



**Kashmiri Pandits constructed
Guru Tegh Bahadur Jee
Gurdwara at Teetwal, J&K**

**TRIBUTE TO GURU TEGH BAHADUR JI
ON HIS 350TH MARTYRDOM**



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AIKS SECRETARIAT, HQ
AIKS Camp office at Samavar Club,
Pamposh Enclave New Delhi

**BUSINESS MANAGER &
CIRCULATION FEEDBACK**
Sudhir Shah
9910076101

EDITORIAL COORDINATOR
Bharti Raina Kaul
8130538867

LAYOUT & DESIGN
Pranav Koul, Suman Kumar
M/s Print Orbit

THIS MONTH'S COVER

This month's cover is dedicated to
Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji

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Editorial

GURU TEGH BAHADUR JI The Eternal Sentinel of Dharma

Dear Readers,

As the world approaches November 2025, we stand at the hallowed threshold of history to commemorate the 350th year of the supreme martyrdom of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, a moment that shines like a sacred flame in the chronicle of human conscience. His life and sacrifice transcend the bounds of religion and time; they illuminate the eternal truth that righteousness must never bow before tyranny, and that faith, when anchored in compassion, becomes the highest form of courage.

Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, the ninth Guru of Sikhism, rose against the dark tide of fanaticism unleashed by Emperor Aurangzeb, a reign marked by coercion, desecration, and the imposition of blind conformity. In 1675, India's spiritual heart trembled under the weight of oppression: temples were razed, sacred traditions mocked, and the noble Kashmiri Pandits, venerated for their wisdom and learning, were singled out for forced conversion. Aurangzeb, deluded in his zeal, believed that breaking the faith of Kashmir's Pandits would break the spiritual spine of India itself.

But history, at that moment, was destined to meet its redeemer. In anguish and desperation, a delegation of Kashmiri Pandits led by Pandit Kripa Ram Dutt journeyed to Anandpur Sahib, seeking refuge and guidance from Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. Listening to their tale of torment, the Guru's compassionate heart saw not merely their pain, but the peril to an entire civilization. With divine serenity, he uttered a sentence that would echo across eternity:

"Tell Aurangzeb that the Pandits will embrace Islam — if Tegh Bahadur does so first."

With those words, he placed himself between tyranny and the helpless — becoming the Shield of Dharma, the Hind Di Chadar. Arrested, tortured, and finally martyred in Delhi's Chandni Chowk, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji ascended beyond the limits of mortal suffering. He gave his head, but not his truth; his life, but not his light. His sacrifice was not in defeat, but in divine triumph — an immortal affirmation that the spirit of Bharat can be shackled but never subdued.

Since that luminous day, Kashmiri Pandits have revered Guru Sahib as their eternal protector, the one who bore their suffering and redeemed their faith with his blood. His legacy binds Hindus and Sikhs in a sacred fellowship of shared sacrifice and moral unity, reminding us that *Sanatan Dharma* endures not through conquest, but through compassion, courage, and selflessness.

As a humble tribute to this incomparable spirit, NAAD dedicates this special commemorative edition to Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, featuring reflections from eminent scholars and seekers. May this remembrance renew within us the flame of unity, the conviction that righteousness, when guided by truth, remains unconquerable.

Let us bow our heads in reverence to his immortal vow:

*Bāhen Jināhn di pakariye,
Sar di je bāhen na chhoriye.
Tegh Bahadur bolyā,
Dhar payae dharma na chhoriye.*

Give up your head, but forsake not those whom you have vowed to protect.

Says Tegh Bahadur — sacrifice your life, but never abandon your faith.

मूल गीत गणक



From the *President's* *Desk*

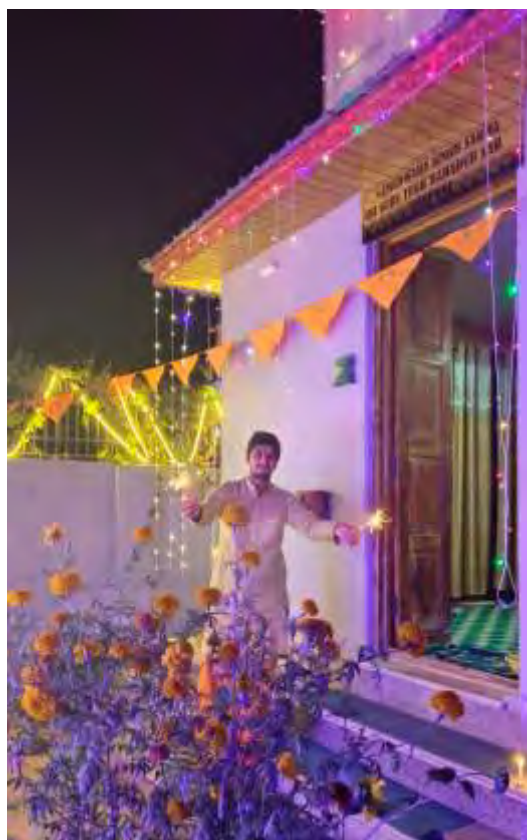
Respected All Namaskar to All AIKS family,

The community is facing crisis on preservation and promotion of culture, heritage and language. In this connection AIKS is leading a campaign and called on Kapil Mishra and Manjinder Singh Sirsa cabinet ministers in Delhi Govt and demanded setting up of Kashmiri academy on the lines of Punjabi, Sindi, Urdu academy in Delhi. We need to create a museum and Martyr memorial. The ongoing 350th. martyrdom anniversary celebrations of Guru Teg Bhahdur saviour of Kashmiri Pandits is also ongoing and Kashmiri Pandits need to resurrect history.

Meanwhile, on the instance of AIKS, Sh. Vivek Tankha has granted our community the aid of Rupees Ten lakh towards setting up of cultural centre through KECSS. We need to work in tandem with KECSS on this project. Formal letter was handed over to KECSS in presence of AIKS president & members.

Meetings with Relief commissioner Dr Arvind Karwani and Pr. Resident Commissioner, Resident Commission Delhi were also fruitful and further follow-up is needed. The State & Central Govt should investigate day to day difficulties of PM package employees and they should be treated at par with other govt. employees. Further employment in all departments should be generated for Kashmiri Pandits on the pattern of PM package. At least 10000 jobs for Kashmiri displaced community be advertised so that the community visibility in valley is seen and the community should feel that Govt has listened to our woes.

The recent rejection by Supreme court of our plea seeking age relaxation in central Govt. jobs for displaced Kashmiri Pandits is yet



another blow to our return & rehabilitation. This shows that courts even are not inclined to hear us. But the ongoing AIKS case in J&K High court can be decisive where in last hearing last & final opportunity has been given to Divisional Commissioner Kashmir to file the compliance report (NDOH : 21.11.2025)

Meanwhile AIKS was a part of Guru Teg Bahadur ji's 350th Martyrdom centenary event that was organized on 20th September at ICAR Convention Centre Pusa Campus, New Delhi. I was a part of Sarab Dharam

Sammelan and honored along with Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Shri Chidanand Saraswati, Acharya Lokesh ji, Shri Goswami ji, Sh. Bhikku Sanghsena ji, Haji Syed Salman Chisty ji, Sh. Rabbi Ezeikel Issac ji, Rajyogi Binny Sareen ji, Sh. Anil Joseph ji and Sardar Giani Raghbir Singh ji. The event was presided over by guest of honours S.Manjinder Singh Sirsa & Sh. Kapil Mishra, cabinet ministers of Delhi government. Further another press conference of Religious yatra by Cycling federation of India was held in which I was also a speaker on behalf of Kashmiri samaj. Kashmiri Pandits owe a lot to their savior Guru Teg Bahadur and we look forward to take part in main celebrations in New Delhi in November.

The membership drive and subscription towards Naad magazine has to be speeded up, in the meantime. Also the team members need to approach our community brethren for getting advt for Naad and Vaakh for better results. Working in tandem with affiliates & other KP organizations, financial sustenance, having a permanent office in Delhi, reneging on our commitments, use of social media for transparent functioning.

At the end, We look forward to hold AGM in near future.

May Sharda Mata bless us all !!



Er. Ravinder Pandita
Tel : 9811143024



पुण्य-श्लोक गुरु तेगबहादुर की स्मृति को नमन

हम संसार भर के कश्मीरी पंडित 'हिंद की चादर' और औरंगजेबी संकटकाल में हमारे अस्तित्व और धार्मिक अस्मिता की रक्षा हेतु अपने प्राणों को न्यौछावर करने वाले अप्रतिम गुरु तेगबहादुर की पुण्य स्मृति को नमन करते हैं और सदैव याद करते हैं गुरु गोविन्द सिंह के ये शब्द:

तिलक जंजू राखा प्रभ ताका॥ साधन हेति इती जिनि करी॥ धरम हेत साका जिनि कीआ॥
कीनो बडो कलू महि साका॥ सीसु दीया परु सी न उचरी॥ सीसु दीआ परु सिररु न दीआ॥

गुरु तेग बहादुर जी के निर्भय आचरण, धार्मिक अडिगता और नैतिक उदारता का यह विलक्षण उदाहरण है। हम कश्मीरी पंडितों ने उनकी स्मृति में श्रद्धा और सम्मान के साथ यहां टीटवाल (तीर्थबल) कश्मीर में एक गुरुद्वारे का पुनर्निर्माण किया है जो वर्ष 1947 में पाकिस्तानी हमले की भेंट चढ़ा था। हम गुरु तेग बहादुर जी के 350वें बलिदान-दिवस पर कोटि कोटि नमन करते हैं।

Save Sharda Committee Kashmir (Regd.)

Tel : 9811143024 E-mail : panditaravinder8@gmail.com



Sunil Kaul



General Secretary's Column

The months of September–October 2025 were marked by meaningful community engagements, interfaith representation, and cultural initiatives that reflected the continued commitment of the All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) toward promoting unity, preserving heritage & fostering active social participation.

On the auspicious occasion of Diwali, AIKS extended heartfelt greetings to members of the Kashmiri Pandit community across India and abroad. The message captured the festival's essence of hope, *harmony & renewal* calling upon every member to strengthen the bonds of togetherness while upholding the community's rich cultural and spiritual values.

The greeting beautifully reminded us that *even a single Diya can illuminate the darkest path*—symbolizing the resilience, courage, and enduring faith that continue to define our collective spirit as a community.

AIKS President

Felicitated at Interfaith Sammelan

On 23rd September 2025, AIKS President Shri Ravinder Pandita was felicitated by the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (DSGPC) during a *Sarv Dharam Sammelan* held at the ICAR Convention Centre, Pusa Campus, New Delhi. The event commemorated the 350th Martyrdom Anniversary of Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Ji, revered as *Hind Di Chadar* for his supreme sacrifice in upholding religious freedom and human dignity.

The interfaith gathering was graced by eminent spiritual and religious leaders, including Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Shri Chidanand

Saraswati, Acharya Lokesh Ji, Shri Goswami Ji, Haji Syed Salman Chishty Ji, Rabbi Ezekiel Issac Ji, Sh. Bhikku Sanghsena Ji, Rajyogi Binny Sareen Ji, Sh. Anil Joseph Ji, and Sardar Giani Raghbir Singh Ji. The distinguished guests of honour included S. Manjinder Singh Sirsa and Shri Kapil Mishra, Cabinet Ministers, Government of Delhi.

In his address, Shri Ravinder Pandita, the only speaker representing Jammu & Kashmir, highlighted Guru Teg Bahadur Ji's historic role in protecting Kashmiri Pandits from persecution during the reign of Aurangzeb. He emphasized that the Guru's sacrifice remains a timeless message of unity, courage, and interfaith harmony. Shri Pandita further urged the younger generation to actively participate in inter-religious and cultural dialogues that strengthen India's social fabric and uphold its pluralistic ethos.

AIKS also appealed to Kashmiri Pandits



worldwide to participate wholeheartedly in the forthcoming year-long 350th Martyrdom Anniversary Commemorations of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji, beginning in November 2025, reaffirming that the Guru's sacrifice continues to serve as an eternal inspiration for the community.

AIKS Proposes Establishment of Kashmiri Academy and Martyrs' Museum in New Delhi

A delegation from the All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS), led by its President, met Shri Kapil Mishra, Cabinet Minister, Government of Delhi, on 6th October 2025 to present a proposal for the establishment of a Kashmiri Academy and Martyrs' Museum in the national capital.

AIKS recommended that the proposed Academy be modeled on similar cultural institutions established for other linguistic and regional communities, with management under the aegis of AIKS and support from the Delhi Government. The Academy will serve as a center for the promotion and preservation of the Kashmiri language, literature, art, and culture, while the Martyrs' Museum will be dedicated to honouring the sacrifices of Kashmiri Pandit martyrs and preserving the community's rich historical heritage.

Shri Kapil Mishra appreciated the vision behind the proposal and assured the delegation that the matter would be given top priority, with directions issued for an immediate examination and formulation of an actionable plan.

The AIKS delegation comprised Vice President Shri Rajinder Premi, Joint General Secretary Shri Ashish Zutshi, and activist Smt. Kusum Shishoo.



MPLADS Grant for Kashmiri Pandit Cultural and Heritage Centre

During the Diwali Milan Celebration held on 19th October 2025 at Samavar, Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi, Shri Vivek Tankha, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), announced a grant of ₹10 lakh under the MPLADS fund for the establishment of a Kashmiri Pandit Cultural and Heritage Centre in the national capital.

AIKS conveyed its deep gratitude to Shri Vivek Tankha for his steadfast support and generous contribution toward preserving the community's invaluable cultural and historical legacy.

AIKS Core Group Meeting

The AIKS Core Group convened its monthly meeting on 18th October 2025 at the AIKS Office, New Delhi. The discussions centered on key strategic and administrative priorities, including:

- Strengthening affiliate-led programs across various states.
- Enhancing coordination and communication between AIKS and its regional affiliates.
- Planning for the Annual General Body Meeting (AGM), tentatively scheduled for the last week of December 2025.
- Reviewing ongoing and proposed community welfare and youth engagement initiatives.

