

**Wishing our readers a Happy New Year &
A Happy Republic Day**

Long Live The Republic of India

Let Truth Prevail

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COVER STORY

20th Anniversary of Homeland Day Celebrated

KS Correspondent

JAMMU, Dec 28: With the news of Homeland Day celebrations pouring in from all across the country and the world, the celebrations in Jammu marked day long programmes that involved men women and youth of the exiled Kashmiri community.

At Press Club Jammu, the exiles from Kashmir were joined in by their supporters from Jammu in taking the pledge for working towards realization of Panun Kashmir. On the occasion the members of Panun Kashmir who had gathered in hundreds, also expressed their solidarity with the anti-corruption crusade of Anna Hazare for a strong Lokpal. People in big numbers joined the celebrations from

Press-club dotted with these colourful caps and the National Flags carried by the Rallyists and the Anna supporters, looked all gay as if celebrating the Independence Day. And the Rallyists did pledge to launch the second phase of the struggle for India's Independence.

The proceedings on the occasion started with a public oath taken by all the participants to rededicate their lives and the lives of their progeny to the sacred cause of establishing Panun Kashmir Homeland in Kashmir valley to the North and East of River Jehlum. Sh. Mahesh Koul a budding young scholar of Jammu University conducted the proceedings. Speakers from Camps and the non-camp

Muthi.

Pt. Shailendra Aima, Vice-Chairman of Panun Kashmir, set the tone of the day. In his inaugural address he emphasised on the relevance and rationale of the vision of the Panun Kashmir Homeland. In a thought provoking address to the Rallyists, Sh. Aima reminisced about the ordeal of 1989-90 and narrated how several events, marathon interactions and intra-community dialogue lead to the creation of Panun Kashmir. The Margadarshan Resolution of 28th December, 1991 was a culmination of all these interactions and a massive brainstorming. He called this culmination as a rebirth of the Kashmiri Pandits and congratulated the community on its 20th Birthday. From Panun Kashmir stand-point, Aima stated, this rebirth is the beginning of a renaissance; that would reinvent the philosophy, values, art, literature, aesthetics and tradition of Kashmir – a tradition that finds its expression in the seminal ideas and works of Panini, Patanjali, Bhasa, Kalidasa, Bhavabhatti, Kumarjiva,

Asvaghosha, Abhinavgupta, Khshemendra, Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu, Asanga, Dharmakirti, Padmasambhava, Kalhan, Bilhana, Bana, Ananga, and hundreds of others from Yogini Lalleshawari to Ahad Zargar, Shamas Faqir and Waz Mehmud. Mr. Aima expressed great hope that with the realization of Panun Kashmir, these ideas would be further explored, interpreted, discovered, reinvented and reconstructed in modern day Kashmir, to the benefit of not only Kashmiris but also to the benefit of the entire humanity.

Dr Ajay Chrunghoo, Chairman of Panun Kashmir, concluded the deliberations by describing the Homeland Day on December 28, as the day of true revelation - the Margadarshan, for all Kashmiri Hindus. He said that on December 28 1991 Kashmiri Hindu representatives from all organizations and walks of life adopted the resolve to reclaim Panun Kashmir in an area north and east of river Jehlum as a Homeland for all Kashmiri Hindus as the only possible way of reversing the genocide perpetrated on them. Since then the Homeland has become the heart-throb of Kashmiri Hindus. Homeland

(Contd.on Page 4)



Nagrota, Jagati and Muthi Camps, as well as from non-camp localities of the city. The Rallyists raising slogans of "Bharat Mata ki Jai" and "Homeland-Homeland" were also seen breaking into the chants of "Bhrashtachaar mitainge, Desh ko bachaenge".

The saffron headscarves and the white Gandhi-caps worn by the Panun Kashmiris carried the motifs of Panun Kashmir Homeland, and spruced up the event lending it a unique flavour and colour. The

areas spoke on the occasion highlighting the importance of the day and the need to intensify the struggle. Those who spoke on the occasion were Sh Shailendra Aima, Vice Chairman of Panun Kashmir and Editor of Kashmir Sentinel. Sh PL Dhar, President of Nagrota Camp, Sh. S. L. Pandita, leader of the Jagati Tenement Committee and Sh P L Raina, representative from



CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

April 18: A major tragedy was averted as a RDX filled pressure cooker was detected and defused at Bhati Dhar, Nendhar while an Army Jawan was injured in a mine blast at Kantar, Mendhar. Interlocutors started their deliberations with academicians and intelligentsia at an RTC at Srinagar.

April 19: A terrorist was arrested in Patti. LeT and HM have reportedly shifted to mountains. Interlocutors conclude RTC Ramjethmalani led committee is to revive talks with sepratists. Omar Abdullah briefed PM, HM and UPA chairperson about security and political situation in the state.

April 20: Two OGWs of HM were held in Pulwama. NIA is to probe Geelani linked Hawala case. Hurriyat leader A G Bhat was suspended from the organization as he met interlocutors in Srinagar. Army Chief visited Leh and reviewed security scenario while IAF is to deploy fighters along Pak border. PoK PM suggested that LoC should be converted as the line of commerce. BJP suspended seven MLAs in the cross-voting case.

April 21: Two LeT terrorists were killed in an operation in Kishtwar. Explosives were recovered from a Panchayat Ghar at Khari, Banihal and three Hawala operatives including two government employees were arrested in Banihal and Rs 1.99 Lakh hawala money was recovered from their possession. Hill Council and VDCs' issue dominated during interlocutors' visit to Doda. Omar Abdullah asked sepratists to come forward like Ansari. 108 villagers, shifted during Pak shelling in Poonch, have been relocated.

April 22: Police-terrorist nexus was unearthed as two cops, A TA Jawan were held with Pak made pistols in Mendhar while one another was reported to be at large. A cop was killed in firing in Kupwara. A VDC member committed suicide in Rajouri. Sepratists staged another sit-in against the killing of the cleric. HC and strengthening VDCs dominated at Kishtwar also. Succumbing to pressure, centre extended relaxation to entire J&K. Indian envoy to Pak said that Pakistan should address India's concerns.

April 23: Interlocutors review situation with Governor and CM while centre distanced itself from Jethmalani led Kashmir Panel.

April 24: Two top LeT terrorists Moosa and Zulqarnain were killed in an encounter in Banihal. A Jawan was killed in an encounter in Gool while two infiltration bids were foiled in Poonch. A woman SPO and her husband were arrested in Mendhar for their involvement in arms racket. Terrorists shot dead a man in Kreeri, Patti. Interlocutors said that people's aspirations cannot be held hostage to sepratists and claimed that most of the people want change in the status-quo and empowerment of all the regions. PM commands high turnout in Panchayat elections in J&K.

April 25: Two cops were killed by terrorists outside Nowgam Police Station. Steps to tackle summer-unrest were discussed as Omar Abdullah discussed situation with the top brass.

April 27: Principal Secession Judge Udhampur awarded life imprisonment to three HM terrorists. Fresh guidelines have been issued as MHA approves SOP to deal with protests.

April 28: An SRTC driver injured in Baramulla in stone-peltting while ferrying polling staff on 25th April succumbed to his injuries. Tension gripped Maisuma as Yasin Malik staged a dharna against alleged arrest of a youth. A JCO was among four killed as a Jawan ran amok at an RR camp in Awantipora. Pakistan agreed to non-discriminatory trade with India. J&K has sought 65 additional companies for Amarnath Yatra.

April 29: Protesters were cane charged and dispersed in Maisuma. P Chidambaram said that there is no reason for civilian unrest this summer and added that new SOPs will tackle protests in J&K. Pak terrorist, planted by HM, took agencies for a ride and married a Rajouri girl.

April 30: Terrorists shot dead a civilian in Sopore. One person was killed, four injured and 16 arrested as clashes broke out between the supporters and rivals of Jamait-e-Ahlihadees. Pak terrorist's free movement for eight years has been described failure of intelligence agencies. Two youth crossed over to PoK in Mandi, Poonch.

May 1: A contractor was among two LeT ultras held in Poonch and ammunition haul was recovered from a hideout on their disclosures. LeT and HM used females on both the sides of LoC for smuggling of arms and used Bhati Dhar as the dumping ground.

May 2: World's most wanted terrorist Osama bin Laden was killed in an operation by the US in Abbottabad, yards away from Military Academy, in Pakistan. A

civilian was killed and seven others injured as terrorists tried to target an Army Commandant with car bomb at Udhampur. A youth was killed in firing range in Rajouri. Two terrorist and three sympathizers were arrested and arms and ammunition recovered from possession in North Kashmir. GOC 15 Corps said that militants would try to increase their infiltration attempts in next two months. India expressed its deep concern over terrorists finding sanctuary deep inside Pakistan.

May 3: An Army jawan was killed in an accidental blast in R S Pura. Pak terrorist Tanveer Ahamed who had been impersonating as Zaman Shah was reportedly in touch with terrorists of other states and used 100 SIM cards to inter-act with terrorists. Principal Secession judge Kathua awarded death sentence to two terrorists for killing a police informer in 2002. The US said that Laden had support system in Pakistan.

May 4: An Army major was killed in a grenade blast while practicing in Rajouri. Army Chief said that Indian forces are competent enough to carry out Abbottabad like operation. The US hopes to unravel Osama's links with help of decoding discs and DVDs.

May 5: Geelani was put under house arrest as he was to lead funeral prayers in absentia for ladewns at Batmaloo. Army lodged protest on hotline as Pakistan fired RPG and MMG's to give cover to the intruders. Northern Command Chief said that decision on operations across LoC vests with the GoI.

May 6: Kulgam police busted a hawala racket and arrested three operatives of terrorists. A terrorist hideout was busted and arms and ammunition recovered in Trehgam, Kupwara. Explosives haul was recovered in Arnas, Reasi. A VDC member gunned down his son in Rajouri. 13 IM terrorists were charged sheeted in 2008 serial blasts in Delhi.

May 7: Three terrorists were reportedly holed up in Surankote while one more managed his escape in Mendhar. Border projects in Ladakh are to match projects of China. The US released rare video of Osama.

May 8: A big arms and explosives haul including 12 AK rifles were recovered in Kupwara. Three terrorists escaped in Bafliaz. A govt. official and local wife of the Pak terrorist, who masterminded car last and stayed near city for four years, were arrested. Geelani called for strike on May 14 for release of political prisoners and youth.

May 9: Four more were arrested in car bomb blast case. Omar Abdullah said that Osama's death will not derail Indo-Pak dialogue. A KP woman Asha Jee was elected as a Panch in Wussan, Kunzar. Police claimed to have busted a module responsible for issuing SIM cards to terrorists as the terrorists are using six to eight mobile phones. SC stayed Ayodha verdict.

May 10: Plot to revive militancy was unearthed as five terrorists were arrested in Patti and three AKs and other ammunition recovered from their possession. An SPO gunned down his wife and brother-in-law in Ramban. Terrorists shot at and injured a Sarpanch candidate in Sopore. India asked Pakistan to disclose whereabouts of Dawood Ibrahim.

May 11: An explosives haul was recovered in Pulwama. Police claimed to have solved car-blast case and arrested a govt. employee while hunt was launched for the PoK terrorist. MoS Defence reviewed security situation in a meeting in Northrrn Command. Salahuddin and Neeta are among 50 most wanted fugitives in Pakistan. Pak govt. paid 135,000 pounds to a British parliamentarian George Galloway to promote Kashmiri cause. In its favour. Nawaz Sharif demanded probe into Osama debacle.

May 12: Geelani has been barred from holding public rally in Shopian apprehending violence. State government today extended compensation benefits to slain surrendered terrorists' families. PM ruled out US-type operation in Pak.

May 13: An Army Jawan was killed in an ambush in Lolab. More youth arrested under PSA are to be released as government finalises strategy for summer and Amarnath Yatra. EU delegation on visit to J&K said that EU is not to interfere in Kashmir. India is to give data to Pakistan on Wular.

May 14: A BSF Jawan was killed in Pak firing in Arnia sector. EU refused to meet Geelani and KBA. GOC Northern Command described Chinese presence in PoK a cause of concern and added that Pak may push more ultras after the killing of Osama. He said that the Army has given its response on AFSPA.

May 15: BSF lodged protest as Pakistan again violated cease-fire in Arnia sector. India has started to develop air defence system in which an enemy missile can be shot at a distance of 5000 KMs.

May 16: An LeT terrorist was killed in Sopore. Alert was sounded in Mendhar as land mines exploded in fire on LoC. Padgaonkar opposed division of J&K while Governor said that strike calls lead to problems.

May 17: Terrorists gunned down a cop in Sopore, shot at a Panch in Baramulla and attacked the residence of former Minister Usman Majid Wani at Bandipore. Four persons including three terrorists were arrested for drug peddling in North Kashmir. Two Jammu criminals were held in Delhi. A cabinet sub committee is set to make amendments to Sageer Committee Report.

May 18: 10 OGWs were arrested in Kishtwar. A boy, Waheed Ahamed who was kidnapped by terrorists when he was just six years old returned to his house in Mendhar from a Madrassa after nine years. Padgaonkar said that they are working with the government to ensure peace.

May 20: Police recovered a body in Bafliaz believed to be of the terrorist Huzefa while a terrorist of LeT was arrested in Kishtwar. Two persons were arrested in Baramulla and arms and ammunition was recovered from their possession. Authorities are not to allow hurriyat rally. AK Antony said that China-Pak ties are a cause of concern claimed that violence is down and situation is improving in J&K.

May 21: Curfew like restrictions was imposed and hurriyat leaders put under house arrest to foil rally on the death anniversary of A G Lone. A terrorist hideout was busted in Rajouri. P Chidambaram said that we are living in troubled neighbourhood. Northern Command Major General is to lead a military team to China.

May 22: Two OGWs of LeT including the brother of LeT commander Hurera were arrested while taking ration and other material for terrorists. Mirwaiz said that Hurriyat was ready for negotiated settlement. PM said that J&K is moving towards peace and harmony.

May 23: An LeT terrorist was killed and three others trapped in an encounter in Poonch. RDX and grenade haul was recovered in Banihal. Sonia Gandhi said that there will be no compromise on terror but the talks with Pakistan will continue. P Chidambaram said that careful vigil is being kept along the borders to foil intrusions.

May 24: Search for three terrorists was launched in Handwara. Arms have been recovered from the slain terrorists while hunt was on for other three terrorists in Poonch who managed their escape. ISI and LeT helped Headley in executing Mumbai attacks and his handlers wanted to kill Bal Thackrey.

May 25: An LeT terrorist was killed, another injured and a female associate held in Doda district. A terrorist was killed in Handwara. Omar Abdullah said that 30 to 40 militants have entered J&K but added that there was no alternative to talks with Pakistan. Headley wanted an assignment in Kashmir after his training.

May 26: JeM terrorist Qari Zubair and his associate were killed in an encounter at Kellar, Pulwama while one more terrorist was killed in Handwara encounter. Farooq Abdullah said that Kashmir situation should satisfy all. SFC has made serious recommendations for Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh regions. Headley said that Pak Navy man was present with ISI's Iqbal during meeting.

May 27: Two foreign terrorists were killed in an encounter in Sopore. A major intrusion bid was foiled in Ramgarh sector. P Chidambaram said that terror infrastructure is flourishing in Pakistan while Hillary Clinton asked Pakistan to take decisive steps to flush out al-Qaeda. Arun Jaitley said that UPA is soft on terrorism while BJP is to write to PM on Ladakh demands.

May 28: Terrorists shot dead a father-son duo in Kupwara. Two stone-pelters were arrested in Anantnag. An LeT hideout was busted in Kishtwar. Pakistan returned two Poonch boys after a month. PM said that terror machine equally hurting Pakistan and it is time for action against jehadi groups.

May 29: A youth was killed when a shell exploded in firing range in Akhnoor. Omar Abdullah said that we will deal with the infiltrators.

May 30: An intrusion bid was foiled and a guide killed while four infiltrators retrieved in Samba sector. India and Pakistan discussed Saichan.

May 31: A terrorist hideout was busted in Sopore and huge cache of arms and ammunition including six AKs and 13 Pistols were recovered. Two IEDs were seized in Kishtwar. Both sides agreed to carry tanks though there was no agreement on Saichan. The US said that Pak is home to militants targeting Kashmir.

EDITORIAL

The Margadarshan Resolve

TWENTY years have passed since the exiled Pandits in 1991 unanimously adopted the historical Homeland Resolution, demanding the political reorganization of the State of Jammu & Kashmir so as to facilitate the creation of Panun Kashmir, a Homeland for all those who have been forced out of Kashmir on the pain of death and destruction. This Homeland, the Resolution demanded, be placed under a Union Territory, comprising the Northern and Eastern regions of River Vitasta (Jhelum), and be governed by the unhindered flow of the Constitution of India. The Resolution also envisaged a state-hood for Jammu Division and another Union Territory for Ladakh Region.

In December 2011, the Union Minister of State for Home, Jitendra Singh told the Lok Sabha that a "package of 1,618 crore rupees was sanctioned for return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri migrants in the valley in 2008. But so far no family has returned." He also informed that of this amount, about Rupees 22.89 crores were spent on (non-existent) transit camps. But he did not explain why the displaced families had spurned this economic package meant to attract their return, nor did he make any mention of Rs. 400 Crores spent in the name of the so-called Jagati Township.

In the twenty two years of the exile and ethno-religious cleansing of Kashmiri Pandits from their habitat of thousands of years, the State and the Central Governments, have shown no commitment in resolving the issues confronting this community. Only a lip service and a lack of a humanistic component form the institutional approach towards the exiles. This has made the Pandits skeptical about the very intentions of the political establishment, which instead of applying balm on their festering sores of disappointment and dejection, has created a nexus of Relief Agencies and their agents who harass the victims eking out a living in the "migrant camps" and those who draw relief and ration from these agencies. The bureaucratic-political nexus draws huge funds in the name of Relief and has no qualms in squandering the same in the scandalous projects like Jagati, where mega corruption is likely to be unearthed, if investigated by an independent agency.

Not content with this brazen display of corruption, the state agencies have also deployed devious methods of coercion, ignoring the nation's commitment to international precedence and covenants. The exiled Hindus are categorized as "migrants". The circumstances and conditions of their exodus should have placed them in the category of "IDPs" (Internally Displaced

Persons); and that would have also enjoined upon the governments in Srinagar and Delhi certain responsibilities viz. a viz. treatment to the exiled community and the component and conditions of Relief, and their Return and Rehabilitation. As IDPs, the exiles in fact would be entitled to special rights and privileges, under the UN Charters and Resolutions, and no coercion could be imposed upon them. It is primarily this set of responsibilities that the Indian Union and the State of Jammu & Kashmir do not want to own; neither do they want the exiled Pandits to be provided any immunity against the coercive arm twisting.

It seems that the UPA Government and its coalition partner in J&K have accepted Jammu and Kashmir as a sphere of Islamic influence, conceding it morally as an extension of the Af-Pak region, but territorially keeping it a part of India, as a corridor cutting into the Pamirs and Sinkiang on one hand, and the Indian heartland on the other. To make this unholly arrangement acceptable to Indian masses, the entire design needs a camouflage of secularism. What else than a token return of the exiled Pandits to the Valley to provide the stamp of a deceptive Secularism. And in order to facilitate this coerced token return, the UPA Government announced a disguised and misplaced 1618 Crore "Prime Minister's Package on Return and Rehabilitation of Migrants".

It is misleading and a misnomer to call it a package for the Kashmiri Pandits, as the Parliament was informed. A closer look at the phrasing of the package reveals that it is wrapped in subtle jargon, making several categories of affected people as claimants to PM's largesse. For example, the refugees of 1947 from present PoK, have been bracketed with the internally displaced persons from Kashmir and made partners to the package. They are victims of the holocaust of the partition of 1947 and deserve treatment at par with millions of other refugees. Kashmiri Pandits on the other hand have been subjected to ethnic cleansing, where a secular and democratic State absolutely failed to protect them. Likewise, the widows of the victims of violence in J&K are also categorized as a group entitled to a share in PM's Package. The advocacy groups in Kashmir claim that more than a lakh of people were killed during the violence in Kashmir. This number is apart from the Kashmiri Pandits who were martyred during the Islamic Jihadist violence. As such the widows of these one lakh victims are also entitled to a share of what is being showcased as a "Package for Pandits." The State government has played another trick by ascribing the term

"internally displaced" for people who have migrated from far-flung areas of the valley to Srinagar and other district head quarters (and not the Kashmiri Pandits who actually are the IDPs but are being treated as "migrants"); and these migrants too have been bracketed with the exiled Kashmiri Pandits for benefits under the PMs package.

The State government has devised machinations that tantamount to coercive tactics and harassment of the displaced victims. It has framed ridiculous and illegal service rules for the Pandit recruits to government jobs. After a resolute dithering the State government agreed to provide around 1800 (but in reality only a little above 1200) government jobs to 'Kashmiri Migrants' out of a total of 3000 jobs whose financial burden would be borne exclusively by the Central government, under the PM's package. After accepting the Prime Minister's Package for the 'Kashmiri Migrants' the state government refused to fulfill its part of the employment package and declared such recruitments as against the provisions of the State Constitution. Then by linking this employment package to terms of return and delinking it from all factors which led to the cleansing of Hindus from Valley, the jobs were provided only to those candidates who had agreed to return to the Kashmir valley with a written undertaking to the state government with an assurance to stay put in the Valley under all circumstances come what may. To seek such an undertaking is not only discriminatory and illegal, but in fact a coercive measure. Denial of genocide and refouling of the victims is glaring in this entire enterprise.

But kudos to Kashmiri Pandits and the Panun Kashmir! They have despite all odds stood their ground firmly. In fact, the entire community has shown a resolute determination in spurning this Prime Minister's economic package since it ignores the safety and security of the community; it completely obfuscates the issue of their political empowerment; it dismisses protection and preservation of their shrines and properties; and it has no provision for their compact rehabilitation. Why should Pandits feel enthused for such a misplaced and misconceived package that has nothing to offer to the victims in terms of reversing their genocide and ethno-religious cleansing? In the Apex Committee formed by the Relief Organization and that gives no room to Panun Kashmir, the members showed exemplary courage in dismissing this plan and expressing their disapproval of the coercive policy of the government. In fact many of the members of Apex Committee joined

hands with the Jagati inmates and launched a mass protest against bad management and corrupt practices of the Relief Organization. They have shown their resolve and spoken from Panun Kashmir platform in demanding their legitimate share in the Kashmir Valley, and in being comrade in arms. It is an exemplary display of Unity among the community cadres and organizations.

Today, the Margadarshan Resolve has become a guiding factor of the community's resolute determination for pursuing its legitimate rights as Internally Displaced Persons, and envisages their return and rehabilitation in an internationally accepted frame-work under the UN charter and covenants. Kashmiri Pandits of all hues are gathering and galvanizing as a unified mass and articulating their aspirations for Panun Kashmir - a geo-political dispensation in a politically reorganized State of Jammu and Kashmir. With Ladakhis and Jammuites also determined to claim their legitimate share in any future resolution of the Kashmir problem, its fructification appears not a distant dream but a possible reality.

The time is ripe for the powers that be to review the Kashmir Policy that has so far yielded only adverse results and caused further alienation. This policy has pushed the State of Jammu and Kashmir and its problems into labyrinthine morass that needs a bold and decisive initiative to extricate it from the present mess. Overwhelmed by the violent eruptions, terrorist blackmail and competitive communal politics, the Union of India is considering options like greater autonomy and self-rule to resolve the Kashmir imbroglio. Such options not only tend to embolden separatist tendencies and strengthen communal stridency in the State; it also involves a malevolent engagement with Pakistan as a party. Contrary to this, the Margadarshan Resolution is a significant and constructive arrangement available, which tends to meet the aspirations of all the major stake-holders in the State of Jammu & Kashmir; it is also a strategy that would exclude Pakistan and Pakistan sponsored interest groups, marginalize them and render them irrelevant. It strives to give secular nation building precedence over communal politics in Jammu and Kashmir. Let the policy makers engage with Panun Kashmir and other regional groups in the State, as also with advocacy groups, academics and political parties in an inter-regional dialogue to ascertain their opinion on power sharing, decentralization of power and empowerment of the people and regions to device modalities for the political reorganization of Jammu and Kashmir.

