facilities and access to carrying out 'Operation Enduring Freedom, in Afghanistan. Occasionally, it cooperated with Americans in indicting terrorist financing and apprehending and rendering terrorist targets for prosecution abroad. At the behest of Americans Pakistan launched '**Operation al Mizan**' by moving over 85,000 Regular Pak army troops into FATA. Over 700 al Qaeda operatives were captured and handed over to the US. Pakistan also forced some though by no means all senior al Qaeda operatives such as Khalid Sheikh and Ramzi Binalshibh to disperse inwards within Pakistan. Nearly 600 Pakistani soldiers were killed in the campaign. Al Qaeda and Pakistan Taliban campaign in FATA is now targeting Pakistani state as such.

Ashley Tellis summarises Pak states handling of terrorist groups:

"Its (Pakistan's) larger campaign against terrorism has... been conspicuously selective and perhaps self-serving. Although it has secured major gains in eradicating some domestic, anti-national sectarian terrorist groups and has contributed disproportionately to the ongoing campaign against al Qaeda, it has been much more reticent to conclusively eliminate those terrorist entities operating against India in Kashmir and elsewhere and against Afghanistan in the FATA, as well as those groups operating against Afghanistan that routinely transit back and forth to the southern and

eastern Afghan provinces. The protection of the terrorist infrastructure that supports these groups has produced undesirable blowback effects because the actors traditionally involved in perpetrating terrorism in Kashmir increasingly assist the Taliban and al Qaeda in operations, not only against Afghanistan but also the United States and even Pakistan itself."

Pro-Taliban Military leadership:

Senior Pak military officers are at variance with US line on Taliban for many reasons:

1. US partiality towards Durrani Pashtuns, urban privileged political elite and the calculated neglect of Ghilzai Pashtuns, rural-uneducated peasantry. Latter constitute ranks of Taliban and have deep ties to the tribes that have dominated the FATA for centuries. There are also fears that heightened and targeted anti-Ghilzai campaign may lead to renewal of demand for independent 'Pashtunistan.'

2. Fears that large scale military operations in FATA may further inflame tribal sensitivities and lead to internal polarisation in Pak society

3. Most of the ISI officers in the field support Taliban for nationalist, ideological or personal reasons.

Tellis observes that '**the Pakistan Campaign against the Taliban is hobbled by convolution and hesitation.**' The result is that Taliban and its sympathisers have entrenched themselves in all the seven administrative agencies of the FATA, with a growing expansion of their influence in the NWFP. The Taliban movement and its sympathisers have moved beyond the traditionally stateless regions close to the Durand Line and into more settled areas within Pakistan.

Taliban movement in FATA/NWFP is graduating from terrorist operations into a Nature insurgency with capacity for positional warfare and coering local opponents into cooperating to sustain the newly secured safe haven. The survival of the Taliban sanctuary in the FATA has led to the talibanisation of the area more generally. This has helped continuing regeneration of al Qaeda in the area.

B. Societal and Operation Challenges.

Other reasons for inadequacy in the campaign against Key Taliban and al Qaeda elements in FATA include:

i. **Poor tactical intelligence,** because of ISI officers being sympathetic to radical Islamist

elements. Peculiarities of the political structures in the FATA and the corrosive changes that have been occurring there is also hampering intelligence activities. Traditionally, the ties between the political agent a (mid level civil servant) and the **tribal maliks** were critical to the production of good intelligence. Social transformation over the past several decades in which maliks are being slowly supplanted by new religious leaders, **the maulvis** (who viewed issues of political loyalty primarily through religious or ideological lenses.) These radicalised maulis view protection of the Taliban and al Qaeda cadres in the FATA as a politico-religious obligation. Tellis assigns another reason for poor intelligence. He says strategic intelligence collection in Pakistan is disproportionately oriented toward targeting India. The increased use of the internet by Taliban and al Qaeda operatives, including the growing utilisation of encryption software, makes it difficult for Pak agencies to monitor, such communications systematically given Pakistan's relatively low technological capacity. Another handicap for technical intelligence is that Taliban Al-Qaeda are relying on "Snail Mail" and human couriers for their operational planning.

Social Disruption: The arrival of the Pakistan Army in strength in FATA has resulted in social disruptions that have undermined its counter terrorism effectiveness. The Pak army's **The Special Services Group**, composed of non-Pashtun elements is viewed as an unwelcome intruder in FATA and receives little cooperation from the local populace. **The Frontier corps** composed primarily of tribal levies is the resident paramilitary force and is sympathetic to Taliban-al-Qaeda and remains deeply suspicious of Pak state and the US. Pak Infantry -11th Corps now pressed into service has no experience in counter-terrorism operations. Hostile terrain and the heavy fire-power of Taliban-al Qaeda have led to relatively coarse counter-terrorism tactics that are invariably derided. Resort to lethal suicide attacks by terrorist elements is leading to increasing weariness with the counter terrorist operations in Pakistani society in general. Musharraf has sought to address this national fatigue by going for 'episodic strategies of appeasement built around "peace accords" with the pro-Taliban locals in South and

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A website launched for Kashmiri Pandits

KS Correspondent

To help build stronger contacts among members of Kashmiri Pandits in diaspora a new website www.kashmiribhatta. In was launched on February 17, 2008. Over 400 members of the community living in Delhi attended the launch of the portal. The brain behind the website is Dr. Hira Lal Saraf, a noted philanthropist and an intellectual.

The novel feature about the website is that it will have first ever e-directory, containing addresses of Kashmiri Pandits spread all over the globe.

The e-directory would provide addresses and telephone numbers of community members.

The website would have other features as well e.g. features on history and culture, luminaries of the community, almanac information, places of tourist importance. It will have an option to facilitate interaction among community members.

Cabinet regularises Displaced Kashmiri Pandits' substitutes

KS Correspondent

Feb, 16: The J&K Cabinet ordered regularisation of the substitutes posted against posts of Displaced Pandit employees. The orders were issued for three departments-Indian System of Medicines, Health and Medical Education and Education Departments.

Kashmiri Pandits seek probe

KS Correspondent

Feb 23: Displaced Kashmiri Pandits in Kupwara condemned attempts to grab temple property in Kupwara town. Members alleged that the temple property was deliberately set on fire which also damaged a hall and some shops. The Pandits have approached Deputy Commissioner and demanded a probe into the matter. They alleged that there was a subtle move to grab the temple property located in the heart of the town.

Maikash Kashmiri's collection of poems and musical album released

KS Correspondent

Feb 17: Maikash Kashmiri Literary society released poetry collection of Pt. Kailash Nath Kaul 'Maikash Kashmiri' at a simple but impressive function in Jammu. The collection titled 'Saz-e-Rag Jaan' is fourth in the series. Rich tributes were paid to the doyen of Urdu poetry. A music album "Yaadon Ke Chinar", based on the poetry of Maikash and sung and composed by the ghazal maestro Seema Anil Sehgal was released in a separate function.

Cabinet allots 100 kanals of Stateland to Jamiat-e-Ahlihadis

KS Correspondent

Feb 16: The J&K cabinet allotted 100 kanals of state land to Jamiat-e-Ahlihadis organisation for establishment of an Arabic University, a hospital and a common facility Centre at Narbal, Narkoora, Budgam.

100 VDC members without honorarium since 1992

Feb 25: State BJP accused the government of not providing honorarium to more than 100 Village Defence Committee members, appointed after 1992. It said "even recognized and aided committees were not provided their dues for the last five months"

Steep rise in liquor sale in Kashmir

National Conference sought a ban on liquor sale in the state after government figures suggested that alcohol consumption had registered a steep increase in the Valley. In 2007-08 Kashmir Valley consumed 4 lakh bottles of liquor. While figures for Jammu in the same period was 3.85 lakh bottles. Beer consumption in Valley too has gone up from 1,65,000 bottles in 2006-07 to 4,00,000 in 2008-08. At present only two licensed outlets-one near Srinagar cantonment and another inside-govt. owned hotel Heemal-are authorised to sell liquor in Valley.

'Private developers from outside can buy land, says Beig

Deputy Chief Minister Muzaffar Hussain Beig was quoted by media having said that fundamentalists in mainstream political parties were derailing the move to allow outsiders to buy land for infrastructure development in the state. He said, "Let me dispel the myth that people in other parts of the country cannot buy land in J&K. There are provisions in our constitution by virtue of which non-state subjects can buy land in the state". He added that politicians were opposing the govt. move because of fear of militants. Subsequently Mr. Beig said he was quoted out of context.

Dr. Farooq Abdullah puts blame on Mufti

Feb 15: Dr. Farooq Abdullah, senior leader of National Conference and former J&K Chief Minister described Mufti Muhammad Sayeed's PDP as real Muslim United Front of 1986. In an interview on local TV Channel, 'Take-One' Dr. Abdullah said, "He (Mufti) was part and parcel of Congress when we had alliance with it (Cong) but he propagated his own agenda and instead he and supporters campaigned against the alliance to garner votes for MUF". Dr Abdullah blamed Mufti for triggering a communal clash (communal violence against Kashmiri Hindus) in South Kashmir in 1986 only to harm NC. The former Chief Minister said Mufti was even responsible for fall of GM

Shah government in the State. Terming the PDP patron as 'shrouded politician', Dr Abdullah sad that he (Mufti) was responsible for all the anti-people and anti-Kashmir approach of New Delhi. On safe return of Kashmiri Pandits to Kashmir Valley Dr Abdullah said he wished he could ask the same question to some "divine power to reply it".

MUF leader joins PDP

Feb 14: Muslim United Front (MUF) leader and Chairman of Kashmir Resolution Movement (KRM) Abdul Khaliq Haneef joined PDP at Srinagar. He had contested 2002 assembly elections after snapping ties with the separatists. Hanief termed PDP's major policy initiatives aimed at the resolution of Kashmir issue as pragmatic. He said that since Kashmir Resolution Movements agenda coincided with that of PDP he decided to join the party. He demanded end to "human rights violations, release of all political detainees, repealing of 'draconian' laws, including AFSPA, return and rehabilitation of divided families across the border.

PIL filed on Muslim Migrants' Colony Plan

Feb 13: J&K High Court has issued notices to State's Chief Minister, Chief Secretary and 4 other top officials for setting up of Kashmiri Muslim Migrant Colony on a forest land in Jammu. The PIL, filed by Chairman of National Panthers Party Bhim Singh, alleged that 623 kanals and 10 marlas of forest land were being transferred to JDA for setting up of the colony. Meanwhile, J&K Chief Minister has denied it.

550 kgs of poppy seized in Kulgam

Feb 25: J&K police seized 550 kgs of poppy husk in Homhalibug area and arrested 4 persons in this connection.

LeT terrorist involved in UP blasts, associate killed

Feb 15: Abdul Rehman alias Rehman Bhai, a Pakistani terrorist affiliated to LeT outfit and a local terrorist Moin Ahmad Mir were eliminated in an encounter at Niloora-Aglar (Pulwama) on the intervening night of February 14 and 15. Slain LeT terrorist was involved in the November 23 blasts in Varanasi, Faizabad and Lucknow courts in which 13 people including 4 lawyers were killed. In another incident in Fatehpur Mandi in Poonch district terrorists cut the toe of a civilian in his house. Two masked terrorists had entered a house and asked for food. When the family members refused to comply and raised an alarm the terrorists retaliated.

CRPF jawan with 'Hizb links' arrested

J&K Police arrested Mudasir Yusuf (22) from his house at Botingoo, Sopore for links with Hizbul Mujahideen. He had proceeded on leave for 10 days after planting a ½ kg IED at the CRPF Battalion headquarters in Pulwama. The police were alerted by a

cellphone intercept in which the Hizbul's district chief for Pulwama was caught talking to someone about an IED blast. The call was traced to the CRPF jawan. Bhat was recruited in 2006. Police said he was contacted by a Hizbul 'Commander' from Baramulla soon after his recruitment. After he was posted to Pulwama, Bhat was reportedly introduced to the outfit's district 'Commander'. In the last fortnight this is second incident of security personnel-terrorist nexus.

VDC member's father, 2 daughters killed

Three members of a Village Defence Committee member's family including his father and two daughters were killed when terrorists hurled a grenade on his house at Soni Top in Haidar village of Arnas, Reasi district. VDC member himself was injured alongwith 4 other family members. There are two dozen VDC members in Soni Top, most of whom are majority community members. The main accused Abdul Rashid Mir R/o Challad was arrested in a swift operation. Mir was affiliated to Hizbul Mujahideen.

Red Alert sounded on terrorists' plot to smuggle explosives in fruit trucks

March 6: An alert was sounded after the recovery of two grenades from an apple box in Naroda fruit market, Ahmedabad few days back. The apple box had been transported in a truck from Kashmir to Gujrat.

Hardcore terrorist eliminated in Chatroo

March 9: A top-ranking Hizbul Mujahideen involved in several killings and subversive activities was gunned down in an encounter at Chatroo in Kishtwar. Identified as Mohd. Qasim alias Babbar, a nomad was presently residing at Gorimar in Chatroo Babbar and had joined terrorists in 2001.

Terrorists manipulating stock markets, says BJP

Feb 18: BJP President Raj Nath Singh blamed terrorists for recent fluctuations in the sensex. Expressing concern that upto 40% of investments in the stock markets were by the Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) through Participatory Notes (PN) system-he wanted a probe to ascertain the antecedents of investors. The recent crash in the stock market led to losses worth crores of rupees to small investors. Last week senior BJP leader LK Advani had also voiced similar concern and demanded strong punishment to offenders.

Top SiMi terrorist held

Feb 22: Bangalore police arrested a top SiMi functionary, Mohd. Yahya Kamakutty, 32, hailing from Mukkam in Kozhikode (Kerala). The SiMi activist, a former software engineer has been described as a key link to SiMi activities in India and

to leaders of the group. Already six activists of SiMi involved in terrorist activities in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Bangalore recently have been arrested. As per police Yahya had taken a LeT terrorist on a secret tour of Kerala in 2007.

Hurriyat constituent, 3 others blacklisted

March 7: Union Home Ministry has blacklisted a constituent of Hurriyat Conference-Muslim Conference led by Prof. Abdul Gani Bhat along with Jamaat-e-Islami subsidiary Fala-e-Aam Trust, Public Relief Trust and Akandar Trust under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act.

Pak Ambassador goes missing

Feb 1: Pakistan's Ambassador to Afghanistan Tariq Azizuddin went missing while driving to Kabul through Khyber agency. He is believed to have been kidnapped by militants in the Khyber agency. On the same day in a separate incident two workers from the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission were also abducted by masked men from the country's northwest.

UK convicts Indian-origin recruiter

Mohammed Hamid, 50, described as one of Britain's leading recruiters for Islamist extremism, has been found guilty of running secret terrorist training camps in one of the most important counter-terrorism prosecutions since 9/11. Hamid, a Jihadist of Indian-origin, whose family had migrated to Tanzania is said have set up secret training camps in Lake District and New Forest. He had been involved in this for nearly a decade. 4 of his trainers were involved in failed suicide bomb attacks on the London underground on July 21, 2005. Hamid had close links with Tablighi Jamaat.

America says LTTE is deadliest terror outfit

The FBI (US) described LTTE as the "most dangerous and deadliest extremist" outfit in the world and cautioned donors not to give money to charities, established as front organisations by LTTE to raise funds for terrorist activities. It blamed the rebel group for inspiring terrorist networks across the globe. In India security agencies suspect nexus between LTTE and Moaists.

Dawood is in Pakistan, says Interpol

Secretary-General Interpol, Ronald K. Noble revealed, almost accidentally, in Mumbai that Dawood Ibrahim, mafia-don turned terrorist was in Pakistan. India had been demanding extradition of mafia-don who is involved in Mumbai serial blasts. Pakistan had been denying his presence and planted reports that he was in Iran. Noble evaded questions on the global terrorist. He also expressed that Interpol cannot nab him since Interpol cannot dictate terms to any country. He pointed out that the terrorist problem can be effectively tackled at the diplomatic level.

US lacks consensus to confront Pak military leadership

(From Page 9)

North Waziristan. The indigent residents are tasked to prevent crossborder movements of terrorists into Afghanistan and further attacks on Pakistani civilian and military targets. They are also to ensure the ejection or the surrender of all foreigners from the FATA, in exchange for which the Pakistani army would withdraw to the barracks, suspend its combat operations and defer to the tribes to resolve disputes relating to the status of particular individuals. Tellis observes that this strategy is doomed to fail as **'it did not appreciate the extent of radicalisation in the FATA and the tribes' new determination to protect their al Qaeda and Taliban cortege against the Pakistani govt. and the United States, which were viewed as greater threats.'**

Operational context:

Tellis says that Taliban after its ouster from power has become an even looser network of affiliated individuals and groups. Its implication is that destroying the

"Taliban today has become much more difficult because its previously weak hierarchical structure has become even more diffuse with truly diverse entities coordinating as necessary, but each also carrying out their own local agendas. The complexity of Islamabad's relations with many of the constituent elements in the Taliban coalition does not help." Al Qaeda collaborates with the Taliban to assist the latter in recovering control of Kabul while continuing to preserve a sanctuary in the FATA in the interim.

Consequences of US neglect:

Tellis blames US for pursuing an approach that only permitted Pakistan to conclude that the **'War on terrorism was in fact eminently divisible'** (i.e. allowing Pakistan to patronise terrorist groups against India). Tellis observes, "the (US) administration's diplomacy, by declining to hold Musharraf accountable for breaching his serial promises to end Pakistani support for terrorism, enabled Islamabad to infer that so long

as operatives belonging to "terrorist groups of global reach," meaning al Qaeda, were being regularly apprehended by Pakistan, the ISI's links to and protection of other regional terrorist organisations would not become critical liability in US-Pakistani relations." This allowed Pakistan to sustain its ties with Kashmiri terrorist groups and Taliban remnants. Tellis says that US's focus on al Qaeda also led to US overlooking Pakistani decision to ignore the Taliban as a target of counterterrorism operations. US failed to see how Taliban survival could lead to regeneration of al Qaeda. The Americans thus lost an opportunity to consolidate its political and military gains in Afghanistan. Tellis says "belated Pakistani actions against the Taliban and its leadership may end up being far less successful than they otherwise might have been if executed a few years earlier."