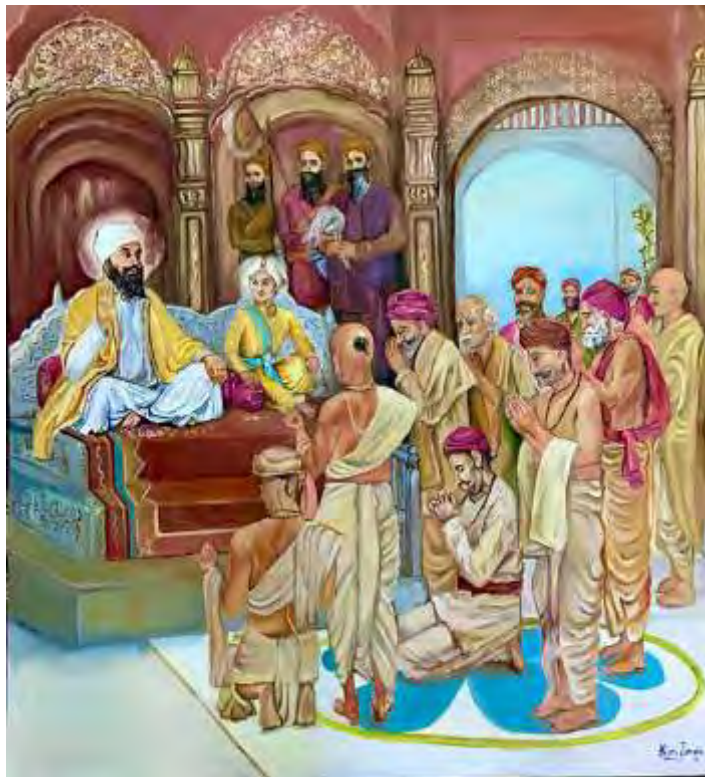
The venue and date for the AGM will be finalized and circulated shortly. The meeting concluded with a renewed commitment to inclusivity, youth involvement, and broader representation across all AIKS programs and initiatives in the coming months.



HISTORY'S GREATEST SACRIFICE FOR PRINCIPLES

Aurangzeb was a religious bigot whose proselytizing missions were accompanied by ruthless persecution of non-Muslims. In 1675, he issued an order to Iftiqar Khan, the Governor of Kashmir appointed by him. The order directed the Governor to convert the entire population of Kashmiri Pandits to Islam, using whatever means he, Iftiqar Khan, deemed fit, including use of force. Aurangzeb strongly believed that the mass conversion of Kashmiri Pandits would go a long way in not only convincing but also forcing the rest of India to follow suit. Aurangzeb was so radical in his thinking that he could not stand the sight of sacred Thread worn around the neck or Tilak on the forehead of any of his subjects.

Iftiqar Khan, accordingly, set a deadline for the Kashmiri Pandits to follow the royal diktat or be prepared to follow ruthless methods of conversion witnessed by them in the past. As the deadline for the mass conversion was fast approaching and panic reigned supreme among the beleaguered community, a large group of over 500 Kashmiri Pandits led by



Pandit Kirpa Ram Dutt, left for Anandpur Sahib to seek the help of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, the ninth Guru of Sikhs.

Pandit Kirpa Ram Dutt explained to Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji their plight and the imminent danger that they faced. While in deep thought to contemplate a suitable

Aurangzeb was so radical in his thinking that he could not stand the sight of sacred Thread worn around the neck or Tilak on the forehead of any of his subjects.

solution for the problem that Pandits faced, the Guru's young son, all of 9 years, Gobind Rai entered the room. He noticed the serious situation in the room and his father in deep thought. He, therefore, asked his father what was the cause of this serious atmosphere in the room and why was his father immersed in deep thought. Guru Tegh Bahadur replied, "Unless a holy man lays down his head for the sake of these poor Kashmiri Brahmins, there is no possibility of their escape from the Mughal oppression." Young Gobind Rai replied, "Respected father, who else could be worthier for this than you?" Guru Tegh Bahadur embraced his son and shed tears of joy and pride. "My dear son, I was only concerned about your future, as you are too young now". Gobind Rai replied, "Father, leave me to God and accept the challenge of the Mughals."

Thereupon, Guru Tegh Bahadur asked the Pandits to inform Aurangzeb that the Brahmins would gladly accept his diktat and embrace Islam if Guru Tegh Bahadur converted first. Guru Tegh Bahadur, thereafter, started on his journey to Delhi after he had bid the final goodbye to his family members and to his followers. Before he left, he appointed his son Gobind Rai as the next Guru. Those who accompanied the Guru were Bhai Mati Das, Bhai Dyala and Bhai Sati Das. All of them were fully aware of the danger that stared them in their face.

When Aurangzeb came to know of this challenge thrown to him by Guru Tegh Bahadur, he issued orders to put Guru Tegh Bahadur and those who accompanied him under immediate arrest. Consequently, soon after the Guru and his team had left Anandpur Sahib, they were arrested and taken in chains to Delhi to be produced before Aurangzeb

Aurangzeb angrily asked the Guru why he was revered as the Guru and called Saccha Paadshah (True King). He further taunted the Guru to perform a miracle to prove that he truly was such a Guru or a Prophet. The Guru reprimanded Aurangzeb for his cruelty and persecution of people from other faiths. The Guru firmly told Aurengzeb, "Sanatana Dharma may not be my faith but I would fight for the right of all Sanatana Dharmis to live freely with honour and practice their faith according to their belief."

On being ordered to to convert to Islam immediately Guru Tegh Bahadur refused to embrace Aurangzeb's religion and said, "For me, there is only one religion and that is the religion of God. Whosoever belongs to it, be it a Sanatana Dharmi or of any other faith, him I own and he owns me. I neither convert others by force, nor submit to force to change my faith." The infuriated Aurangzeb then ordered his soldiers to convert Guru Tegh Bahadur to his religion through torture and if that did not produce the desired result, he ordered the Guru to be killed.

Thereafter started the Guru ji's nightmare. Guru Tegh Bahadur was subjected to ruthless torture and imprisoned in an iron cage like an animal, besides being starved of food. To break his resolve, Bhai Mati Das, the devoted Sikh, was tied between two pillars and was sawn into two parts alive, right in front of the Guru's eyes. Worse fate awaited Bhai Dyala, who was thrown alive into a cauldron of boiling water and thus killed. Bhai Sati Das was wrapped in cotton wool and he was set on fire. The Guru took all these cruel acts without flinching and he showed neither signs of anger nor distress nor fear.

On the fateful day of 11 November 1675, the brave and courageous Guru Tegh Bahadur was taken to Chandni

Guru Tegh Bahadur asked the Pandits to inform Aurangzeb that the Brahmins would gladly accept his diktat and embrace Islam if Guru Tegh Bahadur converted first.

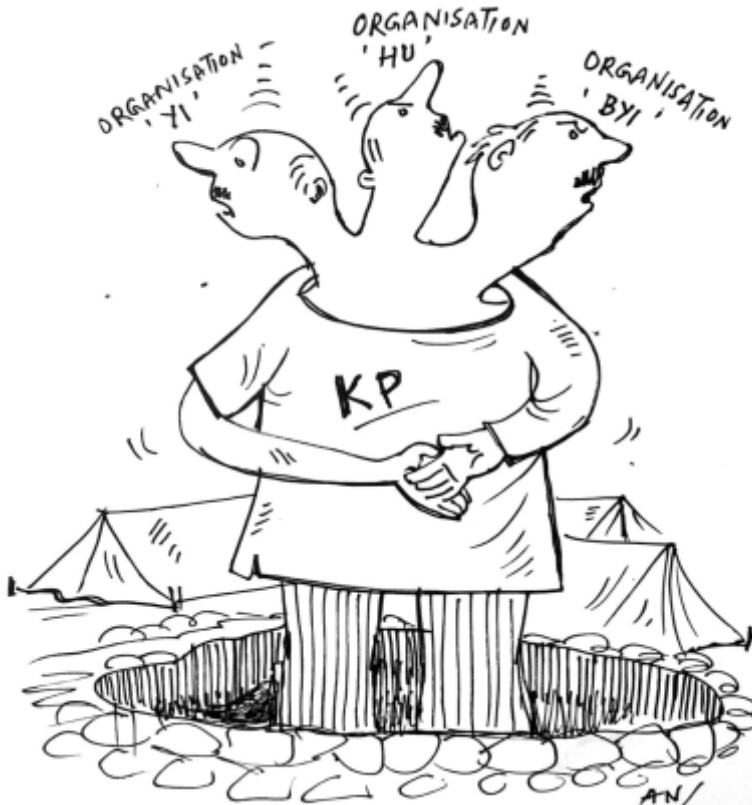
Chowk square. As the Guru prayed, he was beheaded by the executioner of Aurangzeb in full public view. The Guru's body lay in the open where it fell for days as no one had courage enough to go anywhere near the Guru's body lest they too be killed by Aurangzeb's men. Later that afternoon there was a severe storm and the entire city plunged in darkness. Taking advantage of the darkness, Bhai Jaita managed to collect the Guru's sacred head and carried it to Anandpur Sahib and placed it before the Guru's son. Another Sikh, Bhai Lakhi Shah, who owned a cart, managed to smuggle the Guru's headless body to his house in Anandpur Sahib. As a public funeral would have been too dangerous for the entire population of Anandpur Sahib, Bhai Lakhi Shah set fire to the Guru's house, thus 'cremating' him in the process. At the same time, The Guru's head was taken to his

The infuriated Aurangzeb then ordered his soldiers to convert Guru Tegh Bahadur to his religion through torture and if that did not produce the desired result, he ordered the Guru to be killed.

saddened widow Mata Gujari and young son Gobind Rai. On the 16th of November 1675, a funeral pyre of Sandalwood was constructed in Anandpur Sahib. The head of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji was cremated by his young son Gobind Rai, who was to later to become the 10th Guru of Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh.

Excerpted from 'Kashmir, its Aborigines and their Exodus' Author: Tej K Tikoo, Ph.D.

Cartoon by- Anil Nakhasi





 Upender Ambardar



GURU TEGH BAHADUR JI

Embodiment of Sacrifice, Bravery and Valour

Guru Tegh Bahadur ji, the ninth Guru of Sikhism, born on 18 April 1621, in Amritsar, Punjab, stands as a testament to unwavering sacrifice, selflessness, bravery, valour, compassion and self offering for a cause greater than one's self. It was a sheer presence of the divine nature and spiritual disposition in him that made Guru ji to endure unspeakable tyranny with unbelievable calm and composure. Steeped in the ancient and time tested "Guru-Shishya" tradition and following the footsteps of the 8th Guru Shri Har Krishan ji, he became the 9th Guru on 16th April 1664. It was due to his mastery and absolute hold over the sword wielding skill and martial art forms that he was given the rightful name of Tegh Bahadur. He was named Tayaga Mal by his parents, Guru Hargobind ji and Mata Nanki. He earned the name of Tegh Bahadur later on after he exhibited exemplary valour in the battle of Kartarpur against the mughal trayants in the sword wielding skill, archery and horsemanship.

In addition to his being a fearless and formidable warrior, he was also a reputed devotional poet, master mind, thinker and a spiritualist to the core, who carried forward the light of righteousness and sense of inspiration for the oppressed people. His extensive travels facilitated the setting up of the religious teaching centres, drinking water facilities and community kitchens in different places. He was instrumental in the establishment of the town of *Chak-Nanki* in Punjab, now famously known as the city of



Anandpur Sahib. His 116 poetic hymns which include Sholkas and devotional couplets provide an illustration of the themes varying from objectivity, spiritual elements to the nature of mind and body. They form a part of the holy Shri Guru Granth Sahib. They were penned down when he was kept in the forced confinement in the mughal prisons.

His supreme sacrifice is regarded as a decisive happening that made his illustrious son, the 10th Sikh Guru, Shri Gobind Singh ji to establish the Khalsa in the year 1699. It was a disciplined body of the saint soldiers, engaged

in safeguarding the spiritual purity, freedom of religious belief, to fight against religious fanaticism, intolerance and tyranny. In November 1675, Guru ji along with his close companions namely Bhai Mati Das, Bhai Dayala Das and Bhai Sati Das were brought to Chandni Chowk Delhi. They were threatened to change their religion and convert to Islam or else face the dire consequences. Steedfast in their determination and firmly anchored in their religious belief, the brave of these braves were brutally tortured and savagely killed for their refusal to renounce their chosen faith. It happened before the very presence of the Guru Ji and it steeled his resolve to fight religious oppression at all costs. Later on, 24th November, 1675 the Guru Ji was publicly beheaded in Chandni Chowk area of Delhi on the orders of mughal emperor Aurangzeb. The place, where he offered the highest self-sacrifice now houses the hallowed Gurudhwara Sis Ganj Sahib. The second Gurudhwara, Rakab Ganj Sahib, also in Delhi is built at the spot where one of the Guri ji's disciple burned his house to cremate his body. Additionally the holy Gurudhwara Shri Sis Ganj Sahib in Anandpur Sahib, Punjab marks the place, where the severed head of the Guru ji was cremated after it was bought there by Bhai Jeevan Singh. His martyrdom not only hardened the resolve to fight against religious intolerance and persecution but also galvanized the Sikh panth in cohesiveness. It was a watershed moment in the struggle against religious oppression.

Guru Tegh Bahadur and Kashmir connect : Guru ji, for the minuscule Kashmiri Pandit community, represents a scintillating example of the highest self sacrifice, fearlessness and religious firmness having no parallel in recent human history. He is also known as “Hind-Di-Chadar”. Kashmiri Pandits venerate and treasure him as “Dharam-Di-Chadar” of the pandit community for being their protector from forced conversion and religious oppression. He is also remembered as personification of divinity in the mortal form for his momentous role in saving an ancient civilizational culture and faith of Kashmir.

Pleading for help : In the year 1675, a delegation of Kashmiri Pandits led by Pandit Kripa Ram Dutt and Pandit Trilok Nath Raina, came all the way from Kashmir to Anandpur Sahib to seek help from Guru Tegh Bahadur to save them from the religious torment and forced conversion by the then mughal governor of Kashmir, Iftikhar Khan. The Guru ji responded that it can be halted only by the offering of a sacrifice by a spiritually endowed eminent person. It prompted a remark from his son, Shri Gobind Rai (Later Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji) that there was none greater than himself. Guru ji took this remark as a divine signal. As a counter response, the Pandit delegation was asked to tell the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb that they would follow suit, if he could succeed in converting Guru ji. This open defiance let to his arrest, unspeakable torture and martyrdom in Delhi in November 1675.