Message

I send my sincerest and heartfelt greetings to the Kashmiri Pandit Community and the Panun Kashmir activists on the advent of New Year 2012. It goes without saying that Kashmir is the Homeland of Pandits who are Saraswat Brahmins and no power on earth can deny them what is legitimately theirs.

Despite all their travails today and the suffering heaped upon them by forces of fundamental-

ism and irresponsible governments, I am sure that the time will come soon when they will return to their homeland to pursue their traditional way of life to take Bharatvarsh to a great glory with the prosperity of all.

A word for Panun Kashmir Activists ?

Birth is our opening balance, death is our closing balance. Prejudice views are our liabilities, creative ideas and good deeds are assets. Heart is our current asset, soul, our fixed asset, brain is

fixed thinking. Good will & achievements are capital, character and morals. Friends our general reserve, values and behaviour our goodwill. Patience is interest earned. Love our dividend. Children our bonus issues. Education is brand. Knowledge is our investment. Profit & Loss is Karma earned, before final assessment death.

Balance your sheet.
Great leaders make people to believe in them.

-Sh. O.N. Trisal, Bangalore.

Press Brief of the statement issued during the press conference addressed jointly by Panun Kashmir Chairman Dr Ajay Chrungoo, Chairman of Advisory Committee of Panun Kashmir Dr M K Teng and Sh Jagan Koul, Chairman of the Diversity USA, a national democratic THINK TANK for minority affairs in USA on 21-11-2011 at Jammu.

Panun Kashmir and Diversity USA exchanged and shared views on the state of affairs in Jammu and Kashmir in the light of happenings in Pakistan and Afghanistan as also the plight of internally displaced Kashmiri Hindus. Both are of the view that the handling of affairs in the state by Government of India has been disgusting.

Government of India is fast squandering the historic opportunity of a very favorable international environment and the consequent awareness that Pakistani State is the epicenter of International terrorism. Instead of strengthening the national position in the state and dealing a decisive blow to Islamist separatism in the state, Government of India seems to be engaged in a process of granting crucial concessions to Pakistan as well as Separatist constituency in Jammu and Kashmir.

The government of India as well as the state government are involved in recognizing and engaging the most communal and radical



Islamist formations, as well as their leadership in the state, as legitimate political forces who can deliver peace. This entire approach is shameful and also dangerous.

The Government of India has not embarked upon a process of return of internally displaced Kashmiri Hindus by addressing the critical issue of the reversal of their Genocide. It has instead unleashed a policy of their abandonment to hand them over and submit to the political order as is existing now in the valley.

The Relief

Organisation created for ameliorating the plight of internally displaced Kashmiri Hindus has been gradually turned into political department to generate dismay, disarray, and desperation amongst Kashmiri Hindus living outside Kashmir valley. This organization has also become a symbol of corruption.

The small numbers of Kashmiri Hindus who have returned are in an atmosphere where freedom of expression is seriously curtailed. They have to keep silent for safety and listen to the prodding of both the separatist establishment as well as the government.

Both Panun Kashmir and Diversity USA will pool their efforts to bring to the light of the world at large that the separatist campaign in the Kashmir valley is becoming the epicenter of terrorism in India. Both Panun Kashmir and Diversity USA will also make the world aware about the fraud being perpetrated of Kashmiri Hindus in the name of return policy and dangers to their life, dignity and cultural identity.

Rs 318 ticket to terror?

Shibananabasu

ALL it takes for a cross-border terrorist to travel from Bangladesh to Sealdah railway station in the heart of Kolkata is Rs 318.

According to recent state government Intelligence reports accessed by The Statesman, illegal immigrants, including certain suspected terrorists named in the report, pay a mere Rs 18 to enter Bongaon, a border village in India, through Benapole in Bangladesh. In Bongaon, the illegal immigrants pay another Rs 300 to reach Sealdah station.

Suspected terrorists from the Pakistan-based militant group Harkat-ul-Mujahiddin are using this "safe route" to enter India, paying the fee to touts who safely transport them to their destinations. From Sealdah, these individuals can easily travel anywhere else in the country.

"They disperse to various parts, including Rajasthan, Punjab and Assam," says the report. "But most of these trespassers prefer to go to Malda town first." A senior intelligence official said: "Before venturing out to the rest of the country it is easy for the suspected terrorists to find a hideout in Malda. Also, it is easy to enter rural Malda via Kolkata after carrying out terrorist activities elsewhere in the country."

Reports that terrorists use Kolkata as a transit route are nothing new. Back in 2010, Calcutta High Court, worried about the security of the general public in West Bengal, expressed concerns that the state was becoming a "safe haven for terrorists."

According to Intelligence experts, more than 74 "terror masterminds" from Bangladesh are hiding in and operate from various Indian cities. Interpol has already issued arrest warrants for most of them.

Central Intelligence agencies have received specific information, the official said, that absconding Bangladesh terrorists, including Fateh Ali, Kamrul Hassan, Kala Jahangir and Jabbar Munna, have established links with separatist and jihadist groups in Jammu and Kashmir.

—(Courtesy: The net)

NEWS

20th Anniversary of Homeland Day Celebrated

(From Page 1)

of Panun Kashmir is a vision of our future and the pedestal of our liberation from the ongoing tyranny.

Dr. Chrungoo further stated that Panun Kashmir is the beginning of the Resolve to save a civilization under attack and to reclaim its glory. Referring to the contemporary times he stated that an unholy alliance seems to have fructified between a

CONTINUATION

section of the government in the Centre and the State and the radical communal establishment operating in Kashmir. The protection and respect conferred to the most radical and communal leadership in Kashmir valley is a policy of suicide pursued. "He said the government is perpetuating corruption in running the Relief Organisation to create a pliable leadership to work against the interests of the community and the nation. The Relief Organisation

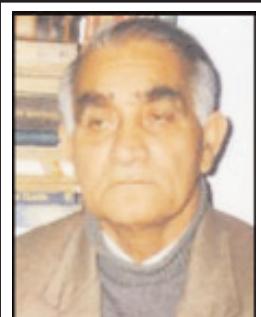


has been converted into an arm of coercion to modulate and control the opinion of Kashmiri Hindus living in exile. He complimented the camp dwellers for having risen against the corruption and harassment despite intimidations and threats from the government. He also congratulated the members of the community for spurning the various allurements offered by the government to toe its line to return to an Islamized Kashmir. While concluding his address, he warned the State and the Central Governments of the imminent dangers posed by the fragile and volatile security environment in the Kashmir valley, POK and the Pakistan.

Later, Dr. Chrungoo also addressed the members of India against Corruption and assured Panun Kashmir's full support in making a corruption free India.

Sh BLKoul Coordinator of the Prog. Concluded the programme with vote of thanks.

Return of the Hindus to Kashmir-II



By Dr. M.K. Teng

AFTER the Hindus were driven out of Kashmir in 1990, their return to their homes was never under the consideration of the people who ruled India. The Indian leaders never had the courage to deny Pakistan and the Muslim separatist forces, the claim they lay to Jammu and Kashmir, on the basis of the Muslim majority composition of its population. Nor did they possess the resolution to fight against the religious war, Pakistan and the Jehadi war groups, operating inside as well as outside the State, waged to unite it with Pakistan. The Indian political class assumed complete silence over the death and devastation the Jehad wrought in Kashmir and, in fact, spared no efforts to camouflage the genocide of the Hindus and their ethnic cleansing in Kashmir and the Muslim majority districts of the Jammu province. The stray references, the Indian leaders made on the return of the Hindus to their homes and hearths, "with honour and dignity" were a part of the propaganda aimed to minimise the impact of the displacement of the Hindus in the State and contain its effect. Behind the scene, the Indian political class tried frantically, to negotiate peace with the Muslim separatist flanks inside the State and their Jehadi mentors outside the State. Negotiations for peace with the Jehadi war groups, who were later joined by Pakistan, left hardly any space for the return of the Hindus to Kashmir, who had been driven out by the Jehad for having harmed the cause of the freedom of the Muslims of the State.

The Indian Government and the State Government never made their stand clear on the genocide of the Hindus and the exodus forced upon them by the Jehad. They did not make their stand clear on the reversal of the genocide, which formed the precedent condition for the return of the Hindus to their homes. In fact the Indian Government never made any formal commitment in respect of the return of the Hindus to their homes and made no concrete proposals for their rehabilitation.

Disinformation Campaign :

The Indian political class launched a widespread dis-information campaign to camouflage the portent of the terrorist violence and to conceal the real purpose of the Jihad in Jammu and Kashmir. The White Paper on Kashmir issued by the Joint Human Rights Committee, Delhi, noted : "All over the post-independent era, incessant efforts were always made by the State Government and the Government of India, to conceal the

ugly face of the Muslim communalism in Jammu and Kashmir. Deliberate attempts were always made to provide cover to the growth of the Muslim fundamentalist and secessionist movements in the State, right from the time its accession to India. The various forms of the Muslim communalism and separatism which ravaged the life in the State, during the last four decades and which imparted to the secessionist movements in the State, their ideological content and tactical direction, were camouflaged under the banners of sub-national autonomy, regional identity and even secularism. Largely, perceptual aberrations, misplaced notions, and subterfuge, characterised the official as well as the non-official responses to the upheavals which rocked the State from time to time. More often, the real issues, confronting the State were overlooked by deliberate design and political

The uprootment of the Hindus from their homes in Kashmir, was one of the major displacements of people in the aftermath of the second world war, in which a whole community was torn off from its roots. The White Paper on Kashmir notes : "Like the other tradition bound, endogamous and native people, the Hindus in Kashmir with an incredibly long history, extending to pre-historic, proto-Aryan, later Stone Age Culture, formed an independent part of the cultural identity of the State and its personality."

interest, a policy which in the long run operated to help the secessionist forces to consolidate the ranks and their hold on the people in the State". No sooner the Jehad commenced in Kashmir, a mild goose chase began in search of scapegoats to camouflage the forces which were involved in the upheaval, the State faced. "Even after widespread militant violence struck Kashmir in 1989," the White Paper on Kashmir noted : "and thousands of innocent people were killed in cold blood alongwith hundreds of the Indian security personnel and the whole community of the Hindus in Kashmir was driven out of the Valley, the disinformation campaign continued to cloud the real dangers the terrorist violence posed to the nation. Indeed efforts still continue to be made to side track the basic problems of terrorism and secessionism and the role of the militarised Muslim fundamentalist forces in the whole bloody drama enacted in the State and divert the attention of the Indian people to trivial concerns, which have no bearing on the developments there."

The disinformation campaign succeeded only partially to provide a smokescreen to what the Jehad wrought in Kashmir and the Muslim majority districts of the Jammu province.

A part of the truth of what had happened in Kashmir was, actually, revealed by the Jehadi regimes themselves and their overground separatist outfits like the Hurriyat Conference. The Indian political class had ascribed the militant violence to alienation of the Muslim youth, brought about by the Indian misrule in the State which had led to the economic deprivation

and political oppression of the Muslims. The Jehadi regimes told the Indian people and the world around, that the Muslim Jehad was aimed to liberate the State from the occupation army of India, which was stationed in the State illegally. The Jehadi regimes and the Muslim separatist organisations denied that the militant operations and the Muslim upsurge were in any way related to any political distrust, economic deprivation or the alienation of the Muslims. They made it clear in unmistakable terms that the Muslims in Jammu and Kashmir had commenced the Jehad in Kashmir to liberate State from the "illegal occupation of the Indian army" and unite it with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

A part of the truth was told by the leaders of the mainstream political parties: the National Conference, and the Peoples Democratic Party, who had ruled the State, before the onset of

been drastically changed by the Jehad. The Hindus of Kashmir were driven out on the point of the gun because of their resistance to the Muslim separatist movements in the State. Their opposition to the Muslim Jehad assumed nation-wide proportions during the last two decades of their exile. They will hardly find it easy to come to terms with the conditions that prevail in Kashmir, while the religious war continues unabated. It may not be out of place to mention here that the over-ground political outfits of the Jehadi war groups and the militant flanks, including the various factions of the Hurriyat conference, have offered to accept the return of the Hindus and at the same-time expressed their hope that after their return the Hindus will join their Muslim brethren in their struggle for their liberation from India.

Changed Milieu:

The war of liberation, which the Hindus are expected to join on their return apart, the Jehad has upturned the whole social milieu of which the Hindus formed a part, when they were cast overboard. The decades of the religious war has dissolved the mutually accepted rules which ensured the stability of the inter-community relations in the State and brought about imperceptible and drastic changes in the social organisation in Kashmir. First the ethnic cleansing of the Hindus in Kashmir has dissolved the pluri-cultural social organisation of Kashmir. The demographic alignments which existed in Kashmir before the onset of the Jehad formed the basis of its multi-religious social organisation. In the tradition-bound societies of the former colonial peoples, demographic alignments have been found to play a major role in determining the inter-community relations in their social cultures. The social culture of Kashmir has assumed a dominantly Islamic expression. No wonder, therefore, that during the last several years the Kashmiri Pandits who have been going on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Khir-Bawani in Tulamulla on the outskirts of Srinagar, on Zeshta-Ashtami, have been greeted at the gate of the shrine by a crowd of Tablighi Muslim volunteers, who distributed Islamic literature among the pilgrims.

Secondly, the fundamentalisation of the Muslim society in Kashmir-a process which continued for nearly a decade, before the onset of the terrorist violence in the State in 1990, has led to the regimentation of the large sections of the Muslim society in Kashmir on the basis of their ideological commitment to the Islamisation of the State. Most of the regimented sections of the Muslim society are militarily responsive.

Thirdly, the regimentation of the Muslim outlook has severely impaired the secular character of the social and political institutions in the State. Suppression of all dissent in the Muslim society in Kashmir, which the materialisation of the Muslim separatist movements led to, has increased the acceptability of the Islamisation of all political and social institutions in the State. Many of the militant

(Contd. on Page 8)

By Lt. General PC Katoch,
PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, SC
(Retd)*

INTRODUCTION

OPERATION Geronimo conducted deep inside Pakistan on 02 May 2011 by US Navy SEALs will go down as a remarkable operation in annals of the US Special Forces (USSF) history notwithstanding speculations of a US-Pak understanding to sacrifice bin Laden, facilitating the US withdrawal from Af-Pak and boosting President Obama's ratings for re-election. A viewpoint circulating the web even posits Osama having died six months back, his body preserved in Tarbela and SEALs taking 40 minutes at Osama's safehouse because a Pakistani helicopter had to fly in Osama's body from Tarbela. The whole truth may never come out considering close US Special Forces (USSF)-SSG ties, long standing CIA-ISI relations albeit with mutual suspicion, the recent Raymond Davis affair, divergent Pakistan and US claims post Geronimo and even facade of resignation by Shuja Pasha (DG ISI) knowing fully well it would not be accepted by Prime Minister Gilani, survivability of Pak politicians being courtesy blessings of ISI-Military. Remember feeble effort of President Zardari to bring the ISI under the Ministry of Interior, words he was made to swallow within 24 hours? David Ignatius wrote in Time magazine dated 23 May 2011, "When I asked top CIA and military officials what the intelligence showed about ISI activities, they would become visibly angry. They would say ... see the double dealing ... how US intelligence is passed on to Haqqani network". In all probability, the USA could not trust ISI on this one despite the fact that the US-Pakistan mutual dependency in terms of strategic and security values will remain critical at least till the US presence in Afghanistan, unless a major event like 9/11 recurs. It is for this reason that despite giving \$20 billion to Pakistan for counter terrorism since 9/11, the US has hardly received sincere and appropriate response for something which is seriously being questioned by the US citizenry.

Osama bin Laden

Post 9/11, when USA declared war on Al Qaeda, Osama bin Laden was priority one target. CIA operatives and USSF launched a

global hunt for this most wanted terrorist. Information and intelligence were both elusive with Pakistan having been forced into the GWOT rather than submit to the alternative of being "bombed into stone age". In 1998, the US launched a cruise missile attack against an Al Qaeda camp, having tracked bin Laden through his satellite phone. It could be providence or a tip off that Osama switched off his phone in the nick of time, moved away and was saved by the skin of his teeth, the corollary being that two of the unexploded cruise missiles were spirited away to China courtesy IS1 and the Chinese having mastered reverse engineering, produced their own cruise missile in no time. Over the years, there were

Significantly, satellite imagery / aerial photographs with CIA, US DoD and GeoEye show this area empty with no construction in 2003. So, what was the ISI raiding in 2003? Only the boundary wall came up in 2004 and construction of the mansion began in 2005 perhaps under the watchful eye of the ISI / Musharraf himself. Houses in close proximity of the boundary wall (missing in the 2004) may well have been constructed to house Al Qaeda/Taliban cadres.

The fact that a mansion on a plot measuring 2508 square metres came up within 700 metres of Pakistan Military Academy (PMA), Kakul, adjacent to a cantonment housing three regimental centres including the Frontier Force Regiment and housed bin

cue of 1980 in Iran and the 1993 disastrous operation in Somalia. Amidst stories of Osama having been betrayed by Ayman al Zawahiri (Al Qaeda Number 2) and Amal (Osama's Yemeni wife), the US must have ensured synergising of 'all sources' overlapping and overwhelming intelligence - human, signal, open sources, imagery, technical, geospatial and technical. CIA already had some 3000 strong Counter Terrorism Pursuit Teams (CTPTs) deployed in Af-Pak region crucial for HUMINT and vital to guide 'Predator' strikes on Al Qaeda and Taliban. The US must have deployed intelligence operatives and Special Forces deep inside Pakistan without taking ISI into confidence. Raymond Davis himself was a CIA operative.

Any operational plan has a number of options and sensitive operation like Geronimo requires that these be weighed very carefully. The options in this case were three; a joint raid in conjunction with ISI / SSG with actual target given to Pakistan last minute, an overwhelming air strike by B-2 bombers and a heliborne raid by the USSF. The first option was more theoretical considering doubts of ISI sincerity. A bombing run by B-2 bombers could obliterate even the post operation proof of Osama's death, especially since the assessed requirement for effective bombing was 32 x 2000 pound bombs. Therefore, the third option of a heliborne raid by USSF was considered the best and adopted.



Bin Laden's lair: The compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan, was half a mile from a military academy. If it had been hit in an air strike there would likely have been civilian casualties



Watching: President Obama was joined by Vice-President Joe Biden, left, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, second right, counterterrorism chief John Brennan, standing behind Mrs Clinton, Defense Secretary Bob Gates, right, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mike Mullen and National Security Advisor Tom Donilon (both back left)

a couple of sightings of bin Laden but he managed to evade capture / death. In February 2011, Al Qaeda declared they had thwarted an assassination attempt on Osama a month ago by US forces using a device that could send signals to satellites to locate and guide air strikes. "The Al-Qaida leadership is proud of its technical wing which used its expertise to discover a 5 mm chip fixed in a Universal Serial Bus (USB) that was meant to reach our leader for an interview", the statement said. According to them, a man who called himself David Noshkay, posing as a US journalist wanted to interview bin Laden and having been refused had sent a USB with his questions, requesting the interview to be recorded on camera and saved on the USB.

Abbottabad Compound

When Benazir Bhutto said in 2007 that Osama was in Musharraf's backyard, she was not lying. Post Geronimo, an ISI spokesman told BBC's Owen Bennett-Jones in Islamabad that the said compound in Abbottabad was raided in 2003 and the compound was not on ISI radar thereafter.

Laden for perhaps six long years without knowledge of the ISI and Pakistan Military is hardly acceptable. Though without internet and telephone connections, USBs containing emails for Osama were regularly brought to the house and replies taken back in similar fashion. Osama was either getting medical treatment at PMA Kakul or had doctors visiting him. The likes of Hamid Gul and ISI contacts too would have been visitors. The design of the mansion itself is typical of a 'safe house' designed by ISI to provide maximum security, considering the various security walls denying outsider observation, privacy wall on the third floor living of Osama, limited opaque windows and large killing zones on the western and eastern ends to trap intruders.

Intelligence

An operation like Geronimo cannot be undertaken purely on TECHINT even though Leon Panetta, Director CIA claimed the US was not sure whether Osama was present. If the US was not 200 per cent sure about Osama's presence, the raid would never have gone in especially after the failed hostage res-

The main lead came up over a year ago when a 'trusted courier' of Osama was tracked down in Peshawar. While bits of intelligence from thousands of interrogations from prisoners and captives collected, eavesdropping on telephone calls and e-mails of the 'trusted courier' with contacts 'inside Pakistan' coupled with constant satellite surveillance of the Abbottabad mansion provided hard intelligence for conceiving Operation Geronimo, vital piece of intelligence being when the 'trusted courier' was spotted driving himself into Osama's Abbottabad compound. One cannot say the mansion was not kept under surveillance from ground. If indeed there was a mole inside the house, then there had to be an outside contact who himself visited the mansion or communicated through a delivery boy though such arrangements are fraught with danger. In such a covert operation little can be left to chance. Excellent coverage of the target area provided a 3D model of the mansion, enabling building of a life sized replica of the target area.

Planning, Rehearsal and Execution

US Navy Seal Team Six chosen for the operation had the advantage of training extensively on life sized model of the target in a training facility back home in the US. As in all Special Forces operations, the Seal Team was quarantined and not told during the rehearsals what the actual target was and whether they were training for a live operation and when such an operation would go, in, if at all. This is standard procedure and the actual target must have been told to them either after arriving at the transit base at Jalalabad in Afghanistan or even after having taken off from Jalalabad for Osama's mansion.

The raiding party consisted of 79 SEALs in four helicopters, catering for possible firefight and 100 per cent back up. The route taken was hugging the hills and over the Tarbela river, approaching the target from the north. The night was moonless and the raiders arrived at the target just past midnight on 02 May 2011, in pitch black darkness.

24 SEALs descended on the compound. Five occupants of the mansion were killed with no casualties to

the raiders. One of them was Osama Bin Laden who was found in his living room on the third floor. He reportedly resisted and was shot in the head. 40 minutes taken for the raid included time required to search the sprawling mansion, collecting the intelligence treasures of electronic equipment, laptops, hard drives, tapes, USBs, uploading pictures of Osama for confirmation of identity and destroying electronic and sensitive parts of the MH-60M Black Hawk that had stalled. Though Osama's body was identified by one of his wives, his photograph was uploaded to analysts back in the US. The CIA confirmed Osama had been killed by feeding the photograph to a facial recognition programme and by matching DNA with Osama's sister who had died two years earlier. President Obama and his national security team watched the entire operation live via satellite - an example of battlefield transparency flashed by news channels around the world.

Analysis

Geronimo was undoubtedly a flawless operation, meeting all the requirements of a successful Special Forces mission - intelligence, planning, rehearsals, stealth, surprise, speed of execution, optimising technology, no collateral damage and no casualty to own side. It was a fine example of employment of Special Forces effort at low and precisely calculated levels to achieve strategic effects, major fallouts being:

(a) Focussing world attention on Pakistan being home to terrorist leaders especially of Al Qaeda and Taliban.

(b) Messaging Pakistan that there was a limit beyond which the US would not tolerate ISI's duplicity in GWOT despite dependence on land route via Pakistan to sustain US/ISAF forces in Afghanistan.

(c) Heightening internal debate in Pakistan on capability of ISI in protecting the country and complicity in sheltering terrorist leaders - help generate public opinion to strengthen democracy.

