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Sh. Advani faced embarrassment at the hands of several Pandit delegations who raised vital core issues of security, secularization of polity and nation building process, central to their return and long-term survival of minorities in J&K state.

## LETTERS

## Left emanates conflicting signals

Sir,

The left parties in India appear to have lost touch with the Marxist philosophy of revolution that starts at the grassroots level. They are trying instead to adopt power brokering as their ideology. The conflicting signals emerging from the sixteenth party Congress of the CPM about taking the Congress direction mainly out of hatred of the BJP signifies that the Marxists too want to make a quick buck on the Indian political market by any means, fair or foul.

What the CPM bosses are forgetting is that they can shape things at national level only if they have a following. A meagre vote-bank of about 3-4 per cent that has more or less remained stagnant for the last 50 years is not going to give them any respectable clout at the Centre.

Come on comrades, don't play to the gallery. Come out of the Kerala and the West Bengal cocoons, offer new ideas to the rest of the country and build up a mass base before clenching your fists.

R.K. Sudan  
Rajouri

## Martyrs' Day Special

Sir,

Thanks for sending a copy of Martyrs' Day Special issue of

the esteemed 'Kashmir Sentinel'. The article and write-up or so informative and thought provoking that I would like to preserve the same. Through your publication you are doing a yeoman's service at a crucial juncture in the contemporary developments in the country. I congratulate you for these efforts.

Prof K.L. Bhalla  
Rehari Colony, Jammu  
II

Sir,

Thanks for the Martyrs' Day issue. The entire journal is preservable. It exposes the festering wound of the Pandits and the urgent need to remedy the situation which has been constantly worsening.

The union government needs to realise the reality without any further delay.

Your editorial venture is all encompassing, especially in this composite number. What else to do except to invoke Almighty's grace. The entire lot of nationalists pray for the restoration of Kashmir to its pristine glory.

We are one with you in your struggle for the reversal of genocide and return to your homeland.

D.C. Sharma  
Retd. Devsthan Comm.  
Ajmer

## State's callous attitude

Sir,

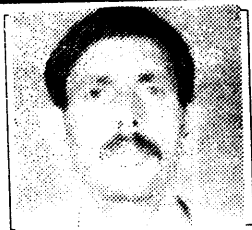
Through the columns of your

esteemed fortnightly I would like to bring to the notice of the authorities in particular and public in general that my house situated at Shesheyar Habbakadal was gutted in fire in June 1995.

I prepared the case for ex-gratia relief three times and submitted to the Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar. Unfortunately no ex-gratia relief has been sanctioned in my favour so far. More than 3 years have elapsed since then.

Arjan Nath Dalal  
Talab Tillo, Jammu

## SHRADANJALI



The sad demise of  
**Sh Tej Krishan Koul**

R/O Ram Nagri (Shopian)

is deeply mourned by

SHRI BHAT

MEMORIAL TRUST

Udhampur

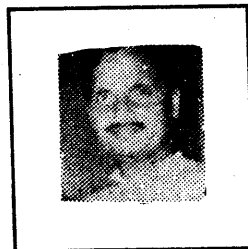
and staff and students of

SHARDA PEETH RISHI

MODEL SCHOOL

Battal Ballian (Udhampur)

## APPEAL



**SH ASHOK KUMAR RAINA** of Trichal (Pulwama) a dedicated social worker and an activist of PK is suffering from kidney failure. Presently he is admitted in PGI Chandigarh and advised immediate transplantation.

To save this precious life, we **APPEAL** all brethren to donate liberally in his bank Act.No. 01190016142 SBI Purani Mandi, Jammu or send to their present address H.No: 422 Sector: 2 Vinayak Nagar, Muthi, Jammu

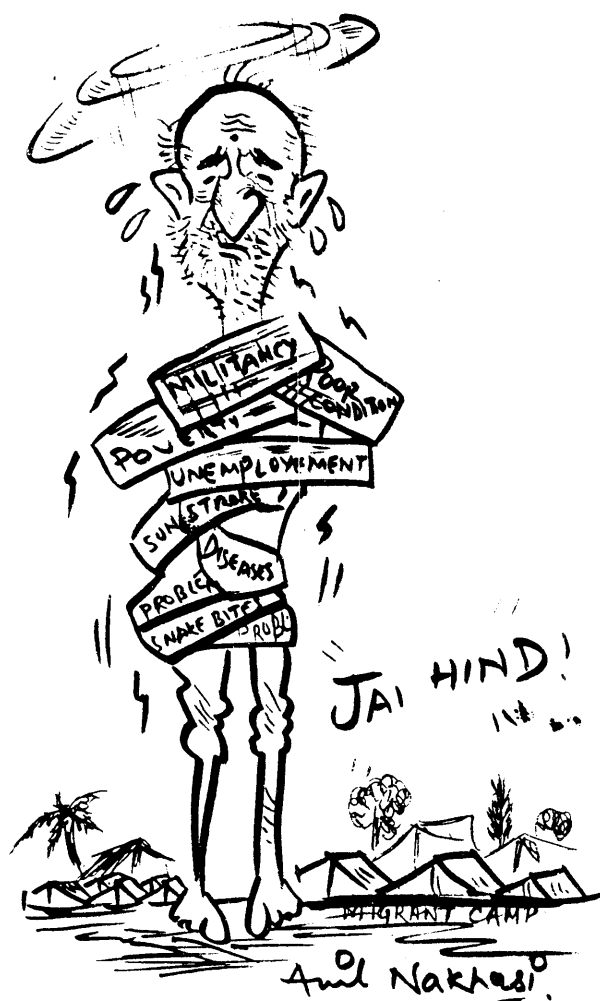
PANUN KASHMIR

## THOSE WHO LEFT US

(15-10-98-1-11-98)

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

1. **Smt Jai Kishori Koul** W/o Sh P.N.Naz; presently at 168 Street No: 15, Talab Tillo, Jammu. 12/10/98.
2. **Smt Indrawati Malla**, R/o Sangrampora Shopian; presently at Barian Udhampur. 13/10/98.
3. **Sh Roop Krishan Ganjoo**, R/o Battapora, Sopore; presently at Qtr. No: 388 Nagrota Camp, Jammu. 15/10/98.
4. **Sh. Mohan Lal Sopory**, R/o Wazir Bagh; presently at C-407 Sarita Vihar, New Delhi. 16/10/98.
5. **Sh Tej Krishan Koul**, R/o Ram Nagri, Shopian; presently at Udhampur. 16/10/98.
6. **Smt Shamrani**, R/o Khalhar, Anantnag, presently at Qtr. No: 207, Migrant Camp, Nagrota. 16/10/98.
7. **Smt Raj Lakshmi** W/o Triloki Nath Raina, presently at Qtr. No: 50 AG Colony, Shakti Nagar, Jammu. 17/10/98.
8. **Sh Prem Nath Bhat**, R/o Ladhoo; presently at H.No: 113, Vinayak Nagar, Upper Muthi, Jammu. 17/10/98.
9. **Sh Vesh Nath Kaloo**, R/o Nai Sarak, Sgr; presently at 110, Sector: 4, Pamposh Colony, SBI Lane, Janipur, Jammu. 17/10/98.
10. **Sh Madhusudhan Wali**, R/o Shutrashahi, Sgr; presently at 81, Laxmi Nagar, Sarwal, Jammu. 18/10/98.
11. **Smt Soomawati Kaul**, R/o Chunkral Mohalla, Sgr; presently at 116 Priyadarshani Lane No: 3, T.Tillo, Jammu. 18/10/98.
12. **Seema Ji** W/o Raies Kumar, R/o Chanapora, Sgr; presently at 307, Tomal Anand Nagar, Bohri, Jammu. 19/10/98.
13. **Sh Mohan Lal Wali**, R/o Zandar Mohalla, Sgr; presently at C-73 East Extension Village Enclave Link Road, Jammu. 19/10/98.
14. **Sh Omkar Nath Bhan**, R/o Shehil Tengh, Sgr.; presently at 500, Rajpura, Mangotrian, Lane No: 31, Jammu. 21/10/98.
15. **Sh Sham Lal Pandita**, R/o Lalpora, Kupwara; presently at Mishriwala Camp, Jammu. 21/10/98.
16. **Smt Rattan Rani Bhan**, R/o Tullamulla Ganderbal, Sgr; presently at 67, Lane 8, Upper Laxmi Nagar, Sarwal, Jammu. 22/10/98.
17. **Smt Prabhawati Dhar**, R/o Srinagar; presently at B-33, Pamposh Enclave New Delhi. 23/10/98.
18. **Sh Maheshwar Nath Pandita**, R/o Kathwar Budgam; presently at Patoli Brahmana, Jammu. 23/10/98.
19. **Sh Jagar Nath Razdan**, R/o Nai Sarak, Sgr; presently at 102 Laxmi Nagar, Sarwal, Jammu. 24/10/98.
20. **Sh Janki Nath Reshi**, R/o Hera Mohalla, Anantnag, presently at 61, W.No: 10, Lambi Gali, Udhampur. 24/10/98.
21. **Smt Laxmi Shori Ganjoo**, R/o Sathu/Chanapora, Srinagar; presently at Lane No: 4, Bhawani Nagar, Gole Polley, T.Tillo, Jammu. 24/10/98.
22. **Smt Maheshwar Nath Pandita**, R/o Kathwar Budgam; presently at Patoli Brahmana, Jammu. 23/10/98.
23. **Sh Sudershan Bhat**, R/o Gund Kupwara; presently at C-28 Phase-III Migrant Camp Purkhoo, Jammu. 26/10/98.
24. **Smt Asha Langer** W/o Sh J.L. Langer, R/o Shivpora; Sgr; presently at 291-D, Pocket E, G.T.B. Enclave Delhi. 26/10/98.
25. **Sh Amar Nath Razdan**, R/o Soibough Budgam; presently at Purkhoo Camp, Jammu. 26/10/98.
26. **Lt Amit Koul**, R/o Shopian; presently at Village Muthi, Jammu. 27/10/98.
27. **Sh Kulbushan Khar**, R/o Mattan Nagbal; presently at Durga Nagar, Sector-1 Near Jany Ghar, Jammu. 28/10/98.
28. **Sh Radha Krishen Koul**, R/o Lar Gauderbal; presently at Muthi Camp, Jammu. 31/10/98.
29. **Smt Gunwati Bhat**, R/o Kaloosa Bandipora; presently at Durga Nagar, Sector-1 H.No: 312-B, Jammu. 31/10/98.
30. **Sh Poshkar Nath Peer**, R/o Vicharnag Srinagar; presently at Indra Nagar, Ward No: 2, Udhampur. 31/10/98.



Amul Nakhasi

## Separatist Manoeuvres

# 'Will BJP succumb again'

By Dr. Ajay Chrunoo

**W**hen Jagmohan was unceremoniously removed as the Governor of J&K State in 1990, many an ardent supporters of BJP, including its rank and file in the state, received the news with shock and bewilderment. The question which haunted them at that time, and continues to prick a significant section of them even now, is as to why BJP high command didn't intervene and forestall the removal of Jagmohan. The then VP Singh government depended totally on the support of BJP which was being extended to it from outside.

Sh LK Advani, BJP stalwart and present Union Home Minister, threw some light on the issue when he stated recently in an interview to a national daily that, "we succumbed to the campaign they unleashed against Jagmohan in which Pakistan was a principal party and Indian political parties joined hands."

This statement makes two significant admissions. One, that external machinations constituted a very important compo-

nent of the decision to remove Jagmohan as the Governor of the state. Second, that BJP's decision making organs, even in such crucial matters as the national security, are as susceptible and pervious to external influences as those in any other party.

But the silent acquiescence of BJP with regard to the decision of calling back Jagmohan cannot be explained only on the basis of foreign sponsored campaign particularly the disinformation deluge, unleashed at that time, and which swayed all other political parties. Sh Advani Ji even then had described the decision by United Front government as a 'monumental blunder'.