Honoured place of Guru Ji : Guru Tegh Bahadur enjoys enormous reverence in the social memory of the Kashmiri Pandit community. This social knowledge and historical information is preserved down the generations. It is to the extent that Guru ji's photograph finds an honored place in their pooja rooms. It is a reflection of the collective gratitude and indebtedness, it also finds manifestation during the Shivratri festival pooja where in some specific families install Guru ji's photograph in the pooja room along with their festival utensils symbolizing different deities. Additionally in the collective remembrance, seminars and special programs are mounted on Guru ji from time to time. Also, the Tarpan, the ritual of offering water in the memory of Guru Tegh Bahadur in the early morning is a daily custom in the many families of the community. An expression of gratitude to his supreme sacrifice, it has continued uninterrupted over centuries and generations till this date. In brief Guru Tegh Bahadur ji's entire life and resistance continues to serve as a powerful inspiration within our social matrix to cope up with adversity and new challenges.



 Ravinder Gurtoo



GURU TEGH BAHADUR JI

Martyr For Faith, Legacy Betrayed

History does not forget those who stood for truth when fear ruled the land. In the 17th century, when tyranny cloaked itself in the authority of empire, one man Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji rose as the shield for the voiceless, the protector of conscience, and the saint-warrior who embraced martyrdom so that others could live with their faith intact. His sacrifice, remembered for over three and a half centuries, stands as a monumental act of spiritual courage, the defence of the Kashmiri Pandits against forced conversion under Mughal tyranny.

But what does this sacrifice mean in today's India, an India that claims to be built upon the principles of freedom, faith, and justice? What have we, as a nation, done to

honour the promise made by Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji that the weak would be protected, that the oppressed would find justice, and that the persecuted would return home with dignity? For the Kashmiri Pandits, the answer is painfully clear. Centuries after the Guru gave his life for their right to exist, they still live as exiles in their own country, betrayed by rulers who make grand declarations but fail to fulfil the simplest moral obligation the right to return home.

The 17th Century Sacrifice : The Voice of Conscience Against Tyranny

In 1675, when Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb unleashed a wave of religious persecution across India, Kashmir's Pandits were among the first to face the brunt of his fanaticism. Led



by Shri Kripa Ram Dutt, a delegation of Kashmiri Pandits travelled to Anandpur Sahib, seeking refuge and guidance from Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. They were desperate, broken, and facing annihilation.

The Guru listened. He didn't belong to their faith, but he belonged to the truth. He told them that he would stand for their right to worship as they chose. His stand was not for one community, but for the fundamental principle of freedom of belief. When Aurangzeb's court demanded his conversion to Islam, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji refused not because of defiance, but because surrendering would have meant the death of the human spirit. His execution in Delhi on 24 November 1675 was not merely a physical act of martyrdom, it was a cosmic declaration that no power can suppress faith if one brave soul chooses to resist. In his death, the Guru became the "Hind Di Chadar", The Shield Of India, protecting not just the Kashmiri Pandits, but the very essence of India's civilisational ethos.

From 1675 to 1990 :

The Betrayal of a Promise

Fast forward to modern India of 1990 changed. The same community that Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji gave his life to protect was once again hounded out of its homeland. Overnight, the valley that once echoed with the chants of "Namah Shivaya" and "Waheguru" turned into a nightmare of slogans demanding "Raliv, Galiv, Ya Chaliv", convert, die, or leave. The Kashmiri Pandits fled their homes, carrying with them not just memories, but the unhealed wound of abandonment. And since that night of terror, every government Congress or BJP has offered words without will, promises without plans, and sympathy without sincerity.

For 36 long years, the descendants of those saved by Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's sacrifice have waited for justice. The Modi government, which came to power with the rhetoric of nationalism and justice for Kashmiri Pandits, has done little beyond speeches and symbolic gestures. The same party that quotes the Sikh Gurus in its political campaigns has failed to honour the very

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essence of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's legacy to protect the oppressed, not exploit their pain for political mileage.

The Fake Normalcy of Kashmir : A Dangerous Mirage

Today, the government proudly parades a narrative of "normalcy" in Kashmir. The tricolour is hoisted at Lal Chowk under heavy security, and the media is fed images of tourists in Pahalgam and Gulmarg as proof that peace has returned. But let's ask the hard question, if all is normal, where are the Kashmiri Pandits?

Why do the same government which boasts normalcy go silent when asked about the roadmap for return and rehabilitation of the Pandits? Why is there no concrete plan, no safe township, no truth commission, and no accountability for the massacre that took place post-1990 from Nadimarg to Sangrampora, from Wandhama to Ganderbal, and now the Pahalgam killings that once again exposed the fragility of this so-called peace?

If Kashmir is truly "normal," then it must be normal enough for the original inhabitants to live there. If the valley is safe, then let the government announce dates, policies, and guarantees for Pandits' return. Instead, we see hollow displays at Lal Chowk, choreographed scenes meant to deceive the nation into believing that the valley has healed. But peace without justice is an illusion, and reconciliation without truth is a lie.

The Pain Behind the Propaganda

Behind every slogan of "Naya Kashmir" lies an unspoken truth that the old wounds have



never been allowed to heal. The Pandits still live in migrant camps, their children growing up with the stories of homes they have never seen. What does the government offer them? Occasional compensation, selective job schemes, and empty anniversaries where their suffering is turned into political theatre.

What it doesn't offer is justice, justice for those murdered, raped, or displaced. What it doesn't offer is home, the right to live again on the land where their ancestors prayed. The same rulers who light lamps in honour of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's martyrdom have forgotten that he died protecting the Pandits' right to faith. Today, when those same Pandits ask for their right to homeland, the silence from Delhi is deafening.

The Unfulfilled

Promises of Modi Government

The Modi government has built its political capital on the narrative of nationalism, Hindu pride, and justice for exiled communities. Yet, in the decade it has ruled, not a single comprehensive plan for Pandit rehabilitation has been implemented. The Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP) and Employment Schemes remain mostly on paper. The "homecoming" narrative is reduced to carefully staged media events with a handful of symbolic resettlements. The government speaks of revoking Article 370 as a masterstroke of justice, yet it has failed to

reverse the humanitarian exile that Article 370 symbolised.

Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji didn't make a promise he couldn't keep. He gave his life to keep it. The Modi government, with all its power and majority, cannot even give a roadmap for the Pandits dignified return. That is not just an administrative failure, it is a moral collapse.

A Nation's Conscience Tested Again

When Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji walked to his execution, he carried no fear, but the moral burden of protecting another's right to exist. His martyrdom was an act of selfless love, a declaration that no ruler, however powerful, can dictate one's faith. Today, when Kashmiri Pandits continue to live as refugees, their faith in the Indian state is dying a slow death. The same land for which the Guru laid down his life now betrays the very people he died defending.

The government that claims to uphold "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas" has turned its back on the most wronged community of independent India. Its silence is not just political, it is historical amnesia, a denial of the Guru's legacy, and a stain on India's moral fabric.

The Call of Conscience

As we mark the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, we must remember: his sacrifice was not a story for schoolbooks. It was a moral contract, a promise that India would always stand by those persecuted for their faith. If the rulers of today cannot uphold that promise, then they stand guilty of betraying not just the Kashmiri Pandits, but the very soul of Bharat. For as long as a single Kashmiri Pandit remains in exile, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's sacrifice remains unfinished business. And until justice, return, and rehabilitation become a living reality, not a televised spectacle, India will continue to fail the very ideals that made it worth dying for.

In reverence to Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, the martyr who gave his head, not his faith and in remembrance of the Kashmiri Pandits the community is still waiting for a nation to keep its word.



Dr. Ravi Dhar



GURU TEGH BAHADUR JI'S MARTYRDOM AND THE ETERNAL CALL OF DHARMA

In the long and luminous history of India, few lives shine with such moral and spiritual clarity as that of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji (1621–1675). The ninth Sikh Guru stood not only as a saint and philosopher but as the protector of Dharma, the defender of freedom of conscience, and the embodiment of fearlessness born of Truth.

At a time when Emperor Aurangzeb sought to impose uniformity of faith across his empire, a quiet anguish spread among the Kashmiri Pandits. Facing the threat of forced conversion, a delegation of Pandits led by Pandit Kirpa Ram Dutt travelled from Kashmir to Anandpur Sahib, seeking refuge in the Guru's grace.

Guru Tegh Bahadur listened in silence. He did not speak of revenge or rebellion; instead, he reflected on a question that has pierced through the ages: *What is Dharma if it cannot protect the weak?* His answer was not in words but in an act that transformed India's spiritual destiny. He offered himself as the one to stand in defence of another's right to worship freely.

Arrested and brought to Delhi, he faced Aurangzeb's wrath to embrace Islam. The Guru's response was calm and immovable: *"I will not change my faith, nor compel another to change his."* On November 11, 1675, he was publicly executed in Chandni Chowk. Guru Ji gave up his life with a calm mind as a





martyr not for one religion, but for the principle that every individual being, irrespective of his/her faith has the right to live by his/her own faith. He upheld with his martyrdom every individual's basic human right to freedom of conscience, which came to be adopted much later in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.

It was his fearlessness, compassion, and clarity of consciousness that defined him. He saw Truth not as an abstract idea but as a living force — a power of awareness that dissolves the fear of death and the allure of compromise. To live in Truth, for him, was to act in harmony with the Divine order, *Ritam* — where thought, word, and deed are aligned in the service of the quintessential good.

For the Kashmiri Pandit community, whose suffering across centuries has too often mirrored that moment of 1675, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's life offers not only solace but a call to awakening. He reminds us that Dharma survives only when upheld by courage, compassion, and clarity of spirit and not by nurturing a victim psyche, through grievance or despair. His sacrifice was not for any sectarian cause; it was for the

He upheld with his martyrdom every individual's basic human right to freedom of conscience, which came to be adopted much later in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.

freedom of conscience itself.

To honour his legacy is to emulate his vision — to stand for truth without hatred, to defend the dignity of all faiths, to transform suffering into spiritual strength. For a community that has endured exile, alienation, and the erosion of its homeland, the Guru's message resounds with renewed urgency: *let adversity refine, not reduce you; let memory kindle light, not bitterness.*

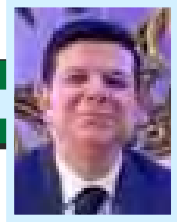
Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's martyrdom is not a story of death but of spiritual triumph — of the eternal flame that no tyranny can extinguish. It calls every seeker, and especially those who have known displacement, to rediscover that inner sovereignty which no worldly power can destroy. As the Guru's own son, Guru Gobind Singh Ji, declared in reverence:

*"Dharam het saka jin kiya,
sees diya par sir na diya."
He laid down his head for Dharma,
but not his principles.*

May his spirit continue to guide the sons and daughters of the Himalayas, and indeed all humanity, to live fearlessly in truth, upholding the light of Dharma through the power of compassion and the clarity of conscience.



B L Koul



Homage to Amar Shaheed **PT. PREM NATH BHAT** A Beacon of Courage and Conviction

Amar Shaheed Pt. Prem Nath Bhat was not merely a man of law, literature and service but he was in fact the living spirit of Kashmiri Hindu resilience, a torchbearer of truth and justice whose voice reverberates the conscience of an entire community of Kashmiri Pandits. Born of the sacred soil of Kashmir, Bhat Saheb's life was a journey from intellectual brilliance to spiritual depth, a fusion of fierce conviction and deep compassion.

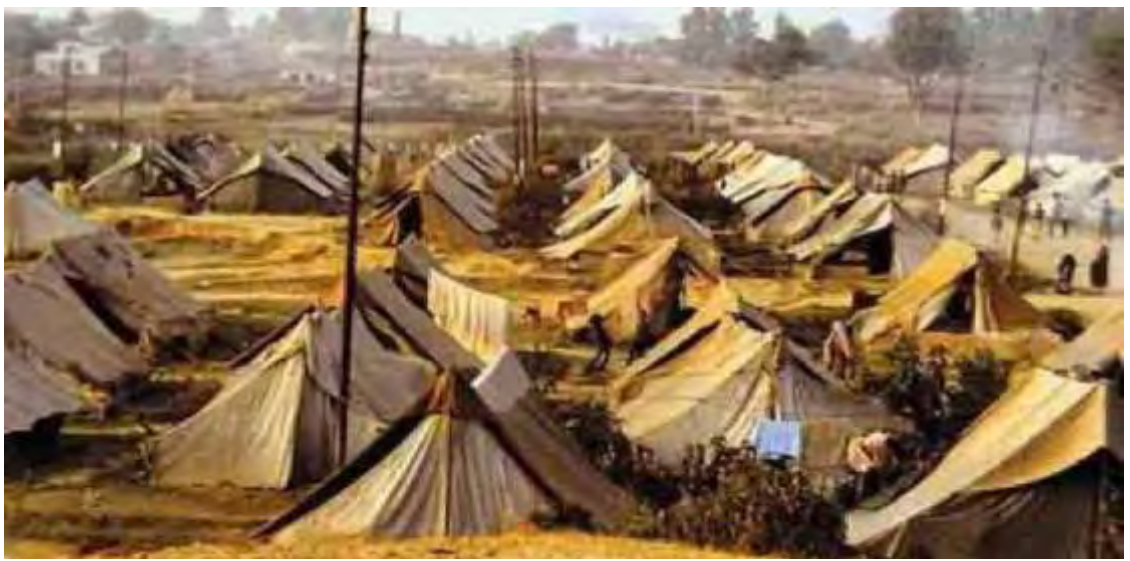
An advocate by profession and a social reformer by choice, he wore many hats with effortless grace, a journalist, author, thinker and above all a guardian of Hindu rights in the Kashmir Valley. From the 1950's through the turbulent late 1980's, he stood as a moral and ideological fortress against rising tides of communalism and political opportunism. His insights, particularly his prophetic warnings about the nature of terrorism in Kashmir and the eventual collapse of the Soviet system, were decades ahead of their time.

Bhat Saheb was not just a man of ideas, he was a man of action and immense empathy. He was known to extend legal help and moral support to the poor and underprivileged, often offering his services without charge to those who couldn't afford representation. He personally aided families devastated by fires, natural calamities and economic hardships. When villages were razed by fire or families lost everything in floods, Pt. Prem Nath Bhat



would be among the first to arrive, not as a politician seeking attention but as a brother bringing relief. He believed in the dharmic duty of "seva", selfless service and lived that ideal with unshakeable sincerity.

His fearless critique of political leaders whether Syed Mir Qasim, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed or Farooq Abdullah was rooted not in partisanship but in unwavering commitment to truth. His clarity of thought and sense of justice made him a target in a time of growing



extremism. On 27th December 1989, in the heart of Anantnag, his life was brutally snatched away by local jihadis an act not just of murder but of attempted cultural annihilation.

His assassination sent shockwaves through the Kashmiri Hindu community. It was not just the loss of a man but it was the symbolic silencing of a voice that had for decades stood tall amidst chaos. The State's indifference and the community's isolation made displacement the only path to survival.