US Policy options:

The US has been emphasizing inalterable political support for the person of Musharraf rather

than support in him to accelerate the political transformation of Pakistan towards democracy to secure victory in the war against terrorism.

Tellis rejects options of "smart sanctions" and unilateral US military action against terrorist groups within Pakistan. He says this will deepen the already strong suspicion within the Pakistani military about US regional goals. Tellis claims that designating Pakistan as an adversary would be more dangerous in view of its being a precariously poised Muslim state with nuclear weapons and an unsavoury record of proliferation activities.

Intriguingly, Tellis is an advocate of continuing with the current policy, even while admitting that Pakistani officials **"seek to exploit the US aversion to a conflictual relationship with Pakistan to play both ends against the middle: Collecting US aid while protecting their terrorist clients..."** Tellis says that senior Pak military officials fear that intense counterinsurgency operations in the FATA and elsewhere

would lead to internal polarisation of Pakistani society.

Tellis suggests two options that US should demand:

i) Islamabad start systematically targeting the Taliban leadership as part of the current counterterrorism concept of operations.

ii. Pakistan permit the CIA and the components of 'Operation Enduring Freedom' to acquire greater insight into the existing terrorist networks operating within Pakistan.

Tellis also supports the US military proposal to enlist and arm some key tribal leaders in the FATA to fight against al Qaeda and the Taliban. He also makes advocacy for retaining Musharraf, ignoring the ground reality that he remains the major stumbling block for orderly political transition toward democracy in Pakistan.

Ashley Tellis:

Pakistan and the War on Terror: Conflicted Goals, compromised Performance.

The Washington Quarterly, Spring, 2008.

Zardari's statement rattles many feathers in Kashmir

(From Page 8)

concerns regarding the rivers of Kashmir were taken care of in this war. The Mangala River, which irrigates a large part of West Punjab, lies in Mirpur, a part of PoK. It flows twenty miles within Pakistani Kashmir territory before entering West Punjab.

Arif Hussain, a Pakistani commentator notes that **Fear that he who controls the rivers is psychological rather than actual.** It is considered by experts that Indian cannot divert the water in the case of the Indus, and likewise in the case of the Jehlum any attempt to do so would be fruitless. As far as the Chenab is concerned, she can divert it at Mehru, a place in Indian territory outside Kashmir. According to Hussain Haqqani and Arif Hussain **Pakistan's main reasons for wanting to obtain Kashmir are ideological, rather than strategic.**

Yossef Bodansky's argument that **'a new rail line that will connect Karachi and Central Asia must pass through Indian Kashmir to be engineeringly and economically effective'** is flawed. Through this rail link Pakistan wants to "established hegemony (over) the Western gateways to China" and be the linchpin between China and the Islamic world. Part of J&K which is relevant to this rail link is not Kash-

mir Valley but Buddhist Ladakh, an area which is not the goal of Pak policy makers. 60 years of confrontation with India--4 wars, support for an insurgency and billions of dollars on defense, has not brought Pakistan closer to obtaining control of the Kashmir Valley than it was in 1947. This confrontation has led to its dismemberment in 1971, threat to internal stability from Jihadi groups, international isolation over sponsorship of Jihadi state terrorism, fragile economy, permanent military rule etc. failing state. The immense costs of Kashmir policy are much greater than any strategic benefit from obtaining all of Kashmir. Pakistani Major General (retd.) **Mahmud Ali Durrani** in his book, **'India and Pakistan: The Lost of Conflict' and the Benefits of Peace'** (OUP) observes that **Pakistan would find difficult to sustain mounting defence budget while agreeing that the Indian economy can sustain defence spending at current levels.**

The magnitude of change that Pakistan seeks to the status quo in Kashmir is the kind of change that **can only be obtained when a country is defeated in war and defeated very badly. India has overwhelming conventional superiority. It successfully dislodged Pakistanis from Kargil, defeated Pak sponsored insurgency in Punjab and achieved**

notable successes in Kashmir. Moreover, Pakistan has failed to get international support to annex Kashmir Valley from India. Pakistani columnist **Ardesair Cowasjee** notes, **"We have no allies in this particular struggle; and the entire world is as sick of the word Kashmir as it is of the word Palestine".**

Pakistan's insurgency in Kashmir is **no more a low-cost option. It does not have smoke screen of 'indigenous insurgency'. There is the cost of growing Islamic Fundamentalism at home and having large defence budget. Lastly, it puts Pakistan at risk of facing a much stronger power in case of escalation of conflict.**

It is a matter of time that sooner than later Zardari's loud thinking on Kashmir and relations with India would become a compulsion for Pakistanis due to contradictions within Pakistan.

Kashmiri Reaction:

Dr. Farooq Abdullah, President of National Conference, with much exposure to International and regional politics, lost no time in welcoming Zardari's statement. Subsequent statements by two senior NC leaders-Messers Omar Abdullah and Abdul Rahim Rather address a different constituency-competitive politics and NC's own legacy. Senior State Congress leaders,

including J&K Chief Minister, Mr Gh. Nabi Azad and Cabinet Minister Mr. Abdul Gani Vakil welcomed it. There have been no comments from BJP and the Left parties.

The reaction of Kashmiri parties to Zardari's statement has also provided amusement to mediemen in Kashmir. **ZG Muhammad**, a Srinagar-based journalist and author of **'The Cinderling Chinars'** and **'Kashmir in War and Diplomacy'** in his comment **'The theme songs of Kashmir'**, mocks at Kashmiri leadership. He says that Musharraf's 4-point formula provided theme songs not only to 'pro-right to self-determination groups' but also to mainstream parties like NC and PDP, which saw reflection of their own concepts of **'greater autonomy'** and **'self-rule'**. ZGM writes, **"The youngest Abdullah who has inherited the party played in this tune like Yehudi Menuhim with his full orchestra and perhaps created a niche for himself in the Pakistan establishment. The (PDP) selectively played upon the theme of de-militarization and made it look as the redeployment of forces to the places outside the public gaze. Other partners in the ruling coalition also found melodious tunes to play upon their bagpipes in his 4-point formula. It seems that like many other formulas on Kash-**

mir this 4-point formula will also be relegated to the pages of history. The theme songs that resonated in Kashmir for 5 years will evaporate. And the political parties that had picked up the theme songs from this formula will have to look for a skylark to sing a theme song for the year 2008".

Zardari's statement and major successes achieved by security forces in Kashmir has left PDP agendaless. Mufti Mohammad Syed's immediately reaction "that Kashmir problem hasn't disappeared" and call for settling the Kashmir issue in internal and external dimensions reflects desperation rather than appreciation of ground realities in Pakistan and Kashmir. Kashmiris in general have remained indifferent to PDP's prescription of 'hibernation'. This has not gone unnoticed. Nobody takes note of APHC (G) leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani. He has outbeat even Goebbels by raising figure of Kashmiris killed, from 1 lakh (as claimed earlier by Geelani and other separatists) to 6 lakhs.

A section of Kashmiri politicians who thought 'emotional politics' had permanence fear losing their constituency following Zardari's statement. Their opposition has to be seen in this context.

OSTRICH-LIKE IN CHHATTISGARH

BJP and Congress lack political resolve and leadership to counter Naxalism

By *K.P.S. Gill*

FOR meeting the threat to law and order, the first requisite is political will. Unless there is political will to confront the forces of terror, nothing effective can be done. Chhattisgarh has fundamental drawbacks which pose a constant threat to the conduct of focused and sustained campaign against Naxalism in the state.

These are a few factors that have to be taken into consideration. Number one, there is complete lack of political will and number two, there is a severe lack of effective machinery to tackle Naxalism. Lack of experience and effective leadership among those given the task of confronting Naxal terror, rampant corruption in the recruitment of police forces, control of all transfers and postings which are made from the state Secretariat leads to a situation in which no one is ever held re-

sponsible.

What strikes one is the extremely comic and laughable political situation, except that the consequences of such political actions are so tragic that the Home Minister of the country gives the charge of fighting Naxal terror to the Chief Minister of the state, notwithstanding that both the Chief Minister and the Home Minister have the constitutional obligation to carry out the task to protect the livelihood of innocent people in this country. I have already spoken on numerous occasions about the setting up of a proper unified command, its something that has not happened. It has failed in Assam. A poor cousin of the same is sought to be set up in Chhattisgarh, with much acclaim and one can easily foresee Naxalism in Chhattisgarh, continuing to flourish.

That the Home Minister represents the Congress and Chhattisgarh Chief Minister, the BJP, shows a complete bankruptcy of political resolve and

leadership. And the two major political parties are busy playing games. When the recent Naxalite-inspired agitation in West Bengal reared its head, both these parties were delighted. The BJP went to the extent of supporting the agitation in West Bengal. So on what basis is the BJP supporting Naxalism in West Bengal and opposing it elsewhere?

The political doublespeak over Naxalism is a grave failure and political parties need to introspect. The police in Chhattisgarh have been given armoured vehicles. Merely adding a few battalions and giving them armoured vehicles is hardly upgrading security.

The police station, which is the basic unit in this regard, has to be strengthened and enabled to meet whatever threats emanate within the area of jurisdiction. This has unfortunately not been done anywhere and this is the reason why the situation continues to deteriorate.

I agree with the assessment made by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh that Naxalism poses the greatest danger to the country. Because unlike terrorists who are active in one state, Kashmir, Naxals are rampant in a large number of states. For effective management of problems, proper systems have to be in place. 'Is there a connection between the Naxalites and the ISI? Well if you look at their websites, Naxals say they have troops in Pakistan and Afghanistan. There is also the issue of crass political opportunism.

Whatever political parties say on different platforms, during election time, they are not above tying up secretly with Naxalites to win elections. For instance, even though Mahendra Karma of the Congress is opposed to the Naxals in Chhattisgarh, it would be no surprise if his party has an understanding with the Naxalites during the time of elections. Helps them get votes. Is Naxalism a law and order issue

or is it linked to economic concerns? It is instructive to see that in Chhattisgarh, the groups which provide the cannon fodder and the cadres to Naxalites is not confined to one social group. There are thousands of other tribals who are not sympathetic to the Naxal cause. I fail to understand why the government cannot address their problems. If not addressed, the rank of the Naxals will only swell.

Apart from law and order and pathetic implementation of development programmes, there is a terrible decline in the capacity of Chhattisgarh to fight Naxals. I completely support the creation of Special Forces on the lines of Greyhounds in Andhra Pradesh to deal with this very special problem. I am aware that human right groups will raise objections, which they usually do when the state begins to get active and seeks a handle over the proceedings.

(Source: *The Sunday Indian*, 2 March, 2008)

Zardari on Kashmir

ASIFALIZARDARI, co-chairperson Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has aired his views on Pakistan's future foreign policy for the first time since his party emerged as the single largest parliamentary party in the February 18 general elections. He was speaking to Indian journalist Karan Thapar on CNN-IBN's programme Devil's Advocate. Naturally, the Indo-Pak relations, especially the thorny questions concerning Kashmir, were expected to hold the centre-stage in such an exchange. In a pleasant surprise, Mr. Zardari has relayed some very promising vibes which, if translated into action, can usher in an altogether new phase of relations between the peoples of both neighbourly countries who have been at each other's gullet for more than half a century. Here is the gist of Mr. Zardari's observations in the said interview. He expressed his willingness to set aside the Kashmir issue to focus on other aspects for improving relations with India. He emphasised that the Indo-Pak relations should not be held "hostage" to the

Kashmir issue because the two countries "can wait" so that future generations resolve the dispute in a mature manner in an atmosphere of enhanced "trust". The need, at the moment, is to eliminate the factor of fear. In a significant vein, he readily endorsed the idea that the Kashmir issue could be put aside just as India and China had set aside their border dispute to focus on other aspects of their ties. When bilateral relations improve and the two peoples come closer through heightened level of economic interdependency, they would be better placed to tackle thorny issues, Zardari expatiated.

The statement marks a shift in Pakistan's standing position that Kashmir issue has to be tackled along with efforts on other fronts to improve relations between the two countries. While the Indian leadership has insisted over the past years that the two countries set aside the Kashmir issue because of its complexity and work for developing relations in other fields, particularly trade, Pakistan has been firm that the central position of the Kashmir issue could not be compromised. The intri-

cate ground-realities began to initiate a re-thinking among various tiers of the Pakistani leadership in the past. Benazir Bhutto and Rajiv Gandhi tried to loosen the shackles of a close-end approach but were foiled. A decade later, when a different set of elected leaders, i.e. Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Nawaz Sharif embarked upon the journey to friendship, the derailed carriages ended up in the freezing heights of Kargil. The metamorphosis of global political ambience in the wake of 9/11 necessitated that both countries revise their strategies correspondingly. President Musharraf held out a hand of friendship at the Kathmandu SAARC Conference in January 2002 and Mr. Vajpayee visited Islamabad in 2003.

However, the comprehensive dialogue has made little substantive progress since then while the years have ticked along. The invisible snag on this side of the divide has been the strictly limited constitutional and political legitimacy of the Pakistan leadership. A handicapped leadership is always unlikely to take potentially unpopular, even if

necessary, decisions. While it is reassuring to listen to Mr. Zardari making these wise comments, a large number of leaders across the political spectrum in this country are well familiar with the desirability of the proposed approach. Mr. Zardari is brimming with what others have lacked all these years, i.e. an im-

pregnable support of the people as well as the constitutional legitimacy. Once the newly-elected leaders have passed the crucial test of government formation, it should be interesting to watch the developments along the avenue identified by Asif Zardari.

(Source: *The Post*, March 4, 2008)

Pragmatism on Kashmir

.....This is not to say that we are anywhere near the resolution of outstanding disputes. But where India has shown intransigence, even provocation, on the glacial military outpost that is Siachen, there has been welcome albeit slow movement on Sir Creek and the demarcation of coastal waters. The historical injustice meted out to Kashmir of course remains the major stumbling block. But here too both sides have shown a willingness to disagree amicably and not let a fight that has been fought on and off for 60 years to impede progress on other fronts. In this connection, Mr Asif Zardari's recent statement that Pakistan and India should not be held "hostage" to the Kashmir issue makes sturdy common sense. He pointed to the example of India and China who have seemingly shelved their border disputes to concentrate on a more holistic, and mutually profitable, approach to bilateral ties with a focus on trade between the two Asian powerhouses. There can be no quick-fix solutions to problems so ingrained in the public psyche — on both sides of the border — and there must be a willingness to show patience and foresight. The will and aspirations of Kashmiris must remain central to any future solution. Those who think that keeping an open mind on Kashmir is tantamount to 'abandonment' do a great disservice to the Kashmiri people and the citizens of Pakistan and India. There can be no winners in perpetual hostility.

(Source: *Dawn*, March 2 2008)

By Special Correspondent

FOR the past few months Pakistan's new military leadership has been pursuing a new line in FATA areas, affected by local Taliban –Al Qaida violence. The line on which military developed an understanding with the Tehrik-e-Taliban was that 'in Tribal areas at the onset of a planned military offensive there, both sides would attempt to keep losses to the minimum'. This meant that they would go through the motions while Pakistan 'fulfilled' its obligations in the eyes of the world in cracking down on militancy. Gen. Kiani's move was to banish Tehreek-e-Taliban to rear positions while at the same time facilitating tribal Jirgas(councils) to devise a strategy to combat the Taliban.

Local Taliban declared an 'indefinite' ceasefire on February 6. It said that ceasefire declaration followed talks with the Govt. but Pak army spokesman denied any knowledge of such talks. Reacting to deal with Pakistan Taliban, US State Deptt. said 'it would oppose any truce that resembled an earlier deal struck by Musharraf with Tehreek-e-Taliban. It said that Washington was opposed to any deal that would let armed Islamic militants continue to operate on Pakistani territory'. Admiral Michael Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a report to Congress that a next attack on the US would most likely be launched by al Qaeda, operating in "under-governed" regions of Pakistan.

Meanwhile, Nigel Inkster, senior risk analyst at the Interna-

tional Institute of Strategic Studies in London warned that Taliban groups based in Pakistan pose a significant international threat. The researches at the institute said the 'neo-Taliban' groups operating in Tribal areas may soon become a global menace.

For sometime Military-Taliban understanding went smooth. But Tehreek-e-Taliban resumed suicide attacks on Pak govt. targets. On February 16, 38 people were killed in a suicide bombing attack in the town of Parachinar in Kurram region (NWFP), outside PPP office.

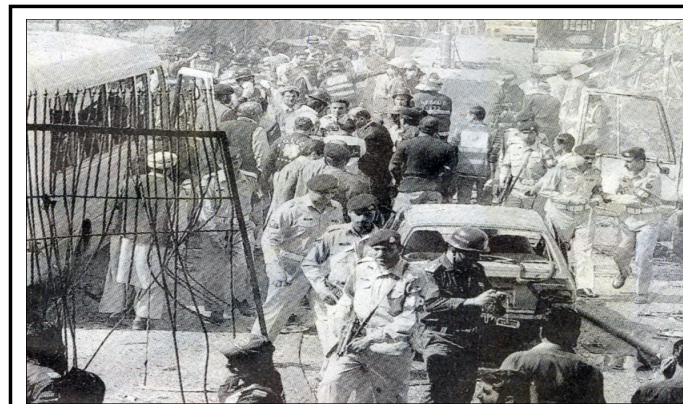
On Feb. 25 Pakistan army's Surgeon-General Lt. Gen. Mushtaq Ahmed Baig was killed with 7 others when a suicide bomber blew himself up near his staff car at a busy intersection in Rawalpindi. There was another attack on the office of an international aid organization in the NWFP in which 4 people were killed.