The confession made by the BJP stalwart now, of having succumbed to the campaign masterminded by Pakistan is only a half truth. The other half of it being that 'Ayodhya campaign' was BJP's prime concern and the only focus, then, Kashmir issue was of a very peripheral importance and visualised just as an argument to add some punch to BJP's political expositions and rhetoric. And Jagmohan's removal was not the only decision

where BJP acquiesced silently.

Right from inception of VP Singh government, the party high command provided a silent sanction to many other vital decisions which proved to be of critical importance for the fight against terrorism and subversion in the state.

BJP-RSS cadres in the state had expressed their concerns with regard to the long latitude provided to the VP Singh government, by the BJP central command, on many issues con-

### FOCUS

cerning the handling of crisis in the state. The standard explanation to their queries then was that BJP's coming to power was the only way to influence the events in the J&K state and 'Ayodhya' was the key to power. The statement of fact about the BJP mindset then is that 'political gains' of 'Ayodhya campaign' had precedence over everything else. Even if it meant conceding or ignoring the strategic advances made by separatists in the state.

BJP's flowing with the general current in 1989-90, whose

direction was determined externally underlines the sophistication of separatist operations. This sophistication only increased in the subsequent years.

In 1989-90, besides the cleansing of Hindus from Kashmir valley, the other main objective of separatists was to dismantle the democratic set up. Two years back when elections to restore democratic order in the J&K were to be held, separatist imperatives had under gone a change. Former Chief Minister of the state and brother-in-law of the present Chief Minister articulated the separatist imperatives very clearly. In his advice to the Kashmiri Muslim youth, up in arms against India, he said, "It is time to put the guns on the shacks. Keep the powder dry and resort to the ballot." Restoration of a democratic set up, a permissive one, was now seen not as an anathema by separatist think-tanks though most of us are being made to believe so.

In 1989-90 the pattern of violence in the Valley was typically of 'Terrorise and Kill' type. Then the buzz word was 'alienation.' Now a days pattern of violence in Valley is more 'pro-

fessional and technical'. More security personal have got killed in Valley in recent times than in the past. But the buzz word now is of 'returning normalcy'. The phenomenal widening of the ambit of terrorist operations encompassing entire Jammu and even Ladakh is being made out to be fallout of this 'returning normalcy' in Valley.

Then the pet theme on Pandit displacement was 'The conspiracy by Jagmohan'. Now the new phrase on the same issue is 'Pandits vested interest not to return'.

The most subtle but significant ongoing operation of separatists is to exploit the compulsions of coalition politics in the centre and ensure the continued legitimisation of 'Muslim sub-nationalism' in the state by the BJP and decisively undermine and demoralise the social resistance in the state to the separatist politics.

The separatist 'campaign' is continuing unabated, 'in which Pakistan is a principal party'. Will BJP 'succumb' again as it did when Jagmohan was removed.

## Kashmir Insurgency: It is more than a proxy-war

By Dr. M.K. Taing

**I**wonder whether the Indian people should be more concerned than they appear to be about the challenges that the proxy war poses to the nation. I wish, that we ourselves, and the whole people of India, mustered up courage to face the truth of what is happening in Jammu and Kashmir. However, bitter the truth is it must be faced. I quote Saint Jeroms: "If an offence come out of truth. Better it is that the offense came rather than truth be concealed."

The crisis in Kashmir involves more than a proxy war. It is a war of crusades for the eastward expansion of the Muslim power, which has one of its epicentres in Pakistan. Jammu and Kashmir is in the frontline of the civilisational conflict, which the war of crusades underlines.

For Pakistan and the Muslim nations of the world, Jammu and Kashmir is the gateway to South-Asia as well as South-East Asia. The inclusion of Jammu and Kashmir with Gurdaspur-Sheikhpura belt of the erstwhile province of the Punjab formed a part of the grand design of the Muslim League to carve out a Muslim state across the north of India, from Afghanistan in the west and Tibet and Sinkiang in the east.

The crisis in Kashmir has a

deeper portent than is apparent. In fact, it is the first military attempt of the continued Muslim effort to break up India. It is no longer Jammu and Kashmir or the Punjab, which are in peril. The security of the whole country is at stake.

The American bombing of the terrorist bases in Afghanistan and Sudan, has exposed the international implications of the subversive capabilities of the Muslim crusade. Americans have been right in their own way, for they have acted in their national interests. It is for India to identify what is right for its national interests. Kofi Anan's reflections on the crisis in Kashmir, are indicative of the dangers, the war of crusades in Jammu and Kashmir is replete with. Kofi Anan has included Jammu and Kashmir into the storm.

If Jammu and Kashmir is a storm centre in the global configuration of power, India has to read the writing on the wall. The war of crusades has the propensity of converting, Jammu and Kashmir into a storm centre of international conflict. India has to act now to forestall that. It will ignore the warning Kofi Anand has sounded, at its own peril.

The international implications of the crisis in Jammu and Kashmir are wider than actually perceived. The Jammu and Kashmir state must be seen not only as a

state, but as the central feature of the northern frontier of India.

Pakistan has used the militarisation of Pan-Islamic fundamentalism as a potent instrument of subversive warfare in the Punjab as well as Jammu and Kashmir. India must not lose sight of the fact, that in Jammu and Kashmir Hindus do not constitute a majority and therefore, its vulnerability to sabotage from outside is greater. The truth must be faced with the boldness of a soldier.

The Bhartiya Janata Party government must address itself to the defence of the northern frontier of India. The northern frontier of India was left undefended for the last five decades by its predecessor governments of India.

### OPINION

The occupation of the several strategic parts of the Indo-Tibetan border by China, deep south of the McMahon Line and Aksaichin in Ladakh, and the occupation of entire Baltistan and Gilgit by Pakistan in 1947, has impaired the entire frontier of India in the north, bringing the Chinese presence, as well as the presence of Pakistan, to a geographical proximity, which poses a serious threat to the mainland India.

Both China and Pakistan have

used subversive warfare as a potent instrument against India, in the north eastern states, in the Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. We must not lose sight of the fact, that these are the regions, where the Hindus do not constitute a majority.

The new Government of India must:

i) evolve a new national policy for the defence of the northern frontier of India;

ii) deal firmly with the all forms of subversive war, inducted from across the Indian borders;

iii) deal firmly with all religious and ideological separatism which have impeded the integration of the political culture of India.

If, India does not, right now, reverse its policies of accepting religious separatism, as a gradient of its secular political organisation, it will not be after long, that it will have to face the prospect of a second partition. The cry for the second partition of India has already been raised in Jammu and Kashmir.

The genocide of the Hindus in the State and their ethnic cleansing from Kashmir and the Muslim majority districts of the Jammu province is a part of a well-devised plan to prepare the ground for the separation of these areas from India. The projection of the Muslim majority determinism, which formed the groundwork of the

Muslim League demand for Pakistan, is once again assuming prominence, inside our country and outside it. The whole campaign has dangerous dimensions.

The Hindus of Kashmir are the essential component of the Indian State. No one should commit any mistake about that. If the Indian State is not able to secure them the right to life and equality in and the states, where, they are in a minority, the Indian state will not survive.

The make-shift arrangements proposed from time to time, to push back the Hindus into the inferno of terrorism, will lead to disastrous consequences. The genocide of Hindus in the state is still in progress and, no government of India, can envisage the resettlement of these refugees in Kashmir. The refugees are refugees. They are not cabbages and cattle to be pushed out and pushed into their homes at whim.

The Government of India should realise that it is fighting a low-grade war, which is escalating to new frontiers. The problem of refugees is consequent to their determination to fight it. The Hindu community of Kashmir, cannot be used as cannon fodder for any tactical manoeuvres. Any attempt to do that, will have disastrous implications.



## NEWS BRIEFS

### ANC flays Advani

**KS Correspondent**

JAMMU, Oct 24: The Jammu and Kashmir Awami National Conference has criticised Sh L.K. Advani, Home Minister, for giving a clean chit to State government. The party accused NC government for misappropriation of funds, rampant corruption, favouritism and breeding militancy.

It may be recalled that Mr Advani recently stated that proper accountability of funds is maintained by the State government amidst reports that the funds are being misused by the State government.

### Water poisoning plan foiled

JAMMU, Oct 18: The Army today foiled an attempt of ISI-agents to poison PHE water tanks and blast Hindu shrines, including famous Raghunath temple, when they eliminated an intruder in Samba sector.

The slain militant was a Pak national and a large quantity of explosives and poisonous material was recovered for him.

### Meet held to review J&K situation

NEW DELHI, Oct 23: Amidst reports that Osama Bin Laden is planning to shift his hideout to Kashmir to escape from direct attack from America, Mr Lal Krishan Advani, Union Home

Minister, held a high level meeting to discuss J&K situation and work out plans to counter proxywar.

### Attachment notice to Ansari Motors

SRINAGAR, Oct 24: The State government has issued attachment notice to Ansari Motors, owned by Mr Iftikhar Ansari the Housing and Urban Development Minister J&K. Mr Ansari's concern has been declared a leading sales-tax, defaulter.

### GSTA supports migrant teachers

DELHI: Delhi Government School Teachers Association have threatened to stage dharna against discriminatory attitude meted to migrant teachers working in Delhi administration.

It may be recalled that BJP government in a helpful gesture appointed migrant KP youth with B.Ed degree registered with Delhi administration in education department, however, they are being paid lesser salary than the other Delhi government teachers. The migrant employees are demanding pay equal to their counterparts.

Meanwhile, as per release, All Party Kashmiri Pandit Action Committee, New Delhi met Lt. Governor and Chief Minister Delhi who assured the delegation to increase the pay of migrant teachers who are working on contract basis in Delhi administration.

## Vigilance unveils multi-crore scandle

**Kashmir Sentinel Correspondent**

Taking action in yet another 20 crore embazzlement scandal in PHE Division Kupwara, Vigilance Organisation organised simultaneous raids on the premises of nine involved engineers and arrested one executive engineer and AEE while others gave a slip.

Earlier, the vigilance department unearthed multi-crore bunglings in Kishan Ganga Hydel Project during 1992-94 and sub-transmission Division II of PDD Rajbagh Srinagar. Subsequently the government suspended 32 officials in Kishanganga project scandal. One of the involved officials in other scandal is the brother of a Hurriyat Conference leader, who was promoted to the rank of superintending engineer by the NC government.

### Events/Chronology of loot

- Rs 1.34 lakh drawn in March 1997 against non-existent works under Kalam Chakla scheme.
- The corrupt engineers even didn't spare the religious shrine of Muqam Shah Wali Mir and drew Rs 50,000 sanctioned for removing silt in the water there. No work was carried out and entire amount was misappropriated. Even filtered samples taken from the shrine water were found unfit for human consumption.
- Rs 81,000 sanctioned on account of chemicals for use in filtration plant of Handwara in 1997-98 were bungled.
- Rs 11.7 lakh worth 'removed pipes' after laying new pipes under Water Supply Augmentation Scheme at Handwara were also embazzled. There was no record to removed pipes.
- Rs 1.42 lakh were drawn from treasury against installation of eight hands pumps. Not

even a single pump was installed. Rs 83,000 were drawn for laying Public Stands at Chuntipura and Mirpora. Only two or three stands were installed, which also remained non-functional.

- Rs 6.40 lakh were drawn by Executive Engineer Mohd Shaffi Shah against non-existent works in the district. Rs 1.19 lakh were drawn for repair of 30-KVA diesel generator, which was never done.
- Rs 80,000 were drawn for the repair of 1983 model jeep No: 952/JKD. The very next day, the jeep was burnt down to hush up the matter.
- Rs 1.48 lakhs were drawn showing purchases of tools. Not even a single tool was found in the offices during inspections by Vigilance sleuths.
- Several other such frauds in PHE schemes at Kupwara were being investigated and details will come out within a week's time.