(d) Delivering another blow to a weakened Al Qaeda.

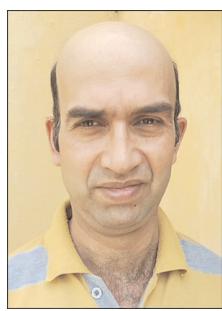
Aftermath - Pakistan

Post Geronimo, musings within Pakistan are on following lines

If we did not know Osama was in Pakistan, then we are a 'failed state' and if we knew Osama was in Pakistan then we are a 'rogue state'. Shahid Saeed tweeted, "I am, for not a single moment, arguing we should have shot down the Americans. I for one believe they did the right thing. For all we know, it was the

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Interactional Potential of a Place



By Dileep Kumar Kaul

A site attains meaning and becomes a place when people become emotionally attached with it. Such emotional ties are cause primarily through past experiences or memories that are associated with a site. When we talk about a place many memories and emotions are recalled. These memories and emotions may remain dormant amid the daily

things, social objects are our relatives, poets, sages and spiritual people. Abstract objects are our philosophies and moral principals. All these form the basis of our interaction; constitute our past, present and the interactive potential of the place we live in. Out of these objects some emerge above others and play an important part in establishing the meanings of a place. These are poets, sages and mystics. These form a large part of the interactions of the people living on the site. No need to say that every Vaakh of Lalded is taken as a mantra and listened to with a feeling that one may be spiritually liberated. Take Ghulam Ahmad Mehjoor. His poems are listened with emotion and reverence. Such is the case with many other poets and mystics. The poems and their creators are important objects in the environment of a site. They encode spiritual energies associ-

the muslim character of the script the interactional past of the people and place was rejected. This shows that place eroding forces were at work at that point of time as well. That place is not important for these forces, islamisation is. This process exposes an important proselytizing strategy. 'Nastaliq' has nothing to do with the interactive past of Kashmir. It does not carry the consciousness of Kashmir as a place. It is associated with some other place. Thus while proselytizing the consciousness of another place is imposed so that the local place consciousness remains subservient to it. Adoption of 'Nastaliq' as the state script of J&K was not a small happening. It was aimed at breaking the continuity of meaning of Kashmir as a place about which 'Mehjoor' was so concerned. This was an attack on our interactive past. Sharda was a product of

'Vitasta' aka 'Jehlum' has been treated. 'Vitasta' is a sacred river about which it has been said, "Sati Devi nadi bhootwa Kashmirayam vinirgatah", i.e. mother Goddess 'Sati' became a river and flowed through Kashmir. Vitasta is mother Goddess 'Sati' herself and imparts a sacred meaning to the site that is Kashmir. Again 'Vitasta' is replaced with the word 'Jehlum'—no sanctity, no rootedness in the preceding interactive past of Kashmir. This shows a thorough process of manipulation of objects in the interactive past of Kashmir, replacing them with alien contexts or nomenclatures so that Kashmir as a place slowly loses its significance and way is cleared for proselytization. It is a strange kind of violence of nomenclature to ensure that the sacred cultural meanings of the objects present in the environment of a place are destroyed

ness the great mystic poet Ahad Zargar makes the statement of his transcendence in very daring ideological terms:

Safri mehmoodas downstan

*Kufru islamu nish shruts
gav me man.*

*Vucch ahad zargaran
doun kuni zaath*

*Pamoposhu manzu gayi
padu kaaynaath.*

(during my spiritual journey my soul was rendered pure of blasphemy and islam. I saw both belonging to the same creed i.e. encouraging dualism. This universe was created out of a lotus)

Such things could be written in Kashmir only. Ahad Zargar's thought, like Lalded takes us to eternity. The terminology he uses goes back to times immemorial in our interactional past. As such a thought would give rise to such interactional potential of Kashmir which would



Gh. Ahmad Mehjoor

Mehjoor was not an ordinary poet. His intense attachment with the natural environment of Kashmir is known by one and all. He had an understanding of ancient culture of Kashmir and revered it. This is evident from the fact that many years back when the official script of the Kashmiri Language was being decided Mehjoor had suggested Sharda. He understood that only this script expresses the ancientness of Kashmiris as people. He comprehended it as the key element of their interactional past. And what could happen to such thinking. His proposal was rejected and Nastaliq was decided for. Why? Because it has a Muslim character. For the muslim character of the script the interactional past of the people and place was rejected. This shows that place eroding forces were at work at that point of time as well.

struggles of our lives but are recalled nevertheless, off and on. These experiences or memories are recalled in the present and lead to future experiences that are imagined and anticipated to be possible within that place. As the past experiences result from interactions among people, and their interactions with the site, its environment, natural and man made. All these interactions, with and within the site, result in a set of expectations for future interactions within the site. Thus sets in the continuity of meaning for the site, and all that happened within it that lead to its meaning and made it a place. This continuity of meaning when internalized by the people living on that site forms a sizeable portions of their identity and strengthens their self esteem. As the past experiences are interactional, so is the present, the interactions in the present owe a lot to them and the future experiences that are imagined and expected in this present constitute the interactive potential of a place, in simpler terms, the possibilities we see for ourselves and the place.

At every point of time there are some objects present in the environment of a site. These objects may be physical, social or abstract. Physical objects may be natural or man made

associated with a site, which are significant to make it into a place. The site taken from the point of view of its physical existence is also an object and a poem, or any other thought for that matter comes into existence through interaction between all these objects and then become a part of our interactive past. Same is the case with sites within sites. There may be such sites that impart meaning to the site within which they are situated. Amarnath is such a site, the contribution of which towards imparting meaning to Kashmir and making it a place is significant. It is a very important site of interaction from times immemorial.

Mehjoor was not an ordinary poet. His intense attachment with the natural environment of Kashmir is known by one and all. He had an understanding of ancient culture of Kashmir and revered it. This is evident from the fact that many years back when the official script of the Kashmiri Language was being decided Mehjoor had suggested Sharda. He understood that only this script expresses the ancientness of Kashmiris as people. He comprehended it as the key element of their interactional past. And what could happen to such thinking. His proposal was rejected and Nastaliq was decided for. Why? Because it has a Muslim character. For

the interactions of our ancestors that defined our place. Nastaliq was the product of an alien place and it was imposed. The local place consciousness that ensured the continuity of meaning of Kashmir as a place was eroded. Sharda remained confined to horoscopes and was forgotten. It was another step towards cultural dementia and ultimately, a cultural neurosis.

Physical/ecological objects were also given the same treatment. Take the grand 'Booni' the sacred tree which was christened "Chinar". Booni is a feminine word and the tree has been considered motherlike in Kashmir. But it was named "Chinar" as during autumn its leaves become so red that they appear like fire. This word decimates the original cultural meaning of the object. The sacred meaning is changed into a very mundane meaning based on mere appearance, that too, in a particular season. The sacred meaning of such ecological entities contributes towards the meaning of the whole place. The interaction of

'Booni' with the people of Kashmir is well known and its leaves have been used in rituals. When the sacred meaning is made to regress into just mundane meaning, it again breaks the continuity of the meaning of the place and leads to cultural dementia. In the same way river

and decimated and are lost in some remote corner of the consciousness of the people living in the place, thus eroding their place consciousness.

Not only these non human mother figures, but the human mother figure of Kashmir, "Lalded" also, gets the same treatment. Our interactional past cannot be possible without her. She was the result of the culmination of traditions of spirituality and poetry and with her began a new tradition of both. That way she as a single personality represents the ethos of Kashmir which truly can be termed as 'Lalded Consciousness'. This fact is acknowledged by all significant mystics. The core idea behind Lalded Consciousness is transcending all dualisms. It is this concept of transcendence that has driven sages and mystics of Kashmir from times immemorial. Lalded had transcended all dualisms through "Shiva":

Gagan tsuy bootal tsuy

Tsuy dyen, pawan tu raath.

Arg tsandun posh ponya

tsuy,

Soruy tsuy tu lagizi kyah.

(you are the sky and the earth

day, breeze and night are

you

offerings, sandal, flowers and water are you,

you are everything, so what is there to offer you.)

True to this Lalded conscious-

have no place for any dualisms he was subjected to fatwas more than once and he, as he had been always, remained undeterred.

As such a personality as Lalded could not be given a different name to change her context narratives were built around her to prove that she had converted to Islam. Such attempts failed because Kashmiri mystics and scholars opposed such lies and these narratives were rendered meaningless. But the 'Lalded Consciousness' remained as a core element of the interactional past that constitutes the place consciousness of Kashmir. If we take the discourse of 'Kashmiriyat' that too, is a place discourse attempting to confine Kashmir just to a socio-political concept of religious tolerance, the most general example of which is that a Muslim king Badshah brought back those Kashmiri Pandits to Kashmir who were hounded out during his time and that of his predecessors. Here also the Muslim King is glorified and the Kashmiri Pandit doctor who made him to do this is kept subservient to the persona of the Muslim king. Shirya Bhatt was a Kashmiri pandit who as a doctor treated even the enemy of his community without any malice is a brilliant example of what

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Ahad Zargar

(From Page 6)

nightmare we have, that some sympathetic group in our very forces protected the most wanted man on Earth". In immediate aftermath of the raid, an ISI spokesman told BBC that ISI had shared all information of the compound with the CIA since 2009. Whether true or not, it surely evoked repercuSSION from Al Qaeda-Taliban resulting in the 22-23 May attack on PNS Mehran in Karachi causing much damage including the destruction of two PC3 Orions. Security experts now question the safety of missiles and nukes of Pakistan. This notwithstanding, for Pakistan to change its jihadi strategy is not going to be easy with the ISI-Military combine having infiltrated into every sector of Pakistani governance.

Post Geronimo, Pasha warned India that any Abbottabad-like attack would invite befitting response from Pakistan, targets inside India having been identified, reconnoitered and rehearsed. Pasha was obviously referring to ground work done by terrorists like David Headley and Tahawwur Rana. MK Dhar, former Joint Director IB, writes in his book 'Open Secrets', 'Way back in 1992-93.....the process of 'transplanting armed modules' in the heartland of India had started taking cognisable shape. Some of these cells were identified in Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Kota/Ajmer region of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, and Kerala. The Student Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) had already started deputing Volunteers' to Pakistan for training along with the mujahideen, Taliban and Al Qaeda cadres'. So where is the problem in identifying, reconnoitering and rehearsing targets in India?

Aftermath - India

Lack of reaction to the Geronimo raid by military garrisons located close by, is being construed by a cross section of our security experts as proof of ISI-Pakistan Military

having been given advance information of the raid. This need not be the case. The sound of low flying helicopters on a pitch dark night is so misleading that it creates the mirage of an omni-directional attack. Earmarking a reaction team from a close by garrison implied more and more people knowing someone important was in the compound. Can you imagine the ISI risking this with troops turn over and requirement of rehearsals? One thing is certain that having eluded the US for a decade, complacency must have set in with the US hunting along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border while Osama enjoyed the comfort of his luxurious mansion in

urban surroundings. This is perhaps the reason that the developers and occupants of the mansion never thought of developing escape tunnel (s) that could have helped evade capture and death, utilising them the moment helicopter noises were heard. Talking of reaction, how deep inside India was the Purulia drop? Did we scramble any aircraft? How many hours after the terrorist strike during 26/11 did we react and how do we rate the eventual clean up - taking 60 hours to clear a couple of terrorists?

As it happened after the attack on Parliament and 26/11, the Indian media went in a tizzy on whether our Special Forces could undertake a similar raid like the US Navy Seals. The answer is yes provided our boys could be landed in the same compound but could they have been landed there? Answer to the second question is 'no', in the absence of national will and our inability to revive the concept of HUMINT that was throttled during Prime Minister Gujarat's time. Notwithstanding this, covert actions to take out the wanted terrorist are possible provided we have the will. There are many ways that covert and incognito operations can be conducted and it is all the easier when the targets move freely in

Pakistan. Our Special Forces come into focus periodically when operations like Geronimo occur. There are calls for revisiting our Special Forces but the end result is only unwarranted expansion in complete disregard to global norms. The annual expansion rate in Special Operations Command (SOCOM) is 3.5 per cent albeit for 2012, a special sanction is being sought to hike it to 4.12 per cent due to increased commitments. This growth rate is despite USSF deployment in over 85 countries. In sharp contrast, our Army Special Forces expanded by 110 per cent during the period

2000 to 2003. This

year, we have raised

the eighth Special

Forces unit, causing a manpower shortage of 80-90 personnel in all Special Forces units. Already, India's Special Forces are at par in numbers with SOCOM, considering 2/3rd strength of SOCOM is 'in support' role comprising civilians and military which are not Special Forces. We need to define a National Strategy for Employment of Special Forces and integrate and consolidate our Special Forces. Unless we want to continue suffering from Pakistan's '1000 cut policy', we must develop a deterrent to the irregular war thrust upon us. We need to build overt publicised capabilities and deniable covert capabilities with Special Forces in the lead. We should also have the will to selectively demonstrate this deterrence in order to establish its credibility. We should heed Chanakya who said, "Do not be very upright in your dealings for you would see by going to the forest that straight trees are cut down while crooked ones are left standing". Advantages of joint training / joint operations of our Special Forces with counterparts like the USSF require little elaboration and should be exploited.

There was considerable inquisitiveness about the 'stealth' helicopter used by the

Seals. Indications suggest the MH-60M Black Hawk has greater radar and acoustic stealth. Delivering his posture statement on 03 March 2011, Admiral Olsen, Commander SOCOM had stated, "We are fielding the first of 72 planned MH-60 K/L as part of our capitalization of MH-60 K/L platforms". Additionally, the flight route was obviously chosen intelligently through gaps in radar coverage hugging the hills, which would obviously be known to the US.

Conclusion

India should not be lulled by elimination of Osama Bin Laden. Having sponsored terrorism in India for over two decades, Pakistan is becoming more and more jingoistic, increasing her nuclear toys, tacit Chinese support to her jihadi policies and impending US withdrawal from Afghanistan. Her obsession of installing a Pakistan favoured regime in Afghanistan and kicking Indians out is unlikely to recede. The thousand cut policy of Pakistan is going to multiply much more with institutionalised radicalisation in Pakistan, especially in urban areas, which according to an opinion published in Daily Times of Karachi dated 11 May 2009 is "...a monstrous experiment in brainwashing and on a par with, if not worse than, Nazi Germany's eugenics". Dr Marc Faber, author of Gloom, Boom and Doom writes, "India continues to be ambivalent about power; it has failed to develop a strategic agenda commensurate with its growing economic and military capabilities ... throughout history, India has failed to master the creation, deployment and use of its military instruments in support of its national objectives". India needs to gear up for much harsher times.

-Source: Journl of the United Service Institution of India.)

**The author is a Retd. Army Gen. and a prolific writer on the militancy and security issues).*

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regimes and in fact all the Jehadi structures openly reject secularism as a basis of all state activity and governance and instead insist upon the regular reorganisation of the State and society in accordance with the precept and precedent of Islam. The protagonists of the Islamic order of the society and government have claimed that the Islamic religious injunction provided for the protection of the peoples who do not profess Islam and the other minorities. Some of the Hurriyat conference leaders have accepted without hesitation that secularism has no place in the Islamic order of the society and government as it conflicted with the imperatives of authority which draws their sanction from Muslim religion.

It is difficult to conclude that the Indian leaders are not able to realise the risks in sending back the Hindus to Kashmir in a situation of conflict. The truth is that the Indian political class follows a measured policy, in regard to Jammu and Kashmir, which does not underline the return of the Hindu refugees to their homes. The Indian political class seeks to graft the return of the Hindu refugees to their homes to an overall settlement on the Kashmir dispute with Pakistan and the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir. Had it been otherwise, the Indian Government would have opened talks with the Hindu refugees of Kashmir, before

they conceived of a settlement with Pakistan or the Muslims of the State.

Peace Process :

A discussion on what constitutes the Kashmir dispute is outside the scope of this paper. Suffice it to say here that the Indian political class recognises Kashmir dispute to be what Pakistan and the Muslim separatist flanks in Jammu and Kashmir construe it to be. The Indian Government has, in principle accepted the Kashmir dispute to be the expression of the claim Pakistan lays to Jammu and Kashmir on the basis of the Muslims majority composition of its population as well as the claim made by the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir, to a separate freedom, to which the partition of India entitled them on the basis of the ratio of their population in the State. The negotiations for a settlement of the Kashmir dispute, which were originally initiated by the Indian Government and which have now assumed the brand name "political process", underline a quest for an agreement which India seeks to reach with Pakistan and the Muslims of the State.

The "peace-process" has been carried at many levels : between the two governments of India and Pakistan, back-channel diplomacy, third power mediation and the negotiations carried on between the

Indian Government and the various Muslim separatist as well as mainstream political organisations and outfits inside the State. Interestingly Pakistan has made its position clear in unmistakable terms, that it will accept a settlement on Kashmir dispute which is approved by the Muslims of the State. The Muslims in Jammu and Kashmir have also made their stand clear that they will agree to a settlement on Kashmir, which is acceptable to Pakistan.

The "peace-process" has largely revolved round the claim Pakistan has laid to the Muslim majority regions of the State : the province of Kashmir, the Muslim majority districts of the Jammu province and the Kargil district of the Ladakh region, as a baseline for a settlement of the Kashmir dispute. The two countries came close to the acceptance of the reorganisation of the Muslim majority regions of the State into a separate sphere of Muslim power placed in between the two countries under some form of a protectorate. The Manmohan Singh-Musharaff proposals, on which the two countries are reported to have come to an agreement, underlined the reorganisation of the Muslim majority regions of the State into a separate political structure, which was based upon the territory of India, but placed under the political con-

trol of both India and Pakistan.

The "peace-process" is still in progress. But the Indian political class has given no indication of how it will graft the return of the Hindu refugees to Kashmir to the commitments it has given to Pakistan and the Muslims of the State in respect of the settlement of the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir.

Road Ahead :

The uprootment of the Hindus from their homes in Kashmir, was one of the major displacements of people in the aftermath of the second world war, in which a whole community was torn off from its roots. The White Paper on Kashmir notes : "Like the other tradition bound, endogamous and native people, the Hindus in Kashmir with an incredibly long history, extending to prehistoric, proto-Aryan, later Stone Age Culture, formed an independent part of the cultural identity of the State and its personality. Because of their endocrine cultural patterns, local ritual structures, blended with the Vedic religious precept and practice and their pride in Sanskrit civilisation, they had a deep sense of attachment and belonging to their land, which they addressed in their worship as the 'Mother, who had given them birth'. The displacement of the Hindus has thus

snapped their history.

Today the Hindus of Kashmir are a displaced people, torn from their social and cultural moorings, scattered in a state of diaspora, which threatens them with the loss of their identity. Nearly, half the people of the community are living around the subsistence level, in refugee camps in various parts of the country.

Ever since the commencement of their exile, the Hindus of Kashmir have been waiting to return to the land of their birth, reiterating their resolve, from time to time, to go back to their homes and hearths. The Hindus were driven out of their homes by a religious war, which brought them death and attacked their faith. The political class of India is yet to accept that the delegitimisation of the religious war is a precedent condition for the reversal of their genocide and their return.

The Hindus have as sacrosanct a territorial right in Kashmir as their Muslim compatriots have. The claim made by Pakistan to Jammu and Kashmir State on the basis of the Muslim majority composition of its population and the claim made by the Muslim separatist flanks inside the State for a separate freedom, do not in any respect prejudice the territorial rights, the Hindus claim in Kashmir.

**The author is the Chairman of Panun Kashmir advisory).*

Jammu & Kashmir in the words of Padgaonkar

By Rustam

Inter-Regional Relations

INTERLOCUTORS on Jammu and Kashmir DileepPadgaonkar, Radha Kumar and MM Ansari submitted their report to Union Home Minister P Chidambaram on October 12, 2011. The report has not been made public so far. Hence, one cannot say what exactly the report contains. However, one can say with some authority about what Padgaonkar thinks about Jammu & Kashmir and the nature of the problem the nation has been facing in the state since decades. It would be appropriate to quote him verbatim to put things in perspective.

What he says about Jammu & Kashmir reads like this: "Our experience was that the people across the state were not satisfied. They had suffered and the reasons were different in different regions. One of the main reasons for the unrest among the youth was the acute employment problem. Youth were not getting jobs. That was the reason they were turning towards militants".

"When we tried to find what the people's political aspirations were, we found the people inhabiting different regions of the state had different and mutually exclusive political perceptions and aspirations. The people of the Valley had different political perceptions, whereas the people of Jammu and Ladakh had altogether different political perceptions. Their standpoints were altogether different. Not just this, the people of Kargil had political perceptions different from those of the people of Leh. Similarly, the political thinking of the people of the Muslim-majority districts in Jammu province was different from those of the people of Jammu city. How should one tackle all these diversities and satisfy all the interests? This was the fundamental issue before us. I think a way could be found out of the report we had submitted".

"I view the issues facing the state from three angles. One is the relations between the centre and the state. We know that the Instrument of Accession signed by Maharaja Hari Singh had restricted the jurisdiction of New Delhi to just three subjects (read defence, foreign affairs and communication) as far as Jammu & Kashmir was concerned and the rest of the subjects were under the ambit of the state government. But in course of time New Delhi eroded the internal autonomy the state enjoyed under Article 370 of the Indian Constitution and brought the state under the ambit of several central laws. The Government of India also applied various schedules of the Indian Constitution to the state. Article 370 had envisaged for the state a very special status and the purpose was to enable the state to preserve and promote its distinct identity. The application of the central laws and the various schedules of the Indian constitution caused dissatisfaction among the people of the Valley (read Kashmiri Muslims), they got alienated from India. But the people of Jammu and Ladakh felt jubilant. They accepted the central laws and central institutions very cheerfully because they were for their full integration into India".

"The other was that there were inter-regional tensions and animosities. For example, the people of Jammu and Ladakh hate the people of Kashmir (read Kashmiri Muslims) from the core of their heart. They complained that Kashmir and the people of Kashmir (read Kashmiri ruling elite) had consistently followed a policy of discrimination with

them. If the people of Jammu elected one MLA at the rate of one per 100,000 voters, the people of Kashmir elected one MLA at the rate of one per 85,000 voters. It meant that the people of Kashmir had seven seats more in the assembly as compared to the people of Jammu province, although the population of this province was almost equal to that of the Valley. They also complained that it was the people of Kashmir who had occupied the bulk of positions in the vital service sector. The share of the people of Jammu province and Ladakh region in the public services was very inadequate and negligible. Not just this, it was the Kashmir province which always got more funds for developmental activities and creating infrastructure. The people of Jammu and Ladakh always got only crumbs. The people of Jammu and Ladakh were extremely angry with Kashmir. There existed in Jammu and Ladakh anti-Kashmiri sentiment. This was the internal situation in the state. It was said again and again that the inter-regional bitterness would continue to dot the state's political scene unless there was decentralization of the state power".

Diversity, Kashmiriat, Corruption, Weak Govt

"The third angle relates to the Pakistan-occupied-Jammu & Kashmir. The Line of Control has divided many families. Both sides have mountains. Gujjars inhabit these areas. Take, for example, Gilgit. The relatives and ancestors of the people of Gilgit lived, and continue to live, in Baluchistan. POJK, which people on other side call Azad Kashmir, doesn't house Kashmiri-speaking people. The population of ethnic Kashmiris in POJK is not even one per cent. We have to take cognizance of this demographic profile of the region also. Because in 1994 the Indian Parliament had adopted a resolution which said the only issue that still remained to be resolved between India and Pakistan was the merger of POJK with India. Thus, according to me, the Kashmir problem has three dimensions - Centre-State relations, internal dimension/empowerment and Jammu & Kashmir and POJK".