In yet another attack on Darra Adam Khel in NWFP a suicide bomber blew himself up on March 2 at a large meeting called by Tribal leaders pushing for peace in NWFP. It killed 40 people. Thousands of people, hailing from 5 tribes had assembled to finalise a resolution calling for punishing any one who sheltered or helped militants, including those of al Qaeda and the Taliban. In Swat valley on Feb. 29, a suicide bomber blew himself up at the funeral of a slain police official in Mingora town, killing more than 40 people and injuring 60. The next day, another suicide bombing in nearby Bajur killed 1 person and wounded 19 others, mostly security personnel.

Pakistan's Ceasefire with Local Taliban collapses

On March 2 in Lahore at least 6 persons were killed and several others injured as four simultaneous blasts rocked the campus of a Pakistani Naval War College. The series of suicide bombings coincided with two visits to Pakistan by Admiral Michael Mullen. Another reason for Pak army—Tehreek Taliban understanding was to pave way for Musharraf's exit and limit 'War on Terror' to tokenist raids against Tehreek Taliban. Pak army is faced with another problem—pro-jihadi elements in Army in NWFP and in Punjab province (mostly non-commissioned officers) are leaking information to militants. In some cases they have been hand-in-hand with them in attacking officer and camps. Attack on Naval War College is believed to have been staged by members of the camp.

The recent missile attack by a US Predator drone on terrorists in the tribal area on March 6 further sealed the fate on Army-Pak Taliban deal. 8 jihadis were killed in the attack. Meanwhile, in the biggest operation in past 12 months so far, Gen. Kiani, Pak army Chief ordered 1000 raids in several cities and hundreds of suspected terrorists were arrested. The operation was launched soon after the killing of the Surgeon-General. Musharraf is trying to revive 'pro-American' and 'anti-Ameri-



Pakistani security officials examine the scene of the suicide attack in Lahore on Tuesday.

can' divisions in the military, to project himself as the best option to serve US interests in the region.

Reports say top military brass was putting its weight behind Musharraf. At a Corps Commanders Conference in the garrison city of Rawalpindi on March 6, Gen. Kiani rejected suggestions of "distancing of the army from the president", adding that "any kind of schism, at any level" wouldn't be in the national interest. The meeting took place soon after Admiral Mullen had met in Pakistan with top military leaders, as well as Musharraf. Pak military also agreed to US military plan, as per reports, to send 100 American trainers to work with a Pak paramilitary force, Frontier Corps,

fighting in FATA and other restive tribal areas. In another development Pak military has prevailed upon Jamaat-ud-Dawa (a new name for Lashkar-e-Toiba), to denounce attacks on Pak civilian targets and Pak state. Jamaat-ud-Dawa said it does not believe in armed struggle against "Muslim rulers in Islamic countries." It said "such activities (armed struggle) not only weaken the Muslim nation... but also provide an opportunity for non-believers... to succeed in their nefarious schemes." The Jamaat also said that it believes that bomb blasts at public places, damaging public property; random killing of innocent people, raping women and other crimes against humanity are "blatant acts of terrorism".

Antartica Hero Shri MK Kaul passes away

By L.C. Kaul

THE Antartica Hero, affectionately known to his large circle of friends and admirers as 'DOD', left for his heavenly abode, on 18/2/2008, after having suffered a sudden brain haemorrhage, on 10/2/2008. His untimely and tragic demise has left all his relatives, friends and colleagues dumbfounded and heartbroken. Fondly known by different names- 'Baba', 'Babuji' and 'Kaul Sahib', he was a karmayogi, an extraordinary human being par excellence, a scientist of limitless talent and courage.

Born on 9th May 1940 at Bagh Jogi Lankar, Rainawari, Srinagar, Shri Kaul passed his M.Sc. Geology in 1961. He served Indian Bureau of Mines from 1962 to 1965 and Geological Survey of India (GSI), thereafter, till his superannuation on 31st

May 2000, as Director (Selection Grade).

In 1969, he was married to Nirmala, daughter of Shri P.N. Dhar residing at Hauz Khas, New Delhi. Shri Kaul had settled at Faridabad in 1985 in his own house (No: 67), Sector 17. He is survived by his wife, a daughter, a son and a grand daughter.

During a span of 39 years of active service, he was engaged in geological, glaciological and mineral surveys in J&K and HP Himalaya and on the icy continent of Antarctica. He was trained in Mountaineering from Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Darjeeling, in 1968 and in skiing from the Indian Institute of Skiing and Mountaineering, Gulmarg, in 1973. Shri Kaul was the member and also the leader of several multidisciplinary and interdepartmental scientific expeditions which included expeditions to Nun Kun, and to Rulung (Ladakh) and Nehnar glaciers in J&K, Gara, and Gorgarang glaciers in Kinnaur, HP and to Antarctica. Particularly noteworthy was his role as the leader of successful fifth Indian Expedition to

TRIBUTE



Antarctica (1985-86), organised by the Department of Ocean Development (DOD). He was one among the veterans whose vision and endeavours culminated in the birth of the National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research (NCAOR) at Goa. He was a member of several committees of DOD and NCAOR and Indian National Committee for SCAR (Scientific Committee of Antarctic Research). He attended several National and International Conferences and made valuable scientific contributions to Indian and Foreign journals. As the Editor of the publication 'Inventory of Himalayan Glaciers' - a contribution to the International Hydrological Programme (Tech. Pub. No: 34, GSI), he contributed significantly to an endeavour which was the first of its kind in the Asian region. Based on his scientific achievements, he figured in "Reference Asia (Asia's Who is Who of Men & Women of Achievement-Volume Fifth-1989)".

Shri Kaul's invaluable contribution to the study of Himalayan glaciers and Antarctic Sciences will ever be admired by future generations. In recognition of his distinguished services, Shri Kaul received the prestigious 'National Mineral Award (1987-88)' from the Govt. of India.

As an individual, intensely human person, sublime simplicity, helpful attitude, sweetness of temper, soft-spoken, with an all-around personality, a man of learning and erudition in his professional sphere, Shri Kaul was a self-made man by dint of his hard work, commitment and dedication. He will live for ever in the heart and thoughts of his relatives, friends and colleagues.

May his noble soul rest in peace.

The Secular Agenda & Kashmiri Pandits

BY SHAILENDRA AIMA

KASHMIRI PANDITS have prided themselves for several centuries as being learned, broad-minded and modern in several aspects of life and behavior. Besides, they have been astute in state-craft and most adjusting. Their adaptability has been an envy of their competitors as well as compatriots.

To these qualities of head and heart, Pandits have also taken pride in the adage of being secular. In fact, it has been one of the Pandit luminaries, Jawahar Lal, who thrust the term not only on Pandits but on the entire Indian nation and state.

Genesis of Secularism

The Cambridge advanced dictionary describes secularism as "the belief that religion should not be involved with the ordinary social and political activities of a country" and secularist as when something is secularized, religious influence, power or control is removed from it. It synonyms are often atheism or agnosticism.

The term "SECULAR" was used for the first time about 1846 by George Jacob Holyoake to denote "a form of opinion which concerns itself only with questions, the issues of which can be tested by the experience of this life"

The fundamental principle of Secularism is that, in his whole conduct, man should be guided exclusively by considerations derived from the present life itself. Anything that is above or beyond the present life should be entirely overlooked. Whether God exists or not, whether the soul is immortal or not, are questions which at best cannot be answered, and on which consequently no motives of action can be based. "Things Secular is as separate from the Church as land from the ocean" (English Secularism, 1).

What ever far one would stretch ones imagination, the word secular ends up connoting rejection of religion and religious considerations. It asserts the freedom from religion and the government imposition of religion upon the people, within a state that is neutral on matters of belief, and gives no state privileges or subsidies to religions. And in another sense, refers to a belief that human activities and decisions, especially political ones, should be based on what it considers to be evidence and fact, not on beliefs that secularists consider superstitious. Secularists hold that public policy should be free from religious influence.

Unfortunately, primary sources in the nature of collec-

tion of Holyoake's own writings are not available – at least not easily. But, happily, wholly reliable material is available to show the unmistakable views of Holyoake and Bradlaugh. In 1851, a definite stage in the emergence of explicit secularism was reached by the founding of the Central Secular Society by Holyoake. The Society issued a statement of secularist doctrine proclaiming:

1. science as the true guide of man,
2. morality as secular, not religious, in origin,
3. reason as the only authority,
4. freedom of thought and speech, and
5. that owing to the uncertainties of survival we should direct our efforts to this life only.

George Holyoake was no less an atheist than Charles Bradlaugh. Holyoake had been sentenced to six months' imprisonment for making the blasphemous statement that God should be retired. It should be remembered that Holyoake published 'The Trial of Theism' in 1858. It is also recognized that his coining of the word 'secularism' was an attempt to give atheism some respectability. In March 1870 there was between Holyoake and Bradlaugh a debate on the proposition that "the principles of secularism do not include atheism" Holyoake in support of the proposition canvassed that "... the secularist concerns himself with this world without denying or discussing any other world, either the origin of this, or the existence of that".

Bradlaugh, on the other hand, held "that the logical consequence of secularism is the denial, the absolute denial of Providence". In short, Holyoake said that ignoring God was enough; Bradlaugh insisted that God should be banished. This minor difference between them did not affect their common conviction that secularism demanded complete separation of the Church from the State and the abolition of all privileges granted to religious organizations.

The Indian Context

However, in the discourse on secularism in India, Dr. Radhakrishnan's view of secularism is enough to inform ourselves on the subject:

"No group of citizens shall arrogate to itself rights and privileges which it denies to others. No person should suffer any form of disability or discrimination because of his religion but all alike should be free to share to the fullest degree in the common life. This is the basic principle involved in the separation of Church and State. The religious impartiality of the Indian

State is not to be confused with secularism or atheism. Secularism as has been defined is in accordance with the ancient religious traditions of India". (emphasis provided).

At best this means that, in the Indian context, in a secular society everyone should be free to practice his or her religion. It means equal respect for all religions and cultures and non-interference of religion in the government affairs. Also, according to the Indian Constitution no discrimination will be made on the basis of caste, creed, gender and class. Similarly all citizens of India irrespective of ones religion, caste or gender have right to vote. According to articles 14 to 21 all will enjoy same rights without any discrimination on any ground.

Justice P.B. Gajendragadkar, who, as the Chief Justice of India, had inaugurated the seminar on Secularism organized by the Indian Law Institute in New Delhi, delivered Kashinath Trimbak Telang Endowment Lectures in February 1970 on 'Secularism and the Constitution of India'. On the subject he stated as follows:

"The word 'secular', like the word 'religious', is amongst the richest of all words in its range of meaning. It is full of subtle shades which involve internal contradictions, and of these contradictions the conventional dictionaryary meaning can scarcely give a correct view".

The Constitution of India, till the 42nd Amendment in 1976, did not contain the word 'secular' except incidentally in Article 25(2)(b). Prof. K.T. Shah was the only member of the Constituent Assembly who made a valiant effort to get a provision regarding the secular character of India included in the Constitution. The following amendment, moved as Amendment No.366, was defeated on 3rd December 1948.

"The State in India being secular shall have no concern with any religion, creed or profession of faith; and shall observe an attitude of absolute neutrality in all matters relating to the religion of any class of its citizens or other persons in the Union."

To be sure, neither this amendment nor the speech which Prof. Shah made in support of the amendment would have brought about a situation of "a wall of separation between the State and the Church". But it would have put a brake upon the State functionaries freely using the State finance and the machinery for pilgrimages and other religious activities. Prof. Shah's amendment would have also prevented the State media, especially radio and television, from broadcasting bhajans, prayers, religious

discourses etc.

An early challenge to the theory and practice of secularism in India was provided by the episode involving the reconstruction of Somnath Temple in Gujarat. As is well known to students of Indian history, Somnath temple was destroyed in AD 1025 by Mohmed Gazni and the Shivalinga was broken into pieces. Since then the Hindu sentiment had been strongly agitated and reconstruction of the temple and the installation of a new consecrated lingam had been strongly desired by believing Hindus.

After India attained independence in 1947, moves were initiated towards the reconstruction of the temple. K.M. Munshi, in his 'Pilgrimage to Freedom' recalls that Sardar Patel, as Deputy Prime Minister, pledged the Government of India to the reconstruction of the historical temple and that the Cabinet, presided over by Jawaharlal Nehru, decided to reconstruct the temple at Government cost. But Gandhiji advised Sardar Patel not to have the temple constructed and suggested that sufficient money should be collected from the people for this purpose. This advice was accepted and a committee for overseeing the project was appointed under the chairmanship of K.M. Munshi. The decision of the Government, therefore, became irrelevant.

What followed is important. The Constitution of India came into force in January 1950 and in December of the same year Sardar Patel passed away. Munshi invited President Rajendra Prasad to perform the ceremony of the installation of the deity and requested him to accept the invitation only if he was sure of fulfilling the promise. This was because Munshi suspected that Jawaharlal Nehru might jeopardize the President's commitment. However, the President Prasad stood by his commitment and performed the installation function on 11th May 1951.

It seems Jawaharlal Nehru did not take well the association of Munshi with the work of the restoration of Somnath temple. For, Munshi says:

"At the end of a Cabinet meeting Jawahar called me and said 'I don't like your trying to restore Somanath. It is Hindu revivalism'".

This Cabinet meeting was of 23rd April 1951 because in a letter which Munshi wrote on 24th April 1951, he recalls "Yesterday you referred to 'Hindu revivalism'...". This letter sets out the history of the restoration work with which, as the letter sets out, the States Ministry was closely associated.

This episode gives rise to

some important questions. Was the Government of India justified in resolving to undertake the restoration work of a temple (though as a result of Gandhi's suggestion the money was not provided by the Government)?

If such a decision was taken in a Cabinet meeting over which the Prime Minister presided, was he justified in protesting to the President about the latter's participation in the function and in chiding Munshi for associating with a work of Hindu revivalism? It is true that the Prime Minister's protest and rebuke occurred after the 'secular Constitution' came into force but no Government could have disassociated with the implementation of a decision taken by it.

These questions have been rendered irrelevant by the conduct of the later Prime Ministers (not excluding Jawaharlal's daughter) and the Presidents traveling at State expense to religious places and for religious functions.

M.N. Roy had already commented on this phenomenon in his article in 'The Radical Humanist' of 14th May 1950 as follows:

What is necessary is not facile profession of secularism, but a movement for the popularization of cultural values. The process of secularization, assuming that it is desired by the Government, cannot be promoted by legislation or executive orders. But men at the helm of affairs could help, if they did not willingly swim with the contrary current, as they do as a rule. The President of the Republic, Governors and Ministers of the States and the lesser are frequently taking leading parts in public religious ceremonies. This demonstrative religiosity is entirely different from religion as a part of one's private life.

A very comprehensive study of the Constitution of India and also of the social and cultural conditions in India with a view to determining whether 'India is a secular State' has been made by Prof. D.E. Smith in India as a Secular State. It has been rightly regarded as a pioneering study on the subject. Contrary to popular understanding, Prof. Smith does not assert that India is a secular State. To the question whether India is a secular State, his answer is a qualified 'Yes'. The reason why he does not answer in the negative is that he poses the question, What is the meaning of the term 'secular State' in the Indian context? There were several features of the Constitution which were strongly suggestive of secularism. The prevalent cultural indicators were supportive of secularism.

(Continued on Page 15)

The Secular Agenda & Kashmiri Pandits

(From Page 14)

On page 40 of his book, he formulated his famous table enumerating five characteristics of the three religions - Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam - which indicated whether they were favourable to the secular State. Of five factors, four were positive in the case of Hinduism and Buddhism while four were negative in the case of Islam - which meant that the possibility of an Islamic society becoming secular is practically nil.

India is a country where religion is very central to the life of people. India's age-old philosophy as expounded in Hindu scriptures called Upanishada is sarva dharma samabhava, which means equal respect for all religions. The Upanishadas further go to assert "Ekam sada, viprah bahudha vadanti", meaning, therefore, that the TRUTH is one, and that wise men define it differently.

Sociologist Ashis Nandy ('A Billion Gandhis,' Outlook, June 21) too finds it absurd that an inappropriate European import is being forced on India. Says Nandy, "To go to an Indian village to teach tolerance through secularism is a form of obscene arrogance to which I do not want to be a party," acknowledging that tolerance is an inherent part of the Indian character, something the professional 'secularists' find hard to accept.

Patrick French writing on what keeps India united observes: "Once the British had conquered territory and painted the map red, it became easier to see what needed to be opposed. A common sense of pride and purpose grew, with khadi as the first truly pan-Indian symbol. The freedom movement evicted the alien rulers easily compared to the long and bloody battles for nationhood elsewhere in the world, giving an optimistic momentum that inspired the struggles of other occupied people.... After Independence, the new leaders wrote history in their own image, and set about uniting the country in a way it never had been united before. Jinnah's role in the nationalist movement, and the fact that his demand for Pakistan had been precipitated by the failure of the Congress to cut a deal with the Muslim League in the 1930s, or to recognize his representative importance, was edited away. Further historical elision was required too: it became necessary to pretend that the Muslim invasions of earlier centuries had been undertaken in order to contest political space and bring kebabs, qawwali and ice to the people of Hindustan. A reading of victorious contemporaneous texts gives a rather different impression, suggesting that con-

quering foreign lands and destroying idolaters' temples was a virtue in itself, Except for foreigners and a handful of academics, everyone knows this in private, but a situation has developed over time whereby it is difficult to say so publicly for fear of sparking a return to the days of violence, or encouraging the zealots who want to create an exclusively Hindu rashtra. More than half a century after Independence, with the raw wound still exposed and unhealed-in Kashmir, in Gujarat, ... and in the failure to normalize relations with Pakistan-history cannot be faced squarely in case a genie is unleashed. The attempt by the NDA government to rewrite school textbooks was in part a response to this imbalance, but it was handled so badly and so crankishly that it made matters worse. The idea that an archaeological dig beneath the foundations of a mosque at the birthplace of a mythological figure might, if successful, provoke some sort of national revelation or realignment indicates the scale of the existing problem."