But while his mortal form was lost, his legacy lives on in every displaced Kashmiri Pandit's heart, in every whispered prayer and in every fight for justice. Pt. Prem Nath Bhat did not die but he became eternal. A martyr, a saint and a symbol of undying faith and fortitude.

Shat Shat Naman to the noble soul. Your sacrifice shall inspire generations.

You did not fall, Bhat Saheb but in fact you rose forever engraved in the soul of Kashmir. Pt. Prem Nath Bhat did not merely fall to bullets, but he was torn from the heart of a civilization, leaving behind a silence so deafening that it still resounds in the empty temples and abandoned homes of the Valley. His blood soaked not just the soil of Khah Bazar that winter afternoon but the very soul of a people who had for centuries nurtured Kashmir with knowledge, tolerance and peace.

What words can capture the pain of a child looking for his father's shoes outside the

door, not knowing he will never return? What language can explain the agony of a community forced to carry its gods in cloth bundles, leaving behind ancestral lands with only ashes and memories? Bhat Saheb's martyrdom became the final prophecy, a chilling declaration that Kashmir was no longer safe for its native sons.

He was more than a scholar, more than a social reformer and he was a father to the fatherless, a guide to the confused and a shield for the vulnerable. He carried the weight of his community's pain on his shoulders and in his death, that pain became unbearable.

Even in his silence, he speaks. In every displaced Kashmiri home, his portrait hangs not as a memory but as a promise that we will return, that we will remember and that truth cannot be killed by terror.

The valley may have gone dark but the flame of Pt. Prem Nath Bhat's sacrifice continues to burn in the hearts of every Kashmiri Pandit. It is a sacred fire that is fed not by hatred but by love for the land he died for.

Shat Shat Naman, O noble soul!

You are not lost to us but in fact you have become our conscience, our cry and our courage. Your blood is the ink with which our history is written. And in that history, you shall live forever, not as a victim but as a hero who never surrendered.

"Woh jo mitta nahin hai, maar kar bhi zinda hai, Prem Nath jaisa shaheed har daur kazameer hai."

— Devoted admirer of Amar Shaheed



Sanjay Pandita



The Unwritten Epitaph

Will Kashmiri Pandits Remember Their Roots?

Identity is never inherited passively. It is a conscious act, a memory carried forward, a ritual performed with intent, a word spoken in the mother tongue, a story told again and again until it becomes flesh in another generation. For Kashmiri Pandits, once the proud custodians of a five-thousand-year-old civilization in the Valley, the tragedy of displacement in 1990 did not only cast them out of their ancestral homes—it also unmoored them from the soil in which identity grows. Over three decades later, the question has shifted from exile to existence: will the generations born in camps, in cities, and in foreign lands even remember their roots, or will they become a people whose homeland survives only as folklore?

The exodus was sudden, violent, and complete. In the darkness of that winter, families fled with little more than the clothes

on their backs. The first generation carried the Valley in its eyes: the fragrance of saffron fields in Pampore, the quiet dignity of river Jhelum flowing past Srinagar's ghats, the sound of temple bells at Martand, the crunch of snow under wooden clogs in December nights. The language was still spoken in their throats, the rituals performed with devotion, the festivals celebrated with aching remembrance. For them, exile was not the end of memory but its intensification.

But with each passing decade, distance has widened. Children born in Janipur, Roop Nagar, Delhi, Pune, Bangalore, or in the diaspora abroad, find their official identity tied not to Kashmir but to the place of their birth. Their birth certificates carry not Srinagar, Anantnag, or Baramulla, but the new addresses of exile. The Relief Commissioner's office, which distributes



monthly relief to displaced families, does not record ancestral villages or hometowns in Kashmir. It records only the present addresses of the displaced—tenements, rented apartments, resettlement colonies. Over time, the government itself will come to recognize Pandits not as natives of Kashmir but as migrants settled outside. Bureaucracy, in its cold indifference, thus participates in the quiet erasure of identity. What begins as clerical convenience may one day stand as official history: that the Pandits are no longer of Kashmir, but of Jammu, Delhi, or elsewhere.

This is not a trivial detail; it is the slow burial of a people's claim. For generations born in exile, official records are the first documents of selfhood. If those records bear no trace of Kashmir, what then anchors them to the Valley? What will they pass on to their children—a certificate that says Jammu or Delhi, not Srinagar or Baramulla? A root cut out from official recognition is a root already in danger of drying.

It is here that the deepest anxiety emerges: will forthcoming generations even remember their Kashmiri roots? Already, the signs are troubling. The Kashmiri language slips further with each generation; Hindi and English dominate conversations in Pandit households outside Kashmir. Rituals are performed, but often mechanically, stripped of context. Festivals like Herath and Navreh are observed in exile, but more as cultural tokens than as lived spiritual experiences of the Valley. For the youth, Kashmir exists more in films, in political debates, and in parental laments than as an intimate belonging.

And to make matters worse, instead of investing energy in preserving the essentials—language, customs, rituals—some in the community indulge in a kind of cosmetic nostalgia that borders on parody. One sees, with a faint smile and some sadness, attempts to “revive” long-abandoned practices such as

brides wearing the taranga over the pheran in weddings, or men sporting turbans as symbols of Kashmiri tradition. But let us recall history honestly: by the early 1960s, a cultural movement led by Pandit Kashyap Bandhu, within the community itself had persuaded Pandit women to abandon the traditional pheran with taranga and adopt the saree as the attire of modernity and refinement. By the early 1980s, almost every Pandit woman wore sarees as a matter of identity and pride. These shifts were deliberate, chosen, and seen as progress. Now, to return to abandoned clothing styles in the name of revival is little more than symbolic playacting. Will a turban on the head or a taranga on the bride's veil restore what exile has eroded? Will such superficial gestures

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keep alive a community's roots? Or is this mere nostalgia masquerading as preservation? The sarcasm writes itself: while the mother tongue slips away, we console ourselves with borrowed turbans.

The true crisis is not of costumes but of continuity. A community survives not by what it wears but by what it speaks, remembers, and transmits. Language, customs, and rituals are the lifeblood of identity. To preserve them requires seriousness, not token gestures. Children must be taught Kashmiri, not as a relic but as a living tongue. Rituals like Herath must be explained, not just performed. Songs of wanwun must be sung with meaning, not forgotten in the noise of DJ nights at weddings. Literature—from Kalhana's Rajatarangini to the mystical sayings of Lal Ded—must be read aloud to children as naturally as bedtime stories. If a child grows up without Kashmiri words in the ear, without Kashmiri food on the tongue, without Kashmiri stories in the heart, then no pheran or turban can compensate for the loss.

This failure cannot be blamed entirely on circumstances. Yes, displacement was cruel, and survival came first. Parents sacrificed much to secure education and careers for their children, and this must be honored. But in doing so, the community neglected the parallel task of cultural preservation. Unlike the Jews, who in exile fiercely preserved Hebrew, or the Parsis, who maintained their rituals and language despite shrinking numbers, the Pandits allowed themselves to drift into assimilation. Today, Kashmiri Pandit youth excel globally, but many cannot even recite a Kashmiri proverb. Success without roots creates only individuals, not a community.

The Relief Commissioner's records symbolize this dual erasure—by the state and by the community itself. As addresses shift from Kashmir to exile towns, so too does mental geography shift. Kashmir becomes less a homeland and more a memory. But memory alone is fragile. Without institutional anchors, it fades. And once it fades, so does the claim to belonging.

Will posterity then call itself Kashmiri Pandit at all? Or will it dissolve into the broader Indian mainstream, indistinguishable except for surnames? This is not mere speculation. Already, in many cities, younger Pandits identify more with the cosmopolitan cultures they live in than with Kashmir. They may visit the Valley as tourists, take selfies at Dal Lake, marvel at the ruins of Martand or Avantipur, but not feel the ache of belonging. When belonging dies, so does identity.

And yet, the flame is not extinguished. It flickers still in exiled temples where bhajans are sung, in the collective grief of Herath gatherings, in the stubborn pride of calling oneself “Kashmiri Pandit” even in faraway lands. The challenge is to fan this flame into permanence. For that, cosmetic gestures will not do; only serious, deliberate preservation will.

What must be done is clear. Families must make Kashmiri language the heartbeat of homes. Cultural organizations must build archives of songs, stories, and rituals. Educational institutions must include

Kashmiri Pandit history in curricula. Political leadership must demand that government records preserve ancestral village names alongside present addresses, so that official recognition does not collude in erasure. And most importantly, the vision of return—however distant—must never be abandoned. A community without a homeland may survive, but only as a shadow of itself. With homeland, even as aspiration, memory remains alive.

The crisis is not irreversible, but the window is narrow. Each year lost is a word forgotten, a ritual diluted, a child who grows up rootless. Identity is not lost in one tragic night of exile—it is lost gradually, when stories stop being told, when songs fall silent, when the state rewrites addresses, and when a people console themselves with turbans instead of tongues.

Thus, the question “Is the Kashmiri Pandit losing its identity?” must be answered with brutal honesty. If things continue as they are, the answer leans towards yes. But if the community awakens to the fact that survival is not enough, that memory is as essential as livelihood, and that roots must be guarded more fiercely than symbols, then the answer can still change. Posterity will either inherit a living culture or an empty silence. The choice is being made today—not tomorrow, not in some distant vision of return, but in the daily lives of exiled families, in the Relief Commissioner's registers, and in the decisions of parents about what language to speak, what stories to tell, and what rituals to honor.

In the end, the epitaph of the Kashmiri Pandit identity need not be written as one of loss. It can still be written as one of endurance. But for that, the community must recognize that identity is not preserved by nostalgia or costume, but by language, customs, rituals, and memory—things much harder, but infinitely more meaningful, to sustain. For if they fail, the homeland will not only be lost in the snows of Kashmir; it will be lost forever in the silence of forgetful hearts.

*The writer can be reached at
sanjaypanditasp@gmail.com*



 Dr. Anisha Safaya



FLOURISHING TREE WITH BURNT ROOTS

Born amid cherry trees and exiled among canvas tents, the Kashmiri Pandit children of 1990 grew up with burnt roots — yet they chose to bloom. This is their story of faith, grit, and endurance. (One of the children of the 1990 exodus from Kashmir, she writes to preserve the memories, honour the courage, and celebrate the quiet strength of a generation that turned pain into purpose.)

I was born in the most beautiful place on earth — Kashmir. My childhood unfolded in a tall wooden house, with cherry trees in the courtyard and rose shrubs that painted the garden red each spring. Life was simple, filled with play, stories, and innocence. But in the winter of 1990, that paradise was set on fire. On the night of 19 January, a six-year-old me was watching the weekly movie on national television when the silence of the Valley was suddenly pierced by mosque loudspeakers echoing chilling threats.

Kashmiri Pandits were branded kafirs. The voices declared that men had only three choices — leave the Valley, convert to Islam, or face death. And for those who fled, the demand was cruel: leave behind your women. The fear was not empty. It spread like smoke through every street and courtyard. Neighbours who once exchanged salt and bread turned into silent witnesses — some complicit, others helpless. What began as whispers of threat became unspeakable brutality: killings in the dead of night, rapes of women, abductions, forced conversions.

Terror was not just about bullets; it was about fear seeping into every breath. All of



this happened too quickly for my small mind to understand. Just yesterday, I had been playing with the kids next door — and today, their house was empty. The doors were shut; the laughter was gone. I didn't know why, but it felt like I had lost my best friends, and the world had suddenly stopped trusting itself. We were among them. In one night, we left behind everything — our home, our books, our temples, even the scent of my mother's kitchen. What walked out of Kashmir was not only a people but also the living presence of a civilisation.

My little eyes — and like me, eyes of the children of 1990 — witnessed it all, and our minds created a snapshot so deep, so strong, that it has never faded. We saw fathers whispering hurried instructions in the night, mothers clutching our hands as they stepped into the unknown, homes locked with trembling hands while prayers hung heavy in the air. We were called migrants in our own state, in our own country. While terrorists named us kafirs for holding on to our faith and for believing in non-violence, the system around us also reduced us to a single word — migrant.

Schools for us were no longer just schools; they ran in separate afternoon shifts known as migrant shifts, after regular school hours. Homes were no longer homes; they were tents and one-room shelters, labelled migrant camps. Entire families squeezed into spaces meant for half their size, where kitchens, living rooms, and bedrooms merged into one. Privacy vanished, and dignity had to be stretched thin, just like every rupee. Even universities offered us a category called migrant quota. Every label was a reminder that we had been uprooted, displaced, and boxed into an identity we had never chosen.

It felt like an identity theft. We suddenly didn't know where we belonged. We were not full part of the Valley we had left, nor truly accepted in the cities we had arrived in. We were citizens of India, yet marked as outsiders in our own land. Exile was not just about losing

a home. It was about carrying invisible scars into every single day. In Jammu, where families like mine sought shelter, life was stripped to its bare bones. The winter chill seeped through thin canvas tents, the summer heat turned tin roofs into furnaces, and the comforts of our valley homes were replaced by scarcity, dust, and endless queues — for water, for rations, for medicines.

The camps had a smell of damp earth and kerosene smoke, their narrow lanes lined with open drains. Families slept side by side on the ground, separated only by a curtain or a sheet. Nights brought new fears too: snake bites and scorpion stings crept into the darkness, adding danger to lives already made fragile. For children, these camps were not temporary shelters — they became the backdrop of our growing up, shaping memories too heavy for little shoulders.

In my family, exile carried its own heavy toll. My father, already burdened with the

Despite the trauma, not a single Kashmiri Pandit child picked up a gun. Not one chose the path of terror. Instead, we picked up books, stethoscopes, instruments, and dreams.

stress of displacement, developed severe medical problems. When I was only eight years old, he underwent open-heart surgery. My parents stayed away for his treatment, and I grew up largely alone, seeing them only during summer or winter vacations. At nine, I understood loneliness. I knew what it meant to mature too early, to accept responsibility, and to carry burdens far too heavy for a child. Yet, I was not alone in this. Every Kashmiri Pandit child carried some version of that burden — be it poverty, loss, separation, or the silent grief of watching their parents sacrifice everything. Our parents were the burnt roots — scarred by terror, tested by fate, yet still nourishing us with strength. From them, we learnt resilience, diligence, and dignity. They could not hand us wealth or security, but they gave us something greater: values that would outlast suffering.