## Pak intensifies firing along J&K border

**KS Correspondent**

JAMMU: Besides internal subversion in Kashmir, Pakistan continues her unprovoked firing on Line of Control (LoC) and International Border (IB) in Jammu and Kashmir to keep the pot boiling and attract international attention. Pakistani forces do not only attack security forces and pickets but are deliberately targeting civilian population resulting in heavy loss of life and property in border areas. The people in these border areas migrate temporarily to save their skin. One day people desert Kargil, next day Gurez and Uri, 3rd day RS Pura. It is Hiranagar sector now, where villagers have deserted their native places amidst heavy Pakistani firing and are camping at Hiranagar, tehsil headquarter. Village Londi and Khawarah wear a deserted look as entire population has deserted these two villages.

The refugees were being helped by the local population as well as some voluntary organisations by providing food and shelter.

Meanwhile, the state government has announced a package for border people almost on the analogy of militancy victims and people are looking forward to its implementation. The government has also rightly decided to compensate for the loss of agriculture.

## Situation not conducive for Pandit return : Shastri

**KS Correspondent**

JAMMU, Oct 26: Putting a question mark on Abdullah's plans for coerced return of migrants to the Valley, Mr Vishnu Kant Shastri, senior BJP leader and MP, said that the decision on return issue will be taken in consultation with community representatives and situation is not yet conducive for return of Kashmiri migrants. Talking to press persons he took serious exception to the chief minister's statements on return issue and said that he will take up the issue with Union Home Minister and plead for enhancement of relief to Rs 2500.

The state BJP Chief Sh Daya Krishan Kotwal, who was also present during the press briefing, said that accession of J&K made

51 years back is a historical fact and accused Farooq Abdullah for demanding conversion of LoC into international border.

Earlier, while addressing a convention of Kashmir unit of the party, Mr Shastri assured migrants that "there will be no forcible return and the migrants will determine the state of normalcy in the Valley themselves".

Addressing the same convention, Mr Chander Mohan Sharma, state BJP Vice President, stressed for redressal of migrants problems including special package for employment and urged central government 'not to rely on Farooq Abdullah and his party as they were responsible for the present turmoil in the state.'

## Pak General admits incursion in Indian territory

**KS Correspondent**

JAMMU: It is a national tragedy that India has remained always defensive in case of Kashmir even when it should have seized the opportunity and generated global opinion against misdeeds of Pakistan in Kashmir. India slept over the incursion of Pakistani army into this side of territory in 1990 when the militancy was at height in Kashmir.

Former Pakistan army chief Gen Mirza Aslam Beg revealed that a Divisional Commander

had sent battalions of army across LoC in Kashmir in 1990 when Pak sponsored militancy was at peak.

Reacting to the report, Defence Minister George Fernandes admitted that Pakistani Army made three incursions in 1990, however, Indian Army repulsed all the three incursions. Mr Fernandes said that India and Pakistan had agreed not to give information about it. That India agreed to hush off such a matter of grave importance has raised many an eyebrow.

## A CHAPTER IS CLOSED

With the demise of

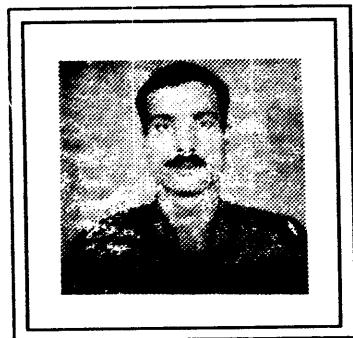
**PT. POSHKER NATH KOUL VAKIL**  
on Sunday, 25th Oct., 98 at 4 AM in Delhi  
Suman-Pyare Lal Koul, Advocate  
Neerja-Kamlaish Vakil  
Sunita-Sushil Vakil  
Preeti-Deep Nehru

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10th Day Kriya a Nigam Bodh Ghat at 9:00 AM on 2nd Nov., 1998

## HOMAGE



*Lieutenant Amit Kaul*  
(1974-1998)

*Your martyrdom shall beacon us  
to  
serve the nation with a renewed resolve*  
**PANUN KASHMIR**

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## Pak firing intensifies Exodus begins in border areas of Jammu



Displaced from village Londi sitting on Dharna

### Special Correspondent

#### HIRANAGAR (Jammu)

With Pakistani firing intensifying with every passing day, hundreds of families have been forced to migrate to safer places from the border areas of Kathua district in Jammu.

More than 1000 people, including women and children have been camping in Hiranagar's Secondary School building in order to escape Pakistani bullets. These persons belong to Londi and Khora villages of Hiranagar Tehsil. "Pakistani firing during last one week became so intense that it was impossible for us to get out of our houses, where we had to remain crouched or lying down on the floor all the time. The bullets pierced through the walls many a time," said Punnu who escaped with his family of six and his neighbours on the night of 26th Oct.

The firing has been so intense that it sparked off strong protests from the people in the area. The protesters raised slogans against the Indian government and the soldiers manning the borders. "Indian forces didn't retaliate to silence Pakistani guns," lament the poor exiles. "In the past BSF and army would retaliate in a big

way and the Pakistanis would stop firing. Now there is *batcheat* (talks) and perhaps the Indians don't want to spoil the *mahoul* (environment)", mockingly said Bachitra Ram, another exile.

Pakistani Rangers have even targeted the passenger buses. The movement of farmers has become a risky affair who want the firing to end. They have not been able to sow paddy this time and in case outside help doesn't reach them, their families face starvation in coming months.

The BSF officials, when contacted charged Pakistani Rangers of breaching all the pacts agreed upon by the two countries. One of the BSF commanders commented that intensified firing helps Pakistan to bring Kashmir to international focus.

"Perhaps, it is internationalisation of the issue which makes India respond meekly to the firing of Pakistanis", commented a top official of the security forces. He informed that plans were afoot to build a bund along these areas, so that civilian houses be saved from gun fire. Interestingly, the army and civil administration are desperately searching for bulletproof bulldozers to start the bunding operations.

### NEWS ANALYSIS

## Kargil: Civilian Life in Jeopardy



By S.M. Pandit

Two hundred five kilometres from Srinagar, on the banks of river Sooru, is situated Kargil town. The district headquarter of Kargil district of Ladakh region. The geography of this district is such that it has a long border, with PoK. Many areas including Kargil town itself come in the firing range of Pakistan. Unlike Leh, the other district of Ladakh, where majority of population is Buddhists, Kargil has Muslim majority, mostly Shias. The people of this district are nationalists and have stood by Indian army in peace and war.

In the outset of militancy in 1989-90, unlike co-religionists in Valley who out of fear or favour, overtly or covertly, helped militants, the people of Kargil resisted all such attempts and didn't allow fundamentalist militants to establish a foot hold. Even Kashmiri Muslims, mostly the government employees working in the region, reportedly made all out efforts and tried to exploit their religious emotions to rope them in the militancy.

Reportedly the meetings were being held by these Kashmiris under leadership of the father of a prominent JKLF militant in the area to work out plans to take militancy across

Zojila. But the local noncooperation made all such plans almost futile and Kargil remained, by and large peaceful in those days when the Valley was in the flames of terrorism.

Pakistan launched full scale heavy artillery shelling on the civilian population of Kargil since 1997. "Some of our youth were approached by ISI agents and asked them to train as militants. But agents never got response. We are being taught a lesson now," said Ashiq Hussain of Kargil to a national daily. Many people lost their lives and even a mosque was demolished and the district hospital badly damaged. The shelling resulted in temporary migration to minimise human loss. Surprisingly Farooq Abdullah, the Chief Minister of J&K, accused civil administration for encouraging migration at that time and exonerated Pakistan altogether.

This summer again Pakistan targeted civil population of Kargil and the Srinagar-Leh national highway causing loss to life and property. Around the same time the terrorists demonstrated their presence in the area by implanting and detonating IED's on national highway at Drass and targeting army vehicles. This time, in total reversal of the stance, Farooq Abdullah, in an interview on Radio

Kashmir Jammu, described Pakistan shelling as direct war and tried to avoid the question of militants presence.

The state government has contemplated a plan to shift Kargil town, even the site has been selected, to a safer area, and construct the portion of the highway across hills out of firing range of Pakistan. But observers doubt whether shifting of Kargil town to save the civilian population can provide easy solution as the entire border including the international border in the state has become alive.

As the migration of civilians from Hiranagar and other border towns is pouring in necessity to devise measures to protect them from Pak-firing has cropped up in a big way as never before.

Recently Sh LK Advani observed on 14th September at a function organised by Delhi Kashmiri Samiti that ISI activities and terrorism are gradually engulfing entire the India.

While cleansing operations and migrations are assuming alarming proportions effected citizens are demoralised. "No citizen in India will be safe in the near future. And ultimately all of us will have to seek refuge from Pakistani violence in the basin of Indian ocean", said recent migrant from Kathua.



Perpetual Siege: Sketch by Sh. Gokul Dombi

# Kashmir Sentinel

November 1-15, 1998

## Oh, this helplessness

**W**hile the booming of guns reverberates along the borders and secessionists are busy spreading their tentacles even beyond Jammu and Kashmir, the Indian state is busy preparing for talks with Pakistan. Right from Siachin down to Kathua, the civilians are traumatized by incessant Pak shelling. There are plans to shift the entire township of Kargil. Displaced from border areas of Kathua are languishing in thousands in Tehsil headquarters.

The terrorist operatives have acquired hightech war-machines and are calling shots.

The Taliban connection stands established. Osama Bin Laden's operatives have penetrated in Kashmir and are directing the Jihad. From Mazar Sharief to Kashmir, they have the sway. And for us Shimla Agreement holds the key!

Three dreaded Pakistanis make good their escape from a high security prison. In next 48 hours they reportedly reach Muzaffarabad. Hand of some top ranking officials, political leaders and a smuggling cartel is not ruled out. Our intelligence and security agencies keep passing the buck.

In less than a week's time more than a ton, nay one thousand kilos of RDX is recovered from two places in the valley. How much more must be still lying dumped. In less than a fortnight, six officers and twenty soldiers of Indian army get killed. How many more shall sacrifice their lives may be countless in coming days. "But we must keep the temperature cool and not escalate the scope of conflict", warn our Home Minister and the Governor of the state.

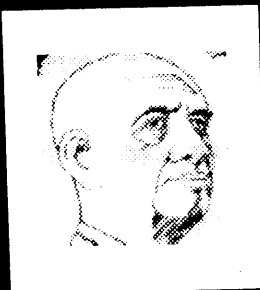
The Defence Minister believes that Pakistan has a compulsion to escalate the tension and try and acquire some strategic advantage before talks; to negotiate on, later. He further asserts that it should not be a cause of worry in case we can negotiate on Tulbul Project and Sir Creek issues. With great pomp and show, we also declare starting a bus-service between Delhi and Lahore as a goodwill gesture.

What the country fails to understand, and would like to know, are the compulsions of the Indian state for this utter helplessness to which it has succumbed. Are we a self-respecting nation.

## PERSPECTIVE

*Birth Anniversaries of great leaders are not only momentous events but also time for reassessing their historical role. On the occasion of the Birth Anniversary of Sardar Patel, the iron man of India, we are publishing two articles for our readers to make their own assessment about this great man.*

—Editor



By Markandeya Raina

**S**ardar Vallabhai Patel's admirers and detractors alike agree that the Sardar was the master-builder of India's destiny. Manibendra Nath Roy, the renegade Marxist once observed, "It is enough to pay tribute to a successful man. But its much more difficult to carry on the work he (Patel) will leave unfinished.... India's misfortune is that there will be none to take his place when he is no more". How prophetic in a sense. Patel's achievements, as a practitioner of real-politick, have been monumental and in this he outclassed all the great leaders of his times, including Nehru and Gandhi.

When the British colonialists left the country, they did not envision a strong and united India. They had tried everything to balkanise this great ancient country—a Harijan homeland, a Sikh homeland, a Muslim homeland etc. To pit princely India, with as many as 565 states, against the erstwhile British India was their last play.