"We have been committing a grave mistake since six decades and the mistake is that we are looking at the Kashmir issue the way the people of the Valley want. I agree that the Valley has witnessed more terror-related incidents. Many people have lost their lives there. But it is also true that all the chief ministers of the state, barring GhulamNabi Azad, have been from the Valley. The militant outfits are also Kashmir based. That is why the media and other people focused their attention on the Valley alone. The result of this approach was the neglect of Ladakh and Jammu province. So, when we talk of diversity we talk of the various aspects of the state's diversity and complexity. We talk of diversity in terms of language. At least eight languages are spoken in the state. There is cultural diversity. There is one more important thing. People say that Jammu & Kashmir is a Muslim-majority state. It's true in a sense. But this doesn't mean that the Muslim population is homogeneous. It is not. The first difference is that the state houses Sunnis and Shiite Muslims. The Muslims who inhabit the areas adjoining the Line of Control are ethnically different. They are Gujjars, Bakerwals, Paharis and so on. They speak different languages. Their culture is different from that of the Muslims who inhabit the Valley proper.

They are like Dogras. They have rich literature. They are culturally very rich. They live and co-exist peacefully because they are Dogras who do not discriminate between Hindus and Muslims. They call themselves Rajputs. Besides, they feel proud of this fact. The people of the country do not know all this. We have discussed in detail this aspect of the state's demographic profile and diversity in our report because I believe that each and every socio-cultural group in the state must get the right to preserve its identity, culture and heritage".

"Yes, we also focused our attention on Kashmiriat. Once upon a time it meant something great; people professing different faiths and belonging to different cultures lived together. But I have come to believe that it has become a story of the past. The Kashmiriat stands considerably eroded. It is now confined to only a few pockets in the Valley. All this happened because Islam in the Valley has become reactionary. The number of Wahabis and the Salafis has increased in the Valley manifold. This has resulted in the erosion of Kashmiriat and rise of extremism and fundamentalism. Hence, I do not consider Kashmiriat as an important factor that could be considered while devising a solution to the Kashmir issue".

"The Government of Jammu & Kashmir is very weak. We all know that Jammu & Kashmir gets 90 per cent money from the Centre for developmental and other activities. But it cannot utilize these funds on time. This happens because the government doesn't have the required system and administrative apparatus. As for corruption, it is everywhere in the country. But in Jammu & Kashmir corruption is deep-rooted and is of different type. There is Dal Lake. We have never seen such houses in the country as we saw near and around Dal Lake. The question arises from where the money came? There is no industry in the valley. There are no big factories in Kashmir. Yes, there is carpet industry, dry fruit there. There are also people who are engaged in the business of furniture. But almost all the things are imported from outside Kashmir. So, how is it that the people of Kashmir have such purchasing capacity? The shops and malls are full of costly goods. This means only one thing - rampant corruption. We know that the people of Kerala have a tremendous purchasing capacity. At the same time, we know the reasons for this. The reason is that the people of Kerala go to the Gulf countries, work there and send money to their families. But this is not true of Kashmir Valley and yet the people of Kashmir have become so rich that they can buy highly costly goods. It is clear that the state government is weak and corruption at its zenith. This has led to dissatisfaction among the people of Kashmir in a sense. They say that India does pump into Kashmir money but it doesn't ensure that the money reaches the right people. It is the misuse of the Indian money which has led to the alienation from New Delhi".

**Autonomy, Separatists, Pakistan,
Jammu & Kashmiri Hindus**

"I had said during my first visit to Kashmir that we would want to meet separatists. We would want to talk with them. They should tell when and where we should meet and with what conditions? But they didn't respond, despite our repeated suggestions to this effect. Then, they told us to invite them formally. We sent letters to each and every sepa-

ratist leader, but none of them replied. Now when people say that we didn't meet them my response would be that they should ask the separatists, and not us. We tried our level best but with no result. I also know why didn't the separatists talk to us? In my view they didn't come forward for discussions because whatever they do they do it as per the wishes of Pakistan. Those who came forward for negotiations without the concurrence of or at the behest of Pakistan they were murdered. Last year, Abdul GaniBhat candidly acknowledged that we had leveled serious charges against the Indian army, including the charge of murder, but those were false charges. The Kashmiris had killed them (separatists). Then the brother of Bhat Sahib was shot dead. Lone brothers' father was shot dead. Mirwaiz Umar Farooq's father was shot dead. They were shot dead because they were willing to talk with India. So, there exists fear in the valley. That's the reason the Kashmiri separatists didn't talk with us. They will not talk unless they are asked by Pakistan to do so".

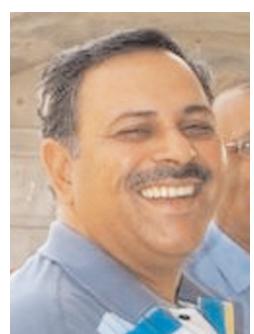
"There is no truth in it. We have nowhere used the term autonomy in our report. Only four persons know what lays embodied in our report. I, my two colleagues and Home Minister P Chidambaram know what is there in the report. I once again repeat that we have nowhere used the term autonomy in our report. Look we have not talked of three regional councils, one each for Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. It was Sheikh Abdullah who had talked of something like this with Jawaharlal Nehru. Thereafter, this issue was discussed thrice. Reports were also produced on the issue, but no decision was taken on any of the reports. BalrajPuri has worked extensively on this subject. We met with him in Jammu a number of times and I can share with you that we were deeply influenced by him".

"I will tell you that Jammu and Kashmir is a very difficult problem. If this problem is to be surmounted, then the solution has to such as is based on the three principles of dignity, justice and insaniyat. Such an approach can help find a workable, durable and acceptable solution. The people who inhabit different regions like Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh need to be given these three things. We have dealt with this aspect in great details in our report".

"You would find that the most serious problem in the state is the problem of the displaced Kashmiri Pandits. I do not want to use strong words, but it is highly regrettable that New Delhi and the media have totally ignored them. They are very sad and disappointed. They are feeling abandoned. They were forced to flee from the Valley. Their new generation is born in unlivable tenements and this new generation doesn't know anything about Kashmir. This is a sad reflection on the situation. Not even a single political party ever raised the issue of Kashmiri Pandits in the Parliament because they constitute a microscopic minority, which has no vote-bank."

"We have said that our report should be brought in the public domain as soon as possible. We have been told that it would be done soon. First the Home Minister would meet the Prime Minister and discuss with him the report. Thereafter, there would be an all-party meeting, where the report would be discussed. Their views would be ascertained. Thereafter the government would proceed further after taking into

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Shailendra Aima

SOMETIMES back, a discussion ensued at a web portal about Kashmiri Pandits, the Sanskrit roots of Kashmiri Culture and Pluralism. It was amazing that some Kashmiri compatriots, now resident outside in the US and the Middle East became highly volatile and denounced the Sanskrit heritage and tried to demonize the Pandits, for being the "Brahmins - the powerful elite of the Hindu social hierarchy", who were charged of perpetrating the "ugly reality of social stratification developed along the lines of Caste and Jati" for thousands of years.

On October 17, 2011, I posted on the same web portal a comprehensive document, "The Sanskrit Himalayas" written by Dr. Shashikumar Toshkhani who developed it after I posted him about these accusing and demonizing charges by a section of Kashmiri diaspora. I am so grateful to Dr. Toshkhani for bringing to light some hitherto unknown facts that had been consigned to antiquity.

The discerning readers and students of history would appreciate that the millennium and a half, which begins with the Mauryas and ends with the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, was a glorious period of Sanskritic proliferation in arts, literature, spirituality, poetics, aesthetics, linguistics, drama, philosophy, Yoga, Sankhya, Mimamsa and criticism. It was a unique period in Indian history that saw to the development of both classical and folk traditions; the Sanskrit language and the regional dialects; and the growth of the central as well as regional powers. This period was a period of immense development of the Indian mind, its knowledge systems, its technology, its Universities and educational institutions, as well as of expanding trade and prosperity.

Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Buddhism, Tantra and Monism brought about an avalanche of Bhakti – an unprecedented spiritual activity that paved way for its manifestations in devotional poetry, a hunger for personalizing man-God relationship and growth and development of regional languages across the sub-continent.

Kashmir was in the forefront of these developments and made its unique contribution to Indian culture and way of life. It shall be very relevant to state that these aspects of uniqueness of Kashmir's contribution to the Indian civilization still mould the minds of Kashmiris

Sanskrit Kashmir, Kashmiri Pandits and the Caste Reality

and are manifestly visible in our prayers, hymns, thoughts and actions even today and make us proud of our Sanskrit heritage and roots. This unique period in India's cultural and civilizational context can't be treated just a continuum of the "Vedic period". We believe that this unique period in India's cultural and civilizational context should in fact be treated as a leap above the "Vedic period" and hence is referred to by Panun Kashmir as the period of "Sanskrit Civilization". I don't find any coherent, logical and cogent reason for these critics to find the term "Sanskrit Civilization" so offensive, abominable or abysmal, as they would like it to be.

In fact this discussion started when I posted a note while refuting the charges of communalism and separatism leveled against Panun Kashmir. My note, "Panun Kashmir and Pluralism", was a political articulation of Panun Kashmir's stand on the issue of Pluralism and Kashmiri Pandits, which these critics detested. It became quite obvious that one of the critics lost her cool when I made some references about conversions in Kashmir by a Shiite Sufi, Mir Shamasuddin Araki or Iraqi (as different historians have referred to him) who had managed to convert a significant number of Kashmiri Hindus population to the Shi'a sect during the reign of Fateh Shah(1496–1505). These conversions were made using force as described in the Persian book 'Bharistan-e-shah' written during those times, as also in 'Tohfaful Ahabab'. In fact as mentioned in these chronicles, in one single instance, 960 Kashmiri Hindus who resisted conversion were slaughtered under his guidance. This mention to Mir Shamasuddin Araki infuriated her; and as I now understand, she holds Mir Shamasuddin Araqi in high esteem. This is a tragedy in Kashmir, where somebody's freedom fighter is another's terrorist.

After my protracted interactions and attempts to understand the real content and motives behind this denunciation, I came to this conclusion that these critics were trying to project Panun Kashmir as a parallel to the Azaadi mongers. They wanted to project that the Kashmiri Pandits had no right to claim themselves to belong to any different class, ideology or thought process; and that the Kashmiri Pandits had rather been more oppressive during thousands of years (for, as alleged, they had been responsible for imposing the ugly reality of caste and Jati), than those who are the perpetrators of iconoclasm, proselytization and

ethnic cleansing in Kashmir. In their bitterness, they went on to denounce Kashmiri Pandits for being Brahmins – the so-called elite and the powerful of the Hindu social hierarchy. Perhaps, the intent has been to tell the Pandits that they have received back what they had wreaked upon others in the past. It is therefore quite evident that these critics are part of a campaign to vilify and malign the Kashmiri Hindus. These critics seem to have joined those who have been spreading lies and concocting distortions about Kashmiri Pandits in order to downplay their pain and ignominy, the geo-political import of their mass exodus and ethnic cleansing from their habitat.

So, while keeping all these aspects in mind, I wrote back to the main ideologue of this denunciation, who happens to be a teacher of historic linguistics in a University in the US. The issues mentioned by her and on which she focuses her denunciation of Panun Kashmir and Pluralism are therefore derived from her amazing ability to interpret or misinterpret linguistics and historicism. I have dwelled upon all these issues, but for present let's look at her understanding of the terms "communal and communalism".

What is COMMUNAL? As per these critics, any objective centered on the welfare of a particular community is communal. This is not a negative connotation, at all. In fact, such an interpretation is rooted in the concept of communes – collective living and/or closeness shared together by individuals. Communal in the context of community life or closeness of individuals in a group or shared living/ experiences is not a contemptuous term. Communal is negative when it is interpreted in the context of communalism – a matter of disagreements leading to conflicts within a larger society where these disagreements arise because the units of the larger community tend to individuation of their interests/objectives/aspirations as opposed to the interests/objectives/aspirations of the other communities and converting these differences into conflicts. If this interpretation of communal as presented by the critics is adhered to, then all such organizations and movements, who speak up for, stand up to and work for the amelioration of the victim communities around the globe should be called communal. Then all those speaking for women's rights are communal, those fighting for the rights of Palestinians are communal; the Sacchar Commission's findings and mandate are communal; and so are probably anyone and

everyone who articulate grievances / welfare objectives of this or that community which is a victim or is perceived to be so.

Submitting grievance 'in itself' is not communal. How can speaking of the welfare of one's community be communal, especially when the perception is that the Kashmiri Pandit community has been subjected to discrimination, murders, plunder by the 'other' community by creating fear and through killings and through political or ideological intimidation, and has been forced to abandon its habitat and to live in exile as refugees/ internally displaced persons; to put it rather in a perspective "cleansed ethnically"? It's possible that through it some kind of communal narrative can be built; but there is a world of difference between 'can' and 'is'. For in that case you are closing the doors on expression for justice on all discriminated communities of not just India but of the world.

The critic further avers that the statement "We also maintain that it is because of us – the Kashmiri Hindus, that Himalayas have been Sanskritized" is a highly loaded one, loaded with the sense of pride and superiority of a certain minority group". I don't understand whether the critics have a problem with the notion of SANSKRIT CIVILIZATION or with a sense of "pride and superiority" of a certain MINORITY GROUP (the KASHMIRI PANDITS)? It seems they have a problem with both. Though it may not appear very pertinent why do they at all talk about "a sense of pride and superiority of a certain minority group"? A little into it and one would understand the entire import of it. As one would notice in the original note, I write: "... we maintain that we are Hindus. We also maintain that it is because of us – the Kashmiri Hindus, that Himalayas have been Sanskritized. It is the Hindus of Kashmir who played a decisive role in carrying the Sanskrit civilization to Trans-Himalayan regions, in China and Central Asia".

The critic adds here the phrase "a certain minority group". What was the impending need to invent such a phrase? To me it appears that it was a reminder to the Pandits of Kashmir that "remember you are a minority group"? Now, is the notion of minority a handicap – some sort of emaciation, a weakness? Being a minority does not make the rights of the Kashmiri Pandits, both legal and moral, either redundant or infructuous in Kashmir; nor does that render them irrelevant in Kashmir's context -

social and political. In fact, the rights of Kashmiri Pandits are special and privileged since these are not merely a set of normal rights but special Rights, under the aegis of the UN and other International Human Rights/Refugee and IDP Provisions.

It is a well established that Kashmiri Hindu sages and scholars played a significant role in Sanskritization of the Himalayas and the trans-Himalayan regions in central Asia and South East Asia. That the millennium and a half, from the reign of Mauryas up to the establishment of the Muslim Rule in the Indian sub-continent, was a period of Sanskrit proliferation and a proliferation of philosophy, poetics, literature, drama, aesthetics, linguistics and great arts, to which the Hindus of Kashmir contributed immensely. To quote from Dr. Shashikumar Toshkhani: *"With the Silk Route straddling the Himalayas virtually becoming the Sutra Route, the Central Asian regions soaked in the wisdom of Sanskrit Sutras that transmitted the sophisticated values and subtle abstractions of the Mahayana philosophy. The intercultural exchanges began right from the time of King Ashoka and bestowed upon these regions a luminous worldview with two places in particular emerging as great centers of Sanskrit learning – Khotan and Kucha. Khotan, the Land of Jade, had an intimate relationship with China. With Khotanese scholars acquiring a profound knowledge of Buddhist texts and Sanskrit language, it played a crucial role in the onward transmission and translation of important Buddhist Sanskrit sutras like the Suvarnaprabhavasotama, Prajnaparamita, Saddharma-Pundarika and Avatamshaka. It fell finally to the Islamic onslaught of the Karkhanid rulers of Kashgar in 1006 after 40 years of bloody war. Kashmir itself was known as Kashi of Central Asia for being a great centre of Sanskrit learning before it was over-run by Islam. Works of Sanskrit literatures have been abundantly discovered from Turfan, Dun Huang and Khotan, including fragments of Sanskrit agamas and plays and kavyas of Ashvaghosha".*

If the Hindus of Kashmir believe that Sanskrit civilization forms a significant part of their heritage, how is that wrong? A pride in one's past and

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heritage is not a disadvantage, but it definitely brings out ones relevance, especially when one is down and out after being victimized and pushed into exile. It motivates one to reclaim her lost habitat with a purpose to re-establish the long cherished values of humanism, catholicity and pluralism; and to reinvent the aesthetics and arts that have not just been abandoned but comprehensively demolished in today's Kashmir.

We expected these critics to empathize with the Hindu predicament and encourage us to articulate our rights and return plans; encourage us in re-affirming our faith in the values of co-existence and pluralism. But the utterances of these critics clearly reflect that they have problem with Kashmiri Heritage and the faith of Kashmiri Hindus in pluralism? Are they inimical to the possibility of a new renaissance to enlighten the Kashmir of today? Would they not like the seminal ideas and works of Panini, Patanjali, Bhasa, Kalidas, Bhavabhuti, Kumarjiva, Asvaghosha, Abhinavgupta, Kshemendra, Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu, Asanga, Dharmakirti, Padmasambhava, Shantideva, Vimalaksha, Sanghabhuti, Punyatrata, Dharmayashas, Shakya-shribhadra, Ratnavajra, Kamalashila, Kalhan, Bilhana, Bana, Ananga, and hundreds of others from Yagini Lalleshawari to Ahad Zargar, Shamas Faqir and Waz Mehmud, to be further explored, interpreted, discovered, reinvented and reconstructed in modern day Kashmir, and also to the benefit of the entire humanity?

Well, may be the very idea of a renaissance might have a problem with an Islamist perspective of Kashmir, because that perspective is not inclusive. Well known author Arun Shourie has aptly summed up this attitude in his book 'Eminent Historians' in the following words: "In a word, both corruption and evil are germane to Hinduism. Hinduism is Brahminism. Brahminism is that 'ism' which serves the interests of the Brahmins: these interests can only be served by the exploitation and oppression of people of lower castes. Hence Hinduism is essentially an arrangement for the exploitation and oppression of the mass of people." And as for Islam, "Islam equals peace, brotherhood, the ascent towards monotheism." And therefore, "the aggression, the butchery, the devastation committed by Islamic rulers is to be sanitized."

These critics further go on to claim that "Sanskrit" ('civilized') civilization in fact is a hypothetical construct based on the ugly reality of social stratification developed along the lines of Caste and Jati." While the critics stand adequately educated on the issue of Sanskrit Himalayas and the role played by Hindus of Kashmir towards its Sanskritization by the scholarly write-up of Dr. Toshakhani

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(posted by me on October 17, 2011) on the subject, it has become important that attempts at juxtaposing Sanskrit with "the ugly reality of social stratification developed along the lines of Caste and Jati" are thoroughly examined and also put in a perspective.

What in fact do the critics imply? They presume that by juxtaposing Panun Kashmir's notion/belief of a Sanskrit Civilization with the "ugly reality of Caste and Jati", they would succeed to bring down the so-called "pride and superiority" of the Kashmiri Pandits. I fail to understand their purpose; is it to denounce Panun Kashmir's claim to pluralism and prove it flawed, or to denounce Kashmiri Pandits and their claim to Sanskrit Civilization and pluralism; and make them into the monsters, the harbingers of a caste system that emaciated humanistic endeavors among the Hindus and paved way for a socio-political dynamics that led to "proselytization drive that was conducted by the various invading Muslims much later in the time-depth (and) was facilitated if not motivated by such ugly and unfortunate social stratification." The critics seem irked not so much by Panun Kashmir, but by the claim of Kashmiri Hindus to pluralism, which they vehemently try to establish as nothing more than a deliberate, systematic manifestation of the caste-system that perpetrated inhumanity and oppression for centuries, much before even the advent of Islam in India and the "so-called conversions" associated with it.

The critics have also tried to establish a case against the priestly class among Hindus, namely the Brahmins. They aver that there is no "Sanskrit" civilization as such, but a superimposed concept emerging from among the select social (and in a way political) class — the privileged priestly class (the Brahmins). In fact, there is no "Sanskrit" language but a superimposed variety deliberately constructed as if it were a "sacred" language (refer to the commendable attempts by Hindu priests and grammarians to keep "Sanskrit" as unchanged through centuries, — because it was the "God's language". And then they make a comparison of such attempts by the Sanskrit grammarians with the attempts by the Arabic liturgy. The critics perhaps again presume that a case against the Hindu priestly class (the Brahmins) shall automatically turn into a case against the Kashmiri Hindus (Pandits) who too are Brahmins.

It is pertinent here to talk about the social structure of Kashmir before the advent of Islam and to put into perspective the caste-reality of Kashmir. On the basis of still extant source materials; pioneering work of great value has been done in the recent decades by erudite scholars like Dr. Ved Kumari Ghai, Dr. S.C. Ray, Dr.

Shashishekhar Toshkhani and Ajay Mitra Shastri to prepare a coherent and connected account of ancient Kashmir's social and cultural life. Yet the field of investigation is so vast, and the available evidence so limited, that there still remain large areas which are unexplored and unlimited.

Varna Vyavastha has been an integral part of Hindu social life since ancient times. In the Rig Veda, which is the oldest surviving record of human writing, there are verses in a hymn called the Purusha Suktam. Purusha Suktam is hymn 10.90 of the Rigveda, dedicated to the Purusha, the "Cosmic Being". One version of the Suktam has 16 verses, 15 in the anuuh meter, and the final one in the triuuh meter. Purusha is described as a primeval gigantic person, from whose body the world and the varnas (socioeconomic classes) are built. He is described as having a thousand heads and a thousand feet. He emanated Viraj, the female creative principle, from which he is reborn in turn before the world was made out of his parts.

The Suktam verses when translated mean that "In the sacrifice of Purusha, the Vedic chants were first created. The horses and cows were born; the Brahmins emerged from Purusha's mouth, the Kshatriyas from his arms, the Vaishyas from his thighs, and the Shudras from his feet. The Moon was born from his mind, the Sun from his eyes, the heavens from his skull. Indra and Agni emerged from his mouth". This order of the varnas undoubtedly forms a hierarchy asserting the primacy of the first two, but at the same time it is made clear that the society consisting of the four orders is held together by the principle of dharma or human values. As Dr. G.C.Pandey puts it, "Society was thus conceived as a hierarchy in the true sense of the word, i. e. in the sense of a society governed in accordance with sacred principles, not in the sense of a society governed by priests." Obviously, the hierarchy was socio-cultural and ethical and not at all ethnic.

What do actual facts say about the caste system and Jati whose "ugly face" so haunts the critics? Well, according to Dr. G. C. Pandey, an international authority on ancient Indian history and culture, "Race consciousness in the modern sense attaching itself to colour or physical type was never a part of the Indian consciousness". Nowhere in the ancient Indian (Sanskrit) literature, he points out, has the term arya been used in the racial sense. The assumption of some Western scholars that a branch of the Indo-Aryans called themselves "Arya" as a racial designation is only an unsubstantiated hypothesis with no basis in facts related to Vedic language and society. Sayana and other well-known Vedic commentators interpret the term arya as

"pious" or "noble". It also has the meaning of "liberal" or "worthy" in some hymns of Rigveda (RV 4. 26. 2 and 2. 11.18); the term has actually been used more in Buddhist texts as an honorific than in Vedic literature. In later literature also the generalized meaning of the word 'arya' tends to be 'noble' or 'pious' or else 'a freeman'.

Another work that is considered an important source for ancient sociological, political and historical studies in India is the Manu Smriti. Manu Smriti is one of the most heavily criticized of the scriptures of Hinduism, having been attacked by colonial scholars, modern liberals, Hindu reformists, feminists, Marxists and certain groups of traditional Hindus. Much of its criticism stems from its unknown authority, as some believe the text to be authoritative, but others do not. There is also debate over whether the text has suffered from later interpolations of verses.