My mother, graceful in adversity, taught me to hold my head high even when circumstances were cruel. My father, battling illness yet never surrendering, taught me perseverance. I, like many of my peers, tried to repay them the only way I could — by making them proud. We excelled in academics, poured our hearts into our careers, and gave our best in every field we entered. But our achievements were never just ours. They were the fruit of our parents' sacrifices, proof that burnt roots could still feed a flourishing tree.

At the age of eighteen, when I lost my father, grief could have broken me again. But by then, resilience was written into my very being. His legacy became my strength. And this story — of loss transformed into endurance — is the story of thousands of Kashmiri Pandit children. What makes our journey extraordinary is not just the suffering but the response. Despite the trauma, not a single Kashmiri Pandit child picked up a gun. Not one chose the path of terror. Instead, we picked up books, stethoscopes, instruments, and dreams. We became doctors healing the sick, engineers building cities, civil servants upholding the Constitution, professors shaping the next generation, soldiers defending the nation, and artists carrying forward our culture.

Wherever you look in India today — in hospitals, universities, government offices, global companies, and theatres — you will find a Kashmiri Pandit not just living but

thriving. That is our response to terror: when they tried to bury us, we chose to bloom. And yet, the world rarely acknowledges this. In every war zone, human-rights activists worry about the impact on children. Reports are written, compassion is extended. But in 1990, when Kashmiri Pandit children were driven from their homes, there was no one. Absolutely no one. We grew up without therapists, without aid, without the comforting hand of compassion. Our trauma never made it to headlines or conferences. And still, we did not let pain turn into poison. Why? Because our roots — though burnt — were too deep in values of learning, tolerance, and dignity. Revenge would have been easy. But it was not our way. More than three decades later, our ancestral homes may remain locked or abandoned, but our spirit stands tall. We are the flourishing tree whose burnt roots still feed branches heavy with fruit. This is not just my story. It is the story of every Kashmiri Pandit child of 1990. Children who studied by lantern light in refugee camps, who faced ridicule for being “migrants,” who lost parents too soon, but who refused to break.

Today, we are doctors, engineers, civil servants, artists, entrepreneurs, and soldiers. We are parents raising another generation. And when we tell them our story, we do not fill their hearts with hate. We tell them instead: Yes, you come from burnt roots. But you must flourish as a tree that gives shade, fruit, and hope. That is our legacy. A community uprooted, yet unbroken. A flourishing tree with burnt roots.



Dr. Daleep Pandita



ALL ABOUT ABHINAVGUPT SHAKTIVEERS

The group of more than 300 like-minded socio economically active Kashmiri Pandit families having their vast global extensions bonded together by their history, ethos and philosophy started their socio-cultural religious activities about 5 years back through a lesser popular organisation known by Abhinavgupt Shaktiveers Trust (AST).

Located at Jammu, Abhinavgupt Shaktiveers one of the apex body of displaced Kashmiri Pandit community in Jammu and Kashmir and a registered organization run by duly constituted body, is an apolitical entity which functions irrespective of caste or creed, through their socially active financially competent warriors spread all across the globe support the educational needs of under privileged deserving children from financially distressed families of the community, so as to ensure them sufficient opportunity to pursue their dreams despite their financial challenges. On occasions, in addition to this basic activity based on the recommendations of community members, AST also support the medical expenses in certain cases of medical exigencies of economically downtrodden families of their community.

The birth of AST came in to existence under the influence of philosophy and motivation of great saint, *Mahamaheshwara Abhinavagupta* and due to firm belief in his



teaching and preaching of serving the deserving needy of the society by undertaking noble deeds of *eternal karma*.

This community driven trust, without any financial support from the government, exclusively function on the financial generosity of socio economically well-established baradari of Kashmiri Pandit community through their regular monthly financial contributions. Duly constituted committee of AST utilize this hard-earned income only after identifying and verifying the deserving children so as to proceed for their educational financial assistance only after thoroughly discussing and finally

approving the full quantum of this financial aid for the entire period of their education of such cases. This meticulous exercise in pursuance to the ethos of ***Mahamaheshwara Abhinavagupta***, is based on complete financial transparency following proper accountancy procedures acting without any bias, helping the economically under privileged budding stars of the community particularly in pursuing their elementary education.

Up to last financial year ending, AST has distributed about 25 lakh assistance among more than 200 economically under privileged children of Kashmiri Pandit community in pursuance to their education mostly at elementary level and in fewer cases at technically higher educational level.

For the sake of ***Sanatan***, based on the recommendations of socially reputed members of their community or from recognized organizations, AST even bear the medical expenses in certain deserving cases of medical exigencies pertaining to the community by issuing special appeals through their extra fund rising drives for generating additional income.

Besides addressing educational and medical needs, Abhinavgupt Shaktiveers nurture their rich traditional ethos by regularly conducting various socio philosophical activities on preserving cultural heritage of place of their birth, their community, their religious belief particularly in ***Shaivism*** thereby carrying forward the legacy of their old age history. Such traditionally rich activities fulfilling the religious objectives of AST equally create public awareness about the socio-cultural philosophy of Kashmiri Pandit community and also percolate down their typical community values to their younger generation spread all across the globe.

All such silently managed activities organized out of meager self-created funds donated by Abhinavgupt Shaktiveers, remain in look out for financial support and request community to join this movement for raising more funds so as to meet the requirements for maintaining the socio cultural traditional and philosophical noble values of elite Kashmiri Pandit community and further supporting the educational needs of children of lesser God.

(Author a senior columnist is an Abhinavgupt Shaktiveer)

The progenitor of Purity in the form of Khalsa is pioneered by Guru Govind Sing Ji Mahraj. The awakening call in 1698 for Sikhs all over the India at Anandpur Sahib was a divinely spark where the Panjepara were Showerd with Solemnized Spirit of Purity and to torch the enlightenment of Dharma.

Sardar Keer Sing qoutes it in (Gurbis patshah 10)

Daya Ram - Lahore ❖ Dharm Dass - Histanpur ❖ Maukam Chand - Dwarika ❖ Sahib Sing - Karnataka ❖ Himmat - Jagarnath Puri

Were the first five to respond to the transcendental call of Guru Govind Sing ji Mahraj. The foundations of Khalsa Panth with five sacred tools were sworn to lead the five denominations.

Khaish to Shun materialism

Kanga to Care ❖ Kadda to Union ❖ Kaccha to protect moralistic ❖ Kripan to protect Dharma.

Guru Govind Sing ji

hymn of protecting Dharma lies in Bole So Nihal , Sat Sri Akal (Any one Who Utters, Shall Be Full filled) This Powerful clarion Call will generate power of Devotion power of Energy, Power to Protect Dharma for centuries to come.

- Surinder Ambardar
Ex - MLC J&K Assembly



Bharat Bushan Bhat



JAMMU STATEHOOD



Jammu Deserves Full Statehood with Legislature

As India marches confidently towards a new era of balanced regional development and national integration, it is time to revisit the long-pending demand of granting full Statehood with a legislature to Jammu. The aspirations of the people of this vibrant and patriotic region deserve recognition, respect, and constitutional empowerment.

Distinct Identity of Jammu

Jammu, the “City of Temples,” represents a proud civilizational and cultural ethos entirely distinct from the Valley of Kashmir. The region's language, culture, traditions, and social values differ fundamentally from those

of Kashmir. Dogri, Pahari, and other local dialects echo the essence of northern Indian heritage, deeply rooted in Sanatan traditions. In contrast, Kashmir's linguistic and cultural patterns are separate and often influenced by alien thought processes that diverged from the mainstream national spirit.

For decades, Jammu's interests were politically overshadowed and administratively neglected under the erstwhile state structure dominated by the Valley-centric leadership. The region's potential in tourism, education, and infrastructure was stifled. A separate statehood, therefore, is not merely a political demand — it is an expression of Jammu's right to self-determination within the



constitutional framework of India, ensuring equitable development, representation, and dignity.

Kashmir's Status Must Remain As Union Territory

Kashmir continues to face the dark shadow of terrorism and separatist ideology that has repeatedly bled the Valley for over three decades. Despite remarkable progress after the abrogation of Article 370, anti-national elements still lurk beneath the surface, waiting for political leverage to revive instability. Hence, Kashmir must continue as a Union Territory until the last terrorist is eliminated, the ecosystem of radicalism destroyed, and every trace of anti-Indian sentiment uprooted from its soil.

Only when Kashmir's socio-political fabric is fully reformed and reoriented toward nationalism can its future governance model be reconsidered.

Jammu – The Shelter of Compassion and Brotherhood

When the Kashmiri Pandits were brutally uprooted from their homes and hearths in 1990 by terrorist violence, it was Jammu that opened its arms to them. Despite its limited resources, the people of Jammu (with some hiccups here and there) offered shelter, food, and emotional solace to their displaced brethren. Temporary camps became centers of resilience, where compassion triumphed over communal divides.

The Kashmiri Pandit community, despite its immense suffering, did not remain dependent. Through education, enterprise, and perseverance, they contributed significantly to Jammu's economic, cultural, and intellectual growth. From education to business, from public service to cultural revival, their contribution has enriched Jammu's pluralistic identity.

Until the conditions in the Valley become conducive for a dignified and secure return, the Pandits must be honourably continue to settle in Jammu with full dignity and recognition. Jammu remains their natural second home — a symbol of national solidarity and human compassion.

The Way Forward

Granting Statehood with a legislature to Jammu will empower its people to chart their own developmental path, preserve their cultural heritage, and ensure balanced regional representation. It will also bring administrative efficiency, attract investments, and strengthen India's security matrix in the border region.

Simultaneously, Kashmir's Union Territory status must continue until it fully transforms from a conflict zone into a symbol of peace and patriotism.

Jammu has stood by the nation through every test of time — steadfast, loyal, and nationalist to the core. It has borne the burden of displacement, shouldered the responsibilities of national integration, and nurtured the idea of India in its truest spirit.

Now, the time has come for India to acknowledge Jammu's unwavering commitment by restoring its full Statehood with a legislature — a rightful recognition of its sacrifices, aspirations, and contribution to the nation's unity and strength.

Jammu deserves to rise — not as an appendage, but as a proud, self-governing State that embodies the spirit of Bharat.

*Author is President Devasthan Suraksha
evam Sanrakshan Samiti Kashmir*

*He can be reached on
bharatbushanbhat4@gmail.com*



Krishen Kemmu



HIGH ALTITUDE PASSES OF LADAKH



The UT of Ladakh has some of the highest altitude motorable roads in the world and the bikers find these most challenging. That's why you will find hundreds of motorbikes from all around the country and the world, in groups of 20-30 in full gear traversing the length and breadth of Ladakh. Ladakh is a paradise for the bikers.

Chang La is a high mountain pass in Ladakh at an elevation of 5,391.3 m (17,688.000 ft) in the Greater Himalaya range between Leh and the Shyok River valley. The Chang La, on Leh to Pangong Lake road, lies on the Leh-Karu-Sakti-Zingral-Chang La-Durbuk-Tangtse-Pangong Lake motorable road. Karu, which lies on Leh-Manali NH-3, connects Chang La and Pangong Lake to Leh and the rest of India. Chang La is approached from Zingral village by a steeply climbing asphalt road which requires a careful drive. The stretch of 10–15 km road on either side of Chang la becomes loose

dirt and slush after the winter and requires regular maintenance. During the summer months specifically the tourist season, small streams appear across the road, making the climb a challenge for the bikers. The descent from Chang La towards Tangtse or Durbuk is again very steep. Doctors advise that staying at the top for more than 20-25 minutes can cause altitude sickness.

The Changla Pass is the main gateway for the Nubra region. The small town of Tangste is one of the nearest settlements. Zingral is the nearest habitation. The world's highest research station, established by the Defence Research and Development Organisation is functional in Chang La at a height of 17,664 ft. Renowned for being the third highest motorable mountain pass in the world, Chang la presents beautiful views not only because of the natural landscape but also because of the yak rides and the army tea

stalls in the region. It is also gateway to Pangong Tso Lake and is known for its harsh weather and strategic importance in connecting border regions.

Khardung La or Khardung Pass is a mountain pass in the Leh district of the Indian union territory of Ladakh. The pass is on the Ladakh Range, north of Leh, and connects the Indus river valley and the Shyok river valley. It also forms the gateway to the Nubra Valley, beyond which lies the Siachen Glacier. A motorable road through the pass was built in 1976, and opened to public in 1988. The pass is strategically important to India as it is used to carry supplies to the Siachen Glacier. The road is one of the world's highest motorable roads. It connects Leh with Nubra Valley and is essential for logistics to the Siachen Glacier. Its also a major point of tourist attraction.



Khardungla in 2025



Khardungla in 1920

The elevation of Khardung La is 5,359 m (17,582 ft). Khardung La lies on the historically important caravan route from Leh to Kashgar in Central Asia. About 10,000 horses and camels used to take the route annually, and a small population of Bactrian camels can still be seen at Hunder, in the area



View from the Khardungla

north of the pass. Leh is on a historic caravan route that leads not only to Yarkand in Sinkiang but to Lhasa in Tibet. It was central to trade route in the ancient times. Wool, silver, felts, tea, candy, skins, velvets, silk, gold, carpets, musk, coral, borax, jade cups, salt came down from the north. Cotton goods, shawls, brocades, opium, indigo, plumes, shoes, pearls, ginger, cloves, pepper, honey, tobacco, sugar cane, barley rice, wheat, corn came up from the south." During World War II there was an attempt to transfer war material to China through this route.



At the Khardungla

Umling La or Umlung La is the highest paved road and mountain pass in the world, located in Ladakh, India, on the ridgeline between Koyul Lungpa and the Indus River near Demchok. It forms the source for the Umlung stream that drains into the Indus and a tributary of the Kiungdul river that drains into Koyul Lungpa. The Umling La pass is traversed by a road between Chisumle and Demchok, also called the Umling La Road, which ascends to a height of 5799 metres (19024 feet) in the vicinity of the pass, making it the world's highest motorable road.

It is higher than Mount Everest's South Base Camp, which is at 17,598 feet (5,364 m),



and over half the cruising altitude of commercial jet airlines. The environment poses severe challenges for construction, with winter temperatures falling to -40°C , and oxygen levels 50% lower than at sea level. Umlingla connects the Chisumle and Demchok villages near the Indo-China border.

Zoji La is a high mountain pass in the Himalayas. It is located in the Ganderbal district of Jammu and Kashmir and the Kargil district of Ladakh. This pass connects the Kashmir Valley to its west with the Dras and Suru valleys to its northeast and the Indus valley further east. National Highway #1 between Srinagar and Leh in the western section of the Himalayan Mountain range traverses the pass. Its close proximity to Sonamarg adds to the popularity of the pass, and you can easily combine a visit to both places in one trip if you feel so inclined.