The Dichotomy

It is clear therefore that Secularism in India is trying to exist between two glaring opposites. And in fact, instead of resolving the basic notions of nation building, it has unleashed a plethora of issues that is threatening the very survival of the Indian nation and the state. Central to this entire debate on SECULARISM is the Muslim question and the Muslim identity politics. The Nehruvian attempts at rewriting or contriving the history has become a hot topic for debate. Whether it did any good or not, but it definitely has done a great havoc with his own community.

Prem Nath, who is notorious for his Pakistani leanings, quotes Gandhi's letter to him in his book 'The Kashmir Crucible'. Gandhi writes, "In a Musلمان state like Kashmir a Hindu ruler can rule only by abdicating".

Maulana Mohammad Ali, a great freedom fighter and secularist had to say the following about Mahatma Gandhi, "However pure Mr. Gandhi's character may be, he must appear to me from the point of view of religion inferior to any Mussalman though he be without character".

Ambedkar, who was to narrate this about-turn (of the Ali Brothers) with much relish in support of his thesis that Muslims cannot coexist with non-Muslims, recorded the sequel. "The statement created a great stir," he wrote.

Many did not believe that Mr. Mohammed Ali who testified to so much veneration for Mr. Gandhi was capable of entertaining such ungenerous and contemptuous sentiments about

him. When Mr. Mohammed Ali was speaking at a meeting held at Aminabad Park in Lucknow he was asked whether the sentiments attributed to him were true. Me. Mohammed Ali without any hesitation or compunction replied:.....

"Yes, I do hold..... a fallen Mussalman to be better than Mr. Gandhi."

As the controversy swelled, Maulana Mohammed Ali gave his version of the reason for his statement.

In a letter to Swami Shraddhananda he wrote: "The fact is as ... some Mussalman friends have been constantly flinging at me the charge of being a worshipper of Hindus and a Gandhi-worshipper. I had, therefore, on several occasions plainly declared that in the matter of religion, I professed the same belief as any other true Mussalman, and as such I claimed to be a follower of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon his soul) and not of Gandhiji. And further that since I hold Islam to be the highest gift of God, therefore, I was impelled by the love I bear towards Mahatmaji to pray to God that He might illumine his soul with the true light of Islam. I wish, however, to emphatically declare that I hold that today neither the representatives of Islam nor of the Hindu, Jewish, or Parsi faith can present another instance of such high character and moral worth as Gandhiji and that is the reason why I hold him in such high reverence and affection. I deeply revere my own mother, and if contentment and gratefulness under all circumstances be the true meaning of Islam, I claim there is no person, howsoever well-versed in religion, who has understood it better than she. Similarly, I regard Maulana Abdul Bari as my religious guide. His loving kindness holds me in bondage. I deeply admire his sincerity of heart. But in spite of all this, I make bold to say that I have not yet found any person who in actual character is entitled to a higher place than Mahatma Gandhi. But between belief and actual character there is a wide difference. As a follower of Islam I am bound to regard the creed of Islam as superior..... is entitled to a higher place than that of any other non-Muslim irrespective of his high character even though the person in question be Mahatma Gandhi himself."

I have quoted from Gandhi's experiences, only because there couldn't be more (un)secular a person than Gandhi. He was deeply religious and at the same time showed equal respect for all religions. And in case that is the definition of secularism in the Indian context, then this defini-

tion as well as the D.E. Smith formulations do not incorporate the Muslim world view.

"How to reconcile the (un) Secular and the Islamic world-views" is the perpetual dichotomy of the Indian secularists. They insist, implore and even browbeat on avoiding, ignoring and even forgetting the Muslim question, the wounds of which, persisting from partition in 1947 get carried over to Kashmiri Pandits' cleansing and to every, where around us. And instead of confronting the ideologies of two-nation theory, the Al Qaida, and their infinite offshoots operating from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Iraq, Iran, Malaysia, Sudan, Chechnya, et al; the secularists like Nehru get angry and denounce any act of Hindu as revivalist, obscurantist and fundamentalist. They not only indulge in Hindu bashing, they also end up providing excellent camouflage to the subversive antinational acts and propaganda.

Pandits & Secularism

As already stated Jawahar Lal Nehru was a great proponent of secularism. And since the Pandits in Kashmir looked up to him as their mentor and a role model, they also followed suit. It is a different matter that many Kashmiri Pandits with an intrinsic capacity to understand the inevitable did not tread the secularist path and committed themselves to complete integration of J&K, with India. Nehru debunked them as communalists when they met him in Delhi in 1950 and asked them to support Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and to support the special status of J&K away from the constitutional frame-work of India.

Article 370 excluded the state of J&K from the Constitutional frame-work of India and gave J&K its own constituent assembly, its own Constitution and Flag. In fact, it created a nation within a nation, a de facto Muslim state in a federal India in the name of secularism, where the Muslim majority of Kashmir should enjoy all privileges and freedom of an independent nation. For accepting the suzerainty of the Indian Republic; they were guaranteed both physical and economic security against aggression and deprivation. Notwithstanding the legality and finality of the Instrument of Accession that the Ruler of J&K signed with India, the Indian state cajoled the Muslim leadership of Kashmir in negotiating accession that was made conditional. It was a comic situation that wrought tragedy after tragedy upon the entire non-Muslim population of J&K state in the coming years.

The tallest secular leader of Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah, had

betrayed his hatred and abhorrence for the Kashmiri Hindus when he would openly proclaim the slogan of (raliev, Chsaliev ya galiev) - merge, leave or perish. It was again Sheikh and his competent team of Goebbels who successfully floated the myths of Pandit prosperity and their exploitation of Muslim masses. The Hindus were the pariahs whose exclusion from state and society was the requisite for Muslim empowerment and awakening. It was not only the Indian secularists who sided with the rank communalists of Kashmir in spreading these lies and canards, but even a section of opportunist Hindu leadership of the state, including some Pandits, prided themselves as secularists and liberals.

These so-called opportunistic, secularist Pandits even today don't get tired of singing the songs of false bonhomie and secular traditions of Kashmir, which they claim to be "Kashmiriat". They tell the uprooted exiled Pandits who are languishing in tattered camps, to return to Kashmir and co-exist with their Muslim brethren, while themselves enjoying a siesta in their plush air-conditioned suites in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, in the US or any other far away land. Many of them hobnob with the Muslim political establishments for seeking berths in Legislature or Cabinet. And when a victim protests, these secularists call him depraved, senseless, - "a typical batta coming from the smelly streets of Habbakadal". Not only that they advise him on forgetting Kashmir, if he refuses to cohabit with Islamic precedence.

Secularism - to these Secular Pandits is :

- (i) A false sense of Kashmiriyat,
- (ii) A denial of Pandit assertion,
- (iii) Belief in the Myth of Pandit disunity, and
- (iv) Lack of pride and ignorance of his ethno-religious tradition.

These secularists would never engage the perpetrators, but would scrap the victims. And while talking about serious and structured dialogues, they would flee in the event of an informed, logical, coherent, thought-provoking cliffhanger meant at them. It is better that the Secularists, who are often rank opportunists, and many a time cowards, sense the mood and fall in line. What India needs especially at this moment are the aggressive virtues, the spirit of soaring idealism, bold creation, fearless resistance and courageous response? Timid and apologetic secular agenda is redundant in the context of both the Pandits and India.



By Nirmal Kusum
Kachru

Sarda-A Memoir-II

One day a cow accompanied by a cute calf landed at our quarter. This created hustle-bustle in the premises. Mother felt happy that she would have an opportunity to catch glimpse of the holy cow daily. The cow was named 'Gauri' and the Calf as 'Nandi'. In the beginning we would be a little hesitant to come near the cow. Gradually, this hesitancy was overcome. We would make the cow eat grass with our hands and caress by stroking her skin.

Once Papa returned home, riding a stout, good-looking horse. Without dismounting the horse he entered the gate. The usual practice was that he would get down from the horse outside the gate. The horse would then return alongwith its owner. No sooner he dismounted the horse Gopala and me ran up to see him. We started gazing curiously at the horse and Papa.

Papa disclosed, "this horse belongs to us now. How is it?" Our eyes brimmed with joy. We replied, "Very beautiful". My brother who too came running said, "Papa, we will also ride the horse".

Mother was witnessing the scene from the Verandah, with Muna in her lap.

The new saddle on the horse looked dazzling. It was bright brown in colour, with a long linear white spot in the Centre. By now Raghu Kaka had also joined us. He moved forward and put the two children on the horse back. Patting and stroking the back and the neck of the horse Raghu Kaka took the horse around the courtyard for 1-2 rounds. I too desired to have a ride but didn't express. After dismounting Billoo and Nanhe from the horse Raghu Kaka called me, "Come dear, you also have a ride on the new horse".

Raghu Kaka was a peon in the department. It took him little time to become part of our family. He had lost his wife. His two married sons, their families and an unmarried daughter lived in a village, 8-9 miles from Sarda. In deference to his age the office staff used to call him as Raghu Kaka. Once he fell sick due to fever and cough and grew too weak. On

Papa's instructions Raghu Kaka's food too started coming from our kitchen.

Shortly before snowfall Raghu Kaka and Gopala would dig a ditch in a corner of the courtyard. Then Grass would be laid. In one portion Potato-Shakarkandi (Molasses) and in the other Reddish-Turnip would be stored. Another layer of grass was then spread over the stored vegetables. These would remain unspoiled and fresh till the onset of summer. This used to be nature's Fridge those days. Vegetables would remain in good condition for months together. When I grew of age I learnt that this practice of storing Potato, Reddish, Turnip and other vegetables underground was prevalent during winters in Srinagar and other places as well. The local term for this practice was 'Khav'.

When Beans-Turnip was the menu Gopala would put lot of turnip into it. It would be put on the hearth quite early in the day. By evening these would be ready. At the time of supper Gopala would complain, "I had put lot many turnips. Where have these gone?" Mother would try to reason out, "These might have got dissolved". Gopala would not be convinced and blame, "Surely, Raghu Kaka might have gulped these". Raghu Kaka and Gopala shared good relationship, with Gopala according fatherly respect due to him. They cared well for each other. Occasionally, they would enter into a brawl.

Sometime later, a teacher named Arjun Singh was engaged for us by Papa. He was normal-trained and did not have any knowledge of Hindi. The teacher would teach me Urdu, English and Math Tables. My younger brother was being taught alphabet and numerals. Two younger brothers were yet to come out of mother's shadow.

By temperament the teacher was simple and humble. Being the lone teacher of the village school he had to attend to every work—opening and closing of the school, conducting prayers, ringing the bell, teaching and attending to the accounts etc. Students from few neighbouring villages also attended the school. The teacher would handle multiple tasks at the same time quite competently. One class would be busy writing Takhties (wooden boards), another would be busy playing, yet another would be

reciting numerals or tables. While the teacher taught one class, another would join gymnastics game.

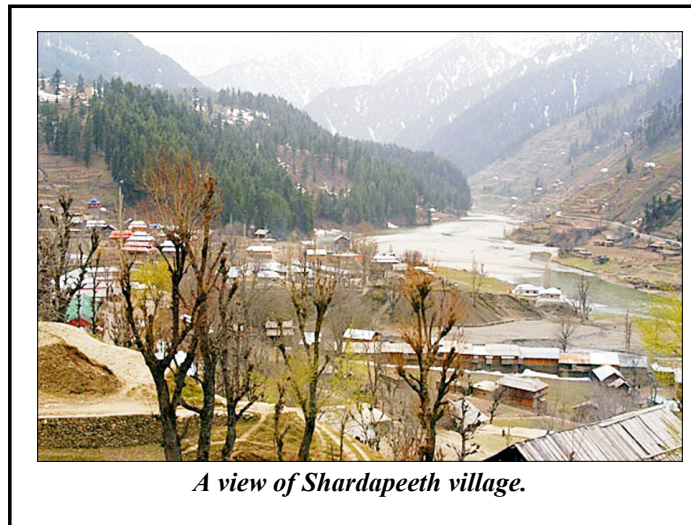
It was the talent in teacher that attracted Papa to engage him as our tutor. The teacher lived in a village called Goos in Machipur area. This is little what I can recollect. Papa had been to this area on Inspection tours many a times. We also visited the area once in the company of Masterji. The school had closed down for vacations. We stayed for 2-3 nights there. Masterji had taken us to his home also. The way to his house lay through fields. His house, made of wood was a good one. In one portion the family had grown pumpkin, cucumber etc., while in the other beds looked full with green-leafy vegetables. Dry bushes surrounded the house on all sides but the courtyard was neat and clean. The cowshed and the paddy store of theirs, like most of the houses in the village, had thatched roofs.

The parents and the elder brother of Masterji, Amar Singh received us with warm affection. The shop was located near the house of elder brother. It had all the provisions of daily use. Mother purchased few items here. That evening the family had hosted a dinner for us.

We went around the village, playing games of Kabbadi and hide and seek. Masterji had informed mother, "There is also a Sarda shrine here. Those who cannot make it to Sarda temple located higher up, can pay obeisance to the Goddess here and have her darsana". Papa's actual purpose in bringing us here was to take us to this shrine. He had kept Raghu Kaka for our company, while he himself went on inspection tour. Masterji and his mother also remained with us.

The shrine was not too far and was a small one. Few Purohit families lived there. The road to the shrine lay through dense groove of walnut trees. There were lot many Chinars as well. Masterji had told us that these chinars were very old.

The sanctum sanctorum of the temple housed well sculpted little idols. Fresh flowers had been put on these idols. Ghee lamp was also burning. After the puja tea (Kahwa) and rice bread (Childasa) was brought for us from the house of purohitis. Some ladies and children also came to meet us. They had brought walnut, apples, maize and sattu.



A view of Sharda peeth village.

Mother was hesitant to accept these. Her dilemma was how could she refuse something that reflected affection.

At home we children spent half the time within residential premises and the rest outside. Everybody in the family would wake up at 5 AM. By 6 O'clock breakfast would be served. Soon thereafter, we would begin our studies. At 10 o'clock we would take lunch. Papa would take lunch at 9.30 AM. He would be in his office by 10 AM. After the lunch I would take my brother along while going out. Sometimes we would go up a nearby hill or play with flowing water making dummy bridges on small water-outlets or 'houses' on banks. We would also prepare mock vegetables/bread etc. 2-3 children from two houses in the neighbourhood would also join us. One of them, who was of my age, was tailor's son. He used to read in Masterji's school. He would return home by noon, with Takhti hanging around his shoulders, and join us for playing.

Occasionally my brother, me and Ismail would go towards the downhill slope. We would climb small hills, move across nullahs, run on green velvety grass and cross on our way grazing cows and galloping horses. We would pluck flowers and take little ripe fruit of the shrubs, besides meeting the hilly children. Initially, the latter would feel shy. For sometime we would gaze silently at each other. Then they would mix up with us and converse, play and share joyous moments. At times, we would wonder why they should giving us so much respect. Was it because we wore clean clothes or had fair complexion? But they too had fair complexion. Sometimes they would pluck jujube fruit for us or get small

pears called 'Sadiyan' in Pahari parlance. We would enjoy their company. On occasions they would feel alarmed on getting rebuke from Isamil. We would not like this.

Among them was a cute girl, Kulsuma, lean and beautiful, with big watery eyes, long black hair strung into small bunches—resting like a net on her back. At times I would drag her to my home. Mother would display affection by serving snacks to her and giving clothes. Kulsuma's mother used to bring us milk and grass for cow and horse. I would play the game of dolls with Kulsuma. Mother would make dolls at home. Later I also learnt this art. I would like stitching clothes for dolls and decorating them. I vividly recollect how I once forgot to make the neck while preparing sweater for the doll. It could not be put on the doll. I laugh at my mistake, for later I had to use scissors to cut the neck for the doll.

Our daily routine was to play around small nullahs, climb trees, enjoy swings, make dummy watermills around nullahs. We would fashion a thin trickle of water on a stone in such a way that it would start moving. We had been trained in this technique by Ismail. He could do many variations of this. Ismail would also make good pellet bows for us and teach us how to take sharp aim.

Nature was bountiful here. Different varieties of trees, vegetables, herbs etc. were seen at every step. Ismail would acquaint us with their local names—Cholai Ka Sag, Bathua (a pot herb), (Big leafed sour sag), Hund, Palhaq, Vena, BunFasha, Ajwain, Kisrode etc. Wild roses were in abundance in the area. We would select Bunfasha flowers with care.