The Manu Smriti was one of the first Sanskrit texts studied by the Europeans. It was first translated into English by Sir William Jones. His version was published in 1794. British administrative requirements encouraged their interest in the Dharmashastras, which they believed to be legal codes. In fact, these were not codes of law but norms related to social obligations and ritual requirements. But the fact remains that the text was never universally followed or acclaimed by the vast majority of Indians in their history; it came to the world's attention through the translation by Sir William Jones, who mistakenly has exaggerated both its antiquity and its importance. It would be pertinent to point out that the Manu Smriti is not the only civil code followed by the Hindus. There are civil codes of Parashar, Yajnyavalka and Brihasapti also, followed by large sections of the Hindu population. The tendency to jump at the Brahmin's throat, though some of the greatest social reformers of India belonged to this community, springs not from any spirit of academic research but from irrational hostility.

According to scholars like Zimmer and Muir, the early Vedic age was "wholly caste free". Even in the later Vedic age when priesthood developed within the caste system, the relationship between different caste categories was not simply linear with the Brahman at the top and the Shudra at the bottom. Sociologists of caste like M. N. Srinivas have pointed to many complexities that arise particularly "in the analysis of the middle rungs of the hierarchy". What the emergence of the varna system accomplished was to do away with the "particularism" of primitive ethnic tribes and clans and conceive the society "as a universal order". In the conceptual ordering of social categories under

this system, each varna (caste) was ideally associated with one kind of occupation — the Brahmins pursued knowledge and performed priestly functions, the rajanyas or Kshatriyas were holders of temporal power and warriors, the Vaishyas were engaged in production wealth through trade and agriculture and the Shudras engaged in labour and menial work. But the meaning of the categories changed in accordance with reference to the conceptual order of Hinduism and to its empirical order as numerous occupations emerged in later time irrespective of social groupings. Thus the Brahmins did not confine themselves to priestly functions but were also seers and poets, teachers, councillors and even agriculturists.

In the Mahabharata we also find them giving lessons in the use of weapons to Kshatriya princes. The Kshatriyas in turn were not only administrators and warriors; they pursued knowledge and learnt other skills as well, sometimes instructing even Brahmins in spiritual matters. But soldiery was not limited to Kshatriyas alone; other castes also were recruited to his army by the ruler. The two lower castes constituted the mass of non-Brahman householders called vishah. Being farmers, traders and artisans, they were regarded as the "economic support of the society". In fact, the line of distinction between the Vaishyas and Shudras was very thin and the two terms were virtually interchangeable. The Shudras subsumed several occupational groups of artisans within the fold of their caste.

Basham in his book The Wonder That Was India suggests that the jati system in its modern form developed very late perhaps not before 1000 A.D. Vishnugupta Chanakya, the author of Arthashastra, never mentioned any social laws prevailing in the society during the Mauryan Emperor Chandragupta's reign. The Chinese scholar Hsuan Tsang in the seventh century was not aware of it.

Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador to India in the 4th century BC, noted the existence of seven classes, namely that of philosophers, peasants, herdsmen, craftsmen and traders, soldiers, government officials and councilors. These classes were apparently Varnas, and not separate Jatis. Megasthenes, who visited the Maurya court at Pataliputra (Patna), also noted: "All Hindus are free, and none of them is a slave. Further, they respect both virtue and truth."

Huen Tsang, the most famous of the Chinese Buddhist pilgrims who visited India in 7th century writes: "Though the Hindus are of a light temperament, they are distinguished by the straightforwardness and honesty of their character. With regard to riches, they never take anything unjustly; with regard to justice, they make even excessive concessions.

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Truthfulness is the distinguishing feature of their administration."

Al-Idrisi a Spanish born Muslim geographer in the 11th century visited India and reported in his journal that "Hindus are naturally inclined to justice and never depart from it in their actions." In the 13th century, Marco Polo described Brahmins he encountered "as the most truthful, for they would not tell a lie for anything on earth." A few decades later Friar Jordanus emphasized that the people of Lesser India (South and Western) "are true in speech and eminent in justice."

Abu Rihan Muhammad bin Alberuni, who accompanied Mahmud Ghazani to India in the 12th century, spent several years here and studied Sanskrit besides astronomy and mathematics. He wrote extensively on India and its many aspects. He describes the traditional division of Hindu society along the four Varnas and the Antyaja - who are not reckoned in any caste; but makes no mention of any oppression of low caste by the upper castes. "Much, however the four castes differ from each other; they live together in the same towns and villages, mixed together in the same houses and lodgings. The Antyajas are divided into eight classes — formed into guilds - according to their professions who freely intermarry with each other except with the fuller, shoemaker and the weaver. They live near the villages and towns of the four castes but outside of them".

On the eating customs of the four castes, Alberuni observed that "when eating together, they form a group of their own caste, one group not comprising a member of another caste. Each person must have his own food for himself and it is not allowed to eat the remains of the meal. They don't share food from the same plate as that which remains in the plate becomes after the first eater has taken part, the remains of the meal".

An initial broad classification of Jati made in earliest references is 4-fold: Udbhija (coming out of ground like plants), Andaja (coming out of eggs like birds and reptiles), Pindaja (mammals) and Ushmaj (reproducing due to temperature and ambient conditions like virus, bacteria etc). Similarly, various animals like elephant, lion, rabbits etc form different 'Jaati'. In same manner, entire humanity forms one 'Jaati'. A particular Jaati will have similar physical characteristics, cannot change from one Jaati to another and cannot cross-breed. Thus according to Vedic connotations (Purush Suktam) "Jaati" is creation of Ishwar or God.

Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra are no way different Jaatis because there is no difference in source of birth or even physical characteristics to differentiate between them. Later, word 'Jaati' started being used to imply any kind of classi-

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fication. Thus in common usage, we call even different communities as different 'Jaati'. However that is merely convenience of usage. In reality, all humans form one single Jaati.

The fission of castes into a multiplicity of hereditary jatis occurred, according to the noted socio-anthropologist Veena Das, due to "a variety of reasons such as occupational diversification". A jati, she explains, "is identified by a combination of three principles of organisation viz. descent, locality and cult". The basic question is that of identification of the jatis and the relations of jatis, Brahmins and others, at the empirical level within the caste system. And it is here that there an undue emphasis is laid on the principle of hierarchy ignoring the meanings associated with the different conceptual categories. It has to be noted that while the jatis proliferated with their own customs and usages, a semblance of the original ideal was still preserved with respect to the varnas that subsumed them. It has also to be noted that a sharp difference of views on the social functions and statuses of caste categories between "Brahmanical and non-Brahmanical thinkers continued into classical time".

Though the Shudras were conceived as the servitors, this description did not exactly correspond to reality, for Shudras were clearly neither "non-Aryans, nor outcastes nor slaves, nor lawless labourers produced through expropriation of property". "Servitude did not reflect their permanent situation either occupationally or legally", says G. C. Pande. There are numerous examples from history showing Shudras gaining upward social mobility and acquiring higher social status or even political power. What greater proof of this can be than the fact that Chandragupta Maurya, who was the son of a Shudra mother, became emperor of India and the mighty founder of the Mauryan Empire due to untiring efforts of Chanakya, a Brahman? Both the authors of the two great Indian Epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata, Valmiki and Vyasa, were not Brahmins. Valmiki was a hunter and Vyasa the son of a fisherwoman; yet is there anyone more respected by the Brahmins than they are? In the Mahabharata, Vidura is counted a Shudra, but at the same time he is treated with great respect by all for his wisdom. There are also references in Vedic literature to Shudras being chosen as members of the king's council. In the Rajatarangini, we see Suyya, an abandoned child brought up by a Shudra woman, rising to become King Avantivarman's minister. The fact is that there is a wide divergence between social theory and social reality so far as the caste system is concerned. For a detailed and true picture of the society in ancient India, it would be useful to refer

to Kautilya's Arthashastra. The evidence of Megasthenes, who declared, that "all Indians are free and not one of them is a slave", is also important in this context. Megasthenes describes seven social classes as distinct from the conventional four castes that constituted the Indian society in his times.

An important point to note with regard to the rise of the jatis is that they were autonomous units based on "functional specialization". The reason why there were numerous jatis when there were only four theoretical castes is attributed by early social thinkers to a mixture of the varnas or castes resulting from intermarriage. The phenomenon of inter-caste marriage was so prevalent that it led to the development of the concept of varnasankara in the Dharmashastras and the Smritis. Admitting to the fact of intermixture of jatis through marriage, Manu gives a detailed description of the progeny of anuloma (mother being from lower varna), pratiloma (father being from lower varna) and doubly mixed castes, and speaks of the anomalous situation arising due to their not fitting into the conventional caste scheme.

Although in the traditional parlance the jatis may pay lip service to the Brahmin as an intermediary to the gods when it comes to ritual, each caste considers itself to be the highest. If the Brahmins were to be accepted as the highest caste then other castes would have no hesitation in giving their daughters to the Brahmins. But in reality they do not. The Rajputs consider the Brahmins to be other-worldly or plain beggars; the traders consider the Brahmins to be impractical; and so on. In classical Sanskrit plays the fool is always a Brahmin. In other words, each different community has internalized a different outlook on life but these outlooks cannot be placed in any hierarchical ordering. The internalized images of the other must, by its very nature, be a gross simplification and it will never conform exactly to reality. Why is it that the Sanskritic as well as the folk narrative in India has mostly shown Brahmins as daridras living in penury and depending on alms? From Sudama to Narsi Mehta to Purander Das to Chaitanya to Swami Ramkrishna, the Indian lore is full of references to thousands of these poor ubiquitous Brahmins' narratives, of those who lived in penury, never wielded the sword or the wealth and still commanded respect and love and transformed the face of the Indian society.

The Brahmins themselves were fragmented into numerous sub-divisions, and among them too the priests "tended to approximate to a professional guild". It is clear from the Buddhist literature that they were engaged in a number of professions which they were not

theoretically supposed to adopt. Thus, as pointed out by Pande, the Dasabrahmana Jataka mentions ten kinds of Brahmins engaged in diverse professions. The Shantiparvan of the Mahabharata also speaks of several varieties of Brahmins. Undoubtedly, the Brahmins took up diverse professions like medicine, trade, agriculture, astrology and also worked as the king's councillors, ministers, officials and even soldiers, besides specializing in various branches of knowledge, teaching and performing religious rites.

This occupational diversity among different social groups can be attributed to the changes brought about by the growth of town-life, trade, industry, political activity several other factors. The formation of the mahajanapadas or geographically large republics and the emergence of the community of influential shramanas or Buddhist ascetics were also important aspects of the post-Vedic and early medieval social scene. The shramanas challenged the supremacy of the Brahmins and their hereditary position and disregarded all caste distinctions, their patrons drawn from all sections of the society — the Kshatriya clansmen, agriculturists, Brahmins, outcastes, servants, courtesans, criminals, rich traders, affluent craftsmen etc. The point to be understood here is that the Brahmins did not wield any excessive influence over the social dynamics of pre-modern India to be declared the villains of the piece who suppressed the lower castes and non-Aryans.

"How is it that the two Heroes of Sanskrit literature, Ram and Krishna are shyavarna(dark skinned) and a great Hindu God, Shiva too is dark skinned? If the theory of the critics about Sanskrit people is to be believed, then were Shiva, Ram, and Krishna lower caste or the non-caste (the outcaste)? Were Valmiki and Vyasa the liturgy or the Brahmins, who forced a Godhood upon the shudras (being dark skinned) just for exploiting them? Vyasa is also called Krishna Dvaipayana, was grandfather to the Kauravas and Pandavas. Their fathers, Dhritarashtra and Pandu, adopted as the sons of Vichitravirya by the royal family, were fathered by him. He had a third son, Vidura, by a serving maid. Valmiki, it is believed was an unnamed highway robber who used to rob people before killing them. Some text versions of the Uttara Khanda name him Valya Koli. The legend states that when confronted with Narada, the robber had a realization and he went into meditation for many years, so much so that ant-hills grew around his body. Finally, a divine voice declared his penance successful, bestowing him with the name "Valmiki": "one born out of ant-hills" (Valmikam in Sanskrit means Ant-hill)".

Caste is a European innovation having no semblance in Vedic culture. Jaati means a classification based on source of origin. Nyaya Sutra states "Sa ma an a prasava aat mika Jaatih" or those having similar birth source form a Jaati. The two words commonly considered to mean 'caste' is Jaati and Varna. However the truth is that, all the three mean completely different things. In fact, as a response to historical events one might credit the emergence of the modern jati system to the next fundamental changes in the Indian polity that occurred with the invasions from the West Asia and the European adventurism.

These critics when confronted by Dr. Ramesh Tamiri, responded to his queries and comments with vehemence and derision, as if these were coming from a person inferior to them. In fact, one critic remarked: "I have better things to do than explain to ill-informed people how they are wrong." The way this critic, with her over-inflated ego, has reacted to Dr. Ramesh Taimiri's views on the history of the caste system, pouring scorn and ridicule on his arguments and calling him "ill-informed", makes it evident that anything related to India's ancient past and its cultural and intellectual traditions is an anathema to her. The boot so far as being "ill-informed" is concerned, however, seems to be on the other foot. It is the critic, who despite assuming the expertise of a social anthropologist is appallingly ignorant of the conceptual and empirical aspects of Indian (Hindu) social reality. Nor does she seem to have studied its cultural and epistemological meanings. As her statements show, she is just repeating the theoretical assumptions of the Western colonial historians and their followers of the Marxist variety who stereotype the Hindu social categories without any real knowledge of their historicity. Hence, it has become all the more mandatory on my part to write comprehensively on the caste-reality viz. a viz. the Brahmins (the privileged priestly class) in general and the Pandits of Kashmir, in particular.

Therefore, now let us revert to the Nilamata Purana and its reference to immigrant Brahmins who followed Chandradeva and settled in Kashmir. It is highly possible that a bulk of them were from the Saraswati Valley who must have decided to migrate to Kashmir after the legendary river changed its course and finally dried up. There is a strong tradition among Kashmiri Pandits that they are Saraswat Brahmins, and the presence of a large number of words of Vedic origin in the Kashmiri language seems to confirm it. From accounts given in the Nilamatapurana, Rajatarangini and other early sources, they "appear to have emerged as the dominant and highly respected social group in Kashmir, not just because they were associated with religious

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Prof. G.L. Jalali

ITS racy prose is both lyrical and moving, subject matter most poignant. It describes what a heaven it (Kashmir) was and what a hell it is now - all man made.

It is an emotional tale of mans' love for his land, the pain of leaving home and ultimately the joy of return

IN the wake of the ongoing Muslim insurgency in the erstwhile princely Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir that broke out in 1989 a spate of books, dealing with the J&K insurgency, have flooded the world book market. These books were authored mostly by the persons living either outside J&K or some foreign writers. There were a few Kashmir authors who wrote copiously on the Kashmir subject. Mr. Basharat Peer, the author of Curfewed Night (under review) is one such author who has the distinction of writing a revealing book on the ongoing political turmoil in his native land - the scenic valley of Kashmir. His book "Curfewed Night" is the memoir of a young Kashmiri Muslim Journalist who spent his childhood and adolescent years in the strife ridden Kashmiri valley.

Belonging to a well-to-do Muslim Peer (priestly) family, Basharat's father Mr.GA Peer is a serving bureaucrat (now posted as Commissioner-cum-Education Secretary in J & K state).His mother serves as a school teacher while his grandfather is a retired head-master of a Government Secondary School. His upbringing was unlike that of other Muslim boys in his native village, Seer which is on way to valley's internationally known tourist spot. Gifted with rich imagination and deft of thought, Basharat Peer describes his village environs-open paddy fields, neighboring mountains, rich flora and fauna, village houses with thatched roofs, running and roaring brooks - in an artistic manner couched in a simple, readable and, above all, racy style of his prose reminiscent of any matured and experienced English writer. Still, the young scribe has to go miles ahead. For his style of writing I offer my hearty congratulations to Mr. Basharat Peer.

The book consists of sixteen chapters running over two hundred twenty one pages. Each chapter carries an appropriate heading, capping the details given inside the chapter. Chapters from one to eight describe author's early life up to the period when he is all set to leave the valley for plains in search of new green pastures and to make a successful career.

TITLE.....Curfewed Night
AUTHOR.....Basharat Peer
DATE OF PUBLICATION.....2010
PAGES.....221
PUBLISHER.....Harper Publications, London

In the second part the author of the Curfewed Night describes his journey as a reporter of a Delhi based newspaper through length and breadth of Kashmir, meeting a cross-section of the Kashmiris and noting their reaction towards the militancy that engulfed his homeland.

So the book titled Curfewed Night is an anecdotal record of the events seen through the prism of a writer who, overtly or covertly, sympathizes with the militants. It is a chronicle of events keenly observed by a young Muslim journalist who grows up watching this charming valley turning into a hotbed of Muslim insurgency.

Basharat Peer's narrative takes the reader into 1990s when almost the whole of Kashmir valley was overtaken very badly by Pak-sponsored militancy. The author was only 13 years old boy, reading in a village school when the Indian army was fighting a tough guilla war with the Pakistan trained militants.

Pakistan had never reconciled with the Indian stand on Kashmir. When General Zia-Ul-Haq came to power in a military coup against the democratically elected Bhutto Government, Pakistan started a proxy-war to grab Kashmir. It started indoctrinating Kashmiri Muslim youth, giving them arms training at military camps set up in PoK by Pakistan's infamous ISI. Thus started the Jihad in Kashmir. It burst forth with vigor in 1990. The civilian government in the valley was almost subverted. That is what Mr. Basharat Peer, the author of the book the Curfewed Night under review, calls "Independence movement".

Even in his adolescence, he was swept by this "Freedom movement" which was in full bloom. Once it so happened that he had to join a procession of "Freedom Fighters", he felt himself a part of "something larger....."Fighting and dying". Fired with a strong urge to usher in an Islamic order and to overpower the enemies of their so-called freedom, Basharat's school friends would cross high-mountain peaks, standing magnificently all along the border with PoK, to receive arms training in alien climes. The rebel in the young school-going boy, Basharat, take the place of a coy- some sibling of a middle-class rural Muslim family and decides to join the much talked about freedom-struggle as Mujahideen. He wants to bid adieu to studies at school.

Peer's parents heard about their sons firm resolve to join JKLF, the then premier militant outfit, fighting for valley's independence. His parents intervened and succeeded in preventing young Basharat from joining the militant outfit. "He can join after finishing his studies," they said to their overzealous son. Rebellion, his

BOOK REVIEW

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Curfewed Night

Packed with facts and fiction, narrated in a locale of electrified human emotions

father said repeatedly, were led by educated men. The young boy had to yield to the wishes of his parents. He draws a pen picture of the situation appearing in February 1990 in the valley, particularly in Srinagar. The author says, "By February 1990 Kashmir was in the midst of a full-blown rebellion against India. Every evening we heard the news of more protests and deaths. Protests followed killings, and killings followed protests. News came from Srinagar that hundreds of thousands of people had marched to pray for independence at the shrine of the patron saint of Kashmir, Nooruddin Rishi. All over the state similar marches to the shrines of Sufi saints were launched. I joined a procession to the shrine of a much revered Zain Shah Sahib at Aishmuqam near my school"(page 17). It is worth mentioning that Saint Zain Shah was originally a Kashmiri Brahman converted to Islam in 15th century,. When Kashmir was ruled by some fanatic Muslim rulers, including the infamous idol breaker Sikender Butshekan. As admitted by the author of the Curfewed Night, it was a full-fledged revolt against India, provoked and abetted by Pakistan in collaboration with the Sunni Musllim Community. So, the so-called political movement was no less short of a religious movement aimed at seceding Kashmir from India on the basis of two-nation theory, the sheet-anchor of the bloody Partition of the Indian subcontinent. It is on account of this premises that former President of Pakistan,Ghulam Ishaq Khan called the Kashmir issue "unfinished agenda of Partition". To call the ongoing Jihad as Independence Movement by Mr.Basharat Peer, the author of the Curfewed Night, is sheer travesty of truth and the distortion of historical facts

His remarks about the former Governor of Kashmir, Jagmohan are unwarranted and condemnable in the light of facts. The night of January 20, 1990 was long and sad. Before dinner, my family gathered as usual around the radio for the evening news on BBC World Service. Two days earlier, Jagmohan, an Indian bureaucrat infamous for his hatred for Muslims, had been appointed the governor of Jammu and Kashmir. He gave orders to crush the incipient rebellion....."(page15). To this question the author will find a suitable answer in the "My Frozen Turbulance" written by Jagmohan two decades ago. He says when he had assumed the charge as the Governor of J & K state, the strife-torn state was "slipping away from India" as a result of conspiracy hatched and worked out by Pakistan's infamous ISI, named "Operation Topac". As a patriot and well-wisher of the peace-

loving Kashmiri's he had no option but to bring the deteriorating situation under control. It goes to the credit of Mr. Jagmohan that he retrieved the valley for the Indian-nation and let the flag of secularism flying aloft on the ramparts of the Red Fort. Had he remained as the Governor of J&K state for some time more the history of the strife-torn state would have been decidedly different and there would have been no Kashmir issue. Unfortunately, some anti-national elements, emboldened by false media propaganda by Pakistan against Jagmohan, this visionary and ace-administrator was unceremoniously removed as Governor of the state. I, as reviewer of Mr. Basharat Peer's book Curfewed Night, am not holding brief for the former Governor Jagmohan, but stating facts for the information of the author of the book who appears to rely upon what former militants and their sympathizers have stated in their interviews with the author of the book.

His reference to the Gowkadal firings and killings needs to be discussed in the light of volatile propaganda. On page 15, the author says "One protest march began from a southern Srinagar area where my parents now live, passed the city centre, Lal Chowk, and marched through the nearby Maisuma towards the shrine of a revered Sufi Saint of a few miles ahead. Protesters were crossing the dilapidated wooden Gawkadal Bridge in Maisuma when the Indian paramilitary, the Central Reserve Police Force, opened fire. More than fifty people were killed. It was the first massacre in the Kashmir valley. As the news sank in, we all wept...? It was no doubt, a great tragedy. There was reliable intelligence reports that some mischievous elements in the protest march were bent upon raking up communal riots by setting ablaze on way Hindu houses in nearby Kashmiri Pandit localities, including Ganpatyar, Habba Kadal etc. That might have been the reason for the Indian Security Forces to take such a strong action. On hearing about such happenings, the heart of every Kashmiri - Hindu or Muslim- is bound to bleed and ache, let alone that of the author of the book under review.

One thing, as pointed out by a critic, goes to the credit of the author of the book Curfewed Night, is an extraordinary memories that does a great deal to bring the Kashmir conflict out of the realm of political rhetoric between India and Pakistan and the lives of Kashmiri's. Again, Mr. Basharat Peer refers to his unsuccessful visit to Kunjan Poshpura Village in Kupwara district of North Kashmir were the security forces were alleged

to have raped a number of village Women. It was just a propaganda stunt by Pakistan. A probe into the alleged rape incidents by the state authorities brought the fact to limelight that these charges leveled against the Indian army were totally false and fabricated. I wonder how an impartial news-reporter was led away by this propaganda stunt. His emotional out burst on these fabricated crimes committed by the security forces can be gauged from his own description ! "He sits at a bus-stop watching for the bus to take him to Kunjan Poshpura, but when it arrives he just goes on sitting, listening to the sound of reviving engine, and watching the bus drive away. For all the stories of suffering he seeks out, there is one he cannot bring himself to look at too closely."

The author has no word to say about the Chattisinghpura and the Wandhama carnages committed by the militants on non-Muslim villagers. In Chattisinghpura village, situated close to Bashart Peer's native village in Anantnag distinct, over thirty- Sikhs were brutally killed, while twentyfive Kashmiri Pandits in Wandhama village in Ganderbal Tehsil were gunned down mercilessly and their houses set on fire. A thirteen year old Kashmiri Pandit boy was the lone survivor in this village where almost fifty Pandit families lived prior to this brutal massacre of innocent Kashmiri Pandit Villagers. Their burnt houses still remain a living eye-witness to the atrocities perpetrated on the Kashmiri Pandit Community.