Zoji La connects Kashmir Valley to Ladakh and is vital for economic and strategic connectivity, especially in winter when Ladakh is cut off. It falls on the Srinagar-Leh Highway (NH1) and the altitude is 3,528 metres (11,575 feet)

Rohtang Pass (Rohtang, literally meaning "pile of corpses") is a high mountain pass (elevation 3,980 m (13,058 ft)) on the eastern end of the Pir Panjal Range of the Himalayas around 51 km (32 mi) from Manali in the state of Himachal Pradesh, the pass serves as a vital link between the verdant Kullu Valley and the arid, high-altitude regions of Lahaul and Spiti Valleys of Himachal Pradesh, India. Known for its dramatic topography and stunning panoramic views, Rohtang Pass attracts travellers, photographers, and nature

enthusiasts from across the world. The journey to the pass itself is marked by a striking contrast—lush green hills gradually giving way to rugged, snow-clad peaks and barren alpine terrain.



The pass provides a natural divide between the Kullu Valley with a primarily Hindu culture (in the south), and the arid high-altitude Lahaul and Spiti valleys with a Buddhist culture (in the north). The pass lies on the watershed between the Chenab and Beas basins.

Wari la: Wari la is considered to be the 4th highest motorable pass in the world. It connects Leh to Nubra Valley. It is an alternative way to reach Nubra Valley. Usually, the people of Ladakh use the Khardungla Pass to reach Nubra Valley. The altitude/Height of Wari la Pass is 5,312 meters (17,427 feet) above sea level, which is why riders from across the globe want to ride on the road of this pass.

As the elevation of the place goes up the oxygen level goes down, the elevation of Warila Pass is 5,312 meters (17,427 feet) above sea level. That is why the oxygen level of Wari la Pass is around 50% (quantity of oxygen molecules per breath). The concentration of oxygen at Wari la Pass is dangerous if you're not properly acclimatized before visiting this place. Staying more than 15 to 20 minutes can increase the chances of Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS).



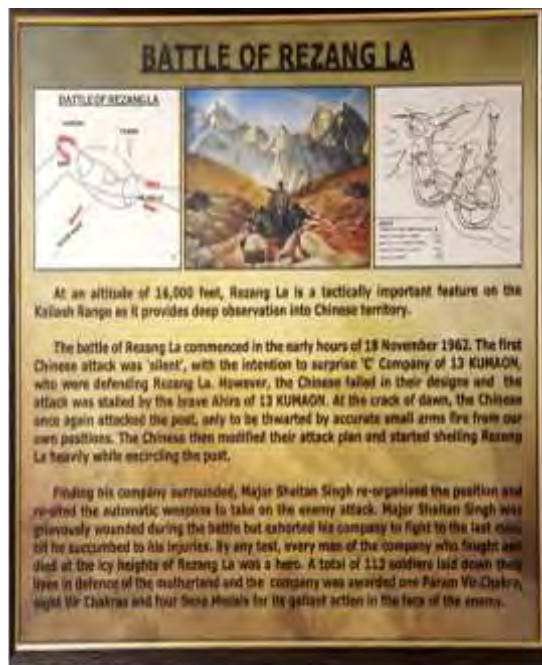
Rezang La is a mountain pass on the Line of Actual Control between Ladakh and the Chinese-administered Spanggur Lake basin. The pass is located on the watershed ridge of the Chushul Valley, on its east. China claims that the ridge is the boundary between the two countries, while India's claim line is further east. About 3 km southeast of Rechin La on the same ridge is a pass leading to an adjacent valley, which China recognizes as Rezang La.

This pass that was the site of a major battle of the 1962 Sino-Indian War. The "C" Company of India's 13 Kumaon battalion, made of Ahir soldiers, fought to the last man in an effort to block the Chinese PLA troops from crossing the ridge into the Chushul Valley. Indian sources state 120 men killed over 1500 PLA troops out of 3000. The battle was the last event of the Sino-Indian War, as the pass was the Chinese claim line and upon overrunning the ridge, a ceasefire was called.

During the 2020–2021 China–India skirmishes, Rezang La was again the site of conflict between the two nations.



*Soldiers of 13 Kumaon
days before the battle of Rezang la*



Bara-Lacha La: Nestled at a height of 15,910 feet, Bara Lacha La Pass is one of the most ancient mountains passes in Ladakh. It is located in the Zaskar range and links the Lahaul district in Himachal Pradesh to the Leh district in Ladakh. A prominent spot for bikers, especially those on a thrilling Ladakh bike trip, it offers beautiful views of the Bhaga River. It also serves as a pit stop for trekkers who commence their treks to Suraj Tal and Chandra Tal.

It is a heaven for bird watchers, and you can see rare and exotic species like lammergeier vultures, horned larks, wagtails, black redstarts and snow pigeons here. Bara Lacha La Pass remains open for tourists from April to October.

Lungalacha La or La Chungla (5,059 metres/16,600 feet): Located on the NH 3 Leh Manali Highway, Lungalacha La Pass is famous as one of the easy-to-climb mountains passes in Ladakh. At a height of 16,600 feet, this pass in the Zaskar range separates the valleys of Tsarap Chu and Tozay. The pass offers a spectacular view of the rugged terrain and the secluded villages. You can marvel at the gorgeous landscape surrounding the pass that is adorned with Buddhist prayer flags. It is

one of the popular passes for trekkers and bikers. If you are not properly acclimatised, you may face high altitude sickness due to the height of this pass. The pass remains accessible between late May to mid-October.



Altitude: 5,059 metres (16,600 feet)

Taglang La (5,328 metres /17,480 feet): Taglang pass is located on the way from Debring to Gya and promises awe-inspiring views of the rocky Ladakh mountains crisscrossed by sparkling streams of River Indus. This stunning pass is often a favourite stopover during a Ladakh group trip, where travellers can indulge in photography and soak in some serene moments while the fresh mountain air brushes their cheeks. At the pass, you can get a glimpse of local culture in nearby villages like Sarchu and Upshi. Make sure you capture the panoramic views of the Zaskar and Ladakh ranges. It is traversed by the Manali Leh Highway and remains open between April to June.

Pensi La (4,400 metres/14,436 feet): Also known as the “Gateway to Zaskar”, Pensi pass is one of the important mountain passes in Ladakh. This mountain pass connects the Suru valley to the Zaskar valley and also acts as a watershed destination for the Suru River. This pass is essentially the beginning of Ladakh on the Srinagar route, and you can perceptibly see the landscape change hereon. The pass is situated close to Kargil and you can combine visits to the two together. A lovely glacial lake and the Drang Drung Glacier also lie at close range to the Pensi La. Rangdum Monastery lies approximately 25 kilometers away from this pass.

Namika La (3,700 metres/12,139 feet):

One of the most prominent mountain passes in Ladakh, Namika La is the “Pillar of the Sky Pass.” it offers breathtaking views of the neighbouring peaks. The pass falls en route to the Mulbek valley and is a popular tourist stopping point on the way to Ladakh. There is a lot of scope for sightseeing in and around the pass. There are ancient rock carvings of Maitreya Buddha to be seen as well as a Buddhist Gompa. The pass connects Leh and Kargil and is one of the highest passes in the region. Stopping at this pass is a great way to signal your entrance into Leh Ladakh.

Fotu La (4,108 metres/13,478 feet): The highest pass on the Srinagar- Leh highway, the Fotu la is a magnificent place to visit during your trip bike to Ladakh and should be on the travel itineraries of all tourists. It is a beautiful pass and offers fantastic views of the mountainous neighbourhood. This scenic route is often a highlight for adventure enthusiasts on a Manali-to-Leh bike trip, adding thrill and beauty to their journey. Wild and chilly winds blow here all through the summer months and make the place a memorable one.



Saser La (5,411 metres 17,753 feet): A formidable mountain pass in Ladakh, Saser La is an impressive pass and a dangerous one, and crossing it is a thrilling experience that stays on in the memory for long. The pass connects Ladakh to the Yarkand in China and provides visitors with a breathtaking experience. The roads along the pass are very rough and driving across them is not an easy task. The steepness of the pass and the low-oxygen supplies there only add to the challenge. But for those who are able to overcome these obstacles and manage a ride through the pass, the experience is rewarding.



 Surinder Koul



Experience of Snowstorm

WHEN FASTEN YOUR BELTS WERE ANNOUNCED

A vivid sensory detail of a whiteout blizzard with piercing winds and plummeting temperatures, encountered by a septuagenarian Kashmiri couple who were stuck for four hours in an aeroplane in Deo Monis, the US, to take off a flight to Las Vegas, was a life-shaking experience for them.



The temperature dipped to -31 degrees centigrade due to a major snowstorm, followed by a cold wave which gripped the entire region of Denver and Des Moines. The scheduled boarding of the Allegiant Airlines was at 07 a.m. The flight's scheduled time was deferred twice due to severe weather. The reason was that the previous sorties of the airlines did not return. The Indian couple was dropped off at the airport and picked up for their residence twice by their niece, as their flight was repeatedly rescheduled, subject to the landing of the

flight at the Des Moines airport. During their to-and-fro trips in the car between the residence and the airport terminal, they had an overarching view of unmarked snow layers deep down the horizon, similar to the Antarctic snow-clad field of immeasurable land mass, as published in National Geographic magazine.

The dwelling houses and buildings in visible range were seen covered under the blanket of snow from the rooftops, and the piled-up snow rose to the ground floor. However, their constant shuttling between the airport and the residence was tiring for them.

They had to be patient with the discomfort in the adverse climatic conditions to catch the available flight to reach their next travel stop.



A little later, the airline staff messaged that the flight would take off at 5 P.M. on 21st December 2022. Their niece and her husband kept tracking the flight with the help of Google Airlines' air route. They took responsibility for driving them to the airport on the day, as per the time-to-time intimation of flight timing. Already, the Meteorological Department had forecasted 5 p.m. as the commencement of the snowstorm on 21st December. Around 5.30 p.m., Allegiant Airlines landed on the tarmac and anchored at its bay for the boarding of passengers, including the Kashmiri couple on the flight that was bound for Las Vegas. They had to catch the connecting Spirit Airlines flight on their landing in Las Vegas for their next flight to California. The fear of the snowstorm had haunted the passengers who were eager to get seated in the flight as quickly as possible, so that the flight could take off before the snowstorm that could impede the flight. The sky outside had a different story to tell; it was overcast with dark clouds. The visibility was hazy.

The airline's staff at the boarding gate counter checked the boarding cards of each passenger and allowed them to stream into the aircraft to occupy their respective seats. Passengers were impatiently peeping through the glass panes, wondering whether the



aeroplane would take off or not. Most of the passengers were using Google to study the intensity of the snowstorm and the weather conditions. The pensiveness on their faces was discernible. Apprehensions about the flight were vivid. Snow clearance machines were operating on the tarmac. The airport ground crew were pushing the fallen snow from the upper surface of the aeroplane. Everyone was guessing the plane would move outward to the runway to pick up speed for takeoff. Everyone was waiting for the taxiing to start. But nothing of that sort happened, and the aircraft was immovable for four hours with passengers huddled up, fearful and jittery with sulking looks, rolling eyeballs around to understand what was to be followed. Every passenger was bewildered as they could not grasp why flying off the aircraft was out of the question. The visibility in the atmosphere had dimmed as nightfall spread. Under the flashing lights from the electric poles, the falling snowflakes were visible, which turned into a hallucinating situation for certain passengers who imagined the plane was running on the tarmac, when it was not. They were taken over by the optical illusions triggered by assumptions made on the sense of vision.

The Kashmiri couple got physically cramped up in the compact aircraft for four hours, and the longing for take-off was nerve-racking for both of them. Their seats, allotted by the airline office, were diagonally opposite. The lady passenger was in the front

row, whereas her husband was in the rear seat. There was no communication between the two, either verbal or digital. The lady was trapped in a three-seat row with two senior American couples who spoke in their American accent, which was beyond her comprehension. Her husband was at the tail end of the plane in a row of three seats adjacent to an African American passenger and her child. Therefore, the possibility of exchanging the seats with either of the adjoining passengers was impossible. This type of seating for them on the plane rubbed salt into their wounds of desperation. In this confusion, the gentleman made inquiries to the flight hostess about the chances of the flight taking off and whether they would be able to board the connected flight from Las Vegas to California. The reply of the air hostess was demoralising when she said that they won't arrive at the given time, with the result that their connecting flight would be missed. On learning of their inability to catch the flight to California after landing in Las Vegas, he was upset. Shortly after, the senior air hostess announced the cancellation of the flight due to a rigorous snowstorm. The passengers were directed to collect a ticket refund at the counter on the ground floor or to check with the airline staff when their next flight was possible. The declaration of flight cancellation by a member of the airline crew was disturbing for both of them. They had to call their niece, who had been tracking the flight on her mobile. She was on the ground floor waiting to pick up her Uncle and Aunt and drive them back to her residence in Deo Monis, for further stay until air traffic resumed. On their drive back from the airport to their niece's house, the harshness of the winter storm was conspicuously visualised by the instant freezing of the falling snowflakes on the windshield. The hard crust of frozen layers of fallen snowflakes on the windshield of a car was melted by pouring special tinned fluid over it. Then the car wipers were used to wipe off the windscreen. Otherwise, it was all obscure for the driver to see the road.

On the following day, the newspaper

Wall Street Journal, a US-based newspaper, carried a banner news column that eight thousand and five hundred aircraft were grounded due to a severe snowstorm that affected the Midwest, Northeast, East and North Plains, Great Lakes regions. They were flabbergasted by the encounter with an adverse situation that engulfed most of the US region, and they had to suspend all air services. The spell of the winter storm was like a tempest. They were confined within the four walls of the house and did not dare to come out of the door, fearing they might get hit by the winter blizzard. The Wall Street Journal carried a banner headline alarming that any portion of the body of a senior citizen exposed to extreme snowy chill would be afflicted with frostbite. The couple religiously read through the weather forecast column of the Wall Street Journal to know when the storm would subside.

Despite its highly advanced technology and scientific progress, their entire air transport system was shaken by the severe unpredictability of bad weather conditions. This disruption of air travel in a US state reflected the earlier days of the couple, when coach commuters on the National Highway from Jammu to Kashmir or vice versa were stranded for days in winter due to heavy snowfall, landslides, or boulders rolling down from loose rocks atop the mountain ridge. Compared to this, Jammu and Kashmir were less developed and lacked technological advances. Nonetheless, the administration and local people stranded on the highway were providing help to each stranded passenger and the bus drivers. The rolling boulders, with potential force from the upper slopes, struck the moving coaches on the highway. They dragged the vehicles down the gorge into the River Chenab, causing casualties and injuries among the passengers.