Patel foiled this gameplan through his political farsightedness, tact and decisiveness. Keen analysts opine that left to himself, Patel would have handled the Kashmir issue as conclusively as the other princely states he integrated into Indian Union. Fed up with Nehru's indecisiveness on Anglo-American intervention, it is reported that at one time both Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad and Sheikh Abdullah approached him with the request that he should take the problem into his own hands. Patel declined, saying that the problem was the special preserve of the Prime Minister Nehru and consequently he must deal with it.

With the eruption of Muslim-separatist insurgency in Kashmir, Patel's role vis-a-vis Kashmir is being re-examined in all its dimensions. Critique of Patel's role has ardent Nehruites as well as the nationalists. The nationalists' criticism of Patel centres around two arguments: Patel who as the Home Minister/Minister of states Affairs did not brook any interference in the handling of other princely states, allowed himself to be sidelined on Kashmir, thus putting long-term national security to great

imperial. Secondly, Patel not only agreed to the draft of Gopalswamy Aiyangar in regard to the special status of Kashmir in Indian constitution but also mobilised support for it. The rank and file of Congress party was totally hostile to the idea of having a 'republic within a republic'. Nehru was away on a foreign tour. It was Patel's persuasive skill that turned the tide in favour of special status. Sardar's personal secretary V Shanhar also expressed doubts about the wisdom of Patel in this acquiescence. The Nehruite critique has been presented by the noted journalist, Mr MJ Akbar. To establish that Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah were true messiahs so far as the integration of J&K with India was concerned, he makes a sweeping statement about Patel. According to him Patel had written off Kashmir as a future constituent state of the Indian Union. Akbar writes:

"...it is extraordinary that the ministry of states made no attempt to bring Hari Singh into Indian Union either before partition or, even more shockingly, after 15 August. Patel could easily have pressurised Hari Singh into releasing Abdullah and negotiating a settlement long before Pakistan sparked off the crisis with a sponsored invasion. The problem would never and should never have reached the battlefield."

That Patel was non-serious about accession of Kashmir is not true. Even as early July 3, 1947 i.e. just 15 days after the partition plan was announced, Patel wrote to Maharaja Hari Singh:

"I fully appreciate the difficult and delicate situation in which your state has been placed, but as a sincere friend and well-wisher of the state, I wish to assure you that the interest of Kashmir lies in joining the Indian Union and its constituent assembly without any delay. Its past history and traditions demand it, and all India looks upto you and expects you to take that decision..." Further Patel invited the Maharaja for a free and frank discussion to clear his apprehensions. Same day, in a separate communication to Ramchandra Kak, the Prime Minister of J&K State, Sardar Patel asked:

"You are aware that on 15 August, India, though divided,

will be completely free, and you also know that by this time a vast majority of states would have joined the constituent Assembly of India. I realise the peculiar difficulties of Kashmir, but looking to its history and its traditions, it has, in my opinion, no other choice."

For the release of Sheikh Abdullah from detention, Patel had been impressing upon RC Kak right from 11 April 1947. On July 3, 1947 he again asked Kak:

"Do you still think that Sheikh Abdullah should continue to remain in Jail? I am asking this question purely in the interest of Kashmir state. You know my attitude all along and my sympathy towards the State. I am once again advising you as a friend of the state to reconsider the matter without any delay."

How serious Patel was about the accession of J&K to India is again indicated by his stand on Plebiscite in Junagadh. Patel opposed the proposal for plebiscite in Junagadh only for the sake of Kashmir. Junagadh was a pawn with which Jinnah hoped to get the queen i.e. Kashmir. If India argued, as Jinnah was sure it would, that not Junagadh's ruler but its people should choose, he would make the same demand for Kashmir in case the Maharaja joined India. Nehru not only consented to the plebiscite proposal in Junagadh but even nodded his head when Mountbatten told Liaquat Ali Khan that if the need arose Nehru would apply the principle to other states too. Describing the plebiscite proposal as "unnecessary and uncalled for," Vallabhai made it plain that a plebiscite in Kashmir would be conditional on one in Hyderabad. Not prepared for the latter, Jinnah offered no plebiscite in Junagadh.

Patel did permit Mountbatten to convey the assurance that if Hari Singh acceded to Pakistan, it would not be construed as an unfriendly act. As Patel's private secretary, V Shanker rightly says it was more for tactical than for political reasons. Patel was clear in his mind about his personal preference that the state should accede to India and democratise its administration.

However, prior to 13 Sept Patel did not press this overmuch. He did not want to take any such step on Kashmir that could precipitate matters on Junagadh and Hyderabad and lead to difficulties in their integration. Patel preferred to tread cautiously on Kashmir. Besides being strategically located, Kashmir was a Muslim-majority state and geographically contiguous to Pakistan.

Patel adopted a more mature approach on Kashmir. While Nehru tried to provoke conflict with Maharaja, Patel appreciated his difficulty. On one hand, accession to Pakistan would have meant linking up with a professedly communal state, and an immediate threat not only to the ruler but also to the several minorities living in the state. On the

other hand, there is a possibility that accession would create complications of another kind.

The boundary between the two Dominions had not yet been determined. The stage had been set for the Radcliffe award of Gurdaspur which contained the cary between the Dominion and Pakistan. If this was confirmed it would have thrown the high mountainous territory into no common field between the J&K and the Dominion. Eventual Radcliffe award in that area was given to Pakistan. It was a couple of days later that the award itself was made. Patel hesitated, though in Mountbatten him.

Patel has also been criticised for not working an agreement with As Maharaja was to decide, on 12 September sent telegrams to Delhi and Kara standstill agreement assure that arrangement, trade, travel, and other services continue as with British India.

Pakistan, with most of the link asked for time to complications. Pakistan to hesitate. Princely states were prompt in Also Pakistan signing a standstill agreement. It retained control post and telegraph services, bulk of communication of essential supplies with hundreds of to contend with a prompt response. Kashmir did not dia for communication, no suffering by not signing agreement.

Finally on August 14, 1947, India telegraphed for a duly authorised come to New Delhi a standstill agreement. actual signing of never took place. enigma. Detractors however look at a Korebel in his book 'Kashmir' says: felt certain that ready in the bag the agreement, subtly telling India would not a quo indefinitely.

It must, however, be noted that if choose between Hyderabad and would choose to if Patel had to Kashmir, he would stand gain. His approval of national emotional



# ining Patel's role

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realpolitik. He tried to tempt Jinnah by offering J&K for East Bengal and even enrolled support of a section of British establishment (Field-Marshal Auchinleck) for it.

Patel's initial cautious approach towards Kashmir was based on realism. Though strategically located, Kashmir was 300 miles away from the nearest Indian border. Radcliffe's partition of Gurdaspur district infused some hope in him. While avoiding pro-active approach on Kashmir, Patel did on his own authorize an improvement of Jammu-Pathankot road, which in places was no more than a cart track.

Patel's cautious approach towards Kashmir lasted until September 13, 1947. Pakistan's acceptance of Junagadh's accession alerted Patel but also gave him the confidence. He became apprehensive that Jinnah could do the same with Hyderabad. But on Kashmir he now felt more confident. If Jinnah could take hold of a Hindu-majority state with a Muslim ruler, why should he not be interested in a Muslim-majority state with a Hindu ruler. From that day onwards Junagadh, Hyderabad and Kashmir became his simultaneous concerns.

To integrate Kashmir and to counter the Pak gameplan for wresting Kashmir by force, Patel took a number of strategic steps. At Patel's initiative, planes were diverted to the Delhi-Srinagar route, and wireless and telegraph equipment to both ends of the Amritsar-Jammu link. Telephone and telegraph lines were laid between Pathankot and Jammu. In a letter to the Maharaja on 2 October, Patel assured:

"I am expediting as much as possible the linking up of the state with the Indian Dominion by means of telegraph, telephones, wireless and roads".

On 27 September, 1947 Pakistan Times noted:

"Orders have been issued by the Kashmir government that a temporary boat bridge should be constructed over the Ravi near Pathankot so that vehicular traffic could be maintained between Jammu and the Indian Union. The metalling of the road from Jammu to Kathua is also proceeding at top speed. The idea is to keep up some sort of communication between the state and the Indian Union, so that essential supplies and troops could be rushed to Kashmir without having to transport them through Pakistan territory".

Earlier Meharchand Mahajan, a Punjab High Court Judge and a strong admirer of Patel was appointed as the next Prime Minister of J&K at the instance of Sardar. He was fully briefed by Patel about his mission in the crucial phase that was awaiting Kashmir.

Although Hari Singh had earlier rejected Mountbatten's suggestion of military links with either Dominion, on 13 September, his government approached New Delhi for the loan of the

services of Lt Col Kashmir Singh Katoch to replace Major General Scott as commander-in-Chief. In a communication to the Defence Minister Baldev Singh on 13 September, 1947, Patel argued.

"...you know the difficulties of the state, and I feel that at this juncture it would be most useful to have an officer of our own Army as commander-in-chief of the Kashmir forces. The officer selected is the son of the Prime Minister of Kashmir, General Janak Singh, and has opted for service with the Indian Dominion...while it is possible for us to find substitutes, I am doubtful whether Kashmir could get a more suitable person."

On 7 October, Sardar Patel urged his Defence Minister to expedite supply of arms and ammunition to Kashmir and to send them by air if necessary. "There is no time to lose if the reports which we hear of similar preparations for intervention on the part of the Pakistan government are correct".

Realising that an understanding between the Maharaja and Sheikh Abdullah was crucial to stall the impending mischief, Patel made Maharaja see the reason in ordering immediate release of Abdullah! Consequently Abdullah was released on September 29, 1947, Sardar's position was perfectly clear. He urged power-sharing between the Maharaja and the Sheikh, "without in any way jeopardising Hari Singh's position". Patel felt that this was the only way to ensure peace in Kashmir and establish the state's lasting friendship with India. Abdullah and Nehru thought otherwise, with its disastrous consequences so apparent today.

On Oct 26, when Maharaja asked for military support, Mountbatten insisted on accession first before the troops were dispatched. Patel's position was that the invasion of Kashmir was sufficient warrant for going to its aid. Accession or no accession Patel was determined to clear Kashmir of Pakistani invaders. His detractors hold that even on October 26, Patel was not enthusiastic about accession. As a far-sighted administrator, Sardar realized that Kashmir's accession to India could lead to greater exertions for securing Hyderabad to Pakistan. Patel understood well the ploy of Mountbatten, who wanted to tag plebiscite with accession. This Mountbatten thought could help smooth take over of Kashmir by Pakistan. Patel thus opposed accession as a conditionality for military aid as well as plebiscite to determine its future. Since individual Britons still headed India's military services, Patel had to give in.

M.J. Akbar's arguments accusing Patel of 'strange indifference' on Kashmir and not making "any move to prepare for this (Tribal) predicted onslaught" thus rest on sand.

(To be concluded)

# Patel and Kashmir

By Jagmohan

The seeds of the current turmoil in Kashmir lie embedded in the politics of deception, in the soft and permissive attitude of the State, in fundamentalisation of the otherwise liberal Kashmiri Islam, in administrative infirmities, in the habit of nursing illusion instead of facing hard realities, and in the overall disregard of forces that go to make a cohesive nation.

Had Sardar Patel been alive or another Sardar appeared on the country's horizon, would he have permitted these unhealthy seeds to be planted? Even if some ill-winds had brought such seeds to our newly laid fields, would he have allowed them to strike roots and grow into a bitter harvest?

When V. Shankar expressed doubt about the wisdom of Sardar Patel agreeing, albeit against his better judgement, to the draft of Gopalaswamy Ayyangar in regard to the special status of Kashmir, he remarked: "After all, neither Shikh Abdullah nor Gopalaswamy is permanent. The future would depend upon the strength and guts of the Indian government and if we cannot have confidence in our own strength we do not deserve to exist as a nation".

Do the subsequent events not show that we, as a nation, have not displayed much 'strength and guts'? Would Sardar Patel or the like of him have allowed national traits to take such a sorry shape?