There is just one stray reference to the forced mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the land of their birth. The author went to attend his village school one fine morning. He found no Kashmiri Pandit teacher present in the school as all of them had fled the valley. Of course, he felt very sad and puzzled. The murderers sent a wave of fear through the community and more than a hundred thousand Pandits left Kashmiri after March, 1990. The affluent moved to houses in Jammu, Delhi and various Indian cities. But a vast majority could find shelter only in the squalor of refugee camps and rented rooms in Jammu and Delhi (page 184).

The author refers to the secular and harmonious atmosphere prevailing In the valley prior to 1989. The practice of Islam in Kashmir borrowed elements from the Hindu and the Buddhist past, the Hindus in turn were influenced by Muslim practices. In my childhood nobody raised an eyebrow if Hindu women went to a Muslim shrine to seek the blessings of a saint. The religious divide was visible only on the days India and Pakistan played cricket.

(Contd. on Page 14)

Interactional Potential of a Place

(From Page 7)

can be called the 'lalded consciousnesses.' He was an enlightened soul who had risen above any dualism.

Not only this, the consciousness associated with those places within Kashmir, that are important from the point of view of meaning they impart to Kashmir, has also been diluted. We can take the sacred site of Amarnath for an example. As per muslim narratives Amarnath was discovered by a muslim, forgetting the fact that the site is mentioned even in Kalhana's Rajatarangini. Here also, a Muslim is the chosen one even by Shiva. These distortions

were resisted by KP scholars. Amarnath has a lot to do with the Interactional potential of Kashmir. Pilgrims from all over the world flock in Amarnath every year, despite threats from terrorists. Most of the pilgrims are from India. In fact, Amarnath makes Kashmir Indian which was an eyesore for anti amaranth agitators some years back. But the agitation in Jammu created problems. This agitation was significant as it tried to establish the Interactional potential of Kashmir, and showed that Jammu was concerned about it. It showed that any attempt to distort or damage the interactional potential of Kashmir may

not be taken hands down. In this way Jammu established its interactional potential as well and showed Kashmir as a part of it. This shows that one place, at a distance from the other can be used to fight place eroding forces unleashed on another place that leads to the preservation of interactional potential of both.

If we take just these objects that we have discussed (there can be many more distorted in different ways), in an interconnected arrangement with their original meanings we can see a portion of our interactional past bubbling with the activity of life. And just apply the violent nomenclature and distortions they have been subjected to whole of the activity vanishes, a stagnation, a vacuum is felt. A

total cultural neurosis occurs, leading to a community that has a shattered self-esteem with an absence of a cultural initiative to anticipate a potential interactivity for their place. With their interactional past loaded with such alien meanings that stagnate the objects constituting that past nothing of their actual past remains that can be carried into the future. No sense of interactional potential of the place is felt. It must be kept in mind that the interactional past and the interactional potential of a place are intertwined to constitute the place attachment. When anyone of these is distorted and decimated, a negative valence is attached to the place and people lose interest in it.

But our imagination of a future life in our place cannot be

blocked by such distortions and violent nomenclature. We have to go farther and farther into our infinite interactional past where the sage Kashyap made Kashmir inhabitable and if possible we can go farther than that also. We can think of the remains of Burzama. Those were our ancestors who lived in Kashmir about 10,000 years back. Those could have been the times when dualistic discourses did not exist. They lived only because the wanted to live. The natural beauty around those ruins is still stunning. They must have worshipped that which is still a better option because nature knows no dualism.

(The author is a prolific writer and a poet)

(From Page 13)

Muslims supported the Pakistani Cricket and the Pandits were for India. My father's best friend was and remains a Pandit; my mother had long friendships with Pandit women who taught in the same school" (chapter 15, page184).

The chapter titled "Papa-II" deals with the author's interviews with some militants. The details given by these militants about some of these interrogation centres are horrible and blood-curdling anecdotes. The description of these horrible stories invoke the sympathies of the reader, no matter how callous-minded the reader may be. If true, one cannot but condemn these inhuman acts committed by the army investigators. But there stands a question mark: are these real acts of the India's disciplined army? However, there may be exceptions here and there. Perhaps it is aimed to tarnish the image of our security forces.

One such centre was shut and later on occupied by a top-ranking Oxford Educated Kashmiri bureaucrat as stated by the author of Curfewed Night, Says the author, "Before moving in, the Oxford-Educated Officer called priests of all religions to pray there and exorcise the ghosts"(page 133, chapter 11).

The author has almost sidelined describing the gruesome killings of some eminent Kashmiri Pandit leaders, Lawyers, Doctors, Journalists, Business

men, Teachers and Scholars. Can the Kashmiris particularly Kashmiri Pandits forget brutal killings of Pandit Sarwanand Premi and his son, whose eyes were gorged with an iron rod and the bodies cut to pieces or Sarla, a school teacher in a Kupwara school, sawed to death in a sawmill. Militants are equally responsible for turning the happy valley into hell. Without describing these killings, the author has not taken his narrative to a successful conclusion.

However, author's search for his "lost teacher"-Pandit Chaman Lai Kantroo evokes our admiration for this budding Kashmiri Muslim author. He desperately makes a search for his childhood Kashmiri Pandit friends. He visits Awtar's hut in Jammu where he meets his father's adopted Hindu sister Gouri wife of Awtar, Jee. "Is he Ammul's son?" says Gouri. "Ammul was my father's childhood name which hardly any one outside the family knew. My eyes were wet," narrates Basharat Peer (page 183). He met his childhood friend, Vinod, by chance in Srinagar where he worked as Area Manager of a Pharmaceutical Company. After a long search he met his Master Jee Chaman Lai Kantroo, in a rented room in Ampheela in Jammu. "A step stair led to the rooftop. Behind a curtain of clothes hanging on a nylon

rope was a garret. "Come in, Basharat," Mr Kantroo called out. I looked at him; he had aged. His checks had sunk deep, his hair was almost white; his eyes were deep down, but seemed to have lost their verve."(page190). His teacher gave him a book of poems composed by him. The cover of the book read "Eternal Sin". His partings were surcharged with emotions on either side-from his old student Basharat and his teacher Pandit C.L. Kantroo.

He describes valley's corrupt bureaucracy. Even bureaucrats demand huge bribes for sanctioning monetary relief. "The files do not move by itself from one table to another. Out of the relief money of one lakh, the applicant has to spend 25 per cent to thirty thousand rupees. Otherwise he will waste years visiting offices. And once he pays that, we ensure that his name in the compensation job list goes up and things move fast."(page 164). He gives a pen picture of the devastated Rughnath Mandir in the interior of Srinagar city and the abandoned Martand temple at Mattan sans (missing) Shiva idol. At the end of the Curfewed Night the author crosses the Line of Control at Uri which now "functions as a defunct border between two parts of Kashmir" He comments, "The Loc did not run through 576 kilometer of

militarized mountains. It ran through the reels of Bollywood coming to life in dark theatres; it ran through the conversations in Coffee shops and TV screens showing cricket matches. It ran through whispers of lovers. And it ran through our grief, our anger, our tears and our silence". (Page 220-221). It ends with the people awaiting eagerly for the bus coming from the other side of our valley. "I watched thousands of men, women and children stand and along the soldier-laden road, welcoming the ones who had stepped across the line."(page221).

I wish Basharat Peer writing his new book, describing the return of 4 lakh displaced Kashmiri Pandits to their land of birth and their Muslim brethren according them warm hearted welcome in the true spirit of "Kashmeriat" of which the author of the Curfewed Night is a strong votary Amen !

In the end I agree that the "Curfewed Night is an emotional tale of man's (author's) love for his land, the pain of leaving home and ultimately the joy of return". Its racy prose is both lyrical and moving, subject matter most poignant. It describes what a heaven once it was, and what a hell it now is - all man-made! Buck up Basharat Sahib-that is my message to you!

(The author is prolific writer and editor Samachar Post)

(From Page 9)

account the views of the various political parties. Our job is over'.

Article 370, Candid Reflections & Unsettling Suggestions

"Yes, I can say something about Article 370. Union Home Minister P Chidambaram had said that Jammu and Kashmir is a unique state. On the one hand, it is an integral part of India and, on the other hand, it enjoys a special status within the Indian Union. It is under Article 370 that it enjoys a special status. Besides, Jammu and Kashmir has its own constitution which declares Jammu and Kashmir as an integral part of India. So, Jammu and Kashmir has two identities. The people of the state have two identities. One is that they are Indian nationals. The other is that they are state subjects. There is no region in the country which houses people having two identities. It is very important to understand this double identity of the people of the state. We have also to see how this double identity could be preserved and promoted. It is very important. We have dealt with this aspect in our report".

One would agree with most of the Padgaonkar's formulations on Jammu and Kashmir, as well as his views on Pakistan, on Kashmiri separatists, on

Jammu & Kashmir in the words.....

displaced Kashmiri Hindus, on the attitude of Jammu and Ladakh towards the Central laws, on the Kashmir's demography, on the plight of Jammu and Ladakh, on the attitude of New Delhi towards Jammu and Ladakh and on the attitude of the India media towards Kashmir. He is absolutely right when he says that the Wahabis and Salafis have given a radical orientation to Islam in Kashmir, thus creating an environment in the Valley where liberals could not live. Indeed, it was the rise of radical Islam that led to the exodus of Kashmiri Hindus, thousands of Sikhs and a few Muslims from the Valley. There is no doubt whatever that a particular section of Kashmiri Muslim society has become intolerant and exclusivist over the period. Padgaonkar is also right when he holds Pakistan responsible for their failure to engage with the Kashmiri separatists and opines that the Kashmiri separatists are mortally afraid of Pakistan and that they just cannot afford to ignore Islamabad, which has established their stranglehold over them. He is also to the point when he says that the Kashmiri Society is highly heterogeneous and that while the Kashmiris dislike the central laws, the people of Jammu and Ladakh accept the same most cheerfully.

Equally appreciable are his sugges-

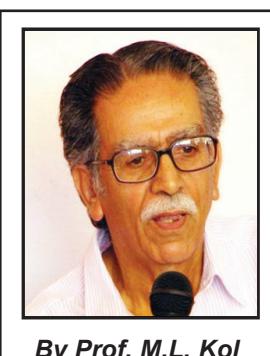
tions on the miserable plight of the displaced Kashmiri Hindus and the people of Jammu and Ladakh who, according to him, never received their due share in the political and economic processes in the state. No less significant is his negative observation that New Delhi and the Indian media have always ignored Jammu and Ladakh and looked things the way the Kashmiri leadership wanted and wants. It would also be a crime against man and god if his observation on the empowerment of people inhabiting different regions is overlooked. Indeed, his' are candid reflections on Jammu and Kashmir.

However, to say all this is not to suggest that there is nothing controversial in what he has said about the state. There is much that creates serious doubts in the minds of the people about his real intentions. Take, for example, his formulations on Article 370, on double identity of the people of the state, on the need to preserve and promote this double identity, on the special status of the state and on the Instrument of Accession. His formulations clearly suggest that he wants the retention of Article 370; that he doesn't consider the people of the state an integral part of India to the same extent as other Indian nations, that he supports the concept of

double nationality, that he emphasizes the fact that the Instrument of Accession had restricted the jurisdiction of New Delhi over the state to just defence, foreign affairs and communication, that New Delhi over the period diluted the state's special status by bringing it under the jurisdiction of several central laws and institutions, that the state enjoys a special status that needs to be protected, and that we have depended largely upon BalrajPuri while dealing with the issue of regional empowerment. (BalrajPuri wants autonomy for the state and within that autonomous state some semblance of autonomy for Jammu and Ladakh, which is utterly unacceptable.)

Besides, the various reports clearly suggest that the interlocutors have suggested withdrawal of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, demilitarization of certain areas, rehabilitation of militants, general amnesty and many such things. The fact that Padgaonkar did not reveal as to what exactly the report contains as far as the solution part is concerned does suggest that he has put forth suggestions, which, if accepted, would hasten the process of disintegration or unsettle the settled in Jammu and Kashmir. One must keep one's fingers crossed. The interlocutors are not really dependable.

-(Courtesy: The Early Times)



By Prof. M.L. Koul

NATASHA KOUL, though a Kashmiri Pandit in her origins, has deliberately ignored the heterogeneity of the state of Jammu and Kashmir and projected the secessionist aspirations of a small segment of the Kashmiri population as the destiny of the entire state. She should know that Jammu province predominantly secular and democratic is whole-hog for full integration of the state with the Indian Union and is vehemently opposed to the special status granted to the state under article 370 of the Indian Constitution.

So is Ladakh. It is entirely Buddhist with a sprinkling of Muslim population. The Shia segments of population inhabiting the region of Kargil fully know their fate in the Muslim state of Pakistan where shias are detested and have been under a state-sponsored process of elimination. The foreign settlers in Kashmir from Iran, Turan and Afghanistan are and have been the source of turmoil in Kashmir. They are in siege of the state power and have demolished the native cultural structures and motifs and fed and reared a brand of politics based on obscurantism and religious bigotry. It is they who donated their sons to Muslim Jihad and made it obligatory for the native converts to swell the ranks of Jihadis. The training camps opened by Pakistan military imparted them training in wielding lethal weapons and funded the Jihadi groups formed at its behest. After having crossed into the Indian territory they made the Kashmiri Pandits as their first targets. JKLF killers were the first to wage war on natives of Kashmir and made them flee their homes and hearths. Jihadi aspirations of the foreign settlers in Kashmir are not the aspirations of the Hindus, Shias, Sikhs, Buddhists and large sections of Sunni Muslims of Kashmir. Peace will prevail in Kashmir only when the Jihadi forces in India, Pakistan and other Muslim countries are globally defeated. That is the solution to the present turmoil in Kashmir.

Natasha Koul on Kashmir as national and international problem

Kashmir certainly is a national problem. The patriotic people of the country are in four gears to vanquish the vicious forces that are hell-bent on partitioning the country a second time. The collaborators and mercenaries for petty gains and vested interests have chosen to fall in line and get mobilised for facilitating the Jihadi agenda to fructify. The 'Seminar-Circuit'

Suvir Koul's & Natasha Koul's Write-Ups in the quarterly of IIC New Delhi-II

Natasha Koul on People of J&K & their aspirations

run by Dr. Gulam Nabi Fai, a notorious ISI agent, stands exposed alongwith the Indian collaborators and mercenaries who are in sync with the ISI agenda of fragmenting India as a thriving democratic country. The nationalist forces will certainly defeat the ISI machinations and the Jihadi forces dreaming all the time Kashmir going the Pakistan way. Kashmir assumed an international complexion the day it became and inalienable part of India. The Muslim League led by Jinnah detested by the Kashmiri Muslims did not savour well the accession of the state to India. The considerations were bluntly communal. The tribal raiders invaded the Indian territory of J&K State and indulged in loot, murder and mayhem. The Indian army with the full support of Kashmiri Muslim populations fought the looters and killers to the extent of clearing large chunks of territories under their grab and occupation. India as a civilised country lodged a complaint in the world-body against the Pakistani aggression on her territory. Cold-war politics enmeshed the entire issues in knots of complications. The world-body has deleted Kashmir from its agenda now.

The issue in Kashmir is mainly Hindu and Muslim, purely communal. If it were not so, why were the Hindus of Kashmir put to a genocide, thus forcing them to run from helter to skelter in search of existential safety and security? The Jihadis were more than conscious that the Hindus had a consistent history of fighting them from day one when they in the garb of sufis forcibly occupied Kashmir and reduced it to an Iranian colony. The issue has gained prominence at international level when Pakistan, a Muslim state, waged a blatant war on India four times. Despite image-battering defeats, she did not drop Kashmir from its ominous Jihadi agenda. At its behest, Jihadi war has been incessantly going on in Kashmir for the last twenty years. The Kashmir issue, Madam Natasha, is nothing but communal and that is the only paradigm, through which it is to be seen and evaluated and strategies to be forged to defeat the religious war for disintegration of India.

Natasha Koul on history of Kashmir

It is a fact of history that parts of the state of Jammu and Kashmir are under an illegal occupation of Pakistan. It is also a fact that Pakistan treacherously ceded a portion of the state's territory to China only to fortify and buttress its relations with that country. It is universally known that China too has grabbed large belts of the state's territories through a treacherous war waged on India in 1962. The territories that historically belong to the state of Jammu and Kashmir have been under an illegal occupation of both China and Pakistan, now in an unholy alliance to offset the growing influence of India on

international scale. The two states occupying Indian territories cannot be granted justification through ambivalence of not putting the whole issue to a rational judgment.

The learned writer has alluded to the foreign dynasties that have ruled over Kashmir in the past. She has named Mughal and Afghan dynasties but has not knowingly mentioned the Shahmiri dynasty which was as foreign to Kashmir as Mughal and Afghan dynasties were. Dogras, she says, purchased Kashmir from the Sikhs. But, she deliberately avoids to mention that a Shahmiri ruler divided the entire territory of Kashmir as his fiefdom among three Muslims, who were foreign occupiers of sacred land of Kashmir. Historical judgments always falter when they are made on the basis of some isolated periods of history.

How was the British partition-plan messed up in Kashmir? The powers to accede to the dominions of India and Pakistan were vested in the ruler of Kashmir, who, of course, was a Hindu. In view of Pakistan out to grab his state through aggression, he signed the accession document in favour of India. Kashmir certainly was a Muslim majority state but the fact should not be ignored that the majority population supported the Maharaja for having acceded to India. Sheikh Abdullah was the leader of the anti-autocracy movement in Kashmir which had the full support of the whole population of India minus the Muslim League. Those who dissented fled to Pakistan. The Kashmiris, by and large favoured democratic politics and that is why the state of Jammu and Kashmir became a territory of the Indian state.

The Jihadis at the behest of Pakistan opened the secessionist agenda with mosques as its pivotal centres and the slogans that were blurted out were blatantly communal. 1989-90 events were highly shocking that the native Muslims who had supported the Indian accession could turn stark communal and be a part of the insurgency with micro-minority of Kashmiri Pandits as their essential and prime target. As of now, the Jihadi war has an overt communal agenda with its sights riveted to the establishment of a Muslim state in Kashmir.

Natasha Koul on accession of J&K State to India

The learned writer of the write-up, Natasha Koul, is deeply ignorant of the developments that led Maharaja Hari Singh to accede to India. How was the Maharaja forced to accede to India? can she establish it on the basis of genuine historical facts? To make statements about facts of history without quoting genuine references is totally absurd. Maharaja had practically unrestrained powers to make a decision about the issue of accession

of his state to either of the two dominions. The aspirations of the people were taken due cognizance of. The broad masses under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah were supporting the decision of the state's ruler. The issue was raised and opened again by the Jihadis operating under the aegis of ISI of Pakistan. Terrorism was exported to India with a view to bleeding it for purposes of weaning away Kashmir from the constitutional sovereignty of India. Jihadi war going on in Kashmir has been a melange of terrorism and worst brand communalism and parochialism.

Natasha Koul on removal of governments in Kashmir

It is a statement mired in generalities, vague and ambiguous. The state of Jammu and Kashmir is part and parcel of Indian democracy which has been maturing over the years. The state of J&K never had unrepresentative governments. The Sheikh as the tall leader of Kashmir was constitutionally removed during cold-war days and his successor was a Muslim who was super dynamic and led the state to new milestones of progress and development. The governments of Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq and Syed Mir Qasim were very much representative and were so liberal as to allow a communal organisation like Jamaat-e-Islamia to thrive and broaden its popular base. Both Sadiq and Mir Qasim were not impositions from New Delhi. They were stalwarts who too had their entrenched history in politics of Kashmir. The aberrations cropped up during the rule of Farooq Abdullah who did not prove adept in ruling the state with the dexterity and sagacity of a politician.

Natasha Koul on Kashmir as a conflict zone

The question is not that Kashmir is a conflict zone. The fact remains, yes, it is a conflict zone. But what needs attention and emphasis is which forces reduced it to a conflict zone. It is the Jihadis from

Kashmir, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Egypt et al who were launched into Kashmir from launching-pads in Pakistan. They have reduced Kashmir to a veritable hell, have killed and murdered people for no fault of theirs, displaced the Hindu minorities after infliction of genocide on them, raped and brutalized their women-folk and put the houses of minority Hindus to cruel flames of fire and arson.

The learned author of the write-up is deliberate in over-looking the destruction of sprawling habitations of Kashmiri Pandits in cities and villages. She will get shell-shocked to see the charred ruins of such habitations if she takes a chance to place herself in the middle of the Habbakadal bridge in Srinagar and start looking on two sides of the river Jhelum. If she has some grains of sensitivity in her personality and think-

Natasha Koul on Army intervention in Kashmir

The cruel killers, Jihadis in religious parlance, could not be allowed free rope to reduce Kashmir to stone age. Which country in the world will allow it? She should look to Libya and Syria and see the Muslim dictators killing their own Muslim subjects though the protests are not that lethal as we have witnessed in Kashmir. The Indian security forces have been on the borders of the state since 1947. There were no interventions on their part into the civilian life till 1989-90. But, when security situation in the state deteriorated, the Central government was within its rights to deploy forces to defeat the elements out to destroy the integrity of the country. The security forces have not only defended our borders, but also protected the life and property of the civilians who are none but Muslims.

Natasha Koul on Kashmiriat

Without dwelling on the finer points of Kashmiriat, Natasha Koul has made a ridiculous statement that 'Kashmiriat is self-determination'. Kashmiriat, briefly put, is a symbolic expression of the cultural capital and episteme that Kashmiris as one ethnic group have garnered through their whole course of history. It has nothing to do with self-determination which gained currency and advocacy through the colonial struggles against the imperialist masters. The malicious hyphenation of Kashmiriat and self-determination as a deliberate act on part of the author of the write-up is only to please her Jihadi masters whom she appears committed to. Kashmiriat when hyphenated with self-determination is an open support to the enemies of India who are determined to balkanise and fragment her.

Natasha Koul on Imperialist methodologies of ruling the peripheries

Natasha Koul harbouring malice and hatred against the country of her genesis has uselessly theorized on the Imperialist methodology of ruling over the distant peripheries of the colonies. It does in no way reflect the Indian political system that the country has adopted through constitutional stipulations since independence. It needs reiteration to remind Natasha Koul that India is a federation of states with unitary characteristics. The states, now in India, no matter what their distances are from the central seat of power, enjoy the same political powers that the capital state of New Delhi is invested with. It is absurd to say that India is a colonial power and its methodology of governance is hegemonic and resembles a colonial power of yore.

-Concluded

(From Page 12)

rites and ceremonies, but because of their intellectual proclivities, their natural gravitation towards cultivation of cerebral graces. They were intellectual people who prized learning above everything else. And indeed it is because of their contributions that Kashmir came to be known all over the world as a great seat of Sanskrit learning". In the ancient texts referred to above, we see them as people "engaged in self-study, contemplation, performance of sacrifice, penance and the study of the Vedas and Vedangas." Respect was shown to them because they were supposed to be "itihasavidah and kalavidah that is knower of history and the connoisseurs of art". And who can provide a better proof of this than Kalhana, the great author of Rajatarangini, and the whole host of chroniclers of Kashmir who followed him — Jonaraja, Shrivara, Pragyabhutta and Shuka?

Brahmins were also required to have a thorough grounding in the six schools of philosophy, astrology and astronomy, grammar, logic, prosody and medicine, besides religious texts. They had to live an austere life and adhere to a high moral code. Nowhere has it been suggested that they should be worshipped "as gods on the earth" even if they are illiterate and ignorant. And yet Brahmins have been equated with priests (clergy) and as representatives of an exploitative and oppressive social order, by the Critics who think that they can bring down the Kashmiri Pandits by indulging in Brahmin bashing. They accuse the Brahmins of exploitation, usurping power, of appropriating and of ossifying the Sanskrit language and converting it into God's language.