(Contd. on Page 22)

Ancient Temples of Sindh

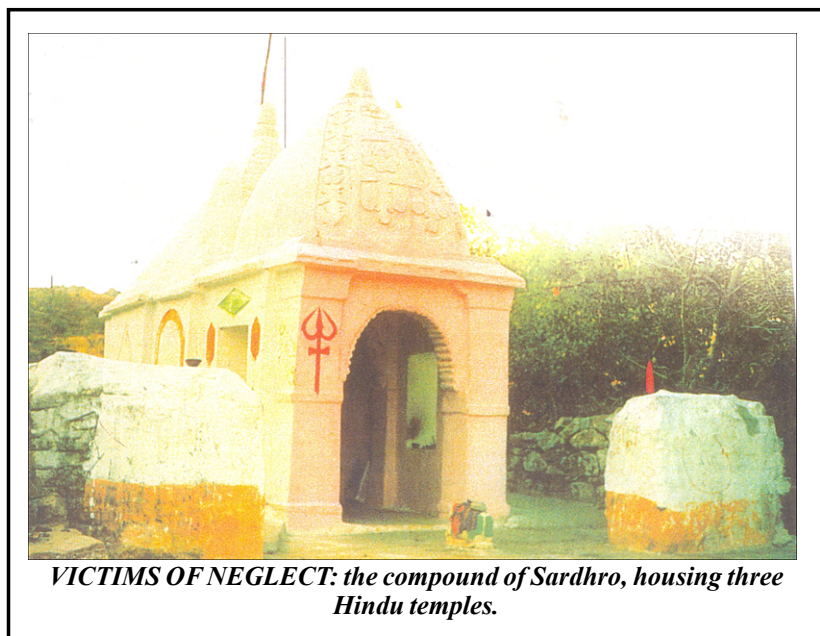


By Sanjay Godbole

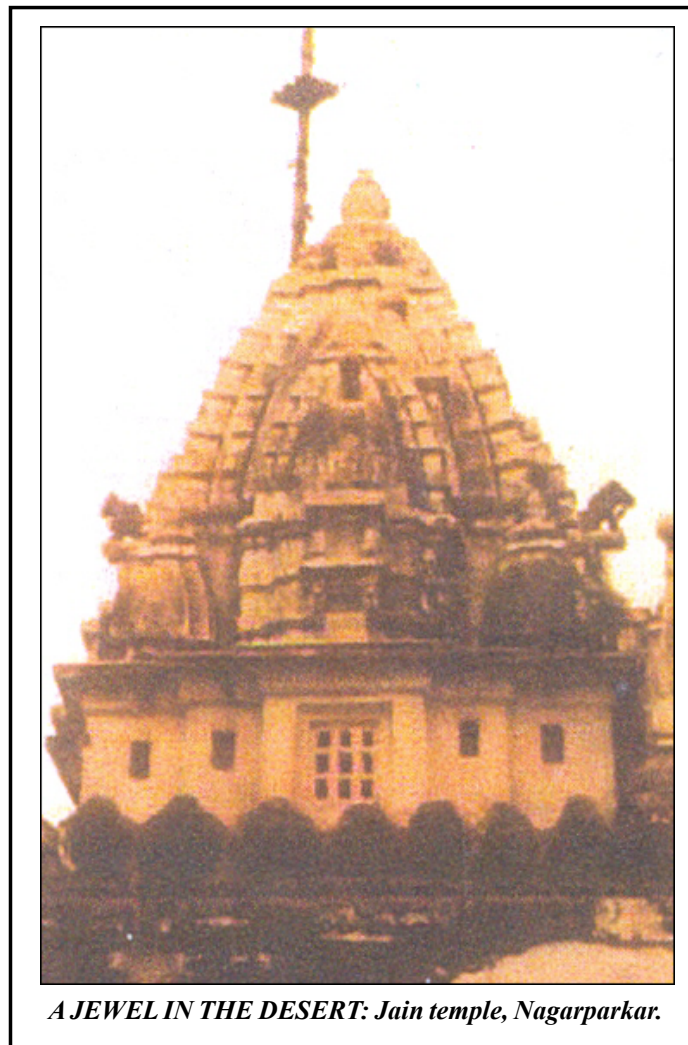
and came to Somnath for attacking and destroying the temple. During the British regime, one Capt. Recks studied this terrain geographically. According to him, 'Parinagar' was an important and large port in the pre-Christian era. A large tributary of the River Sindhu contributed its flow into the Arabian Sea. The river was called 'Hakdi' at that time. Subse-

These give an oblique reference to many such holy pilgrimage sites. There is a holy water tank situated at Nagarparkar which owes its origin by dint of the legendary story given in Mahabharata that Bheema kneeled down here. This Kunda admeasures 30' x 20' in size.

In the direction of North West from 'Nagarparkar' lies a place called 'Achalsor' where there are natural springs. There is a temple of Lord Shiva and a charitable rest house built by 'Satramdasa', where many ascetics dwell. A natural spring stemming and originating at the foot of a mountain near the old town is called 'Zarano' in the local dialect. There is also a cave in the mountain at the east side of nagarparkar, which can accommodate about 25 persons. During emergency and period of crisis, the womenfolk was safely put in the cave and the opening of the



VICTIMS OF NEGLECT: the compound of Sardhro, housing three Hindu temples.



A JEWEL IN THE DESERT: Jain temple, Nagarparkar.

THE 'Thar' Division in Pakistan has an expanse of twenty thousand square kilometers. During the census of this area in the year 1981 A.D., it was revealed that 0.5 million people were settled over there. Geographically, this 'Thar' (desert) has been created out of heaps formed from the sandy dunes, saltish residues and oysters from the kutch desert and carried naturally over there over a period of years. The desert of 'Thar' was controlled by the 'Rajputs' (a warrior community). Many rulers from Rajput dynasties such as Sodha, Sumera, Sanna, Rathod etc. ruled here. Mehmud Gaznavi traversed the Thar desert

quently on account of onslaught of natural calamities such as earthquake, the river changed its course and many towns and villages vanished in the blue. The 'Kutch' province was created due to turmoil on account of earthquakes and subsequent drying up of the Arabian sea in parts. Sindh has many ancient legacies such as temples, Mathaslamaseries, kundassacred tanks and such other ancient holy places. The Government of Sindh had published a Gazzettier in Sindhi language. Mr. Jagdish Rathi, a Sindhi author, sent me a few pages from this Gazzettier.

cave was closed with stones and the men faced the enemies. This place was called as 'Bavanji Bibo'. A Fort was built near Nagarparkar by one Shri. Govind Rai, which was levelled with the ground by the British. 'Ghordharo' is an ancient place near 'Karunjar'. The place is revered as a sacred place in Sindh, it exists from Vedic times. There is a lake called 'Lorai'. The water from this lake goes right upto 'Katch'. There are many ancient remains in the Vicinity of 'Ghordharo'

This 'Thar' desert and the 'Thar' region has also been alluded to by many literatures from Pakistan in their works. Similarly, special mention has been made by some travellers about the sand dunes, desolated barren lands and peaceful tranquillity of this region. 'Mazrul Islam' a famous author and storyteller has said that his heart and Thar' are identical with the same desert. In the South East direction of Thar lies the 'Nagarparkar' district which is still undeveloped, there are huge egg-shaped hills measuring 12 miles long and 1000 feet high. There are many temples belong-

ing to Hindu and Jain faiths. During the pre-independence times, all these temples were always thronged by pilgrims. These are, however, in a deserted state and in neglected conditions in that the patrons of them have settled in India

But these temples are, even as on today, known and are referred to for their Architecture and legacy. In an area at the foot of 'Karunjar' hills, within a periphery of 50 kilometers, there are five Derasars (Jain temples). Out of these, two temples are in good shape and structurally sound. Out of these five Jain temples, the most famous is called 'Gori Mandir' and is at a distance of 40 km. in the North-West direction from 'Karunjar'. This temple was built, it is believed, since olden times. It was built during the regime of rulers from 'Sodha' dynasty, who ruled the province of Sindh during 1376 A.D. Since no inscriptions are available in the Mandir, confirmed conclusions and inferences can not be drawn as to the establishment of the same. This temple is of the size of 39 M x 15 M and is built in Jodhpur stone, which is quite akin to Marble. There is a court

yard in the front side of the temple, in the North direction; and there are acmes in the shape of Umbrellas, on the top of the temple. After entering the temple from the Southern end, one can have glimpses of the rectangular spaces [Khana: means the space between two consecutive pillars] and the acmes over it. Long ago, way back, some idols had been installed there. Since, now that, these idols are no more existent, the acmes and the pillars and the Umbrellas are all in a broken state. At the back side of the main market at Nagarparkar, there exists a Jain temple in a neglected and deserted state. The temple has acmes in the shape of "triangle and there is a lot of carved work on the walls and the pillars. There are many sculptures depicting Jain Mythology. Way back, there were many painting and sketches also. But these are all destroyed and sculptures are broken. The colourful tiles set in the temple have also vanished. There is no one to look after the temple. When there was partition, the Jain community, en masse, chose to go to India.

The 'Karunjar' hill, for the
(Contd. on Page 22)



HOME TO RICH FOLKLOR: Temples at Sardhro.

Festivities Galore-Shivratri

By Upender Ambardar

FESTIVALS and sacred days have deep roots in our socio-religious traditions. They form a significant part of our cultural heritage. Their celebrations lead to spiritual upliftment, soul purification, moral enrichment besides self-discipline. The festivals sustain our spirits, add colour, zeal, variety and zest to our existence and in the process help to keep our traditions and time tested rituals alive. Kashmir has been a seat of spiritual and cultural strength since ancient times, Kashmiri Pandits are basically Shaivites and Shaivite philosophy has attained growth and strength in the serenity of cool and calm surroundings of Kashmir. The worship of Lord Shiva and his Divine consort Parvati is an inseparable part of our tradition and culture. Shivatri, locally known as 'Hayrath', is sacred festival of Kashmiri Pandits. This ancient and auspicious festival has immense religious and cultural sanctity. It's sanctity finds a prominent reference in the sixth century Sanskrit text, 'Nilmat Puran' of Kashmir. Shivratri festival has also been highlighted in the famous philosophical work 'Shivastrottravali' of Utpal Dev, the great Shaivite philosopher of the eighth century. One of the greatest Shaivite, AbhinavGupt has also paid salutations and obeisance to Vatuk Bhairava in his famous Trika philosophical work called 'Tantraloka'. Even the renowned historian Kalhan's 'Rajtarangni' also bears an invocation to Lord Shiva at the very start of the text. The famous treatises like 'Sivadrashiti' by Acharya Somananda, 'Shivstotravali' by Utpal Dev and 'Pratyabhijna Darshnam' by AbhinavGupt have contributed immensely towards the enrichment of Kashmir Shaivism. Kashmir Shaivism, also called **Trika Shastra** is the philosophy of triad, which comprises Shiva-the Universal consciousness, Shakti-the Divine energy and Nara-the human soul. It regards the entire creation as His manifestation, which is real and not illusion. We worship Lord Shiva in His both forms of Shiva and Shakti. Shakti for us is the Goddess Raginya, Sharika, Kali or Durga, who are the energy aspects of Lord Shiva. Worshipping Lord Shiva leads to the cosmic mother, who offers solace, protection and divine grace to one and all.

Accordingly, the ultimate Truth or Supreme Reality is Lord Shiva Himself and the whole creation is His manifestation.

He is consciousness and Bliss. Everything emanates from Him and everything merges in Him. He is in us and we are in HIM. In reality, Kashmir Shaivism is a spiritual quest for an inward journey and search rather than an outward one. It is the exploration and realization of the divinity within ourselves. Lord Shiva is also known as **Mahadeva**-the Great God, **Triloki Nath**-the Lord of three worlds, **Umapati, Gauripati, Parvatipati,**

Chandrashekhar-the moon-crested, **Gangadhar**-the bearer of Ganga, **Girisha**-the mountain Lord, **Mahakal** -the Lord of death, **Pashupati**-the Lord of beasts and **Vishwanath**-the Lord of Universe. HE is the Lord of his spiritual consort, the Goddess Parvati, which in reality is the cosmic energy. **The union of Lord Shiva with Shakti is Shivratri.** Every Monday is sacred to Lord Shiva. Generally, the fourteenth day of the dark half of each month is called Shivaratri. But the one that falls on Phalgun (February-March) is Mahashivratri. Mahashivratri known as 'Hayrath' in Kashmir is a twenty three days festival, which starts from Phalgun Krishna Paksh Pratipada (Phadgun gatapach Oakdoh), the first day of the dark fortnight. It culminates in Phalgun.

Shuklapaksh Ashtami, known as 'Tila Aetham'. On Shivratri, the sun and the moon are usually in the Zodiac sign of Aquarius or Kumbh Rashi. Kashmiri Pandits perform Shivratri Puja called Vatak Puja on the intervening night of Triyodashi and Chaturdashi, while in the rest of the country, people observe Mahashivratri on Chaturdashi.

Shivratri is also known by the names of Mahashivratri, Kalratri and Talaratri. Shivratri, the night of Bliss, has a special significance as the Divine Mother symbolically merges with the divine Lord, thereby establishing non-dualism in the Absolute form. It is also believed that Jyotir Linga appeared on the earth at midnight during the intervening night of Triyodashi and Chaturdashi to remove darkness and ignorance from the world. As such the great night of Shiva is said to commemorate the auspicious advent of the divine Mahajyoti or Supreme light. According to the holy Hindu scriptures, the festival of Mahashivratri also signifies the day on which Lord Shiva saved the world from total annihilation by drinking the deadly 'Haalahal' poison, produced during the great churning of the ocean (Samandhar Munthun). According to sacred texts at this time a forceful natural upsurge of energy is said to take place in the human system, which advances the process of soul purification and enlightenment. This energy in combination with the significant planetary positions help in the upward flow of the energy flow in the human beings. These energy forces help us to overcome the Karmas and raise one's consciousness beyond the veil of illusion resulting in the intensification of the

spiritual process.

Lord Shiva also represents the life cycle of living beings. It is due to this very fact that walnuts are used in the Shivratri puja. Walnuts, known in Kashmiri as 'doon' is a seed, which in reality represents a complete life-cycle i.e. the beginning and end of life. It is also a miniature representation of our universe and is symbolic of our respect for the entire cosmos. The four kernels of the walnut are also believed to represent the four directions of the hemisphere and the four Vedas.

As Mahashivratri falls on the darkest night of the year, it symbolises the darkness of igno-

special significance for the newly-wed Kashmiri Pandit brides. They return back to their in-laws bringing with them new clothes and 'Hayrath-bhog' in the form of cash and kind. It is on this day that vegetarian or non-vegetarian food are cooked as per the family ritual or 'reeth'. It is followed by 'Gada-Kah' (Phagun Gatapach Kah), wherein fish is cooked as per the family tradition. This day has got tantric significance as per the Hindu mythology. On the following day called 'Vagurbah', a small earthenware pot known as 'Vagur' is installed amidst elaborate rituals in the pooja-room, locally known as 'Vatak-Kuth'.

Late in the evening after performing 'Vagur Pooja', cooked rice, vegetarian or non-vegetarian dishes depending upon one's individual family 'reeth' or ritual are offered to the 'Vagur'. This day is followed by 'Hayrachi-Truvah' (Triyudashi), which is the auspicious and most sacred day of Mahashivratri. On this day, an elderly lady of the family fills-up the earthen-pitcher designated as 'Vatak-Nout' with fresh water and a good number of walnuts, usually 101 or 151. This ritual known as 'Vatuk-Barun' is performed before the sun-set. The 'Vatak-Nout' is a symbolic representation of Lord Shiva, while as a smaller earthen-pitcher,

locally called 'Choud' placed adjacent to the 'Vatak-Nout' represents the Goddess Parvati. The smaller earthenwares such as 'Sanivari' (two in number), 'Machvari' (2-4 in number) a hollow cone-shaped 'Sanipatul' representing lord Shiva and a 'Dhupzoor' (an earthen dhoopstand) are suitably placed near the 'Vatak-Nout'. In addition to them, two bowl type earthen-ware 'locally known as 'Dhulij' are also placed in close proximity to the 'Choud'. The 'Dhulij', 'Sanivari' and 'Machvari' are believed to represent Bhairvas, 'Gandharvas' (the celestial musicians) and the other deities of the 'Divine-Barat' (the celestial marriage of Lord Shiva and Parvati).

A small bowl called 'Reshi-Dulij' occupies a special place near the 'Vatak-Nout'. Only cooked rice and milk are offered to it. The 'Nout', 'Choud' and 'Dulij' etc. are referred as 'Vatuk' and are seated on special pedestals of dry grass made in the form of circular rings locally called as 'Aarie'.

The 'Vatuk' is decorated by tying mouli (narivan) i.e. string of dry grass embellished with marigold flowers and 'bael-pater', which is known as 'Vusur'. Tilak is also applied to 'Vatuk'. Incense, dhoop, camphor and ratandheep form the main ingredients of ritualistic material called 'Vatak Samgri'. Milk and

curds and conical sugar preparation called 'Kand' are offered to the 'Vatak-Raz', represented by the 'Nout' amidst elaborate ritualistic pooja and chanting of the holy mantras, collectively known as 'Vatak-Pooja'.

As part of the ritual, special vegetarian or non-vegetarian dishes according to one's family ritual or 'reeth' are offered to the 'Dulij'. The day following 'Hayrath' called 'Shivachaturdashi' is locally known as 'Salam'. Salam is a day of greetings and festivity. On this day, all the family members and near relatives are given pocket-money called 'Hayrath-Kharch' by the head of the family.

During Shivratri days, playing of indoor-game with the sea-shells, locally called 'Haren-gindun' is a usual practice especially among the children. Late in the evening of 'Amavasya' known by the name of 'Doon-Mavas', pooja is performed either on the river bank (Yarbal) or at home as per the family tradition. The practice of performing pooja of walnuts taken-out from the 'Vatak-Nout' called as 'Vatuk Parmozun'.

'Doon-Mavas' is also known as 'Demni-Mavas' as some families (Gourit families) prepare meat preparations in combination with turnip as per their family ritual.

It is a usual practice in most of the house-holds, who perform pooja at the river-banks to allow the head of the family to enter the houseonly after he promises blessings and boons in the form of health, wealth, education, employment, peace and prosperity to each and every member of the family. The conversation in Kashmiri, which takes place between the head of the family (who is outside the closed door, and senior lady of the house goes like this, *"thuk or dubh-dubh, kous chuv?, Ram Broor 'Kya Heth?, Anna Heth, Dhana-Heth Doarkoth, Aurzoo Heth, Vidya, Kar-bar, Te Sokh Sampdha Heth."*

Shivratri 'naveed' in the form of water-soaked walnuts and 'rotis' is distributed among near and dear ones during the period of 'Doon-Mavas' to Tila-Ashtami, locally known as 'Tila-Aethum', which falls on Phalgun Shuklapaksh Ashtami.