The answer to the above questions is in the negative. Because Sardar Patel had a clear and constructive mind. Like a great builder, he looked at the various components of his edifice in an integrated manner and simultaneously thought of the tools and technics to be employed. The need for laying firm foundations remained uppermost in his mind. In his calculation, time was of no less significance. He knew that it was best to strike the iron when it was hot.

## Firm foundation

The manner in which Sardar Patel dealt with the problem of 561 princely States bears eloquent testimony to his constructive genius. He sized up the situation, analysed the mind and motivation of different Rajas and Maharajas, Nawabs and the Nizam, and proceeded quickly, to give a practical shape to his grand design of integration and consolidation. Within a short span of a year or so, he created a bloodless revolution, adding 86 million people and 500,000 square miles of territory to the Indian Union. He demonstrated that "things are revolutionised, not by creating revolutions on the streets but by causing practical solution of the existing problems."

Sardar Patel started with an appeal to the patriotic sentiments which were active in some princes, dormant in others. He reminded them of the common heritage of the past, the common interests of the present and the common requirements of peace and prosperity for the future. He said, "We are at a momentous stage in the history of India. By common endeavour, we can raise the country to new greatness, while lack

of unity will expose us to fresh calamities."

## Unity appeal

While Sardar Patel provided honourable avenues to all princes, he made it clear to all concerned that he would not allow India's hard-earned freedom to be blown over through the numerous doors of the princely States. He scotched Bhopal's game of grouping the States and acquiring a separate dominion status. He dealt firmly with Junagadh and called off the bluff of the Nizam of Hyderabad and his advisors like Sri Monckton and Laik Ali. With raising of a few guns and firing of still fewer shots, he demonstrated what a paper tiger Kasim Rizvi was and what stuff the 'razakars' were really made of.

And when the diehard Tory members of the British Parliament, like RA Butler and Churchill, tried to browbeat India by espousing the cause of the Nizam, the 'faithful ally of the empire' he firmly told them not to stand by the 'old world'. He made it clear: "It is only in goodwill spirit, and not on the malice and venom of Mr Churchill's tongue, that an enduring relationship of friendship can be built between India and Britain and other members of the commonwealth." He thus successfully prevented Hyderabad, whom he described as an "ulcer in the abdomen of India", from becoming cancerous.

If Sardar Patel had handled Kashmir or if the same clear and constructive attitude had been displayed with regard to it as had been displayed with regard to other states, the subsequent confusion and contradictions would have been avoided and we would not have found ourselves in the bloody and brutal mess of the present day.

Sardar Patel had correctly sized up Sheikh Abdullah and sensed his proclivity to bully. His practical sense forbade him to believe that all Indian eggs could be safely placed in the Sheikh's basket. He bemoaned India's reference of the Kashmir case to the United Nations. He tried his best to secure deletion of the words, "plebiscite under the UN auspices", from Pandit Nehru's radio broadcast on October 28, 1947. In his private conversation, he sometimes satirically referred to the 'expertise' of the two votaries of the UN in the Government of India, namely, Lord Mountbatten and Nehru. Patel was also against Gopalaswamy Ayyangar being sent as leader of the Indian delegation to the UN and Sheikh Abdullah as member. He preferred Sir Girja Shankar to the former; about the latter, he feared that the "Sheikh's flamboyant personality might easily swamp the boat."

It is generally not known that Sheikh Abdullah had his own compulsions in joining the Indian Union in preference to Pakistan. Jinnah, during his visit to Kashmir in 1944, had openly favoured Sheikh's political opponent in the State, namely, Chowdhry Ghulam Abbas of the Muslim Conference. Speaking at the civic reception organised by the latter, Jinnah said: "The Muslims have one platform, one 'Kalma' and one God. I would request the Muslims to come under the banner of th-

Muslim conference and fight for their rights." Subsequently, he described the National Conference as a "band of gangsters". All this convinced Sheikh Abdullah that his political future would be bleak if the State joined Pakistan. In his autobiography, *Atish-e-Chinar*, the Sheikh himself acknowledges the hostility which Jinnah displayed towards him.

It was unwise to agree to many of Sheikh Abdullah's unreasonable demands and to bolster his ego to such an extent that he started nursing illusions of carving out a virtual Sheikhdom for himself and his coterie. Had Sardar Patel remained on the scene, he would have halted the appeasement in time.

## Contribution

To the extent Sardar Patel was able to influence the course of events in Kashmir, his contribution was fruitful. When the raiders were on the outskirts of Srinagar and Lt Col Ranjit Rai and Major Som Nath Sharma of the Indian Army had been killed, being heavily outnumbered, Sardar Patel, accompanied by Defence Minister Baldev Singh flew to the State capital, assessed the situation on the ground and on return to New Delhi ordered stoppage of all airline services and diversion of all planes for flying troops to Srinagar. The timely arrival of reinforcements enabled Brigadier Sen to lure the raiders in the net of Indian forces, near Shaltang, and attack them on November 5 from three sides. The raiders were routed. Three hundred of them were killed. The battle of Shaltang (November 7) proved decisive. Three days afterwards, advancing Indian troops recaptured Baramullah.

If Patel had his way, he would not have allowed Maharaja Hari Singh to be humiliated. Left to himself, he would have struck a proper balance between the requirements of the Union and the State and also harmonised, within a sound and truly secular and democratic framework, the aspirations of Sheikh Abdullah, Maharaja Hari Singh and those of the people of three main regions—Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh.

## Sheikh's follies

As soon as Sheikh Abdullah was appointed as Prime Minister of the State on March 4, 1948, he started acting in a dictatorial manner. As a political commentator of the time put it, "Where the Maharaja was required to be consulted, he was bullied; and where he was needed to be informed, he was ignored." In whatever the Sheikh did, reasonable or unreasonable, he was supported by Jawaharlal Nehru, much to the chagrin of Sardar Patel.

Eventually, the Maharaja was forced to abdicate (July 20, 1949). This humiliation incensed the people of Jammu, particularly the Dogras. Their bitterness found expression in a prolonged agitation by the Praja Parishad. With the Sheikh's propensity to exploit India's declaration with regard to plebiscite, he resorted to virtual blackmail, and even hobnobbed with the United States for an independent Kashmir. Speaking at Mujahad Manzil on July 10, 1953,

(contd on Page 11)

## MEDIA SCAN

**Sharif strikes**

Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's decision to crackdown on members of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), with which his ruling Pakistan Muslim League (PML) had been sharing power in the Sindh province until a few days ago, might have been seen by the Prime Minister as his opportunity to gain a better hold over this largely feudal and politically volatile province. The immediate provocation for the conflict with the MQM was the daylight murder of Hakim Said, a scholar and a former Governor of the Sindh province, in Karachi recently. Considering the amount of carnage that the Karachi streets had witnessed (over a 1,000 dead since the beginning of the year), the murder was not an unusual occurrence except that Mr Nawaz Sharif blamed the MQM for it. The MQM, which had just rejoined the provincial government as a junior partner after prolonged negotiations with Mr Sharif, threatened to quit over the accusation. Rather than letting the MQM wear the mantle of martyrdom and gain public sympathy, Mr Sharif moved fast to sack the provincial government, impose governor's rule and launch a crackdown on MQM activists. Over 500 MQM activists were arrested in the first swoop itself so that MQM's exiled leader Altaf Hussain asked his followers to go into hiding.

There probably were other reasons why Mr Sharif chose to play the surprise cards. The fears of an army takeover have receded following Gen. Karamat's resignation, the Islamisation bill has secured him the support of the clergy and the fundamentalists, and Mr Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party-long used to treating the Sindh province as home turf-is in total disarray. To complete his game plan, Mr Sharif is reported to be toying with the idea of appointing Mumtaz Bhutto, a minor rival of Ms Bhutto from the family stable, as the new governor of the province. However, given its ideology and background, an MQM backlash is imminent and could destabilise the province further. Bhutto herself had referred to the possibility of a takeover bid by the madrasa-trained youth in the name of an Islamic revolution. Either way, the country's two main parties are banking on the Islamists to settle mutual scores.

(Courtesy: Hindustan Times)

**'US made Bin Laden a hero for Muslim youth'**

From Vijay Dutt

L O N D O N

The United States is responsible for turning Osama Bin Laden as "champion of Islam" for millions of Muslim youth said Dr Hassan Al Turabi, Chairman of the National Council of Sudan. Even if Bin-Laden is arrested or killed, tens of thousands of Ladens would arise, he warned.

Dr Turabi told the BBC's correspondent for Panorama programme that the US had made Laden the "Lord of the world" for the Muslim youth. The US and the British would face trouble because of spoiling their case against Laden, and not because of any fanaticism for Islam.

He said that the US spoils its case by the wrong conduct of its foreign and military policies. It never complained to the United Nations against Sudan for harbouring Laden or letting him finance the EI Shifa factory which was targeted by the US Cruise missiles. Dr Turabi held that the attack on the EI Shifa plant had angered most Muslim countries. The US and the British could face years of trouble because the attack has triggered a state of war for years to come.

Dr Turabi, rather surprisingly showed no anger or passion while accusing the US nor while warning about the consequences of the missile attacks. Unlike most Muslim leaders who have raved and ranted while charging the West with being anti-Islam, Dr Turabi kept his voice low and kept smiling. An analyst felt that such coolness bodes danger for the West.

Mr Robin Cook, the British Foreign Secretary, has possibly come to realise the long-term danger from the resentment in the Muslim youth and the backlash that might result from a possible arrest or killing of Laden.

This is why he has been, in the last one month, been stressing improving relations with the Islamic world by understanding its culture and values. But, that is not going to help remove the danger Laden poses.

The CIA reportedly sent a decoy who took soil samples from the front garden of the EI Shifa factory in Sudan, which was destroyed by the US Cruise missiles. The operative took samples of the soil in the plant's front garden for testing.

The tests showed, according to Americans, the presence of a chemical which is used for making VX for chemical warfare. But Dr Turabi says that although two months have elapsed since the attack, the US has failed to justify the destruction of the EI Shifa factory.

The Associate Deputy Director of the FBI, Oliver Ravell, and another American analyst also agree that the end result of the attack was not successful.

(Courtesy: Hindustan Times)

**Kailash yatra in Leh**

The proposal to find an alternative route for the Kailash-Mansarovar yatra makes eminent sense. The tragedy that occurred earlier this year, leading to the death of 200 persons, is too fresh in public memory. The present route is so precarious that there is no guarantee that a similar catastrophe would not strike in the future. Even otherwise, the journey through Bareilly is extremely hazardous. The unmetalled road from Dharchula to Kalapani is so bad that it has to be traversed by most of the pilgrims only on horseback. It is now proposed to conduct the annual pilgrimage via Leh. This route offers several plus points. The main attraction is that the longest leg of the journey, Delhi-Leh, can be done through aircraft. From there, the pilgrims can go along the Indus to Damchok by road to reach the border. The road is good and since the mountains there are fairly stable and the region hardly receives any rain, the risk of landslides is far less. As such, the journey can be conducted within a day. In any case, it is always better to have two routes for a yatra which evokes such strong religious sentiments among the Indians. An interesting development is that this proposal has come from the Jammu and Kashmir government itself. The Centre has already shown its concurrence through the Union Home Minister, Mr LK Advani. As such, no bureaucratic hassles are expected. Besides making the journey particularly easier for the pilgrims, this route would also help promote tourism in Jammu and Kashmir. Militancy has cast a dark shadow on tourist trade in the Ladakh region and the traffic has been reduced to barely 40 per cent of what it was in the previous years. Few tourists come to Ladakh via Srinagar now, thanks to the constant shelling by Pakistani forces. As such, Manali is the only dependable lifeline for the picturesque area of Ladakh, weather permitting.