There is no doubt that Brahmins did hold a high position in the society, but mainly as an intellectual and scholarly class, and not all of them adopted priesthood as their profession. And those who did were not much respected as they were recipients of donations and sacrificial fees and not donors. The donor was the patron, the 'yajamana' who hired a priest to have a religious sacrifice or ritual performed. And anybody could be the patron under the yajmani system - including a Brahmin.

In fact, the Brahmins took up several occupations, besides serving as priests. They were katha-vachakas or narrators of Puranic stories, astrologers, vaidyas or physicians, teachers, and even agriculturists. Some of them joined the administrative service also and became councilors and ministers. Some, like Kaihana's own father Champaka, adopted the military career.

Dr. S.C.Ray in his outstanding research in "Early History and Culture of Kashmir" comes to believe that there were no intermediate castes in Kashmir, not even Shudras. "Though the conception of the population as consisting of the four traditional castes was not altogether

Sanskrit Kashmir, Kashmiri Pandits and the Caste Reality

unknown", he writes, "there was no such caste as Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra in early Kashmir". While he describes Brahmanas as "definitely the more privileged and honoured caste", he mentions Nishadas, Kiratas, Dombas, Shvapakas and Chandalas as the lower castes. The Nishadas the Kiratas, the Dombas etc. were no doubt there, but the Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas were not altogether absent, though they have not been mentioned in that detail. The Nilamata describes the functions of all the four traditional castes and says that representatives of all the four participated in the king's coronation. In fact, Kalhana uses the term Kayastha for all those who were appointed in State's service and would include Brahmins as well as the others, though there are hardly any references to Kshatriyas or Vaishyas, as the case may be in other parts of the country.

The Rajatarangini does make references to Kshatriyas as well as Vaishyas in the context of Kashmir's ancient history. Any how, there is no reference in it of tensions between the castes, or anything like the priest – king collusion, to maintain hegemony over others. The Brahmins, however, are often shown as resorting to prayopavesha or hunger-strike to get their demands accepted by the king. The confrontation between King Jayapida and the Brahmanas of Tulamula is a well known example.

There may not be many direct references to Vaishyas as such in Rajatarangani and other early works, but Kalhana does mention the emergence of a rich and prosperous merchant class. With the opening of overland trade routes during Kanishka's rule, and perhaps, earlier, trade and commerce with foreign countries appears to have received a boost. Commercial activity must have been particularly brisk during the rule of the Karkotas. Extensive conquests by kings like Lalitaditya had opened vast markets for Kashmiri goods in neighbouring territories. The Valley was full of wealthy merchants, says Kalhana, with some of them living in palatial buildings excelling the king's palace.

Damodargupta's reference to shreshthin and vanikas also indicates the existence of a rich and prosperous trading community during his time, belonging probably to the Vaishya caste. Many among the upward mobile artisan classes in the Valley too must have belonged to this community. As for the Shudras, Nilamata counts the karmajivin (workers) and shilpis (artisans) as Shudras — that is, the weavers, carpenters, goldsmiths, silversmiths, blacksmiths, leather-tanners and potters. They were treated with respect in the society and were among those who exchanged gifts with the "higher varnas" during the Mahimana celebrations, says Dr. Ved Kumari.

The servants serving in the

houses of the higher castes too belonged to the shudra varna, since no jati is mentioned. They were treated with sympathy and were included in the list of the persons "in whose company the householder feasted and enjoyed". The very fact, writes Dr. Ved Kumari, that the Nilamata describes the Shudras as taking part in the coronation ceremony of the kings, shows that they were not debased.

There were people belonging to mixed castes also like Suta, Magadha and Vandi who lived by singing the paeans of heroes and other famous persons. Dr. S.C.Ray counts the Nishadas, Kiratas, Dombas etc. among the low caste people but stops short of calling them Shudras. The Nishadas, who lived by hunting and fishing, are also described as boatmen in the Rajatarangini. The Kiratas, who were hunters and animal trappers, were a forest dwelling tribe belonging to the Tibeto-Burman racial stock. The Dombas have been described in the Rajatarangini in association with the Chandalas as hunters belonging to the menial class. Kalhana calls them "Shvapakas" or "dog-eating people".

But they have also been shown as good musicians who made quite a profession of their singing and dancing. Kalhana mentions the story of a Domba singer Ranga whose daughters gave a performance in the glittering royal assembly hall of Chakravarman and were included in the king's seraglio, one of them becoming the chief queen much to the chagrin of others. Consequently, Dombas became the favourites of the king and wielded much influence at his court as councilors. Chandalas were bravos and fierce fighters. They worked as executioners and were also employed as the king's watchmen.

If at all, there could be a division of early Kashmiri society into four castes and their sub-castes, it was only notional. In actual fact, the caste-system was never rigid in Kashmir, or of a tyrannical character. Intermarriages between various castes were not uncommon, as we learn from works like the Katha-Saritsagara. It is, therefore absolutely irrelevant to talk of social-organization in terms of "ugly reality of Caste and Jati" in context of Kashmiri Hindus and their legitimate claims to pluralism. The society in Kashmir was actually divided along occupational or socio-economic lines. Dr. S.C. Ray writes: "Three distinct classes of people evolved, along with their several sub-divisions, on the basis of three principle methods of production (agriculture, industry and trade)". While agriculturists constituted the bulk of these occupational classes, artisans and merchants too had important roles to play in the society.

Around the 8th century, in Kashmir, a new class of feudal landlords known as the Damaras, appeared on the scene and started gaining control of agriculturist economy. We do not hear of them in the Nilamata Purana, nor do we hear in the first three books of the Rajatarangini, till we find Lalitaditya — who was Kashmir's most powerful king — warning his successors not to leave cultivators of the land with more than what they require "for their bare sustenance and the tillage of the land". Otherwise, he says 'they would become in a single year very formidable Damaras and strong enough to neglect the commands of the kings'. And then we learn that they were agriculturists who, owned large chunks of land. Lalitaditya's warning appears to have had no effect, for we see the Damaras becoming wealthier and gaining more and more strength. By the time the Lohara dynasty ascended the throne, they had become so rich and powerful that they began to interfere in the affairs of the State. Living in fortified residences, they raised large private armies and established their strongholds all over Kashmir. Such was their power and influence that they were able to extend their stranglehold over the administration, becoming virtual kingmakers, enthroning or dethroning anyone according to their wish. In the wars of succession that became endemic after the 10th century, we find them supporting one claimant to the throne or the other, their support often proving to be the deciding factor.

This is what happened in the internecine conflicts between Ananta and Kalasha and Harsha, each of them vying for their help. Powerful rulers like Didda, Ananta, Kalasha and Jayasimha used every stratagem to curb them, including the use of military force, but the Damaras continued to retain their nuisance value. Dr. S.C.Ray attributes the rise and growth of the Damaras not only to the "weakness of the royal authority" and "the constant wars of succession", but also to "the economic structure of the society", which because of increasing dependence on agricultural lands for revenue proved helpful to the rise of the landed aristocracy. As their wealth and influence increased, the Damaras came to be looked upon with respect in the society, with royal families establishing even matrimonial relations with them.

While agricultural and trading communities were very important elements in the society from the socio-economic point of view, the artisan classes also witnessed a significant growth in early Kashmir. These included the weavers and the jewellers, metal casters and image-makers, potters and carpenters, blacksmiths and leather tanners etc. Although their sphere of activity was quite wide, there were no corporate or traders guilds in Kashmir as in other parts of India.

There were also occupational communities who served the society in various other ways.

Among these could be counted the wrestlers, the actors, the dancers, the physicians, the shepherds, the gardeners and also the courtesans who plied the world's oldest trade. These people were not directly connected with the production of wealth, but nonetheless had their own place in the society.

Yet another class, which distinguished itself from all the classes mentioned above, was that of the administrators. It consisted of the nobility and the bureaucracy. As Dr. S.C. Ray has pointed out, the highest civil and military officials were drawn from the nobility, and these included the sarvadikara (also called dhi-sachiva) or prime minister, stiehiva or minister, the mandalesha or governor and the kantpanesha or commander-in-chief. Being important officers of the State, the nobility drew lame salaries from the royal treasury.

The bureaucracy assisted them in running the general administration of the State. It consisted of all kinds of officials, both high and low, all of them being known by the general connotation "Kayastha", which did not denote any particular caste. As I have mentioned earlier, the members of any caste or class could be recruited as Kayasthas, including the Brahmanas. Both Kalhana and Kshemendra have hated them for their greed and for their cruel methods of exacting revenue and taxes from the people. Kshemendra gives a long list of their designations in his works Narmamala and Samaya Matrika. Describing them as an exploitative and oppressive class, he exposes their fraudulent ways and bungling, and accuses them of forgery, misappropriation and embezzlement. Kalhana too speaks about them in the same vein. The common man appears to have been squeezed between the tyrannical Damaras and the oppressive and greedy Kayasthas, though not all Kayasthas could have been like that.

Where does it leave the critics' attack on the priestly class or the Brahmins? They must explain where from they got such information and with what authority did they speak in such astoundingly damning words about the Brahmins and then use the phrase "ugly reality of social stratification developed along the lines of Caste and Jati" and for which they hold the Brahmins (the Hindu priestly class) responsible, as if the Brahmins in India had enjoyed the same position and privileges as were enjoyed by the Christian clergy during the medieval times or is still being enjoyed by the Fatwa announcing Muslim clergy in today's Muslim world. To me it appears that she has drawn heavily on the narrative of the imperialist/colonial European scholars of the nineteenth century, whose only aim has been to distort Indian history to suit their ideological and politico-strategic aims.

To be Continued

Sir,
A news item, 'Pristine Glory of Wular lake to be restored' appeared in the Daily Tribune dated 1st November 2011. The statement came from Shri Mubarak Gul, advisor to the Chief Minister, J&K at District Board Bondipore meeting. It was revealed that Government of India has earmarked a grant of Rs 389 crores for this purpose. An amount of Rs 20 crore is already reported to have been spent.

Save the heritage for posterity

In the project Wular development authorities concerned have taken the development of Island 'Laank' lying on N.E. of the lake which is of the size of 100x70 yds. This island was developed by King Badshah during his reign and he constructed a mosque, a park and a small temple which contained some idols, and stone carved images of various Hindu deities.

The island is reported to have been laid on an ancient temple which was in ruinous state. (Tariq-Hassan). While the mosque is in final stage of reconstruction, the ancient idols existing at the site on the island continue to be lying open and have been facing the elements of nature, weathering decay for ages past. Since these are of historic value and very ancient, I had

CONCERN

suggested to Shri Gul to put these in a small temple or a museum so that posterity could benefit from their presence. I did write a letter on this subject to Shri Gul, but I didn't receive any acknowledgement or reply considering the matter to be important for the indigenous Kashmiri Pandits, I wrote a letter to His Excellency Shri N.N. Vohra,

the Governor J&K State. I didn't hear anything in reply. I now want to highlight this issue through the columns of your esteemed paper seek proper identification of the Hindu deities and their housing in a small museum temple which can assuage the feeling of neglect which the Pandit community feel otherwise in protecting priceless artifacts.

--J.L. Tiku
Sarwal
Dt: 26/12/2011

An MP earns 104 times more than an average Indian--Prithish Nandi

I was an MP not very long ago. I loved those six years.

Everyone called me sir, not because of my age but because I was an MP.

And even though I never travelled anywhere by train during those years, I revelled in the fact that I could have gone anywhere I liked, on any train, first class with a bogey reserved for my family.

Whenever I flew, there were always people around to pick up my baggage, not because I was travelling business class but because I was an MP.

And yes, whenever I wrote to any Government officer to help someone in need, it was done. No, not because I was a journalist but because I was an MP.

The job had many perquisites, apart from the tax free wage of Rs 4,000. Then the wages were suddenly quadrupled to Rs 16,000, with office expenses of Rs 20,000 and a constituency allowance of Rs 20,000 thrown in. I could borrow interest free money to buy a car, get my petrol paid, make as many free phone calls as I wanted. My home came free. So did the furniture, the electricity, the water, the gardeners, the plants. There were also allowances to wash curtains and sofa covers and a rather funny allowance of Rs 1,000 per day to attend Parliament, which I always thought was an MP's job in the first place! And, oh yes, we also got Rs 1 Crore a year (now enhanced to Rs 2 Crore) to spend on our constituencies. More enterprising MPs enjoyed many more perquisites best left to your imagination. While I was embarrassed at being vastly overpaid for the job I was doing, they kept demanding

more.

Today, out of 543 MPs in Lok Sabha, 315 are Crorepatis. That's 60%. 43 out of the 54 newly elected Rajya Sabha MPs are also millionaires. Their average declared assets are over Rs 25 Crore each. That's an awfully wealthy lot of people in whose hands we have vested our destiny.

The assets of your average Lok Sabha MP have grown from Rs 1.86 Crore in the last house to Rs 5.33 Crore. That's

BLOG NEWS

200% more. And, as we all know, not all our MPs are known to always declare all their assets. Much of these exist in a colour not recognised by our tax laws. That's fine, I guess. Being an MP gives you certain immunities, not all of them meant to be discussed in a public forum.

If you think it pays to be in the ruling party, you are dead right: 7 out of 10 MPs from the Congress are Crorepatis. The BJP have 5. MPs from some of the smaller parties like SAD, TRS and JD (Secular) are all Crorepatis while the NCP, DMK, RLD, BSP, Shiv Sena, National Conference and Samajwadi Party have more Crorepatis than the 60% average.

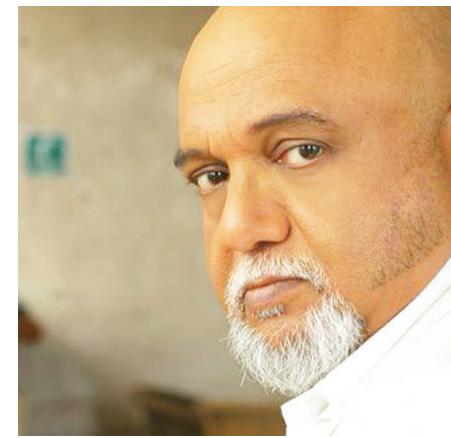
Only the CPM and the Trinamool, the two Bengal based parties, don't field Crorepatis. The CPM has 1 correlate out of 16 MPs; the Trinamool has 7 out of 19. This shows in the state-wise average. West Bengal and Kerala have few correlate MPs while Punjab and Delhi

have only correlate MPs and Haryana narrowly misses out on this distinction with one MP, poor guy, who's not a correlate.

Do MPs become richer in office? Sure they do. Statistics show that the average assets of 304 MPs who contested in 2004 and then re-contested last year grew 300%. And, yes, we're only talking about declared assets here.

But then, we can't complain. We are the ones who vote for the rich. Over 33% of those with assets above Rs 5 Crore won the last elections while 99.5% of those with assets below Rs 10 lakhs lost! Apart from West Bengal and the North East, every other state voted for correlate MPs. Haryana grabbed first place with its average MP worth Rs 18 Crore. Andhra is not far behind at 16.

But no, this is not enough for our MPs. It's not enough that they are rich, infinitely richer than those who they represent, and every term makes them even richer. It's not enough that they openly perpetuate their families in power. It's not enough that all their vulgar indulgences and more are paid for by you and me through backbreaking taxes. It's not enough that the number of days they actually work in Parliament are barely 60 in a year.



Prithish Nandi well known television personality.

The rest of the time goes in squabbling and ranting. Now they want a 500% pay hike and perquisites quadrupled. The Government, to buy peace, has already agreed to a 300% raise but that's not good enough for our MPs. They want more, much more.

And no, I'm not even mentioning that 150 MPs elected last year have criminal cases against them, with 73 serious, very serious cases ranging from rape to murder.

Do you really think these people deserve to earn 104 times what the average Indian does.

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AHMED ALI FAYYAZ

AFSPA or no AFSPA, Kashmir will continue to be the Paradise on Earth for second consecutive year in 2012. This is not Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's wishful thinking but, conversely, the belief of the country's most ardent advocate of the controversial law and commander of Srinagar-based 15th Corps Lt Gen Syed Ata Hasnain.

According to an illustration of Lt Gen Hasnain's Power Point presentation at the Unified Headquarters meeting at Chief Minister's Jammu residence on November 9th, which has been exclusively accessed by Early Times, 2012 would be a peaceful year in Jammu & Kashmir. In a professional analysis of situation in near future, which is known as 'scenario building' in Defence circles, Hasnain gave credit to neither armed forces nor politicians for the next year's tranquillity in Valley. He attributed the rosy picture to the US Presidential elec-

Hasnain views 2012 as another year of peace in J&K 'Because of US elections, ISI would not go for any adventurism'

tions.

Hasnain's classified slide presentation titled "Who Wants Revocation of AFSPA?" claimed that Directorate General of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) would not take any major decisions or risks in the year the people of the world's biggest superpower would be electing a new head of the state. According to him, ISI would also be mute as the NATO forces would begin their withdrawal from Afghanistan and Pakistan towards the end of the same year.

Contrary to the claims of Police and political leaders of the three-year-old coalition Government, Hasnain asserted that 2011 was the "Rest Year for ISI and the separatists" as they wanted the fatigue factor to fade away from the people of Kashmir.

Lt Gen Hasnain, however, apprehended a turning point in

the year 2013. This particular year, according to the Corps Commander, would witness India's exit from the United Nations Security Council and its immediate replacement with Pakistan and some rabidly anti-Indian Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) countries. He claimed that towards the end of Year 2013, Islamabad and her friends in the OIC would trigger off a major campaign of internationalizing Kashmir. He expected veritable turbulence and mass uprising in Kashmir in 2014 when the strife-torn state would be holding general elections for Legislative Assembly as well as Lok Sabha and the separatists, with Pakistan's and OIC's support, would be encouraging "mass protests and sacrifices of a couple of thousand young lives a la Arab Spring style".

Making his averments in sup-

port of continuance of AFSPA in J&K, Lt Gen Hasnain warned in his "scenario building" that the demand for Plebiscite would be spiralling to its highest point in the last several decades in 2015 and the following year could mark the end of Kashmir's integration with India. According to him, this scenario would be taken to its logical conclusion by Pakistan and ISI only after creating an impression that Government of India had completely tied the hands of her security forces in Kashmir under the world pressure. Revocation of AFSPA, according to him, would serve as the watershed.

Focusing on four entities in the presentation, Hasnain claimed that after "remarkable corrections" in observing human rights by armed forces in Kashmir, revocation of AFSPA was no more a peoples' issue. He asserted that in

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today's Kashmir people wanted good "bijli, pani, sadak and governance". While completely ignoring the sentiments of Omar Abdullah government as well as the much familiar views of the union Home Minister P Chidambaram and Dileep Padgaonkar-led team of three interlocutors, Gen Hasnain claimed that only "terrorists, separatists and ISI" were dying for AFSPA's revocation.

"Terrorists? Yes, it helps them dilute the Army's effectiveness; Separatists? Yes, because it enables their separatist activities; ISI? Yes, because it helps in weakening the Army's hold", Lt Gen Hasnain concluded. It was in this eventful meeting, first of its kind with the state government in J&K, that Chief Minister reportedly took umbrage on the Lt General's views and asked him to wind up and drop a copy of the slide so that he could "see where I fit in."

--(Courtesy: The Early Times)