Finally, one may conclude that nature cannot be harnessed.

The writer is a frequent traveller. He has the experience of adventure tourism and runs Nature Walk Travels / Royal Safari Experience travel companies.



When Food, Thoughts, and Words Align

Health does not come from food alone. The body may stay strong for some time with a healthy meal, but real peace comes only when the whole being is in harmony. True health shines when food, thoughts, and words move together like close friends. Without calm thoughts and honest words, even the best food cannot give lasting peace. But when all three walk together, they create a gentle rhythm where strength, clarity, and joy live side by side.

Food is the first gift we give to the body. Clean and simple meals are like soft hands that support our energy. Yet food loses its power if the mind is full of fear or anger. A restless mind does not allow the body to rest, and even pure food cannot show its full blessing. But when the mind is calm, food enters like a friend, bringing peace and healing. Food works best when it is received with calmness.

Thoughts shape the world inside us. Each thought touches the heart and spreads through the breath. Gentle thoughts bring peace, save energy, and invite balance. Harsh or unfair thoughts bring confusion and slowly weaken the body. Right thinking is more than an idea. It is a quiet power that protects health each day like a silent guard.

Words are the voice of the soul. They are not only sounds that fade away. Before reaching others, they touch the speaker first. If



words are harsh or false, they hurt the one who speaks before they hurt the one who listens. If words are kind and true, they build trust and make the heart light. They reduce pressure, and when pressure is low, both body and mind rest. In that state, even simple food works like medicine. The way we speak is not only about manners, it is part of health.

There is also a moral side to this balance. Some people remain silent before wrong to appear good. But this silence burns inside and slowly harms health. To be right does not mean to be harsh. It means to stand with truth and fairness, guided by conscience and not by anger. Such firmness clears the mind, cleans the heart, and keeps dignity alive. Dignity gives strength to relationships and helps kindness remain steady.

When food, thoughts, and words move together, they do not fight against each other. Food gives energy. Right thoughts guide that energy. Right words keep the path free from conflict and save us from the tiring struggle where one part of life pulls against another. Each time this inner struggle is reduced, strength is saved, the body heals with ease, and the mind rests in peace.

This balance can be built with small and gentle steps. Begin the morning with a soft thought that sets the tone of the day. Choose food that the body can welcome with ease. Before speaking, pause for a moment and ask if the words are true and kind. At night, look back and see if your thoughts lifted you or pulled you down, and if your words healed or hurt. This small circle of care slowly trains both the mind and the tongue while giving steady support to the body.

Fairness should guide this whole journey. The aim is not to compare or judge but to remain true to oneself. Clarity should be the lamp, because clear sight prevents both cruelty and carelessness. Accuracy should be our friend, because it keeps us near truth in

food, thought, and speech. With practice this balance becomes natural. Once it becomes natural, it flows like a stream, without force and noise.

The results are steady and lasting. The right food frees the body. Right thoughts free the mind. Right words free our ties with others. As these burdens lift, life grows lighter, breath becomes deeper, sleep becomes calmer, choices become clearer, and the heart feels a quiet confidence. This quiet confidence does not need to be shown; it shines by itself as the true sign of health.

In the end, the lesson is simple and can be trusted. When food, thoughts, and words align, health follows like a faithful friend. When this practice is repeated each day, it becomes a habit. Habit turns into nature. And in that nature, we discover the peace and strength we always searched for. Let us eat with care, think with love, and speak with fairness. Let this union of food, thoughts, and words guard our life and fill our days with calm strength and gentle joy.

Author is Subedar Major (Honorary Lieutenant) (Retd)

Calendar of Month

Dwitiya (Bhai Dooj)	23 rd October 2025
Kumar Shashti	27 th October 2025
Ashtami (Shukla Paksha)	30 th October 2025
Ekadashi (Shukla Paksha)	02 nd November 2025
Kartik Poornima	05 th November 2025
Sankat Nivaran Chaturthi	08 th November 2025
Ashtami (Krishna Paksha)	12 th November 2025
Ekadashi (Krishna Paksha)	15 th November 2025
Amavasya	20 th November 2025

Note

Panchak starts on 31st October 2025 ends on 04th November 2025

Kartik (Shukla Paksha) from 22nd October 2025 to 05th November 2025

Maarg (Krishna Paksha) from 06th November 2025 to 20th November 2025



Hira Lal Kak

Arnimāl

Kashmir's Forgotten Poetess of Resistance and Resilience

“ARNIMĀL - The Hues of Longing-1”

“अँरनिमालि हुन्द रँग”

Arnimāl was born in 1737 CE in the Palhalan village near Pattan in northern Kashmir. At a young age, she was married to Munshi Bhawani Das Kachroo from Rainawari in Srinagar. Her husband grew to be a poet and an erudite Persian scholar in the court of Jumma Khan, the Afghan Governor of Kashmir between 1788 and 1792. An emotionally distant husband while living together, he later abandoned her and went to Kabul to join the Afghan royal court there.

The young bride is waiting for her callous husband as the overcast sky fills her despondent soul with a hopeless hankering. In the depths of her being she knows that he is not going to come but then the heart refuses to listen as it reaches out to hold a hand that is not there. Ah! Who can ever bear the pain of unrequited love? Who can ever understand the agony of abandonment?

Loneliness thy name is Life!

अँमृ गगन गगराय

नबु मन्जु नारु वुजमल द्राय

अनतन पी अनतन पी

आंगन सानि छे फोजमुच्च ही

चटिथ लागस शेरे

अनतन पी अनतन पी

Tearing through the searing sky of my soul

Thunders the fiery lightning of longing

Ah! Send my beloved; someone please fetch Him now

The honeysuckle of passion is abloom in the courtyard of my heart

All the flowers I yearn to shower on Him

Ah! Send my beloved; someone please fetch Him now

म्यानि मदनो हियो हियो

छम चॉन्य लादन इयो इयो

दर्शुन दियो दियो दियो

वादु कवु डोलहोम पियो पियो

O, my Beloved! O, my darling!

I long for you

Ah! How I pine for you

Please show me your face for once

Why have you decided to betray me my dearest?

How will the unfortunate bride live through the pain of desertion? Will she rebel? Or will she decide to kill herself?

Or shall the power of Love see her through a magical transformation?

Let us go on this journey of self-discovery through the suffering soul of my dear Arnimāl!

She mixed her the passion for her estranged husband with her poetry. It is unfortunate and an irony as well that Arnimāl's poetry /works are not properly recorded and in future there will accrue threat to her poetry and it may fade away from the society. Let me conclude this blog with her following couplet - Arni Rang Goom Shrawan Heya Kar Yeeah Darshun Dyea. But still her lyrics and songs are sung by traditional singers and it is so good and a befitting tribute to the great poetess. Her whole poetry has the fragrance of reality.

Author is Ex-C.G.M.ONGC; Ex-Advisor Gail (India) Ltd. and Engineers (India) Ltd.



 Ravinder Pandita



THE SIKH GURUDWARA

AT LOC TEETWAL, KARNAH, KASHMIR

Prior to 1947, Teetwal was considered to be biggest business hub of North Kashmir and it was considered to be the largest Tehsil of Muzaffarabad division. After partition, the Hindu and Sikh properties wore a deserted look as it was destroyed in Tribal raids with Pak proxies in the lead. The Sikh members still remembered are S. Chanda Singh, S. Santu Singh, S. Lakha Singh, S. Jodh Singh amongst others.

To add to it the then MLA of the constituent assembly and a close confidante of Pt. Nehru, Yunus Khan spread the rumours that this chunk of land will go to Pakistan, that led to enmasse migration of whatever minorities and their properties were left behind. Sikhs were mostly into Goldsmith and Jewellery businesses besides Transport and employment. The only village with a sizeable sikh population resisted and still exist in Tribhoni village on offside of Tangdhar.

A lone Sikh gurudwara used to exist in Khokhar Mohalla of Teetwal, alongwith Hindu Dharamshala, built on masonry plinth with a wooden structure that was burnt in 1947 carnage, leaving a vacant plot that was converted into a garbage bin. This plot was reportedly encroached by Ghulam Rabbani and later vacated due to interference of saner elements of society. After 1971 Indo-Pak war this militarized zone became active and saw some development and thus Sikhs like Joginder Singh of Tribhoni and Lala Mela Ram, a forest lessee and contractor came into



SIKH GURUDWARA AT LOC TEETWAL, KASHMIR DEDICATED TO GURU TEO BHAIKORJI

prominence and regained the lost businesses & Properties. But unfortunately no Sikh or Hindu family tried to resettle in Teetwal. Whatever was left in their possession went out of their hands in 1990 militancy era.

It was S. Joginder Singh who was posted in Teetwal tried to search for roots in Teetwal and regained possession of the Gurudwara & Dharamshala land and gave it to local tiller to get some meager income out of maize crops annually. The Dharamshala was dug and some valuables excavated from time to time, by a few bad elements for petty gains. This dharamshala would act as base camp for the Sharda Yatra that unfortunately still is in illegal occupation of Pakistan and no yatra was possible since 1948. The official 'Charri

Mubarak' yatra with a holy mace would be taken out from here annually, facilitated by businessmen of Khatri clan and cross to Chilhana on the other side of river Kishenganga on way to Sarvagnya Sharda Peeth. The yatra would be received with gaitey by local muslims & Sikhs on its successful return till 1948.

It was on 14 September'2021, when members of Save Sharda Committee Kashmir regd, a pressure group for reopening of Sharda, led by its Founder Ravinder Pandita went to this place for an annual yatra. Teetwal was one of the traditional yatra routes to Sarvagnya Sharda Pilgrimage besides Keran, Liddervan & Gurez. Earlier the committee in search of roots had travelled to Keran and Liddervan routes in the year 2020. To its astonishment the committee was received to a great reception at Tangdhar by locals, a few of whom were already in touch with Ravinder Pandita, and they requested the committee in presence of Army officials to re establish Teetwal Traditional route and re build Temple and Gurudwara. This challenge was accepted by the committee and this piece of land including 5 marlas of Sikh Gurudwara was shown to Ravinder Pandita, duly identified & in possession of S. Joginder Singh.

Thus a new era on reclamation of Lost heritage began on 2nd. December 2021 with bhumi puja of Sharda Temple & Center wherein Save Sharda Committee decided to lay foundation stone of Gurudwara first. A construction committee was formed led by Ravinder Pandita that includes Ajaz Khan, Retd. Capt. Ilyas, Khawaja Iftikhar, S. Joginder Singh, Surinder Mirza, Satish Bhat, S K Koul & Mahveer Thussu, the first of its kind having members of all faiths.

The funds were raised through public and Gurudwara work preceeded Temple and was completed within a years time much ahead of temple. Ajaz khan a neighbor and our construction committee member in tandem with Ravinder Pandita monitored the construction. A very few Sikhs donated towards the cause, but the committee stood by its commitment to construct Gurudwara and



temple under aegis of Save Sharda Committee as parent regd trust. The keys of the completed gurudwara were handedover to Sangat of Tribhoni led by S. Joginder Singh in January while Nishan Sahib was also erected earlier on 4 September'2022 being annual Sharda yatra day called 'Sharda Divas'.

The Sharda yatra temple was inaugurated on 22 March'2022 Ist Navratra called 'Navreh' locally by Hon'ble home minister Sh. Amit Shah via Live streaming in presence of Hon'ble LG Manoj Sinha, MP Tejasvi Surya and SSCK head Ravinder Pandita, in presence of a 500 strong audience comprising of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs alike. The holy Granth Sahib was installed inside Gurudwara at Teetwal on 30 September'2023 in which a large number of devotees took part, thus recreating history. Shabd Kirtan & religious chants filled the air back again after 75 long years. Home Minister praised the committee and locals as well as civil societies under Ravinder Pandita on both sides of LoC on this occasion.

The lost heritage of a Gurudwara and temple that was lost in 1947 carnage is standing to its pristine glory as on date. It is urged that the biradari of Sikhs and hindus will come forward in management and running of both these religious places, which have a common compound without a partition wall, setting up an example of Hindu – Sikh Unity and universal brotherhood. At last the way local Muslims had preserved this piece of land and handed over the same to Save Sharda Committee deserves accolades and all appreciation.



 Col Tej K Tikoo



7th OCTOBER AND THE TURMOIL IN WEST ASIA

Some dates stand out so prominently because of the lasting imprint they leave on history of the world. The consequences of the happenings of that day are so profound that history rarely forgets them. In the last century, the world cannot forget 28th June 1914, when Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austria-Hungary empire, was assassinated in Sarajevo, Bosnia, by Gavrilo Princip, a Bosnian Serb Nationalist. This assassination led to a series of events culminating in the start of WW I (1914-1918), with catastrophic consequences for the world. The war ended with the world map being re-drawn with new borders, new countries and new rulers. This was particularly so for the Arab world in West Asia.

Similarly, the failed Beer Hall Putsch by Hitler and his Nazi supporters on 8-9 November 1923, catapulted Hitler to the centre stage of German politics in a period of crisis, with devastating consequences for the world. His rise led to the WW II (1939-1945), which eventually led to the eclipse of the British empire, rise of America and to the beginning of the cold war. Korean war, Vietnam War and many smaller wars which owed their origin to the cold war politics that divided the world and continues to do so even today.

In our own country, Mahatma Gandhi's assassination on 30 Jan 1948 and of Indira Gandhi's on 31 Oct 1984, too had far reaching consequence: so profound that Indian politics was never same again.

In the first quarter of this century, two dates come to mind: 9/11 and October 7. On the former date in 2001, Al Qaeda struck the twin towers of World Trade Centre in New York, resulting in the death of nearly 3000 people of many nationalities. This attack exposed the U.S. to the Islamic terrorism for the first time, even though, by then, many countries had already experienced such violence carried out in the name of Islam. Till then, America had paid little heed to the modern-day scourge of Islamist terrorism, as the U.S. was smug in the belief that its mainland was protected by the

Atlantic and Pacific oceans from the consequences of the militant revival of Islam. The Al Qaeda attack on America shocked the Americans and forced its administration to retaliate against the terror group by sending its troops to Afghanistan, where the Taliban government had provided safe havens for them to train and operate freely. It is a different matter that America had itself helped create this terrorist group to help it prosecute its war in Afghanistan against its Soviet occupation in eighties. Though Taliban was defeated early enough, but America stayed involved in Afghanistan for over two decades, its longest war, till its ignominious exit in August 2021.