But the proposal can reach fruition only if the Chinese authorities cooperate fully. There is considerable Chinese military buildup along the Ladakh border and it remains to be seen if they would like this to be exposed. Quite suffocating restrictions are put even on the pilgrims going via the Bareilly route. But still, the project is well worth pursuing by appealing to China on humanitarian grounds. At the same time, there is need for ensuring that the opening of this restricted region does not compromise the country's safety and security in any way. As things and today, only the local people stand those who have obtained permits from Delhi are allowed beyond Loma, about 210 km from Leh. But since permits for the Kailash-Mansarovar yatra are issued after due vetting, this aspect can be taken care of. One hopes that the government would be able to take up the case with China effectively.

(Courtesy: The Tribune)

**Non-proliferation: who is to blame for failure**

By T.N. Kaul

It is true that the effort for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons appears to have failed, but India and Pakistan are not to blame for it. It was and is bound to fail as the nuclear weapon powers (P5) want to retain the monopoly of nuclear technology, both for weaponry and peaceful purposes, and deny it to sovereign countries like India, Pakistan, Israel and others. It is time the nuclear weapon powers, especially the USA, the sole surviving super power, realised that they could not prevent nuclear proliferation through discriminatory agreements like the NPT or the CTBT, which discriminate between those who exploded nuclear devices before 1967 and those who did so thereafter.

It is questionable whether the so-called doctrine of "Mutual Assured Destruction" (MAD) was or can be the best guarantee of security. However, if it was so with regard to the USA and the former USSR, why can it not apply to India and Pakistan? South Asian nations are not fundamentally more diverse than the USA and the Soviet Union. India and Pakistan are contiguous entities geographically. This makes them more, not less, conscious of the danger of using nuclear weapons against each other. Their cultural, ethnic, linguistic and historical links make them more aware of each other's sensibilities than the distant and ideologically opposed USA and USSR were.

However "primitive" India and Pakistan may appear to Western nuclear experts, there is no doubt that the recent nuclear blasts by them have given them greater self-confidence and a sense of responsibility, as compared to the P5, who are not averse to using their nuclear capability as a threat, or even to proliferate it by giving it to their friends and allies, deliberately or through feigned negligence.

The three brief wars that India and Pakistan had in 1948, 1965 and 1971, were in no small measure due to the encouragement and arms given by the two or three so-called great powers. Now that India

and Pakistan have proven their nuclear capability, in however small a measure, they could set an example to the P5 by signing a no-nuclear-first-strike agreement, as well as an accord for no conventional strikes on each other's nuclear establishments.

While it is true that Washington and Moscow never fought one another directly during the 50 years of the Cold War, they did fight many wars by proxy in Korea, Vietnam, South Asia and elsewhere. What is more, they were on the brink of using nuclear weapons in 1961 in Cuba and, but for public opinion, might have used them in Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf.

India and Pakistan have not had a war since 1971. Now that both have proved their nuclear capability, they have a great realisation of the consequences of a nuclear war if only the so-called super and great powers would stop meddling in South Asia and not tilt towards or against Pakistan and India as they have done in the past, we could not only resolve our problems quicker and more easily, but also work towards greater cooperation in and outside SAARC.

Now that the Cold War is over, the need for nuclear deterrence is much less. We could, therefore, agree to have a total nuclear disarmament agreement for the elimination of nuclear arsenals within a reasonable time frame under international supervision, control and safeguards applicable without discrimination to all powers, including the P5. What we need most today is to make the whole world a Nuclear-Weapons-Free-Zone. As Jawaharlal Nehru said in the mid-1950s. "The only alternative to total nuclear disarmament in the nuclear and space age of today, is total mutual destruction." Surely, no country or people would want that. Will the P5 and the USA in particular, the sole surviving super power, give an early lead in this direction instead of preaching to and threatening dire consequences to India and Pakistan?

(Courtesy: The Tribune)



## SHORT STORY

## The Villain

By M.K. Santoshi

Hemal was happy today. She would be a mother soon. As she came out of the Doctor's clinic, Nagrai, her husband, signalled an auto-rickshaw to stop. But she wanted to rest a while in the adjoining Chinar Bagh. Nagrai agreed.

Hemal was fond of the chinar and its thick foliage like many other Kashmiris. The two strolled for sometime in the garden and then perched on the fine, velvety grass.

"After all what is in these chinar trees that you love them so much?" asked Nagrai. As Hemal smiled, Nagrai gently kissed her lips.

"Its leaves look like wearing fire—a celestial fire. I too feel like facing death the same way", said Hemal in an emotional tone.

"I have thought....", Hemal suddenly stopped as she murmured these words.

Growing curious, Nagrai asked, "what have you thought".

"I shall name my son CHINAR". It provoked laughter in Nagrai. In his non-stop laughter, he looked like a court jester in a Sanskrit play.

"What makes you laugh like that", Hemal asked Nagrai in an indignant tone.

"Nothing. But how do you believe that we will have a son. We may have a daughter instead," said Nagrai.

"Oh! That is true....", said Hemal. "If it is a baby girl, what should we name her?", asked

Sh. M.K. Santoshi is a well known Hindi writer of Kashmiri origin. Belonging to Martand (Mattan) in Anantnag district, Sh. Santoshi works in PNT department at Jammu. In his early forties, Sh Santoshi has three poetic anthologies to his credit, besides numerous short stories and articles which have been published in prominent literary journals and national dailies. His first collection of poems "Is Bar Shayad" was published in the year 1990. His subsequent poetic collections published in 1993 and 1996 are "Burf Par Nangay Paoon" and "Yeh Samay Vivad Ka Nahi" respectively. For his first anthology, Sh Santoshi has been awarded the President of India's Award to a non-Hindi speaking Hindi writer in the year 1992-93. We reproduce an English translation of one of his short stories titled "Khalnayak".

--Editor

Nagrai.

As Nagrai nibbled at the blades of grass, Hemal lapsed into a thought

"Did you think of some name?"

"No"

"But I have"

"What"

"VITASTA"

The newspapers were selling briskly. They published sensational news which was at times even provocative because violence, processions and mass frenzy had become the order of the day. But so engrossed were Hemal and Nagrai in their thought of Vitasta that momentarily the world outside seemed lost for them.

On the birth of his VITASTA, Nagrai composed a poem. He and Hemal recited this to vitasta a number of times.

"Our VITASTA would one day be a great scholar on history", Nagrai said to Hemal.

Hemal retorted back, "No, she will be a scientist like Madame Curie; yes a scientists..."

"No she will be an expert on history of Kashmiri...."

"No she...."

As the child was sleepy, Hemal laid the child down on the bed. She covered it in a new quilt of velvet they had bought for her

birthday. Suddenly a fictive dubious knock at the door alerted them. A bearded youth was asking for shelter.

"Police is looking for me. Hide me somewhere in your house", the youth said. His voice reflected authority rather than request. He gently pulled up his PHERAN halfway to show them the weapon he carried underneath.

Nagrai conducted him to his study. Out of hospitality he asked the youth, "will you have something to eat?" Curtly the bearded youth replied, "No".

...

With a stranger in the house, the night seemed long for Hemal and Nagrai. It was dark outside. The houses in the neighbourhood no more kept the lights on. The January chill pierced the bones of Hemal and Nagrai. The Azan from the nearby mosque woke up Hemal. As she peeped through the glass panes, a thin sheet of snow had covered the earth outside. Also the front gate of the house was wide open. She called Nagrai.

"What is it?", he asked.

"It seems the young man has gone". They went to the study then. The door was ajar. The bedding pellmell. A small slip

with *Indian Dogs* inscribed on it was tagged to the calender hanging on the wall. Nagrai removed the slip. He tore it up and threw it out of the window. His confidence stood shaken.

...

"You read too much these days. History of Kashmir has become an obsession with you," said Hemal to Nagrai.

"Yes, but this is the need of the time", replied Nagrai. Taking off his reading glasses, Nagrai came closer to Hemal. Hemal muttered,

"May I ask you something?"

"Yes?"

"We are not safe now. All the members of our community have left. None of our relatives is here. If anything happens to us, there will be no one around even to cremate us", said Hemal. "No, No! We can never leave our Kashmir. Aren't we the principal characters in the legend of Kashmir?"

Hemal remained silent. She knew how much her husband loved Kashmir—its history, folklore etc. An erie silence prevailed for some time. To Hemal, the grim looking eyes of Nagrai reflected Kashmir's past.

Suddenly fear struck Hemal again. She was ruminating on

the distant past. "Will you not get lost as of yore?", Hemal broke the silence.

"No, I had numerous queens then. But now...."

"What now?"

"Now I have only one queen—the one who is the mother of Vitasta".

"Do you feel ashamed to call me your wife?"

Nagrai did not respond. He seemed lost in deep thoughts.

For a week now there had been no relaxation in the curfew. Uncertainty prevailed about everything. The authorities announced relaxation in the curfew for a few hours. Fear and suspicion stalked peoples mind as they moved about the streets.

Nagrai took out a cloth bag and put it in the pocket of his overcoat. Also he carried some books and went to college where he used to teach. January was coming to close. The salary of December had not yet been disbursed. Nagrai was short of money. In the college he went straight to the cashier. Ghulam Nabi, the cashier greeted him with a slow "Aadab". After collecting his salary Nagrai went to the library. He returned the old book and borrowed new ones. Nagrai was returning home happily when....

...

No, no I don't know who killed Nagrai. I can't say whether he died from the bullets of the security forces or those of the militants. How can I say when I was not on the spot? A few books lay scattered near his blood drenched body. What were the titles of the books? I do not know; but they say again that the books not only contained words but also the soul of Kashmir.

...

Even after the murder of Nagrai, Hemal refused to leave. Did not her husband say "No Hemal, we cannot leave Kashmir. We are the heroes of the legend of Kashmir." The times had changed. Only a few people turned up stealthily to express grief. The reportage in the vernacular papers perplexed and hurt Hemal. Did Nagrai die alone? Had not Vitasta been orphaned? Had she herself not been widowed? As she ruminated on her thoughts, there was a gentle knock on the door. Hemal opened the door. An old man was waiting outside who said.

"Daughter, I am no relation of yours, but you can call me your father". The slow voice suggested that the old man was a chronic patient of respiratory illness.

"I know who killed your beloved, Nagrai".

"Who killed him?" asked Hemal impatiently.

"It was me"

"No, no how could you kill my Nagrai? The old people are not murderers today".

"Daughter! I speak the truth. I am that sinner...."

While wiping his tears, he coughed in between. The old man continued, "Nagrai was

(contd on Page 11)

## SOCIETY

## My Dear Granny

By Prof. Somnath Dhar

Vishimal, my maternal grandmother, was an angel of mercy, not only for me but to all around her. She had a soft corner for my mother who was widowed at a young age. I was a 6-year old kid at that time. My sister was not born at that time. My father, Pt. Tara Chand Dhar, was a healthy man. Unfortunately, he had an accident in Kishtwar; the injury of his leg developed into a septic trouble which caused his death. Vishimal called my mother to her home, because in my paternal grandfather's home, there were too many family members, and she and I were not receiving adequate attention.

It was an abiding pleasure—even inspiration—to observe Vishimal's behaviour towards her kith and kin as well as neighbours. She had a window opened in our sitting room so that she had a full view of the courtyard of our immediate Muslim neighbour. Their surname was Miskeen (poor) which tallied with their living conditions. Every morning and evening, Vishimal would check with the Miskeens whether they had enough provisions, includ-

ing vegetables and meat, etc. Sometimes, if we did not have much of these, she would forego some of her own.

Our home was in Gurgari Mohalla between the 3rd and 4th bridges of Srinagar. My mother and I used to go to Hari Parbat every morning. Very often we would see the dawn there only. Vishimal used to advise us to carry several handfuls of rice, to drop these over the anthills along the hillock base. We would go barefooted. One day I had an injury in my left foot. When we returned, Vishimal had it attended to. But she asked me, "When did you injure your foot—while going to the holy hillock or coming back?" When I replied, "While going to Hari Parbat", she smiled. And, said, "That shows you were really eager to get there. For, if you had injury on your way back, that would evince you were anxious to get away from there". I did not question her logic.