- July 9: A JeM commander Ahsan Bhai and his associate were killed in an encounter at Hajan Payeen, Rajpora in Pulwama. Interlocutors visited Reasi and Kathua. Mufti Mohd Sayed asked India and Pakistan to demonstrate flexibility and involve Kashmiris in talks. GOC 15 Corps reviewed security situation.
- July 10: Two boys were killed as they fiddled with an explosive device in Tral. A live grenade was seized on IB in Reasi sector. A terrorist returned after leaving a young girl in PoK.
- July 11: Interlocutors claimed consensus on many issues. Panun Kashmir described recruitment of migrant youth as mere tokenism. The US suspended USD 800 million military aid to Pakistan for not going full throttle in war on terror.
- July 12: Two IEDs were recovered in Baramulla. Mirwaiz Umar described talks through interlocutors as farce. 45 terrorists were killed in a drone attack in Pakistan.
- July 13: Six people were injured as an explosive device went off while the debris of the July nine encounter site was being cleared by the house owner. Interlocutors claimed that violence and militancy have failed and there was consensus on dialogue and majority wanted unity of the state. 21 people were killed and 141 injured in three blasts as terrorists struck in Mumbai.
- July 14: Eight people including an LeT commander were charged sheeted in the killing of cleric Maulana Showkat but the name of Ashiq Hussain Faktoo, husband of Aisyah Andrabi, who was claimed by police to be involved in the killing, didn't figure in the list. PM said that the government will do everything to prevent terrorist attacks in future while P Chidambaram said that all groups hostile to India are on the radar of investigation in the Mumbai attacks.
- July 15: Five terrorists and a Jawan were killed and five Army men including a captain were injured in an encounter at Maidanpora in Lolab, Kupwara. Arms and ammunition were recovered in Reasi.
- July 16: LeT leader Al-Kama was eliminated in an encounter in Keshwan, Kishtwar. Forces claimed to have eliminated entire LeT leadership in Lolab and Sopore. GOC 16 Corps claimed that 450 ultras are in 42 Pak training camps.
- July 17: A large quantity of arms and ammunition was recovered as a terrorist hideout was destroyed in Mahore, Reasi. Massive search has been launched on Kathua-Punjab border after inputs about movement of terrorists in the area. Police has released a sketch of a suspect in Mumbai blasts. Indo-Pak officials are to discuss CBMs on cross-LoC trade. A jawan killed in an encounter in the state was cremated in Rajasthan.
- July 18: Another consignment of arms and ammunition was recovered from a hideout in Budhal, Rajouri. Six guns have been seized from six security personnel at Railway Station, Jammu for verification as they might have been cheated by the Gun Houses.
- July 19: A cop was injured as terrorists attacked him in his house in Ganderbal district. A woman terrorist Quartul-Ain of Jalalabad, Sopore was remanded to police custody. The terrorists reportedly roaming in Dhar area are in possession of satellite telephone. GOC 15 Corps said that more infiltration attempts are expected in the coming months. US secretary of State asked Pakistan not to give safe havens to terrorists.
- July 20: Two HM terrorists were arrested in Baramulla while seven more girls were quizzed for terrorist links. SAS Geelani was detained after his supporters clashed with Police in Anantnag. Scribes, Mirwaiz and other leaders may be quizzed for Fai links. Experts in Washington opined that another terrorist attack may derail Indo-Pak talks.
- July 21: An IED was defused on Poonch-Mendhar road while arms and explosives were recovered in Reasi and Poonch districts. Owner of the vehicle used in Sopore fire has been identified. A cop reportedly died in accidental fire in Kashmir. Kashmiri terrorists are reportedly eying Doda belt and are making frequent trips to the area. Fai, the alleged ISI agent, roped in many Indian journalists for anti-India cause.
- July 22: Two people were injured in mine explosions near LoC in Poonch. Protests broke out in Kulgam against alleged abduction and gang rape of a Gujar woman Rukaya Bano by Army. The state government is to approach centre for implementation of the recommendations of five WGs.
- July 23: Two LeT terrorists were killed in Handwara Kupwara. Two youth were killed as they fiddled with an explosive material in Rafiabad, Baramulla. Kulgam rape case took new turn as husband and mother-in-law of the alleged victim claimed her mentally ill. Arms and ammunition were recovered from Poonch and Kishtwar districts while seven swords were recovered from an Amarnath bound yatri bus at Bhagwati Nagar, Jammu. Ram Jethmalani described peaceful solution of Kashmir must for Indo-Pak peace. Sri Sri Ravishankar favoured continuation of dialogue with Pakistan.
- July 24: A civilian was shot dead in Sopore by terrorists while an SPO had a narrow escape as terrorists attacked them in Hajan, Bandipore. Arms were yet again recovered in Poonch while the body of a terrorist was recovered after two months of his death. While India has sought clarification to some queries from Pakistan in 2008 Mumbai attack, a Judicial Commission is to visit India to quiz 26/11 attack witness.
- July 25: An Army Jawan was arrested for eve teasing in Pattan, Baramulla. India goes ahead with civilian expedition to Saichen ignoring Pak objections. DG of CRPF said that the force is trying hard to maintain peace in Kashmir. Jammat-ud-Dawah chief vowed to enter India through J&K.
- July 26: Two HM terrorists were killed in Kishtwar. Two people were arrested in R S Pura and fake currency was recovered from their possession. On the eve of Indo-Pak talks, Pakistan FM met both factions of Hurriyat who reportedly sought Pak intervention in release of Fai.
- July 27: A JCO was killed in a gun battle near LoC in Kupwara. A Poonch youth was held and six others detained in Mumbai for questioning in connection with 13/7 serial blasts. India and Pak unveiled a number of CBMs on cross LoC trade as two FMs met.
- July 28: Police filed a chargesheet against the Army Jawan accused of misbehaving with a girl in Pattan while a man was held for instigating Kulgam woman. Farooq Abdullah described it Pakistan's compulsion to talk to separatists. PM accepted invitation to visit Pakistan.
- July 29: Tragedy was averted on NH as three IEDs were detected in a passenger bus at Quazigund and subsequently defused. Two Jawans were injured in Rajouri as the gun of another Jawan went off accidentally while traveling. Mirwaiz accused mainstream politicians of pursuing Indian point of view and asked Pakistan not to talk to them.
- July 30: Two Army personnel were killed as a major infiltration bid was foiled in Kupwara; a terrorist was killed in same district. A Bakerwal boy dodged terrorists and escaped with an AK-47 as two terrorists sneaked into Banihal area.
- July 31: Sopore witnessed tension after the death of a civilian allegedly in police custody even though government ordered probe and suspended Incharge and attached Dy SP. Death toll rose to three as one more Jawan was killed in Kupwara encounter. A mortar shell was defused near IB in Arnia sector. After Fai case, the financial brain of Hurriyat Nasir Safi Mir, accused of making payments to separatists, has reportedly escaped to Gulf after jumping parole.
- Aug. 1: An explosive device was defused on Jammu-Poonch road. An arms haul was recovered on Budha Amarnath route. Sopore and some other towns in the valley observed shutdown against alleged custodial death in Sopore. Army Chief Gen. S K Singh reviewed security situation in the Valley.
- Aug. 2: Police fired in air as angry mob attacked PDP MLAs at Sopore even as government transferred SP Sopore. Mirwaiz threatened violent protests if restrictions on separatists continued. A Pakistani youth crossed over to this side while two girls crossed over the LoC in Poonch sector.
- Aug. 3: A terrorist was killed in Kupwara and life remained paralysed by strike and stone-pelting in Sopore. Farooq Abdullah accused vested interest for exploiting Sopore incident. Geelani's aide was among four chargesheeted in an alleged hawala racket. Police arrested an LeT terrorist Mushtaq Ahmed of Budhan, Reasi who had been staying in Jammu for more than three years and has even married a Gujar girl.
- Aug. 4: An LeT commander was among four terrorists killed across Kashmir valley. Police claimed to have wiped out LeT from Doda belt with the killing of LeT chief of Kishtwar and his associate. Police has decided to conduct census of unauthorized Basti's to find out unwanted elements. Ahead of Independence Day, police has launched hunt for sleeper cells. Centre has announced 5000 scholarships for J&K students pursuing higher studies outside the state after passing 12th from J&KSBOSE.
- Aug. 5: Two infiltration bids were foiled in Kashmir while four people were injured in protests and stone-pelting in Sopore and Srinagar. An OGW of HM was arrested in Kalakote. DG J&K Police said that 300 ultras are trying to enter the state.
- Aug. 6: Two terrorists were killed in Surankote. Protesters clashed with cops in Srinagar while two cops were arrested for alleged custodial killing in Sopore. Govt. has sanctioned 20 new police stations and 0 posts as the major share goes to militancy-hit areas.
- Aug. 7: The death toll in Kupwara operation going on for last two weeks rose to three with the killing of a LeT commander today. One of the terrorists killed in Surankote turned out to be an LeT Commander. Narco-terrorism networks have surfaced in Jammu and Delhi as drug operators are funding terrorists.
- Aug. 8: An SPO and a TA Jawan were killed as they killed an insane youth in a fake encounter in Hari forests in Surankote on the intervening night of 6-7 August to get promotion and rewards. Maisuma witnessed clashes after a youth's arrest. The Delhi High Court upheld the dismissal of BSF men for a rape case in J&K and acquittal of an Al-Badar cadre in another case while the Apex Court said that cops involved in fake encounters should be hanged.
- Aug. 9: Two SPO's reportedly deserted DPL Kupwara along with rifles while two persons including a Panch were arrested from Kellar in south Kashmir. Two more people were arrested and four SPO's detained in the alleged fake encounter case of Surankote. Pakistan has favoured an uninterrupted dialogue with India.
- Aug. 10: The SC upheld the death sentence of a terrorist in Red Fort attack case while a Delhi court acquitted two Pakistani's in infamous Chatisinghpura case as the prosecution failed to produce evidence against them. The govt. said that about 40,000 people were killed in J&K violence in two decades. Army Chief visited forward areas to review situation and asked for ensuring safety of local population. Govt. has recommended rejection of Afzal Guru's clemency petition. DM said that as per records 53 ultras tried to infiltrate till June 11 this year.
- Aug. 11: A terrorist was killed in Kupwara. Pak Army returned the woman who had inadvertently crossed LOC in Poonch district. Army Chief said that the troops cannot afford to lower guard on border as terrorist camps are intact in Pakistan and PoK. Home Secretary R K Singh said that human rights violations cannot be tolerated and anybody found guilty of fake encounter or custodial death will be punished.
- Aug. 12: Huge cache of arms and ammunition was recovered in Kupwara. Five people were

(Contd. on Page 19)

(From Page 18)

- injured as fresh clashes erupted in Nowhatta, Srinagar. People beeline to claim the slasin insane youth as their kin.
- Aug. 13: Grenades were fired on CRPF camps in Dal Lake area. Clashes were yet again witnessed in Maisuma area. Security forces recovered decomposed bodies of two terrorists in Kishtwar. SPO and TA jawan, involved inn the killing of insane youth, claimed that no other person was involved in the killing as samples of four civilians were taken for DNA test. Army claimed to have recovered 43 Kg explosives in Budgam district while CRPF said that a group of militants has intruded to create trouble. 6.36 lakh perform Yatra as the yearly Yatra concluded today.
- Aug. 14: Arms were recovered in Kupwara. Police claimed that the dead bodies were of longest surviving terrorist Shabir Shah alias Khandey, reportedly active from 1989, and of his associate Mushtaq Ahmed but said that DNA tests will be carried to confirm the same. Governer N N Vohra asked sepratists to come forward while CM asked them to join in positive manner and said that Indo-Pak ties are set to improve.
- Aug. 15: Arms were recovered in Tral. Independence Day celebrations passed of peace fully. CM said that gun is no solution andonly talks will resolve theissues and claimed that PM and HM have assured the implementation of interlocutors, recommendations. PM sought help to fight terror menace.
- Aug. 16: Four terrorists operating in Reasi have surrendered on Reasi-Kulgam border. IED devices were recovered in Poonch.
- Aug. 17: An infiltration bid was foiled in Poonch district. Police claimed to have wiped out HM after LeT in Kulgam-Reasi belt.
- Aug. 19: A jawan was injured in a mine blast in Poonch. Interlocutors met Union Home Minister. Indo-Pak parliamentarians favour new transit routes on LoC.
- The US said that Pakistan based LeT is active inn Kashmir and targeting India.
- Aug. 20: 2 terrorists were killed after infiltrating into Gurez sector using boats. An Army Lt. was kill ed and three jawans injured in the operation that was still going on. Intelligence agencies and ploice have unearthed a major racket in which a cross-LoC trader is alleged to have paid an amount of Rs 1.5 crore to sepratists and Geelani's spokesman Aiyaz Akbar is reported to be the major beneficiary.
- Aug. 21: An infiltrator was killed and one another injured while two escaped back in Poonch. GOC 15 Corps said that terrorists are desprate to infiltrate as theoperation continued in Gurez. Pak moves Court of Arbitration on Kishan Ganga project.
- Aug. 22: A woman was killed and her husband injured in cross-firing in Kupwara while two hide outs were busted in the valley. Huge haul of arms and ammunition was recovered in Banihal area. Without naming Sepratists, Farooq Abdullah accused them of ruining Kashmir. Omar Abdullah reiterated commitment of establishing Truth and Reconciliation Commission. High alert has been sounded as Pak Forward Posts have been found directly involved in intrusion bids.
- Aug. 23: Death toll of terrorists rose to 13 as three more terrorists were killed in Gurez. Four infiltrators were pushed back as an infiltration bid was foiled in Mendhar, Poonch. A terrorist hideout was busted in Reasi and large cache of arms and ammunition including 65 Kg RDX was recovered.
- Aug. 24: An SPO was shot at in Sopore while two terorists were arrested in Pulwama. Two bodies of civilians were recovered after four years after disclosure of a terrorist who was one amongst those who surrendered recently on Kulgam-Reasi border.
- Aug. 25: A BSF jawan and a civilian were killed and 13 others injured in two blasts in the Valley. A major infiltration bid was foiled amidst ceasefire violation by Pak troops in Poonch.
- Aug. 26: Two Kashmiris and another from Bengal were arrested and Rs five lakh currency recovered from their possession as police

- claimed to have busted a network of pumping fake currency into terror emanating from Pakistan and routed through Bangladesh. Clashes were yet again witnessed in Nowhatta.
- Aug. 27: A ration haul was recovered from a terrorist hideout in Ramban. Police claimed that more WB youth are involved in terror network.
- Aug. 28: CM announced amnesty to youth arrested during summer unrest on a day when police arrested 70 stone pelters during night long clashes. There are reports that about 6-7 crore rupees were supplied to terrorists through cross-LoC trade.
- Aug. 29: A JeM terrorist was among two terrorists killed in the Valley. A consignment of arms and ammunition was recovered in Budhal. Surankote fake encounter victim's body is to exhumed today for DNA sampling. Kirni experiment to be repeated elsewhere as people return to villages ahead of fencing.
- Aug. 30: Woman proteste after arrest of a youth in Nowhatta.
- Aug. 31: A cop and a woman were injured as clashes were witnessed on the occasion of Eidin some parts of thevalley. DG of BSF said that intrusion bids have been curbed. CM's twitter for TN like resolution for Afzal Guru draws flak.
- Sep. 1: A JCO was killed as Pakistan violated ceasefire in Kupwara. A hunt has ben launched for three terrorists inMahore. HM said that AFSPA will go once DAA is lifted.
- Sep. 2: Six fresh recruits of Kashmir were arrested on way to PoK in Rajouri. A terrorist was killed and two jawans injured while Pakistan again violated ceasefire in Machil sector. Gelani called for strike on 6-7 September.
- Sep. 3: A terrorist was killed in Kupwara. Fresh recruits who were arrested in Rajouri havew been handed over to Shopian police. Apex Committee approved amendments to PM's Return Package as incentives for houses have been proposed to be Rs 20 lakh.
- Sep. 4: A terrorist hideout was busted in Baramulla. Pursuing the fake currency racket, agencies claimed that several crores were pumped in four years and the same was printed at Pak Govt. Press at Peshawar. Mirwaiz Farooq is reported to have opposed passport to Geelani. Defence Secretary visited LoS and met Governor and CM. LS was informed that 93 terrorists tried to infiltrate and 11 were killed upto July.India asks Pakistan to stop work in PoK. Three more trans-border smugglers were arrested and herin worth five crore seized.
- Sep. 5: Normal life remained affected for second day today in the valley. 11 People were killed and 76 othwrs injured in blast outside Delhi HC; HUJI claimed responsibility of the blast.
- Sep. 6: A jawan was killed and four others injured as a live shell exploded in firing range in Budgam.Life remained paralysed in many pars of Kashmir as people observed strike on Geelani's call. Police launched searches in Bani, Kathua after reports of terrorists' movement in the area.Defence Secretary reviewed preparedness on LOC and called for alertness.
- Sep. 7: Normal life remained affected for second day today in the valley. 11 People were killed and 76 othwrs injured in blast outside Delhi HC; HUJI claimed responsibility of the blast.
- Sep. 8: A terrorist hideout was busted and an AK rifle recovered in Arnas. Five suspects were detained and a café sealed as terror mail was traced to Kishtwar while NIA joined the probe. Indi and Pakistan are mulling a proposal for cross-border investment and bank ties.
- Sep. 10: Police quizzed surrendered terrorists and OGWS as NIA team returned with the seized computer. Six weapons were recovered from a Shastris house in Janipura locality.
- Sep. 11: Farooq Abdullah demanded IT probe against Geelani and sepratists and asked about the money collected for shrines and victims.
- Sep. 12: Two people were arrested in Kishtwar and one in Gujrat in connection with the Delhi blast. Geelani asked The UN to send a team to the valley to investigate surfacing of unmarked graves in the North Kashmir.
- Sep. 13: Top LeT commander Uni was killed in Sopore. An HM conduit was arrested in Pattan for his alleged role in summer unrest. Two more people were arrested in Kishtwar.

- An intrusion bid was foiled and five intruders pushed back in Samba sector.
- Sep.14: Terrorists attacked a CRPF party in Sopore while war like stores were recovered from a hideout in Keran sector in Kupwara.Two Kishtwar students were taken on remand as NIA again joined the probe and is looking for the module. BSF on high alert as Pak Army opened firing on Indian posts in Akhnoor sector.Pandits observed MARTYRS' Day as Panun Kashmir organized a rally at Pres Club to pay homage to the martyrs
- Sep. 15: Investigations in Delhi blast move forward as two more suspects were detained and NIA team head reached Kishtwar for further investigations. An AK rifle was recovered in Shopian. Interlocutors visited Samba as BJP workers protested for their Kashmir centric policies.GOC 15 Corps said that no surrender offer will be made to the foreign terrorists during encounters.
- Sep.16: An NC worker was shot at by terrorists in Srinagar. On another was arrestede and an alert sounded to various states on teen-age terror. PM said that cross-border camps have been activated and there was no room for complacency on security front in J&K. Interlocutors met Northern Command Chief.
- Sep. 17: A terrorist hideout was busted in Kupwara. A Kashmir trader complained of receiving threats from HuJI. Guru resolution was listed at No. 2 after ballot. Interlocutors ruled out pre-53 position and said that formulae of the sepratists will be reflected in the report. Six people were injured in a blast in Agra
- Sep.18: Ex. PoK PM Sultan Mehmood Chaudhary expressed his gratitude to GoI and described his visit to Kashmir as major CBM. Mufti Mohd Sayeed described Self Rule as the only viable solution. There are reports about rise in infiltration bids.
- Sep. 19: Sultan Mehmood met Omar Abdullah and Radha Kumar on a wedding. Describing Pakistan as epicenter of global terror and a lost stats GOC 16 Corps Lt. Gen. J P Nehra said infiltration attempts are on rise but troops are alert.
- Sep. 20: A terrorist- hideout was busted and huge cache of arms recovered in Dachigam in the outskirts of Srinagar. Two people were killed and six others hurt in a blast in ascrap dealers shop in Kupwara. Sultan Mehmood met Geelani and other sepratists and accepting state hospitality, he flew in a state chopper. Interlocutors met Addul Rahim Rather and others.
- Sep. 21: All the three accused in Delhi blast have been flown to New Delhi. Interlocutors described situation as still fragile. Sultan asked India Pakistan to resolve Kashmir issue. The US asked Pakistan to cut ties with terror groups and end ISI, proxy war.
- Sep.22: 19 year old Aamir Abbas has turned out to be the main conspirator in Delhi blast. Security officials have expressed grave concern over the flying of Sultan Mehmood over strategic areas. Meanwhile, Sultan Mehmood was moved by the development in J&K and opposing Geelani's stand, he said that things should start moving and rolling.
- Sep. 23: An IED was defused by police in Belicharana in the outskirts of Jammu. Hafiz Dev, the Delhi blast accused has been remanded to NIA custody. The J&K High Court has asked the Advocate General in the case pertaining to the alleged kidnapping and killing of three civilians of Baderwah 15 years ago.
- Sep. 24: Terrorists opened firing on a police post in Sopore. An IEDw was detected and defused on Rajouri-Poonch road at Manjakote. While Sharif was released, Dev was grilled by NIA to reach more accused in Delhi blast case. Addressing the UN, PM said that terrorism continues to rear its ugly head and there can be no selective approaches to fight it.
- Sep. 25: A BSF jawan shot himself dead in Poonch. S M Krishna said that the recognition by the US of links between ISI and Haquani group vindicates our stand. RSS chief Monam Bagwat accused the centre of lacking will to fight internal and external threats and described Communal violence Bill destructive and dangerous.

'I shall not live to be forty years old'- Swami Vivekananda

By Pushker N Bhat

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNA Parmahansa Ji Maharaj had prophesied, during a discourse with his close disciples (The Inner Group as they were called) that when Naren(Narendranath the real name of Vivekanandaji ,fondly called Naren by Parmahansaji) realises who he is, he will not like to live anymore in this world & would depart from it. It is said that this realisation came to him at Tullmulla. I quote here relevant extracts from an article by Swami Bodhasarananda:

"On September 30 1898, the Swami abruptly went to KshirBhavani, leaving strict instructions that no one was to follow him. It was not until October 6 that he returned. Before this famous shrine of the Mother he daily performed Homa (Havan), and worshipped Her with offerings of Kheer (thickened milk) made from one maund of milk, rice, and almonds.

He told his beads like any humble pilgrim. Every morning he worshipped a Brahmin Pandit's little daughter as Uma Kumari, the Divine Virgin.

He practised severe austerities. He became like a child before the Divine Mother. All thought of Leader, Worker, or Teacher was gone. He was now only the monk, in all the nakedness of pure Sannyasa. One day at KshirBhavani he had been pondering over the ruination and desecration of the temple by the

Muslim invaders. Distressed at heart, he thought : "How could the people have permitted such sacrilege without offering strenuous resistance! If I had been here then, I would never have allowed such a thing. I would have laid down my life to protect the Mother." Thereupon he heard the voice of the Goddess saying : "What if unbelievers should enter My

protect you?"

Referring to this experience after his return, he said to his disciples : "All my patriotism is gone. Everything is gone. Now it is only Mother! Mother! I have been very wrong. I am only a little child."

Another day, in course of his worship, the thought flashed through the



A vintage photograph of Swami Vivekananda at Tullmulla.
(Second from left seated on chair).

temple and defile My image? What is Swami's mind that he should try to that to you? Do you protect Me, or do I build a new temple in the place of a

present dilapidated one, just as he had built a monastery and temple at Belur to Shri Ramkrishna. He even thought of trying to raise funds from his wealthy American disciples and friends. At once the Mother said to him : "My child! If I so wish I can have innumerable temples and monastic centres. I can even this moment raise a seven-storied golden temple on this very spot."

"Since I heard that divine voice," the Swami later said, "I have ceased making any more plans. Let these things be as Mother wishes."

The Swami is reported to have woken up from the visions at Tullmulla almost shaken. In course of time he is reported to have lost interest in things happening around him: he was seen brooding all along thereafter. He returned back to Calcutta, resigned later on from the Presidentship of Ramakrishna Mission & within 3/4 years of the experience at Tullmulla, he left this mortal world.

It has been argued that the visions at Tullmulla actually flattened his ego as well as destroyed his sense or attitude of doership (like building of temple of gold for Mother etc). After this happening, he had nothing more to do in this world & died on July 4, 1902. Swami Vivekananda passed away at the age of thirty-nine years, five months, and twenty-four days fulfilling his own prophecy: "I shall not live to be forty years old".

-Courtesy: Net

HISTORY

Maharaja Hari Singh's Letter to Mountbatten

TEXT OF LETTER DATED OCTOBER 26, 1947 FROM HARI SINGH, THE MAHARAJA OF JAMMU & KASHMIR TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN, GOVERNOR GENERAL OF INDIA.

My dear Lord Mountbatten,

I have to inform your Excellency that a grave emergency has arisen in my State and request immediate assistance of your Government.

As your Excellency is aware the State of Jammu and Kashmir has not acceded to the Dominion of India or to Pakistan. Geographically my State is contiguous to both the Dominions. It has vital economical and cultural links with both of them. Besides my State has a common boundary with the Soviet Republic and China. In their external relations the Dominions of India and Pakistan cannot ignore

this fact.

I wanted to take time to decide to which Dominion I should accede, or whether it is not in the best interests of both the Dominions and my State to stand independent, of course with friendly and cordial relations with both.

I accordingly approached the Dominions of India and Pakistan to enter into Standstill Agreement with my State. The Pakistan

DOCUMENT

Government accepted this Agreement. The Dominion of India desired further discussions with representatives of my Government. I could not arrange this in view of the developments indicated below. In fact the Pakistan Government are operating Post and Telegraph system inside the State.

Though we have got a Standstill Agreement with the Pakistan Government that Government permitted steady and increasing strangulation of supplies like food, salt and petrol to my State.

Afridis, soldiers in plain clothes, and desperadoes with modern weapons have been allowed to infiltrate into the State at first in Poonch and then in Sialkot and finally in mass area adjoining Hazara District on the Ramkot side. The result has been that the

limited number of troops at the disposal of the State had to be dispersed and thus had to face the enemy at the several points simultaneously, that it has become difficult to stop the wanton destruction of life and property and looting. The Mahora powerhouse which supplies the electric current to the whole of Srinagar has been burnt. The numer of women who have been kidnapped and raped makes my heart bleed. The wild forces thus let loose on the State are marching on with the aim of capturing Srinagar, the summer Capital of my Government, as first step to over-running the whole State.

The mass infiltration of tribesmen drawn from distant areas of the North-West Frontier coming regularly in motor trucks using Mansehra-Muzaffarabad Road and fully armed with up-to-date weapons cannot possibly be done without the knowledge of the Provisional Government of the North-West Frontier Province and the Government of Pakistan. In spite of repeated requests made by my Government no attempt has been made to check these raiders or stop them from coming into my State. The Pakistan Radio even put out a story that a Provisional Government had been set up in Kashmir. The people of my State both the Muslims and non-Muslims generally have



21st April 1944: Sir Hari Singh Bahadur, the Maharajah of Jammu & Kashmir and one of India's two representatives at the British War Cabinet inspects civil defence workers in Bermondsey, London.

taken no part at all.

With the conditions obtaining at present in my State and the great emergency of the situation as it exists, I have no option but to ask for help from the Indian Dominion. Naturally they cannot send the help asked for by me without my State acceding to the Dominion of India. I have accordingly decided to do so and I attach the Instrument of Accession for acceptance by your Government. The other alternative is to leave my State and my people to free-booters. On this basis no civilized Government can exist or be maintained. This alternative I will never allow to happen as long as I am Ruler of the State and I have life to defend my country.

I am also to inform your Excellency's Government that it is my intention at once to set up an interim Government and ask Sheikh Abdullah to carry the responsibilities in this emergency with my Prime Minister.

If my State has to be saved immediate assistance must be available at Srinagar. Mr. Menon is fully aware of the situation and he will explain to you, if further explanation is needed.

In haste and with kind regards,

Your sincerely,

HARI SINGH

The Palace, Jammu
26th October, 1947



Lord Mountbatten