On Tila-Ashtami, a number of earthen oil lit lamps are placed at different places starting from one's home to the river-bank (yarbal) and also one of the oil lamps is made to float on the river with its base seated on grass ring or 'arie'. The day of 'Tila-Ashtami' also signals the end of the severe cold of winter and advent of the pleasant season of spring, locally known as 'Sonth'. On this day, the change-over of season is celebrated by children by burning old fire-pots (Kangris), stuffed with dry grass and tied with long ropes are rotated around in the air, all the time uttering the words of 'Jateen-Tantah'. It marks the final good-bye to the holy festival of Mahashivratri or 'Hayrath'.



A Shivshakti painting by artist G.R. Santosh.

Kashmir Shaiv Darsana

By Shail Gulati

“Kashmira parvati paroksha, tat swami ch Maheshwara” Kashmir is as beautiful as Parvati manifest, and who’s Lord is Shiva himself.

This ancient proclamation from the scriptures of Kashmir, and duly recorded by Kalhana in the Rajtarangani, tells in the most intimate terms of the presence of Shiva and Shaivism in Kashmir.

Indeed, from time immemorial, this land has been the seat of great divine learning in general, and Shaiv darsana in particular. Starting in this life cycle, with the revelations of Lord Shiva to Rsi Durvasa, who passed it on to the mountain dwellers of Kashmir by the lineage of Trayambakaditya, matured and transmitted through a galaxy of perfected beings like Somananda, Utpala, Vasugupta, Abhinavagupta, Laleshwari, and in our own time, by Swami Lakshmanjoo. The vale has also had innumerable other perfected beings like Bhagwan Gopinath and Nand bab, and great scholars like Baljinathji pandit and jankinathji kaul kamal. It, has even had, great saints like Adi shankaracharya and Swami Vivekananda as visitors, who, by the time they left, were visibly enriched. While shankara actually established the shivlinga on the hill named after him, Swami Vivekananda declared and recorded to his gurubhais about the presence of Mahadeva, in Amarnath, and everywhere else in the land, and also of the Devi, at kshir bhawani.

Kashmir Shaiv Darsana, Revelations of Lord Shiva, Form an extremely profound school of Non -dual philosophy and experiential spirituality.

The revelations teach that man is indeed God who has forgotten his own divine nature, and all of life’s play, is to ultimately Re-cognize that Godhead, which has never left him, it is only veiled.

Those, to whom the philosophy is revealed, are the darsatas, ‘the seers’, also called rsis.

The word Darsana, means essentially, ‘revelation’, or ‘seeing’. Impliedly, it also comes to mean philosophy, or spiritual school of thought, especially when it is then expounded by the rsi to successive disciples. Vouchsafed in the ancient past to his rsis in His abode of Kailash, it is said to be as old, as, perhaps the first teachings of Shiva, beginning from the primal Satyuga.... for practical purpose, many lifecycles ago..

And Lord Shiva came as Svachchandanath to teach.. He taught the shiva tantras, the rudra tantras, and the bhairava tantras, successively, the dual, the intermediate, and the non-dual.

By the time of Kaliyug, however, the important bhairava tantras,

Kashmir the land of great Divine learning

which are 64, were lost..

So Shiva came again as Srikanthnath to reveal the philosophy to Rsi Durvasa.

Ancient texts record that Rsi Durvasa, reoriented it in this lifecycle, and taught it to Tryambaka, who is also said to have lived in Kailash, around the end of 3rd century A.D. and whose successive generations, in turn, revealed and thus developed the darsana by word of mouth, in the preceptor disciple tradition.. About fifteen generations later, a disciple of the line came and settled in Kashmir.

The teachings, and the revelations continued... The Darsana, ripe

and recorded, in turn by his disciples, notably Jaideva singh, John hughes, Baljinathji pandit, Jankinathji kaul ‘kamal’, Mark dyczkowski and George Balesaar..

In one of his talks, Swamiji informed that it was after King Lalitaditya requested Atri Gupta, the great scholar from Antarvedi (Madhya Pradesh), to live in Kashmir, and there was no authority left in the rest of India on the important bhairava tantras, from that time it started being called Kashmir Shaiv darsana (and nowadays, in English, Kashmir Shaivism.) So, what had begun in Kashmir, once again settled there. Atri Gupta was the fore-

father of Abhinav Gupta. And though some element in some thoughts, for example in the krama school, or even in the lower upaya of siva sutras accommodate the seekers duality, the darsana is Largely Non dual, It spans both monism (all beings are one principle) and monotheism (God is supreme), or simply, God is all, and in all.

The understanding of God, here, however is a little more advanced than the Brahman of Advait Vedanta, inasmuch as the Shiva of Advait Shaiv Darsana is replete with his own Shakti, it is not something extraneous to him, like maya. And so, while, like the Upanishadic Mahavakya, even Kashmir shaiv leads you to the truth, that you are THAT supreme consciousness, yet the understanding of Maya being a part of Shiva’s own swatantrya shakti (absolute free will), marks the advance of Advait Shaiv over Advait Vedanta.

It is also distinct from the monistic theism of Shaiva siddhanta, inasmuch as its tilt on non duality,

look for, because all is shiva!

And it brings us to an important understanding of the dynamics of the Darsana:

It is not only the fruit of the collective past, that has been placed in our present by our preceptors, but also, that the fruit contains the seed for the collective future.

Salutations, therefore, to all who are yet to arrive, for they are Shiva too! It is all our play, for ourselves, so let us play it well! Indeed there is an adage in shaivism that says, to worship Shiva, be Shiva!

Saiva Yoga

Saiva Yoga is revealed by Lord Shiva, who, perennially mindful of spirituality, is ever eager to share his penchant with devi, his beloved consort, and transfer illumination. His poetic agamas (replies) to the Devi in response to her nigamas (queries), are recorded in the tantras, puranas, samhitas and siva sutras for the benefit of sincere seekers. They are called the Shaivagamas. And these are the revelational learnings of the rsis.

Concisely, The Shaiv philosophy is :

That in the beginning all is Shivashakti.

A primal urge, pratham spanda, arises in Shiva to roll out a whole universe.

His Shakti enables him to do exactly that. We honour her as jag janani, mother nature.

All creation forget their pristine beginning, by a spiritual concussion, called anava mala, the primal forgetting. Once the divine beginning is forgotten, other limitations are quick to creep in, omniscience becomes worldly conditioned knowledge, omnipotence becomes limited, specific ability, and omnipresence is reduced to a body/collective bodies.

All creatures accumulate experiences in their worldly sojourn. This is almost always in pairs, joy sadness, hot cold, dark light and so on. We understand that all is transient.

We begin to look for permanence. The journey back to pristinity begins. We turn to Masters and the Darsanas, and We do arrive at our own self realisation..

Shiva yoga is beautifully expounded by the sage vasugupta, in the “Shiva sutras”,

Alternatively deemed the Shiva Upanishad, this teaches of three out of four possible systems of Shiva’s mystic way, graded to suit the seeker’s present level of attainment. The four upayas (plans) are:

Anupaya or Ananda upaya.
Sambhava upaya or iccha upaya.

Saktopaya or jnana yoga.
Anav upaya. Also called kriya upaya.

These will be taken up in due writings.

Aum Namah Shivaya!



Amarnath Cave

in itself, began to ripen in the manifest world also.

Transmitted through the aforementioned galaxy of perfected beings, it began to flourish in the heavenly Kashmir, encapsulated in the Trika philosophy, which deals with the series of triads, the Para (supreme, shiva), apara (the lowest, jiva) and parapara (the intermediate link, shakti). comprising of four systems, The pratyabhijna system, the kula system, the krama system, and the spanda system.

The important Bhairava tantras, which were lost and then reintroduced by Shiva Himself, teach absolute non duality.

Baljinath pandit, honored scholar of the Kashmir shaiv darsana, says the ancient system was called Advait shaiva darsana.

Till today the non dual tantras are the core of the darsana.

In our own time, another perfected being, Swami Lakshman joo appeared, and once again gave out the priceless, and paramount divine heritage, for all to re-reach... His teachings, and writings were learnt

father of Abhinav Gupta.

And though some element in some thoughts, for example in the krama school, or even in the lower upaya of siva sutras accommodate the seekers duality, the darsana is Largely Non dual, It spans both monism (all beings are one principle) and monotheism (God is supreme), or simply, God is all, and in all.

The understanding of God, here, however is a little more advanced than the Brahman of Advait Vedanta, inasmuch as the Shiva of Advait Shaiv Darsana is replete with his own Shakti, it is not something extraneous to him, like maya. And so, while, like the Upanishadic Mahavakya, even Kashmir shaiv leads you to the truth, that you are THAT supreme consciousness, yet the understanding of Maya being a part of Shiva’s own swatantrya shakti (absolute free will), marks the advance of Advait Shaiv over Advait Vedanta.

It is also distinct from the monistic theism of Shaiva siddhanta, inasmuch as its tilt on non duality,

sadashiva as student, and coming down to the fifth contact, where, the teacher is still some form of divine shiva, but the disciple is a mortal. But that the ultimate initiation (parasambandh) can take place in any state of these five contacts. He, therefore gives us hope, that this is the great potential of the darsana, that it may be transmitted not just as a given philosophy, but as direct revelation, possibly also explaining the revelations that comprise the Siva sutras, to sage vasugupta, who came much later than rsi Durvasa, and in recorded historical times, in a mortal human frame.

Salutations to Shiva, Lord of all!, to His consort Devi, at whose behest, he first poemed the divine verses, for us to re-cognize our divine self, to Durvasa, and the rsis, to Swami Lakshman jee, and so many other benefactors, some, who may not now be known, but who are represented simply, by the Shiva they taught us we all are.

This, is actually, the brief of the Darsana, that you are the shiva you

Parimoo paints Aishwarya Rai as 'Nayika'

By Dr. R.K. Tamiri

Prof. Ratan Parimoo's recent paintings, titled '**Parimoo's Chaurapanchashika-Icography of a Nayika**', were on display at the Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai from 16th January, 2008 to 22nd January, 2008. Prof. Parimoo, the internationally known Art Historian of India and a native of Kashmir has remained **Head of the Department of Art History and Aesthetics at the prestigious M.S. University of Baroda**. An alumni of the same University, Prof. Parimoo's painting experience extends to over five decades.

Prof. Parimoo has held over forty Art Exhibitions, displaying his painted works. He held a First one-man show in 1958 at his hometown, Srinagar. His studies on the painting of the three Tagores—Abanindranath, Gaganendranath and Rabindranath are considered to be a classic on the theme. Prof. Parimoo's major works include—'**Studies on Modern Indian Art**' and '**Studies in India Sculpture: Essays in New Art History**'. He has also published a well-researched monograph on **Narayan Murtazghar**, Kashmir's celebrated painter-sculpture-artist of 19th Century.

Parimoo has been greatly influenced by two formidable European painters—**Leonardo da Vinci**, the Italian Renaissance painter and **Henri di Toulouse Laurantec**, the French Post Impressionist painter who worked during the last quarter of the 19th Century. Vinci is known to us as painter of **Mona Lisa**, while Laurantec was a pioneer in painting the popular mass culture. Prof. Parimoo observes that in terms of pictorial qualities Laurantec's work presents a formidable challenge as a painter.

At the Indian level Parimoo is a great admirer of **Raja Ravi Verma**. He speaks high about Verma's handling of oil pigment, exemplary compositional skills and deployment of expressions derived from Indian theatre and dance. Prof. Parimoo delivered Raja Ravi Verma Centenary lecture in 2005 at Cochin.

References to these influences are being made to emphasise parallels between the established European tradition and Parimoo's recent paintings wherein students of art/artists paint variations of earlier master's themes.

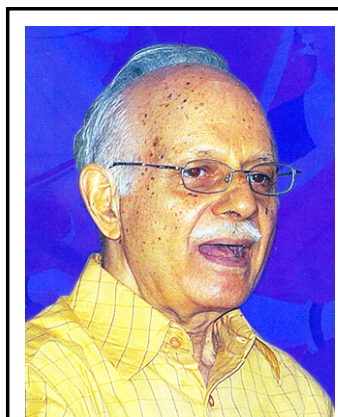
Framework of Parimoo's recently done paintings is '**portraiture**'. It was in 1960 he began his serious affair with the 'portrait' by painting portrait of his artist wife, Naina Dalal. Since then he has been feeling quite confident about delineating faces and likeness. Parimoo began handling his self-portrait since 1970s, the period which also witnessed his obsession with '**hypnotic eyes**'. His attempts

to bring his face into the pictorial space has drawn accolades from art critics.

Prof. Parimoo is just 72, by no means an old man by present standards. Yet he paraphrases his new series of paintings, which he began in 1999, as his '**Old-age-style my ultima maniera**'. Probably, an ocular pathology around this time which led to partial impairment of vision in his left eye made him think so. These new series of paintings, titled '**Retrospective Exhibitions**' were on display at Bombay (1999) and Baroda (2000).

In these 'old-age' style paintings the hostile imagery of the 1970s has been replaced by an **imaginary female** face, called in Indian tradition as **nayika**. Interestingly, Parimoo subtitles his paintings as '**Encounter with Nothingness**', an

as **nayika** of Parimoo. While replacing **Mona Lisa's** face with that of **Aishwarya Rai** Parimoo places Rai in the role of different women characters, mystical and legendary that one comes across in literature



Dr. Ratan Parimoo

nayika in great women characters in Kashmiri traditions.

Initially, Parimoo wanted to choose some typical characters Aishwarya played in different films. It did not work, partly because the film directors were not giving her face the variety of expressions and nuances that Parimoo wished to recreate. Secondly, he took it as a challenge to work with hand-drawn skills rather than relying on Computer/Digital system.

By adapting imageries from widely circulated publicity film posters Parimoo engages Aishwarya's filmic characters with certain art historical monuments, milestones, personalities etc. In one such painting he juxtaposes the character of Nandini of '**HDDCS**' to the **Kajra Re** dance posture. In another painting Rai as a Gujrati

'archetypal Indian Women'.

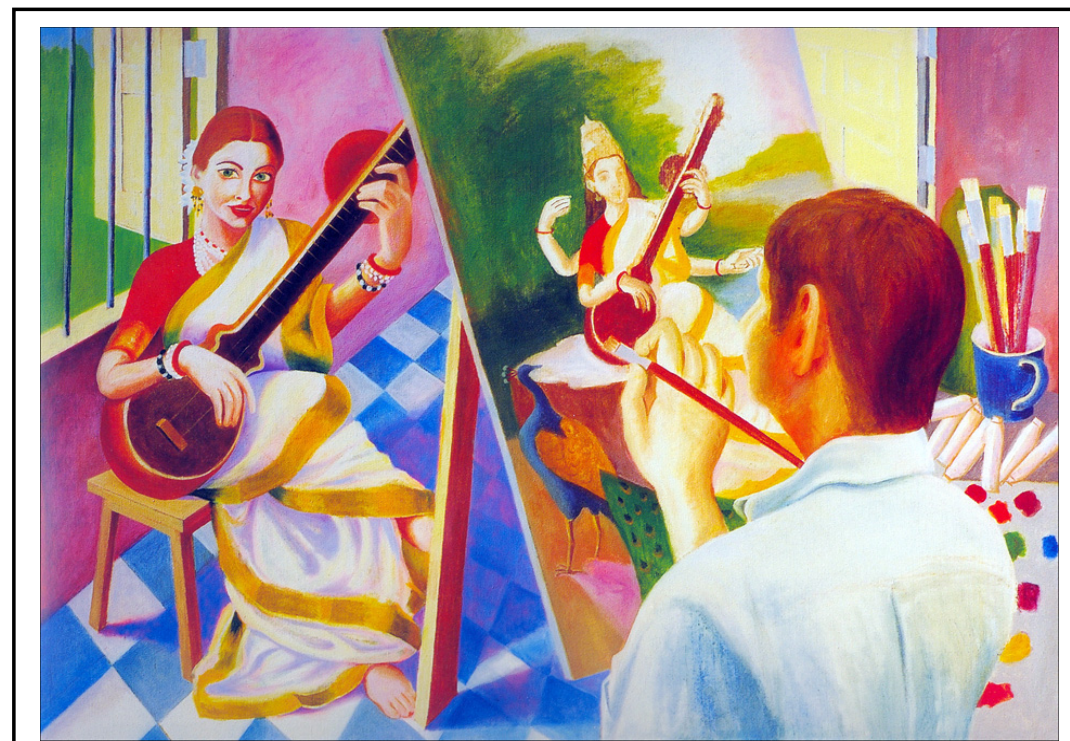
There are four paintings, titled **Parimoo's Chaurapan-chashikia**, two each done in oil and water colour. Chaurapanchashika is a term derived from mid-16th century set of miniature paintings done in a characteristic style depicting the essence of each verse from Bilhan's poetry in which he remembers his ladylove. About the parallel in his paintings Parimoo says, '**Each painting is a piece of poetry something parallel to the verbal delineation about the woman's face. In that case it is a sort of ghazal or doha, in which chiselled features and startling eyes are noteworthy. The latter had a commercial interest I would like to put these paintings in the class of Srinagara poetry of Sanskrit literature**'.

Parimoo's choice of Aishwarya Rai as **nayika** is based on her unique, non-conventional facial beauty (chiselled features and hypnotic (lotus shaped) eyes. He picked her up after seeing the film, '**Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam**'. Parimoo's perception of Aishwarya Rai is more of a multifaceted **nayika** who is warmly accepted and acclaimed 'as a popular icon than a beloved'. He also rejects the '**male-gaze theory**' as an explanation for the manner in which he has constructed the handling and delineation of her eyes. He says, '**It is noteworthy that I do not show the actual eye of the overlooking male face**'.

In technique while working in oil on canvas Parimoo exaggerates colours and gives some emphasis to line especially when details are to be delineated. Through use of brighter colours Parimoo attempts to establish chromatic harmony of tones, shades and hues. He adheres to a kind of naturalistic form and is careful that the oil version does not end up looking like a large miniature painting or an imitation of European old master painting.