Stray dogs and cows always attracted her attention. She was particular to keep meat and bones for a bitch who had a litter of whelps. For so many years in our colony, I have cared for dogs. When I have my walks in the nearby park, I carry bread, etc., for the dogs and cows. Thus, I carry

on the good ways of Vishimal. Late at night, I drop a glass of milk in a container near our gate. The cat has its biological clock -- it is waiting there with its young ones.

Vishimal graciously taught me many things about religion. One had to say grace before eating a meal; and have an oblation, and say words of grace (in Sanskrit), while sipping a little water from the right hand palm. On so and so day of the fortnight, one had to have a fast or miss a meal, or have non-cereal food.

Vishimal was very solicitous about my welfare. Winter was the time when fires would occur, thanks to the ubiquitous use of the Kangri--the Kashmiri firepot which holds smouldering fire enough to last the night. I used to rush to the houses to help neighbours quell the fire. Once, I had a narrow escape when I got stranded on a roof which was on fire. To save myself, I jumped to the roof of the three-floor house across the lane. In the nick of time, I managed to catch hold of grass and plants on the other roof. She knew about this escapade of mine. As soon as she heard of a fire, she would look out for me, and ensure that I stayed put in the house.

In winter nights, Vishimal used to check whether I had taken the

Kangri out of my bed. One night, it so happened that she as well as my mother forgot to check. While I slept, the Kangri fire spilled over. It burnt a hole in the two mattresses as well as the *razai* and blankets over me. I was such a heavy sleeper that even the room was full of smoke, I kept sleeping. In the morning, Vishimal discovered the damage caused by my carelessness. She hid all the things and had them repaired. Thus, she saved me from getting a thrashing from my uncle.

When Vishimal was on her death-bed, she told my uncle, the late Pandit Gobindji Bhan, to take good care of me, for I had not attained a stable job. It came much later. And, when I became a lecturer, I attended the durbar of Maharaja of Kashmir, Hari Singh. (I wrote an article on it, entitled *last durbar*, which appeared in the *Hindustan Times* and a number of papers in India and abroad). Leaving my residence for the palace--wearing a colourful *achkan*, and a turban, and carrying a sword -- I missed Vishimal. She would have been proud to see me accoutred like a nobleman. But that was not to be. So many desires remain unfulfilled. *Ce la vie!* I always remember her in my prayers and pray for peace for the soul of the gracious lady.

**ECOLOGY**

## *State's prosperity lies in augmenting its bio-diversity*

By T.N. Khoshoo



The World Wide Fund for Nature-India has embarked on a project to prepare biological profiles of different states of India. This is being done to highlight our strengths and weaknesses connected with biodiversity, particularly its conservation and sustainable utilization. The first such profile was on the north-eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh, which is also an internationally known "hot spot". The second in the series was on the north-western state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).

The J&K state provides considerable diversity of habitats for its biodiversity. The habitats range from the inhospitable but beautiful snow-capped mountains, permanent glaciers and the cascading crystal-clear and ice-cold water in mountain streams, to hospitable habitats like the lakes, dense forests and lush green alpine meadows studded with beautiful but mute wild flowers stretching for miles. Supporting this is a temperate climate and fresh and clean air. Most of these landscapes can be maintained through proper conservation of biodiversity. There are a number of glacial streams, and the meandering Vitasta (Jhelum), normally quiet and placid but, once in a while, in the fury of floods. At one time the river was clean one would enjoy bathing and swimming. It was full of fish of sorts, so were the lakes. Today the water bodies (Jhelum, Dal, Wular etc.) are polluted which has changed their original biodiversity regimes. Furthermore, in Dal, indigenous fish species have been almost totally wiped out after

carp was introduced in the lake. Kashmir has been regarded as the heaven on earth. Indeed, this land was blessed in the past by many seers, saints and thinkers, but has been "cursed" in the present times. Thus, for quite some time now, it has not been possible to move through the vales and dales of Kashmir and document its biodiversity, but it still continues to remain a biological paradise, which in fact makes any Kashmiri anywhere feel proud and tremendously nostalgic.

Out of the total geographical area of 2,22,235 square kilometres, the actual dense forest cover is only 110,20 square kilometres. This means that actual worthwhile forest area (with a crown density of 40% and above) is only 4.95% as revealed by the Forest Survey Report (1997). Obviously, the effective forest cover is very low far less than the 60% as envisaged under the Forest Policy for Hilly regions. Something tangible needs to be done most urgently to rectify such a situation in forestry; otherwise, it will have its own long-term adverse environmental repercussions like soil and water loss, desiccation, desertification and the like of these.

Even so, the J&K can aptly be called as the biomass state of India because it is known for export of its fruits and nuts, vegetables and their seed, medicinal and aromatic herbs, honey, mushrooms and morels, saffron, condiments like caraway (black zira), silk and silken garments, woolens (rafal, pashmina, and shahtos), carpets (woolen and silken), namdas, gabas, fur garments, wood carving and wood

crafts, khutamband ceilings, paper mache, wicker work, sports goods, joinery items, etc. It raises its own firewood, crops, fisheries, animal husbandry etc. Kashmir is known for embroidery on silk, wool and even on cotton garments, curtains and furnishings. All these materials and products are derived from biomass, much of which is from the rich biodiversity available in the state itself.

Thus, Kashmir's trade and economy depend almost exclusively on biological raw materials. Here then is a state which, from time immemorial, has depended on natural and man-made bounties and has used these with an element of need but has not exploited these with greed. This writer has regarded this state as an excellent museum of biomass of sorts. The state can also show the way to trade sustainably with biomass. This relationship is clear from the extent and nature of dependence of people of the state on biomass.

The other traditional source of income has been tourism, which is also biomass related and basically biomass-dependent e.g. forests and greenery all around, punctuated by beautiful flowers and scenic beauty, clean air, snowy mountains, crystal clear water, etc. This character of the state needs not only to be maintained but also augmented. Among other things, the state must domesticate species at present collected from the wild.

In this state, therefore, highest priority has to be given to the intensification and diversification of biomass production, pro-

(contd on Page 11)

## *Chronology of events*

From Oct. 16 to Oct. 31

**October 16:** Security forces foiled an attempt of infiltration and killed a militant in Kerni (Poonch Sector). Meanwhile, militants ambused BSF petrol parties in Ramban and Mahore areas but there was no loss of life.

**October 17:** Two militants were killed in Valley while a youth was shot dead by militants in Doda district. There were many blasts in Valley and Rajouri.

**October 18:** A JCO was killed in cross-firing at Basthi (Doda) and a civilian was killed in crossfiring at Chaniot (Udhampur). In the Valley a released JKLF militant was killed while the house of a released militant was blasted at Kaimoh (Anantnag).

**October 19:** Army killed 3 militants and destroyed a militant hide out in Doda district, while as 2 civilians were killed in crossfiring in Budhal (Rajouri).

Meanwhile, 2 militants and 2 jawans were killed in militancy related incidents in Valley.

**October 21:** A lieutenant, a jawan and two militants were killed and 3 army men seriously injured in a fierce encounter in Poonch district while as 2 army men, 2 civilians and 2 militants were killed in Booniyar (Uri) encounter. The militants killed a teacher in Kulgam area of Anantnag district while a woman was killed in Pakistani firing in Poonch district. The forces recovered huge quantity of explosives including 500 kg RDX and 270 kg plastic explosives in Tangmarg tehsil of Baramulla district.

**October 22:** The militants gunned down two youths in Doda district while as 2 militants surrendered in Valley. Meanwhile, security forces arrested 7 teenagers from Mattan (Anantnag) who were on their way to Pak for training while 2 youth were rescued from a training camp in Doda district.

**October 23:** The militants struck in Srinagar city and gunned down a constable and injured other of JKP while as a JOC was killed when army vehicle was blown up by militants in a landmine in Sumbal area. Militants killed 2 civilians in Anantnag and another in Doda while another civilian was killed in crossfiring in Poonch district.

**October 24:** In Surankote (Poonch), which has become a green pasture of militants, blasted an Army camp killing a JCO and three jawans. Army killed two hardcore HM militants in Doda while a youth was kidnapped in Gool (Udhampur). Meanwhile, a JKP constable and two other civilians were killed in Valley.

**October 25:** In the Valley militants gunned down constable driver of MLA Budgam at Paraypora, Budgam-Srinagar road, a NC block president in Baramulla district and a civilian in Qazigund (Anantnag). One foreign militant was eliminated by troops. Army gunned down four more suspected militants in Doda. Militants gunned down a VDC member in Chsana (Udhampur) and militants financial source was arrested with 4 lakh worth bank passbooks and 5 passports in Rajouri.

**October 26:** Militants tortured and shot dead a young girl reportedly after rape in Rajouri. While as four militants and a civilian were killed in Valley in militancy related incidents. 11 militants surrendered in Doda while militants attacked a police post Reasi, Army camp in Surankote, Police station Karanagar (Srinagar) and a security force picket at Batpora (Kupwara).

**October 27:** Valley observed a near total bandh on Hurriyat Conference's call on the anniversary of landing of Indian forces in Valley in 1947 to frustrate Pak designs of annexing J&K. Meanwhile, 1 militant was killed in Valley while a woman was injured in a militants attack on village Gurka (Doda) which was repulsed by VDC.

**October 28:** 6 militants and an army jawan were killed in an encounter in Poonch. A BSF source and a civilian were killed and 16 injured in multiple attacks by militants throughout Valley.

**October 29:** 3 militants were killed and 2 RR jawans injured in a fierce gunbattle in Branwar (Budgam) while militants gunned down a civilian in Wadipora (Budgam). 2 civilians were killed in Poonch district. Meanwhile, 18 youth were arrested near LoC who were on way to POK for arms training.

**October 30:** An army jawan and 1 militant were killed in an encounter in Naawar (Akhnoor, Jammu). Police rank badges were recovered from militants in Valley confirming reports of impersonation of militants.

**October 31:** While government claims to have forced surrender of 32 hardcore militants, 5 militants, 2 civilians and 1 surrendered militant were killed in Valley. Meanwhile, 2 civilian family members and a guide were killed in militancy related incidents in Kishtwar.

## Three most wanted Pakistanis escape from high security jail

(Contd. from page 1)

hence, the jail break was inevitable.

The sources also point out that some agencies were tightening the noose on a politician-bureaucratic-terrorist mafia operating in the state. The three escapees who were in possession of vital information on this account, could be used as witnesses, causing a serious damage to the terrorist operatives who have penetrated the state administration and planted moles at significant positions.

The jail-break plan was hatched, the sources point out, a few months ago and all the three escapees had been sent to this jail to make the escape possible. The services of a smuggling cartel operating from Akhnoor Tehsil and some police officers who allegedly are patronising this cartel have been used to the hilt in the great escape.

As of now, a subverted state has announced a one-man commission to enquire into security lapses and a desperate search seems on to find some scapegoats.

## Patel & Kashmir

(contd from Page 7)

he said, "Time will come when I will bid them good-bye." This led to his dismissal and imprisonment with all its unfortunate consequences.

There are many "ifs" of history. No one can say with certainty what would have happened if a particular "if" had materialised. But hard evidence with regard to integration of 561 States indicates that Sardar Patel's type of approach would not have allowed the Kashmir problem to arise, and even if any problem had arisen, it would have been nipped in the bud. It was not for nothing that Gandhiji remarked, "The task of dealing with the princes was truly formidable, but I am convinced that the Sardar was the only per-

son who could have coped with it."

Courtesy: HINDUSTAN TIMES

## Book on 'NANDBAB' released

JAMMU, Oct 25: A book of famous Kashmiri Pandit saint 'Swami Nand Lal' popularly known as 'Nand Bab' authored by justice JN Bhat (retired) and edited by Mr PN Razdan was released in an impressive function at 'Gopi Krishan Memorial and Research Centre' Durga Nagar on 25th October, 1998.

*We must learn from the past and refashion our Kaashmir policy. The best course would be to create three separate states of Jammu, Kashmir & Ladakh and set up a Homeland in the valley for over three lakh internally displaced Kashmiri Pandits.*

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## State's prosperity lies in augmenting its bio-diversity

(contd from Page 10)

cessing and utilization because the state's progress depends on its biomass-producing ability. Such a strategy would help in both conservation and utilization.

The document prepared by WWF-India gives a fair idea of the extent and nature of biomass present in the state. On this depend all vocations, trade and tourism, which is the unique characteristic of this state. The most important underlying fact is that biomass is renewable. If only the annual increment is harvested, and if there are no serious environmental perturbations, biomass can be available in perpetuity. Therefore, the state must ensure that the ability to produce biomass of sorts is not impaired. Obviously, land, soil and water resources have to be conserved and utilized sustainably.

Another dimension of biodiversity is that the state hosts wild relatives of crops and medicinal, aromatic and ornamental plants. Many ornamental and important medicinal plants grow wild, some of these are: aconites, anemones, bergenia, blue poppy, brahman kamal, columbines, coydalis, gentians, jogibadshah, inula, mallow, marsh marigold, may-apple, morina, primrose, snake lilies, violets and others. Some important animals found wild are" black-necked crane, chakor, pheasants

and tragopans, hangul and shou, kiang (with its close relative in far way arid Kutch), ibex, markhor, nayan, urial, bharal, musk deer, yak, caracal, jungle cat, lynx, leopard cat, palla's cat, rusty spotted cat, snow leopard and above all the shy and cute antelope chiru which yields the most expensive wool in the world used to make shahtos.

Conservation of biodiversity of J&K would actually ensure perpetual availability of biomass in the state which in turn would ensure the livelihood of the people of the state at large and especially of the artisans. As stated earlier, the best strategy would be to harvest and utilize for economic purposes only the annual increment of this biological capital.

People-oriented and biomass-based micro-and mega-enterprises are the answer to the development of the State. Given the inherent creative and artistic ability of the people, the biomaterials occurring naturally and/or raised locally, can be molded into uniquely beautiful goods. Modern science, technology and engineering have to be geared to augment such an economic and ecological security of the State. All this will require innovative thinking.

The basic idea is to utilize locally available biomaterials and generate a very large number of micro enterprises with local technical knowledge. This

would enable blending long term conservation and utilization. Here in lies the future economic prosperity of the state and thereby also conserve its unique character.

## .. The villain

(contd from Page 9)

walking near my house when suddenly there was commotion. As gunshots were heard, Nagrai started running. He turned back. I was watching from the window of my house. I signalled him to come in. There was no time to think. To save a life by offering refuge seemed more important. I kept him in my house. Meanwhile, the police cordoned off the entire area. House to house search began. The police entered our house also. They wanted to take away my only son. I knew his mother would not be able to bear the shock. I feigned to the police that Nagrai was my other son, and handed him over to them."

"Nagrai had no time to say that the old man was lying. The police dragged him away and at the nearby crossing....in crossfiring...."

The old man could not complete the sentence. Hemal grew numb as she listened to the old man. Next day she left the house. Nobody knew where she went. They say that the old man kept on visiting Hemal's house. When he returned home, he would weep like a child. As long as he lived, he called himself the Villain of the legend of Hemal-Nagrai.

## Appeal to Readers

**KASHMIR SENTINEL** is the largest circulated English fortnightly of J&K State. It is circulated in India and Abroad and has a readership of above twenty thousand. It has now become the only genuine voice of Kashmiri Pandits in exile.

**KASHMIR SENTINEL** covers wide range of topics from people to politics, despair to hope, history, culture, identity, aspirations as well as opportunities for survival. Undiluted news, views and analysis is brought to you by its dedicated team of political analysts and area specialists in the editorial board.

We are in a crucial phase at present times. Five thousands years of history is behind us. We are sure we will rise again more rejuvenated, more glorious than before. Inspite of our best efforts it is not possible to achieve without your help and cooperation. So please join us in this struggle.

You can help us in following ways:

- Please send your subscription in favour of Kashmir Sentinel. It costs just Rs 100 per year or 40 Dollars for overseas.
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Your prompt action will help us in building this institution for future generations.

Management Board  
**KASHMIR SENTINEL**

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## Community News

### Koul (Vakil's) demise mourned

Various Kashmiri Pandit organisation including Panun Kashmir, KP Sabha Jammu, AIKS and Kashmiri Visthapit Seva Samiti-Bangalore has mourned the sad demise of Sri Pushkar Nath Koul (Vakil)-journalist, social worker and a political thinker, who breathed his last a few days ago in Delhi. Mr Vakil was ailing for sometime.

Sh Vakil belonged to the well known Kashmiri Pandits family of Vakil Brothers. His father was one of the first journalist in Kashmir who started 'Vakil' a vernacular daily from Srinagar.

Sh Vakil loss will be felt for quite sometime.

## Displaced Employees meet Advani

DELHI: A delegation of Kashmiri displaced employees called on the Hon'ble Home Minister Sh L.K Advani and apprised him of the hardships and problems being faced by the displaced employees. The delegation also apprised him of callous attitude of State government towards genuine demands of exiled employees vis-a-vis HRA, promotion benefits etc.

As per press release, Sh Advani gave a patient hearing and assured immediate redressal. The delegation besides others was represented by Mr H.K. Koul and Smt Nancy Koul, President and Vice President of All India Kashmiri Displaced Employees Forum respectively.

## Hindu fire sufferers lambast govt

Kashmiri Pandit Fire Sufferers Forum has expressed anguish over continued burning spree of migrants property in Valley and accused government of deliberately allowing anti-social elements to destroy and usurp their left over properties in the Valley. General Secretary of Forum Mr P.N. Tufchi accusing state administration of discrimination said that while migrants are being denied the payment of exgratia by Relief Commissioner, same is being paid to majority community members at war footing in Valley. He also alleged that police stations in Valley were not deliberately registering FIRs to the disadvantage of exiled community.

Meanwhile, the forum has demanded setting up of a high level inquiry commission headed by a Supreme Court Judge to probe into disproportionate assets of relief organisation officials who have swindled crores of rupees in the name of migrants.

## Human Rights

Sir,

I being myself one of the 'migrants' (displaced persons) from the Valley of Kashmir since 1990 and a consequent sufferer in various ways. Having, therefore, acquired some knowledge and experience about the bedevilling problems and hardships of the displaced and dislodged (migrant) community, I feel myself duty bound to submit this representation to you for your sympathetic consideration and necessary action:

The excesses of the executive, administrative red-tapism and various other factors have been causing death by a sizable number of the "migrant" community which in fact, is a misnomer and is actually "displaced and dislodged" community. The problems of these displaced people called wrongly as "migrants" as well as their offsprings are varied and multiplying as also complex in nature. These problems being intrinsic in the nature of their exodus mostly and partly originate or aggravate from day to day human sphere of activity. These problems also, therefore, range and emanate from prosecution of education and non-recruitment to services, promotions and retirement, non-payment of GP Funds and other dues as well as lost hope of recoveries of the business outstandings from the business houses and government departments as also the non-receipt of the produce from the paddy fields and the orchards or rescuing of or compensation for damaged or destroyed properties both, movable and immovable forcible and illegal occupation of lands, houses etc., and illegal cultivation and unlawful appropriation of produce thereof, forced, compulsive sales and even fraudulent, unauthorised and illegal disposal of their properties. Man such sales/disposals or deprivation of the "migrant" property have taken place with

We reproduce below the contents of the letter (deemed petition) by the prominent political leader, practising advocate and an eminent author, SH P.L. KOUL, addressed to the Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court for the judicial intervention by the Hon'ble Court in the matter of displaced Kashmiri Pandit Community.

the connivance of the police and the government or with their active support. Unhygienic camp life and non-campers unaffordable rental accommodation and dearth of residence, inadequate health care facilities, non-availability of Bank and other loans particularly interest free loans etc, need judicial scrutiny and intervention.

The tension ridden displaced and homeless community from Kashmir valley is, for about ten years now, eking out their morbid existence in the exile, suffering tortures and humiliations with remote or no chances of returning to the Valley at least not in the same numbers as they were driven out from the Valley. A colossal human and historical tragedy that has overtaken this small, unfortunate but historical community, which has suffered the banishment from their place off birth callously and mercilessly, is one more addition to such long list of its catastrophies. It is no doubt, repetition and recurrence of the victimisation that this community had been subjected to, from the times of medieval Kashmir, excepting a brief interlude in between. What is then more tragic about it is that it managed to survive even during the alien rule in those dark days but it has been brought to the virtual extinction in this modern world, landed on the streets and made captives of the refugee camps in their own land when their country India is ruled by the Indians!

Not being only an advocate but also connected with the general public affairs and the common man's woe and wail for some decades past, I have been distressedly approached by some suffering quarters of these "migrants" for seeking some

solution to their miserable plight. Only wearer knows where shoe pinches. A large number of them is individually languishing but do not ordinarily dare to approach the court of law not only because it is an expensive and time consuming affair but also keeping their position in sight as well as their incapacity to live long. Fearing that their cases would fall if instituted, in the routine category and so they may not even live to receive justice from the court and so the time factor also is an essence of their problem. About ten years of their precious life have already been stolen. Many of them have meanwhile passed away as homeless gypsies and a number of them have died premature deaths, which has become a normal feature now with them, while all others are in the cue. There is no powerful remedial council/cell formed and functioning on the government level either in the state or in the centre, much less having any effective and proper representation of the "migrant" in the governance of the State or the Centre.

On the conspectus of this whole situation, it would be highly appreciable, desirable, proper and just to appoint/constitute a special bench of Jammu and Kashmir High Court at Jammu for speedy disposal of cases pertaining to the "migrants" or to be filed by them in future. The worthy judge proposed and appointed for this purpose or assigned the "migrant" case work out to be fully converse with the conditions created and prevalent in the Valley of Kashmir and the causes and the nature of the turmoil and exodus of the Hindu minority community etc, which his Lord-

ship can take judicial notice of while dealing with the "migrant" cases. And speedy justice may be accordingly dispensed to them. I, therefore, humbly pray that such an hon'ble judge may kindly be assigned their case work or be recommended and got appointed for the purpose at your early convenience.

I have absolutely no parochial considerations in making this prayer but impelled by the circumstances and the human feelings for neglected and languishing displaced community as I have, I find no option but to make this prayer. Their last resort and hope is judiciary and this submission is accordingly made, out of human considerations. I further submit that even if a person like Mr Habib-ullah Bhat-a devout Muslim who is currently posted as District and Sessions Judge, Srinagar, is elevated to the bench for this purpose, will also be a welcome step. That apart, there are Muslim migrants also. As such, my request is not based on any communal considerations, but is motivated by seeking speedy justice of the cases of the afflicted migrant community, with benefit of taking judicial notice of the conditions, circumstances and events which put the "migrant" cases, some how on different footing.

I, therefore, request to kindly consider the appointment/constitution of permanent special bench of Jammu and Kashmir High Court at Jammu, as submitted here in above, for speedy disposal of "migrant" cases already instituted or to be filed by them or through their offsprings/substitutes or LRs.

Yours faithfully  
Pyare Lal Koul  
Advocate

## Magazine released

PUNE: Panun Kashmir Pune unit published and released a magazine "Kashmir: Living on the Edge. 1947 to AK-47" on the occasion of "Martyrs Day" 14th September, 1998 in a seminar "50 Years of Independence and Kashmir".

## Kashmir Sabha Calcutta activities

CALCUTTA: In order to keep their cultural identity preserved and social relationship alive among Kashmiri Pandits in Bengal, Kashmir Sabha Calcutta organises get-togethers and SAMOOHIK festival celebrations. The Sabha has long term and short term goals and publishes "The VITASTA" monthly that highlight social, political and cultural problems of the community.

## Hawan at Ludhiana

LUDHIANA: Kashmiri Sabha Ludhiana, is performing Hawan on 3rd and 4th November 1998 on 'KARTIK PURNAMASHI' in True Kashmiri Pandit Tradition. Such occasions help exiled community to get together and keep their identity preserved.

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