Prof. Parimoo is the second reputed artist to paint a popular Bollywood icon, the first being MF Hussain. Parimoo says his work has a totally different context from that of Hussain. The latter had a commercial interest and also personal acquaintance with Madhuri Dixit. Also, Hussain does not paint Madhuri's face. He just writes her name in the title. Parimoo had no contact with Aishwarya Rai.

The identity of **Mona Lisa** till recently was a mystery. German researchers have claimed that **Mona Lisa was Lisa del Giocondo**, the wife of a wealthy merchant in Florence named **Francesco del Giocondo**. This claim is based on dated notes by a Florentine City official, a friend of **Leonarda da Vinci**. Incidentally the painting, now on display at the Louvre in Paris, is called **La Gioconda** in Italian.



Nayika as Model of Raja Ravi Varma's Sarasvati being painted by Ratan Parimoo, oil convans, 2007

expression derived from Jean Paul Sartre's celebrated work, '**Being and Nothingness**'. The influence of French existentialism on Parimoo is clearly palpable. That is why he asserts that his '**female image is entirely a figment of imagination, that it does not really exist**'. At the same time Parimoo is reluctant to keep this female face as vague. To give an identity to it he adopts the face of **Mona Lisa**. His paintings thus became a variation of **Mona Lisa** as well as variations of his self-portrait. Parimoo terms this exercise as '**Parimoo looking at Mona Lisa**'.

In the next step Parimoo links this up with the mass culture of our times. He substitutes face of **Mona Lisa** with that of **Aishwarya Rai**, the popular icon of Bollywood. Srinagara poetry texts call model as **nayika**. So **Aishwarya Rai** emerges

and art.

Parimoo has painted Aishwarya Rai as **Venus de Melos** (proverbial Greek Aphrodite), **Venus of Botticelli**, **Radha of Kangra painting**, **Bani Thani of Kishangarh**, **Khajurahu Apsara**, **Raja Ravi Verma's Sarasvati** and **Maharani (Maharani Chimanbai, queen of Sir Sayaji Rao Gaekward of Baroda) and Umrao Jan**. The most comprehensive painting is the one that adapts **Raja Ravi Verma's 'Galaxy'**, which comprises a number of singers and musicians, all of whom are women. Parimoo makes a nationalist statement (during the colonial period of India) by interpreting this painting as representing Indian women of all regions and faith. While adopting this painting Parimoo endows all the women in the painting with the face of **Aishwarya Rai**.

It is rather surprising that Parimoo has not tried to locate his

princess stands in front of **Lakshmi Vilas Palace** of Baroda, symbolising commonality with Aishwarya's popularity in the public sphere. The contrast with **Kajra Re** is very distinct.

In the painting '**LA to Amritsar**' the Golden Temple is the locale. By imparting a special sunshine effect on Aishwarya's face Parimoo attempts to bestow the entire painting a **Punjabi Character**. The painting '**Paro holding Arti Lamp**' depicts Aishwarya in a **Bengali Context**. In the painting '**Nayika as Temple Dancer**' there is adoption of the widely circulated dance posture from '**Dhai Akshar Prem Ke**'. Parimoo has introduced in the latter the ambience of a temple dancer, a **Devadasi**. By locating her in western and Indian pictorial traditions Parimoo tries to show that **Aishwarya Rai** stands for the '**Universal Woman**' and certainly the

Nalanda ruins---- A revelation of India's past wisdom

By J N Raina

THIS time I made it to Nalanda; the seat of ancient learning. The ruins of Nalanda (giver of knowledge) are magnificent and touching. The very name of Nalanda, a world heritage site, had been conjuring me since long.

Four years ago, I could not reach the rendezvous, as the 65-km-long road from Gaya to Nalanda was in a bad shape. Although the bus I had boarded was in good condition, it halted at several places for one reason or the other, making the journey tiresome and boring. The bus had virtually to crawl on stones. One of its tires got burst, forcing me to cut short my journey at Rajgir, a famous pilgrimage centre, just 12 km short of Nalanda.

But luckily enough, this time it took me and my wife just two-and-a-half hours to reach Nalanda from Gaya, indicating the fact that conditions in Bihar are improving. Bihar's new Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, heading the BJP-Janata Dal (U) coalition government, completed one year in office in November last. People by and large are happy with his method of governance. Nitish Kumar has promised his people 'good-quality roads' this year. Construction has begun on 'war footing'.

The world-famous Nalanda University had flourished from the 5th century AD to the 12th century AD. The world's first residential university had been housing about 10,000 students and 2000 teachers.

When I walked through the ruins, keeping pace with my guide Anil Kumar, I was mentally taken away into an era which saw India leading in imparting knowledge to the world. The courses of study included Buddhism, Vedas, Hetu Vidya (logic), Shabda Vidya (grammar) and Chikitsa Vidya (Medicine). The university had received royal patronage from Emperor Harshavardana of Kannauj and Pali Kings.

As we meandered through the ruins in good sunshine on February 12, 2007, the guide narrated the history of Nalanda from King Kumar Gupta, who had laid firm foundations of the university in the 5th century AD, to its destruction. The university was further extended (after it was established by Kumar Gupta) by Harshavardhana in the 7th century AD. After 200 years, it was rebuilt by king Devapala of the Pala dynasty. But it was painful

to know that Nalanda University, which originally covered an area of 50 square km, was set on fire by Mohammad Bakhtiar Khilji of Afghanistan. The fire kept on raging for six months, destroying its three marvelous libraries --- Ratnasagar, Ratnodiadni and Ratnarangika. An earthquake later tumbled down the residual structures in the 13th century AD and everything was covered under huge boulders of mud. Now there is a railway station in Bakhtiar's name on the Nalanda-Patna track.

Fanatic Muslim invaders were against Buddhism, monasteries and monks, the guide told me. Several monks were killed and many more were forced to flee to other parts of India and abroad. Most of them found refuge in Tibet. Much of the tradition of Nalanda had been carried into Tibet by the time of the Muslim invasion of the 12th century. The invading army also destroyed huge collection of manuscripts and other works, which was obtained as a result of centuries old scholastic studies.

According to Pali scriptures, Nalanda was a mango grove. Lord Buddha often used to stop at a place called Pavarika, which used to be quite prosperous and teeming with people.

Nalanda was the birth place of Sariputta and Maha-Moggallana, two chief disciples of Buddha. Sariputta died in the room in which he was born. The room later began to be regarded as the most sacred spot. It was converted into a shrine. Emperor Ashoka gave an offering to the 'Chaitya' (temple) of Sariputta. In fact, Ashoka is regarded as the founder of Nalanda vihara. He built a stupa in Nalanda in the third century BC. Nalanda was known throughout the ancient world for its learned and renowned teachers like Acharya Nagarjuna, Silabhadra, Arya Deva, Santarakshita and Dingandga.

My guide told me that it was Alexander Cunningham, an expert Archaeologist during the British rule in India, who discovered the ruined sites of Nalanda University in 1861. The ruins were excavated first in 1915 and then by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) from 1915 to 1937. The excavation work was then given up. The total area of the excavated site is about 14 hectares. All the edifices are of red bricks. The gardens are beautiful. The university was constructed in



Ruins of Nalanda University.

the Kushana style of architecture, but the impact of the Pala dynasty is widely visible throughout. The excavations suggest that a large part of the university has so far remained undiscovered. The buildings are divided by a central walkway that goes south to north. The monasteries or Viharas are to the east of the central alley and the temples or Chaityas to the west.

Thickness of the walls of monasteries and residential buildings ranged from three feet to a maximum of 12 feet, providing a cooling effect as that of modern day AC's. Out of 108 monasteries, only 11 have been excavated so far.

Chinese traveler Hieun Tsang, who had stayed in Nalanda, first as a student and then as a teacher, for 17 years, was given the titles of "Master of the Law" (Dharma Charya), "God of Mahayana" (Mahayanadeva) and "Preceptor of Salvation" (Mokshacharya). According to Hieun Tsang, who had come to Nalanda in the 5th century AD, Nalanda formed an important zone of activity for Lord Buddha. There was a rigorous oral examination of students, conducted first by erudite gatekeepers. Many students were turned away who failed the preliminary test. To study at Nalanda was a matter of pride. However, no degrees were granted. Neither there was any requirement for a specific period of study. A memorial has been built in Hieun Tsang's honour near the ruins.

Two Chinese Buddhist

monks, Mingxian and Huikuan visited Nalanda recently after a four-month long journey on foot from China's Shanxi province, tracing the route undertaken by Hieun Tsang 1300 years ago. The two Chinese travelers were received by the Indian authorities at the Memorial Hall.

Taxila University, now in West Pakistan, was destroyed under similar circumstances by the Muslim invaders. When Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee visited Taxila recently, and walked through the excavated sites of the ancient Buddhist university, he was excited to remark: "If we do not forget the continuity, we may find solutions to the present..... The continuity of history could become a binder for the present, and remembering this continuity might help us find solutions to the present stand-off".

ASI has done a commendable job by saving the excavated monuments from further ruin. Nalanda, the site of a great temple city of yore, is now an important tourist attraction. Hundreds of tourists hailing from China, Japan and South East Asian countries could be seen hovering there. Careful excavation has identified many stupas, monasteries, hostels, temples, meditation halls, lecture rooms and structures which speak of the grandeur of Nalanda.

The excavated treasure has been preserved and shelved in the Nalanda Archaeological Museum nearby the ruins. The guide led us to the museum where we could see valuable objects and

images of Buddhist and Hindu gods and goddesses. There is a unique multiple spouted vessel of clay. It was used during those days at the time of worship. Snakes would streak into the vessel to consume milk. The museum was set up in 1971. It has a collection of ancient manuscripts and Buddhist statues. There is a collection of copper plates, ceiling plaques, coins, carved bricks, pottery and small heaps of burnt rice.

An inscription of King Yashovarman of the 7th century describes Nalanda as a "Row of monasteries with their series of turrets licking the clouds".

Now there is a proposal to set up a new residential university at Nalanda to be constructed in phases. It will cover an area of about 21 square km.

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

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Ancient Temples of Sindh

(From Page 17)

Hindus of the Sindh is like a permanent holy place. The town of Sardharo is situated centrally amongst these hills, which are composed of Granite stone with a reddish tinge. In total there are three temples and the Shiva-Parvati temple is very famous. There is a temple of the Goddess on the Dharohar hill. Sardharo next to 'Hinglaj' is considered to be the 2nd important holy place in Pakistan. People come here for immersion of the bones of the dead in the 'Kunda' over here. For the upkeep of this holy place, the 'Nehalपुरी' family consisting of 8 members is permanently settled here.

The residents of Sindh treat and rever the fountain water as holy as the water from the river Ganges. On the auspicious day of Mahashivratri around twenty thousand devotees come here to offer their prayers and Puja. In this temple there are some idols of deities and some paintings of God and Goddesses. Though this temple is nothing special from architectural points of view,

it enjoys special importance due to a legend mentioned in Hindu scriptures; and therefore this place is held in high esteem by the masses. This legend runs as follows- Once upon a time, a couple of deer and doe was returning homewards in the valley of 'Karunjar' and the deer slipped' from a high cliff and fell in the lake below. It got drowned and died. The doe rushed

(Contd. from Page 17)

forward to rescue the deer and in doing so, got herself entangled in a nearby bush. Her head got stuck in the bush and rest of her body bogged down in the lake. Subsequent to this incident, the doe was reborn in a merchant family of 'Patan' She, unfortunately suffered from chronic headache (migraine) and could not be cured of this disease in spite of treatments and medications. A Brahmin priest from the town, with the help of his deep studies and intuitive powers visualized the past of this unfortunate girl and told her parents to retrieve the remains of the head of the doe and

immerse them in the lake. The parents of the girl acted upon the advice of the priest and the girl got totally rid of the sufferings. In kind remembrance of this, the parents of the girl erected three temples by the side of the lake.

Due to geographical situation, 'Nagarparkar' is accessible with great difficulties. In the olden days the pilgrims took two full days to traverse a distance of 490 km from Karachi to reach 'Nagarparkar'. But now with the construction of concrete roads, one can reach 'Mithi' from Karachi within 7 hours. 'Mithi' happens to be the district head quarters of the 'Thar Parkar' desert area. From 'Mithi' one can reach 'Nagarparkar' within a short period of 3 hours. From 'Nagarparkar', with the assistance of local guidance one can go to 'Sardharo'. Lodging and Boarding arrangements of pilgrims can be made by paying charges of Rs. 1500 per day at the residence of a local man. There is no road in good condition for going to Sardharo from 'Nagarparkar'. Hence the pilgrims have to pass many obstacles and obstructions. According to a local resident Shri. 'Maun Puri', though the Hindu Panchayat Committee is looking after the up keep of the temple; it is not in a position to raise funds to make proper arrangements for lodging and boarding of the pilgrims. If, according to Shri. Maun Puri, the Govt, makes adequate arrangements to construct a permanent Road from

'Nagarparkar' to 'Sardharo' the aged and the women can also have glimpses of this holy place. A few days back Mr. Maqbool Ahmad undertook a detailed survey of the temple and published an illustrated report of the same in Herald. He also appealed to the Govt, authorities to take concrete steps to preserve and conserve this valuable heritage of historical importance. In the year 2003 A.D. Mr. Aziz Sanghdar, prepared an exhaustive report about the neglected and ignored remains existing in this area. Janab Zulfikar Syed, too, published a report about 'Karunjar' under the name and title 'Lost world'.

Some days back, I was acquainted with Mr. 'Jethanand' a "resident of 'Dhano', a town in Sindh. Mr. Jethanand gave me a reference to a Baloch gentleman Janab Ali Khosu, who is 94 now and has thorough and in-depth knowledge of the history of Sindh - very recently, G.O.T.V., had broadcast a programme about Janab Khosu.

When contacted, Janab Khosu informed that upto the year 1971 many Jain ascetics visited this holy place. About 1200 Jains were settled in Nagarparkar and the Jain population in 'Parshvanath Gori' was 2000. But majority of them migrated to India. There is a water tank here (Kund) which has natural sources of water, which subsequently joins the river water. This kund is called 'Mrigakund'. A Huge fair is held here by end of 'Kartik' (the 8th month of Hindu calendar.) There is a temple of Lord Shiva at Sadhu Bela near Sakkar, where a fair is held in the month of June. The famous Hindu ascetic, 'Parashar'

had carried out his penance on the hills of 'Sarodhar'. There are prints of his feet here. Janab Khosu further added that prior to Partition, this region was famous for Communal harmony. Many fairs were held and various festivals were celebrated. Yogis and Saints flocked here. In the precincts of this area many remains of Jain, Hindu and Buddha idols were surfaced. An image of Lord Shiva was also found. In addition ancient utensils and containers, along with other remains were also found. In the area surrounding 'Sarodhar', 'Agriculture' was professed on a very large scale. The honey was exported. Today, there is only one household of the Jains. The Name of 'Nagarparkar' has its origin with three words. Nagar means city, Par means to go beyond or transcend the limits and kar means to do - according to Mr. Khosu.

Janab Khosu has his formal education upto the second standard and that too in Sindhi medium. On account of his affinity for culture and history, he has visited all the holy places of pilgrimage and has studied 'Ramayana', 'Mahabharata' and history to great detail. He has sharp memory even now and he has a flare to teach and elucidate the cultural history of Sindh to many scholars and students he comes in contact with.

Erudites like Janab Khosu are furthering the cause of the study of the cultural pride of the past and the bygone areas. And surely it is a matter of pride for all of us that he continues with his endeavour with the same zeal.

(The author is a noted archaeologist, based in Pune).

Sarda-A Memoir-II

(From Page 16)

Ismail, son of Ibrahim Gujar was favourite servant of Papa. He was smart and Jack of all trades. He would remain busy most of the time—putting fodder to the horse in the stable or giving it bath and making its feet rough, uneven; milking the cow, sweeping the courtyard, helping movement of papers in the office, putting tobacco in the hubble bubble, ferrying things down from 1st floor, laying bedding etc. Ismail would also play with children and narrate stories. His father had given up nomadic life to lead a settled one in the village, a little away from Sarda, down below. He was engaged in agriculture. Few cattle which this family had were taken care of by his wife and daughter.

We had free access to fields of Tailor and Potter. Their ladies would get roasted maize or Jaggery-Walnuts for us. At the outer limit of their field a raised area could be seen. In the Centre of this natural platform was a big apple tree. This year it had borne good fruit. At the request of Tailor and Potter Papa had purchased the tree for this season. They got money and we

the fruit. In addition to domestic work Ismail would also take care of the apple tree as well. Frankly speaking, there was no need of care. People living in the vicinity were down to earth honest people. The tree bore abundant fruit, yielding many boxes. One of these was sent by Papa to his boss, DFO. We had also distributed the fruit among Tailor, Potter, the staff of the department, Ismail, Kulsuma and others. The apples tasted very well. Mother had also prepared a jar full of jam.

Another incident of those days that comes to my mind is how we played Badminton game by pitching two poles for the net in the courtyard in front of office. At times Papa would also join us. The two shuttlecocks gave away after heavy use. We had to improvise one by putting 1-2 feather of a cock into the Cob. This invention made us happy as game started again. Its fall-out was that our rackets got worn out sooner, stopping the game altogether. However, this did not deter us from inventing new games.

(To be continued)

(Translated from original Hindi by Dr. R.K. Tamiri)

Splendour of Kani Jamavar: A Revival

By. L.C. Kaul

IN collaboration with the India International Centre (IIC) New Delhi, **Samvedna Culture and Heritage Trust**, presented 5th annual public awareness programme-an exhibition and seminar on the subject of '**Heritage Art Of Kashmir: Kani Jamavar Weaving**', from 15th to 17th February 2008, at the IIC, with a rare collection of antique heritage and exquisite Kani Shawls, showcased as an exhibition at the art gallery, courtesy of **Sozy by Mujtaba Shah**.

The exhibition and book-launch (second edition of '**Kashmir Shawls and Carpets**', written by **Vidhu Ganjoor** and her husband co-author **Buzz Burza**) were inaugurated on 15th

February 2008, by the State Minister for External Affairs, Govt. of India, Sh. Anand Sharma, who praised **Samvedna Culture and Heritage Trust** and the two authors, for their valuable work, in trying to revive the unique heritage of Kani Jamwar Weaving.

On 16th and 17th February 2008, alongside were held seminars, demonstrations and workshops on '**researchers and authors of Kashmiri Shawls and Carpets**' by Vidhu Ganjoor and Buzz Burza; '**natural dyeing of Pashmina**' by Prof. Dr. M.L. Gulrajani from IIT, three representatives of Rohit Bal, fashion designer and trendsetter on '**Kani** in modern day fashion apparel', followed by Frank Ames (from New York) on

'**assessments and Kashmir Shawl**' supported by practical demonstrations of natural dye manufacturing, by experts from Alps Industries Limited, Sahibabad, Ghaziabad.

Peter Harris, a Canadian weaver, designer and yarn maker, held discussions and interaction with artisans from Kashmir, followed by Keshav Prasad, an expert, on the role of government in Kani design. Arvind Kaul, Trustee, Samvedna, had interaction with artisans from Kashmir, through 'questions and answers', pertaining to source of the exhibition of heritage-Kani shawls. On the 16th February at 6.30 pm artisans, experts and the guests were entertained by Sozy: The Divine Sufi Music, orchestrated by Mujtaba Shah.

Prof. Alexei Sanderson-A Scholar Extraordinary

By Kuldeep Raina

Kashmir Saivism continues to fascinate scholars in India and abroad. During the past 2-3 decades some of the finest researchers on Kashmir Saivism have been non-Kashmiris—Dr. KC Pandey, Dr. N Rustogi, Dr Mark Dyzchowski, Prof. Bettina Baumer, Prof. Alexei Sanderson etc.

Of late, Prof. Alexei Sanderson's researches have attracted much attention. His landmark study "Purity and Power among the Brahmans of Kashmir" (published in *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, Philosophy, History etc.* M.Carrithers, S.Collins and S.Lukes, Cambridge University Press (1985), pp. 190-216) has introduced a new dimension in the study of Kashmir Saivism. In this Prof. Sanderson has traced the evolution of saktism in Kashmir Saivism.

Prof. Sanderson studied Classics (1969) and Sanskrit (1971) at Undergraduate level at Balliol College, Oxford. He then came to Kashmir (1971 to 1977) to study Kashmir Saivism with Swami Lakshman Joo, the great Guru of Saivism. After six years he returned to Oxford, joining as Lecturer in Sanskrit there and also remaining Fellow of Wolfson College from 1977 to 1992. From 1992 to the present he has occupied the Chair of Eastern Religions and Ethics in the same University and as the holder of that post became a Fellow of All Souls College.

Prof. Sanderson's field of specialisation is medieval religion in India and Southeast Asia, focusing on the history of Saivism, its relations with the state, and its influence on Buddhism and Vaishnavism. Prof. Sanderson is also engaged in training students at undergraduate, postgraduate and post-doctoral levels. No student of Kashmir Saivism can afford to miss Prof. Sanderson's works.

Scholarship:

During the past 24 years Prof. Sanderson has published over 1100 pages of articles on Saiva, Vaishnava and Buddhist Tantra in South and Southeast Asia.

Major works of Prof. Sanderson include:

1) **Atharvavedins in Tantric Territory:** The Angirasa-Kalpa texts of the Oriya Papippaldins and their connection with the Trika and the Kalikula (2007).

2) **The Date of Sadyoj Yotis and Brahaspati** (2007)

3) **The Saiva Exegesis of Kashmir** (2007)

4) **Swami Lakshman Joo and His Place in the Kashmirian Saiva Tradition:** In *Samvidullasah*, .ed. by Bettina



Professor Alexei Sanderson

Baumer and Sarla Kumar, New Delhi, DK Printworld, 2007, pp 93-126.

5) **The Lakulas:** New evidence of a system intermediate between Pancarthika Pasupatism and Agamic Saivism (2006)

6) **Religion and the State Saiva officiants in the territory of the Brahmanical Royal Chaplain** (2005)

7) A commentary on the opening verses of the Tantrasara of Abhinav Gupta. (2005)

8) **The Saiva Religion Among the Khymer** (2003-2004)

9) **Remarks on the Text of Kubjikamatatantra** (2002)

10) **History through Textual criticism in the study of Saivism, the Pancaratra and the Buddhist Yoginitantras** (2001)

11) **Meaning in Tantric Ritual** (1995)

12) **Vajrayana: origin and function** (1995)

13) **The Sarvastivada and its critics** (1995)

14) **The doctrine of Malinivjayottaratatra** (1992)

15) **Introduction to Basic issues of Saivism** (1993)

16) **The visualisation of the Deities of the Trika** (1990)

17) **Saivism and the Tantric Traditions.** In the world's Religions ed. S.Sutherland, L. Houlden, P. Clarke and F. Hardy (RKP-1990)

18) **Saivism in Kashmir** (1987)

19) **Trika Saivism** (1987)

20) **Krama Saivism** (1987)

21) **Krama Saivism** (1987)

22) **Mandala and Agamic Identity in the Trika of Kashmir** (1986)

23) **Review of Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega's The Triadic Heart of Siva: Kaula Tantricism in the Non-Dual Shaivism of Kashmir** (1990)

24) **Review of Lilian Silburn's Sivasutra Vimarsini of Ksemaraja** (1983)

Recent works of Prof. Sanderson:

1) **Religion and the State: Initiating the Monarch in Saivism and the Buddhist way of Mantras.**

2) **The Saiva Sources of the Buddhist Yogini Tantras.**

3) **The Saiva Age: An Explanation of the Rise and Dominance of Saivism During the Early Medieval Period.**

4) **Saivism and Brahminism in the Early Medieval Period.**

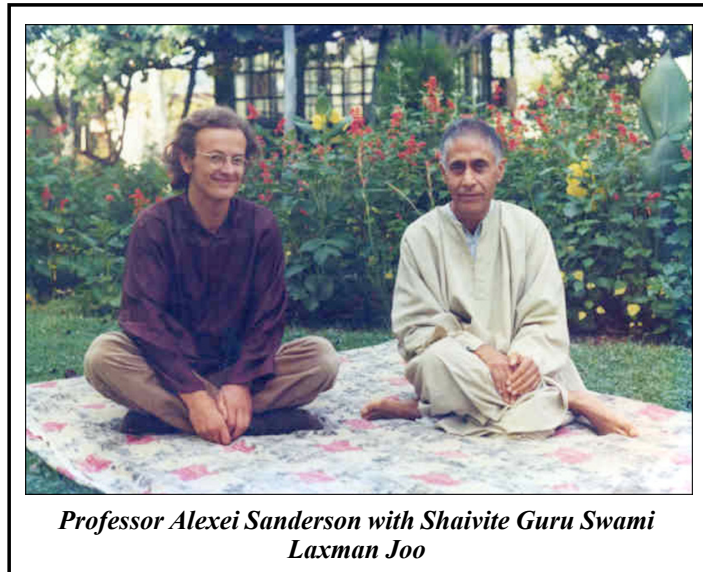
***Quotes on scholarship that illustrate Sanderson's academic approach, selected by his student and web page designer from an interview in the book Mastery: Interviews with 30 Remarkable People** by Joan Evelyn Ames.

*"An effective scholar needs three things: learning the ability to see connections and, above all, (an) intellectual ability to distinguish".

*"The first rule of work must be readiness to examine your positions and to modify or abandon them without delay or embarrassment as soon as you know they are inadequate".

*"Intellect is the ability to see what the crucial issues are, to ask the right questions and then to understand the implications of the evidence".

*"Your perspective on a question must always be



Professor Alexei Sanderson with Shaivite Guru Swami Laxman Joo

enriched by new questions, new evidence, and a growing knowledge of the wider context of the events or thoughts that concern you".

*"The understanding of Saivism can only aspire to objectivity if it includes a sincere effort to see how things are in the subjective perception of its

practitioners. One has to be able to enter into the spirit of their world, to be with them intimately, to see what they are saying and why they are saying it, to go beneath the surface of their texts. There has to be empathy".

*(The author is Gen. Secy. Panun Kashmir)

Shivratri in the age of SMS

Shivratri in exile and in the age of SMS has assumed significance in a different context. It has become an occasion to re-emphasize resolve to preserve Kashmiri language and religious lore. Nature of SMSs Kashmiri Pandits sent to one another on the occasion indicates this:

*Lasiv te mojood rooziv taraki kariv—Maj Bhawani deenav bod aai. Herat hond chruva poshte.

*Thuk Thuk Kuschuv? "Ram Bror". Kyah nyth?? Aan nyth, Dhan nyth, Sokh nyth. Potra Gash, Dushmanan Nash. 'Hairath Mubarak'

*Herat Mubarak Anugreh tu Barkat.

*Heyrath mubarak. Aai ta bata, orzu ta dorkuth, naviv Pholiv ta lasiv. Bajah gasiv. Happy Shivratri.

*Herath Mubarak. Feliv tu Naviv

*Om. Har Har Mahadev. Om

Herath Mubarak

Bhagwan deenav orzu ta Dorkuth, Aai ta bata, Luktiven maai, badiyan yazat, dayi sanz Ruzinev Kripa.

*Bel tai medal ven gulab pamposh dastay. Poozai lagas parm Shivas Shivrathas tai ... TOHI HERATH Mubarak Sariney Saan.

*Bhagwan Shankar Karin tohanz Sari manokamnayenpura—Herath mubarak

*Om Sarva Mangal mangalay

Shivay Sarwarth Sadikay

Sharnay Trimbkey Gouri

Narani manasvay

Shivratri mubarak.

LETTERS OF SIR AUREL STEIN-II

**C/o East India United Service Club
London S.W. March 17, 1939**

My dear Ram Chand,

Kindly see Pt. Nityanand soon and find out whether he has received the payments which I arranged in Oct. and again in January to be made to him by the Inup. Bank in remuneration of the Sanskrit and Kashmiri translations from Don Quixote. Has he seen the communications I addressed to Pt. Zadoo on the subject, also as regards the fair copying of the Sanskrit translation.

I should also be glad to learn from Nityanand which Pandit he would recommend for supplying reliable information to a Dutch Scholar about customs, ceremonies etc. mentioned in the Nilamata.

I hope you are keeping well and receive due encouragement from those under whom you work. With all good wishes.

Yours Truly,
--A. Stein

**22 Manor Place Oxford
2. 7 - VI - 1939,**

My dear Ram Chand,

Your full letter of April 16th reached me last month, while I was still kept very busy by exploratory work in the deserts of Trans-Jordan. I have just returned to England for the Summer and have my hands very full of tasks there also as you will understand on the results of my long journey.

I am keeping quite fit and enjoyed my strenuous work in the desert parts. But an exacting time is now before me so please do not expect more news from England. I hope if all goes well to regain Kashmir next spring and shall then be glad to see you again.

With all good wishes for your health and labours,

Yours Sincerely,
--A. Stein

**C/o Postmaster Srinagar
18 - 12- 1939**

My dear Ram Chand Bali,

Many thanks for your letter of November 30, received today on my way to Srinagar. I was glad to have good news from you. No previous letter had reached me, while in England where after I completing my task in Iraq and Trans-Jordan, I passed five busy months;

I propose to make a tour on the North Western Frontier after staying at Srinagar for about two weeks now. My hope is to return in May for another summer's work in Mohindmarg. I have kept quite well and had a pleasant journey out from England. All good wishes for your health and continued satisfactory progress in the State service.

Yours Sincerely,
--A. Stein

**C/o The President Corpus
Christi College, Oxford
On Board The CU NARD R.M.S
ANDANIA, Jan. 14, 1930**

My dear Ram Chand,

I write this on my voyage back from the United States when your letters of Nov. 10, 18 and Dec. 14 all duly reached me. The last which you had sent by air mail arrived just before I embarked.

I thank you for your full report and all good wishes which I heartily return.

I myself have had a successful but strenuous time in the United States, where I received a very friendly welcome from old and new friends. I had to give a long number of lectures in Boston, Washington and other places, which were evidently much appreciated.

I am glad that the danger of floods is now at last realised and proper measures taken to deal with it for the future.

I expect to be very busy in England until March when I propose to travel back to Kashmir eventually via Japan. So my hope for return there may be delayed until sometime in May. In any case I wish to find you and all others, who care for me, in full health.

I long to see the Marg again. Please let Alia and others who served me well; have my Salam, when they come to call at your home,

Yours very truly,
--A. Stein

**Naples (Italy),
Jan 25, 1935**

My dear Ram Chand

I was very glad to receive a fortnight ago your letter of Dec. 21, with the picture of yourself for which I thank you much. I am at present travelling on the Continent of Europe and can find but little time for letters. Here in this beautiful country of Italy there is so much of ancient art, remains and interesting ruins to be seen.

I was sorry to learn from your letter of the sad condition of Pandit Nityanand, the last of my old Kashmir scholar friends. May it be given to me to see him in better health, on my, hoped return to Kashmir towards the close of May. I also wish that the Winter, which is reported to be so cold all over northern India may provide Kashmir with enough snow so as sure plentiful irrigation for the crops of this year.

I propose to return to Oxford and London at the end of next month and shall there be kept very busy with work until my departure by the beginning of May. So you not expect news from me until later. Please give my kindest good wishes to Pt. Nityanand, who will go well to remain at Jammu until the late Spring.

Wishing you the best,

Yours Sincerely,
--A. Stein

**Camp C/o Postmaster, Srinagar
November 13, 1940,**

My dear Ram Chand,

I am just now completing my tour in Kashmir Valley made for the purpose

of securing photographs to illustrate all ancient sites, ruins etc. for a new edition of my Rajatarangni translations. It has been interesting to revisit all these old places with which I first became acquainted from 52 years ago.

I hope you are keeping fit and carry on your tasks without difficulty.

Yours Sincerely,
--A. Stein

**C/o Postmaster Bhawalpore
Jan. 10, 1943**

My dear Ram Chand

Many thanks for your letter of December 24, received two days ago and the good wishes it brought me. I am very glad to know that all goes well with you and your family even though you are for time separated from them.

I myself reached this ground safely by the first week of December and have since been able to carry on my survey of old site in the desert down to this border of Sindh. The most effective help is being rendered for my work by the authorities of the Bahawalpur State. Thanks to the excellent car supplied by its ruler. I have been able to cover a great deal of ground with comfort and speed even among the sand dunes which cover most of the area to be visited.

In a few days I hope to proceed via Karachi, to Lasbela territory, which adjoined Makran. Here the Winter has brought an unusual amount of rain, very beneficial to this dried land. I hope to regain Kashmir by the beginning of April, if all goes well.

I am very sorry to learn Pandit Nityanand's departure. Wishing you good health and satisfactory prospects.

Yours Sincerely
--A. Stein

**33, SYDENHAM HILL,
London, SE 26.
14th April, 1947**

Dear Pandit Ram Chand Bali,

Although it is several years since I had any news of you, I have often thought of you and wondered what you were doing. I visit now in the hope that this letter may find you. The immediate reason for my writing is to ask your kind help in a matter connected with the memory of our mutual friend, the Late Sir Aurel Stein.

His executors desire to place upon Mohind Marg an inscription, recording his use of the Marg as his favourite camping place during many years, and it is proposed to have an inscription out on a suitable rock, stating two facts:

The first thing to be done is to find a mistri, who can cut the lettering on the rock and who would be willing to go to the Marg to do it. I had in mind Munshi Mohammad Ramzan, who was the instructor in building construction in the Amar Singh Technical Institute during my Principalship of that Institute. Did you know him and could you get in touch with him for you may know of some other competent Mistri who could do the work. I should be very glad to know your opinion.

You are the only one now in Kashmir, who knows the Marg well and only you

could show the mistri the right spot with a suitable rock on which the inscription should be cut. There was a rock which Sir Aurel always referred to as his "tomb", where he would have wished his ashes to be buried, but of course that was impossible as he died in Kabul. If you know this particular rock and it presents a suitable surface for cutting the letterings, that would be the most appropriate site or if unsuitable, a rock nearly could be selected.

Now would you, when the time come, be kind enough to take the mistri up there and show him a suitable spot? I am having the letterings for the inscription drawn on paper full size and shall send this to you or to whom you say. When I hear that you can give us help asked for. The Executors would pay all expenses and I feel sure that out of regard for Sir Aurel Stein's memory you would gladly do this act of kindness.

I should be glad to have your opinion on these proposals, by Air mail as early as possible.

I should also like to hear of your own well being and your present occupation.

With kind regards.

Yours Sincerely,
--Hunderson Tred Andrews

**33, Sydenham Hill, 7th May, 1947
London S.E. 26**

Dear Ram Chand,

It is proposed that the inscription of which I attach a copy, should be at least 24 inches by 16 inches so that it should come easily upon a single suitable rock and would not take too much time to cut. The kind of the letter to be used is that of the fragment (B) herewith. I shall in the course send you a careful drawing of the letters of the whole inscription for the guidance of the mistri, who most copy them exactly. But first I should be glad if you would let me have a complete estimate of the cost including all charges that I may put before the Executors for their approval and sanctions. When this work is finished it should be photographed and copies of this prints sent to me to pass on to the Executors.

I appreciate your suggestion that the rock should be in a sheltered position and the surface to contain the inscription should be sunk to a depth of say two inches which would give a certain amount by additional protection. The letters should be cut fairly deep. As the exact spot selected by Sir Aurel for his "tomb" can no longer be identified. I think your proposal that a suitable rock, as near as possible to his camping ground should be chosen. This we must have to you to decide.

You see I am taking full advantage of your kind offer of assistance and I know it will be a pleasure and satisfaction to you to keep in commemorating this connector of our beloved friend with the Marg where we often so happily shared his camp, and his company in those beautiful surroundings.

--Yours Sincerely,
Tred Hunderson Andrews