October 7 falls in the same category of never-to-be-forgotten dates. On this date in 2023, Hamas and Islamic Jihad, two radical Islamist terror groups that hold sway over Gaza, carried out a series of coordinated armed incursions from the Gaza strip into the Gaza envelope of southern Israel during the Jewish holiday of Simchat Tohra. The attacks, which were the first large-scale invasion of Israel territory since the 1948, Arab-Israeli War, initiated the ongoing Gaza war which completed two years lately.

The attack by Hamas began with a barrage of over 4000 rockets launched into Israel and vehicle-transported and power glider incursions into Israel. Hamas militants breached the Gaza-Israeli barrier, attacking military bases and massacring civilians in over a score of communities including Be'eri, Kfar Aza, Nir Oz, Netiv Haasara and Alumim. According to an Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) report 6,000 Gazans breached the border in 119 locations into Israel, including 3,800 from the elite Nukbha Forces and 2,200 civilians and other militants. Additionally, the IDF report estimated 1,000 Gazans fired rockets from the Gaza Strip, bringing the total number of participants on Hamas's side to 7,000.

In total, 1,195 people were killed by the attacks, which included 736 Israeli civilians (including 38 children), 79 foreign nationals, and 379 members of the Security Forces. 364 civilians were killed while attending the Nova music festival, and many more

wounded. At least 14 Israeli civilians were killed by the IDF's use of force against known and identified Hamas assets. 251 Israeli civilians and soldiers were taken as hostages to the Gaza strip controlled by Hamas. Dozens of cases of rape and sexual assaults on captured women were reported.

Over 40 countries denounced the attack and described it as terrorism, while some Arab and Muslim-majority countries blamed Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territory as the root cause of the attack. Hamas said its attack was in response to the continued Israeli occupation, the blockade of Gaza strip, the expansion of illegal Israeli settlements, rising Israeli settler violence, and recent escalations. Israel called it the bloodiest in its history and 'the deadliest for Jews since 'the Holocaust'.

Immediately, thereafter, Israel, as expected, launched a full-scale attack on Gaza, with the objective of eliminating the Hamas and securing the release of its hostages. Till now, in the past two years, the war in Gaza has killed tens of thousands of Palestinians, with some estimates putting the figure at over 65,000. The war, subsequently, brought other countries and proxies sponsored by Iran into the conflict. These included the Hezbollah of southern Lebanon, Houthis in Yemen and at a later stage, Iran itself. It is pertinent to mention that over the past two decades, Iran had encircled Israel with its proxies as named above. It was, therefore, to be expected that if Israel wanted to eliminate its existential threat, it would have to deal with such proxies and their sponsor, Iran too. This Israel did in the later stages of the war by roping in America, which carried out attacks on its nuclear facilities at Nantaz, Isphahan, Fardow, etc., with its B52 Stealth bombers.

Besides the near-complete destruction of Gaza, Israel has decimated the top Hamas and Hezbollah leadership in pinpointed attacks causing little collateral damage. The top leadership of Hamas and Hezbollah neutralized by Israel included Yahya Sinwar, Hassan Nassarallah, Fatah Sharief, Ali Karouki, Nabil and many others.

President Trump's recent proposal supported by Israel and eight other Islamic/ Arab states has ignited a spark of hope for the early end to the war. The proposal essentially stipulated the return of the 20 living and the remains of dead hostages held by Hamas in exchanges for many Hamas prisoners held by Israel. This was to be done in Phase I of the truce. Prior to this, Israel was to withdraw its troops from Gaza to a pre-designated line, though not vacating from Gaza completely. In phase II, the proposal stipulated the disarming of Hamas cadres and their safe passage outside Gaza and in Phase III, establishing a form of tutelage over Gaza that

promises prosperity crafted by well-meaning international groups as a pathway to peace. One of the biggest gains for Israel till now has been the return of 20 living hostages held by Hamas. However, till 15 October, 2025, Phase I obligations have not been completely carried out by Hamas as it failed to hand over the remains of all 48 Israelis who died in their custody. This, along with some negative statements coming from Hamas have put a dampener on the whole exercise.

Hamas and its supporters feel that Trump's idea of turning Gaza into a coastal business empire with preferred tariff and access rates and a marginal Palestinian role in governance, seems like a demeaning conditionality put on the vanquished by the victorious. Hamas cadres surrendering their arms and leaving Gaza, never to return, would amount to complete surrender, though with one takeaway, i.e., saving their lives. For the rest of the Gazans, it will end their dream of having their own state in near future. It is a moot point whether Hamas or the Palestinians who live there, would accept it.

The celebration that Gazans indulged in after Israeli tanks and troops had withdrawn to the pre-designated line, did not help infuse confidence in the truce holding out. The sloganeering and statements during these celebrations against Israel and Jews, particularly, were toxic to say the least. The protesters invoked Prophet Mohammad's war against Jews in seventh century to claim that it had been victorious in this round of war that began on October 7, 2023, and claimed that Allah will help them to eventually destroy Israel. Under the circumstances, such atmosphere and reaction by Gazans belies any hope of this brief truce holding out for too long and return of peace on permanent basis.

When the truce proposal was mooted by Trump, Hamas had given a conditional acceptance, bringing much delight to Trump, who then claimed that he was responsible for solving an intractable problem and ending another war ! However, Netanyahu knows better and is unlikely to accept the Hamas conditionalities. Having put everything at stake to destroy the last remnants of Hamas in Gaza, Netanyahu knows well enough that he is close to achieving his war objective, viz., destroy Hamas completely.

One thing is sure; after the return of living Israeli hostages held by Hamas, the latter has lost its biggest bargaining asset. If Hamas does not follow through on other points of the proposal, it is bound get destroyed along with the destruction of many more lives and what is still left of its material resources, including its extensive tunneling network. **END**



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KASHMIRI PANDIT MARTYRS

List for October Month

Team Naad pays homage to the martyrs who were brutally killed by Jihadists in Kashmir, leading to the ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Pandits from their homeland. NAAD shall continue to honor these innocent victims of Islamic fundamentalism on a monthly basis.

The list below is not comprehensive. We request community members, along with friends and relatives of the victims, to share additional details of the martyrs so that we can compile a complete record and pay tribute to them.

S No.	Martyr's Name	Location Killing	Date
1	Nila Kanth Ganjoo	Karan Nagar, Srinagar	04-10-1989
2	Sheela Tickoo	Srinagar	31-10-1989
3	Sh. Durga Prasad	...	05-10-1990
4	Sh. D.P. Khazanchi	...	06-10-1990
5	Sh. Jagar Nath	...	07-10-1990
6	Sh. Zind Lal	...	07-10-1990
7	Sh. Jagar Nath Pandita	...	07-10-1990
8	Sh. Poshkar Nath Razdan	...	12-10-1990
9	Smt. Usha Ji	...	14-10-1990
10	Sh. Ausha Koul	...	14-10-1990
11	Dr. Shiban Ji Khirdi	...	14-10-1990
12	Sh. Rajinder Koul	...	14-10-1990
13	Sh. Satish Koul	...	14-10-1990
14	Smt. Neeta Ji	...	14-10-1990
15	Smt. Nancy Koul	...	14-10-1990
16	Sh. Radha Krishen Bhat	...	15-10-1990
17	Sh. Makhan Lal Bhat	...	17-10-1990
18	Sh. Prem Nath Bhat	...	17-10-1990
19	Sh. Poshker Nath	...	18-10-1990
20	Sh. Mohan Lal	...	08-10-1991
21	Sh. Ramesh Kumar	...	09-10-1991
22	Sh. Poshkar Nath	...	12-10-1991
23	Sh. Meheshwar Nath	...	15-10-1991
24	Sh. Sham Lal Pandith	...	15-10-1991
25	Sh. Kanhaya Lal Peshin	...	18-10-1991
26	Sh. Kanaya Lal	...	19-10-1991
27	Sh. Chaman Lal Koul	...	11-10-1992
28	Sh. Soom Nath Raina	...	11-10-1992
29	Sh. Avtar Krishen	...	24-10-1993
30	Ms. Usha Kumari Koul	...	14-10-1990
31	Sh. Ratinder Koul	...	14-10-1990

New Delhi, 24.July'2025

(APEX BODY OF INDIAN & OVERSEAS KASHMIRI PANDIT ORGANISATIONS)

AKS Care Office : B-28, Sarvodaya Extension, GK-1, New Delhi-110049. Mob : 9811143024

Web: www.aiks.org : E-mail: hgaiks@gmail.com

Mr Ashish Sood

24.07.2025

Hon'ble Home Minister

Government of NCT Delhi, 3rd level.

Delhi Sectt. I P Estate, New Delhi -110002.

Subject : Objections and resentment in Kashmiri samaj to the premature release of rapist & murderer of Priyadarshini Mattoo.

Respected Sir,

I am writing this letter on behalf of All India Kashmiri Samaj world over that Delhi Govt should ensure that the murderer and rapist of Priyadarshini Mattoo namely Santosh Kumar Singh, as Sentence Review Board has been asked to reconsider his premature release His pre mature release will create a wrong precedence for such rare rest of rare cases that actually deserve capital punishment

AJKS is a federal organization of community organizations at the State level in India and abroad. Its objective is to address the power corridors' political, economic and social issues. The main focal point of this initiative is to bring to your attention the specific issue of the Kashmiri Pandit Community after its displacement from Kashmir under tragic conditions.

We request Govt through your office to thwart and object to pre mature release of Santosh Kumar singh and urge the govt. to file a supplementary charge sheet to try the accused for capital punishment.

(Ravinder Pandita)
President (AIKS)
Tel: 9811143024

[illegible]

Earlier many other
s o c i o - p o l i t i c a l
organizations also submitted
a similar memorandum to the
minister.

DC Kupwara visits Sharda Temple Loc Teetwal Kashmir

Teetwal Karnah, 9th. August' 2025

Newly posted Deputy Commissioner of Kupwara Shrikant Babasaheb Suse visited Sharda Temple LoC Teetwal Kashmir today. He was received by coordinator Ajaz Khan at the temple and welcomed with a Sharda shawl and citation. The new DC on a first visit to LoC Teetwal during a Tiranga rally there praised the management of the temple and

directed the concerned staff to assist the temple committee in the forthcoming Sharda Divas that falls on 31 August this year. "Save Sharda Committee is also commemorating Guru Teg Bahadur ji's 350th Anniversary of martyrdom also on 1ST Sept at Teetwal" said Ravinder Pandita, Head of Save Sharda Committee Kashmir Regd.

All India Kashmiri Samaj calls on Gajendra Singh Shekhawat Union Minister of Culture - Demand Kashmiri Academy and Museum

New Delhi, 19 August, 2025

A delegation of All India Kashmiri Samaj Regd led by its President Ravinder Pandita called on Union minister of Culture & Tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in New Delhi today. AIKS demanded that a Kashmiri academy be set up on the pattern of Urdu, Sindhi, Punjabi academy in Delhi-NCR to be managed by AIKS with state government to promote Kashmiri language & scripture. A museum depicting Kashmiri Culture, Heritage & Art be also set up.

Besides, Ravinder Pandita, who is also the President of Save Sharda Committee Kashmir regd. requested the minister to give accord to organizing a 2 day 'Sharda Festival' in Delhi in October which shall further be organized in other parts of the country.

The minister assured the delegation that their demands will be looked into. The delegation comprised of AIKS General Secretary Sunil Koul, Kusum Shishoo, Rakesh Thussu, an entrepreneur and Mahaveer Thussu, an activist.



AIKS President Felicitated at LIT Event

Gurgaon, Haryana, 10 September '2025

LIT Bharat 2025 felicitated Ravinder Pandita, president AIKS (All India Kashmiri Samaj) for his outstanding work in fostering peace & harmony in the strife torn valley by his valuable association towards Religious & Border tourism.

On this occasion, Anuradha Das Chief organizer presented a memento to Ravinder Pandita, Chairman of Save Sharda Committee Kashmir Regd in presence of noted WTT actor Jason Shah, who was the Chief guest in a fashion Pageant show held at Crowne Plaza in Gurgaon.

"We look forward to more such events, particularly in border villages of strife torn valley to help depression, drug menace & other such related issues for which LIT (Live in Triumph is working for last 10 years," said Ravinder Pandita



Principal Secretary Home Chandraker Bharti Visits Sharda Temple at LoC Teetwal

LOC Teetwal, 13 September '2025

Principal Secretary Home Govt of J&K Chandraker Bharti visited Sharda Temple at LoC Teetwal Kashmir today. This was the first visit of the Home Secretary to LoC. He was accompanied by his wife, Officials and other police officials. He was received at temple by Coordinator Ajaz Khan and offered prayers at the temple. Chairman of the Save Sharda committee hailed the visit of the Home Secretary. He was greeted with Sharda shawl and was presented with a copy of a book on Sharda authored by Ravinder Pandita on the occasion. Chandraker Bharti hailed the efforts of Save Sharda Committee Kashmir Regd. of re constructing the temple & Gurudwara after 75 years



DSGPC Organizes National Sarv Dharam Sammelan in New Delhi to Commemorate Guru Teg Bahadur Ji's 350th Martyrdom Anniversary

New Delhi, 20th. September'2025

An inter faith conference was held in New Delhi today on occasion of 350th Martyrdom Day of Sri Guru Teg Bahadur ji at ICAR Convention centre Pusa Campus, Pusa Road, New Dehi. The prominent speakers included Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Shri Chidanand Saraswati, Acharya Lokesh ji, Shri Ravinder Pandita, Shri Goswami ji, Sh. Bhikku Sanghsena ji, Haji Syed Salman Chisty ji, Sh. Rabbi Ezeikel Issac ji, Rajyogi Binny Sareen ji, Sh. Anil Joseph ji and Sardar Giani Raghbir Singh ji.

The event was presided over by Guest of Honours S. Manjinder Singh Sirsa, Sh. Kapil Mishra, cabinet ministers of Delhi government.

Ravinder Pandita was the only speaker from J&K to speak on inter faith & Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib and said " We owe a lot to Guru sahib, Saviour of Kashmiri Pandits during Aurangzeb rule"

Sh. Ravinder Pandita President of All India Kashmiri Samaj Regd was also felicitated on the occasion by Delhi Sikh Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee.



AIKS Hails Govt of Delhi Decision on Cash Assistance to Kashmiri Migrants



ALL INDIA KASHMIRI SAMAJ (REGD.)

(APEX BODY OF INDIAN & OVERSEAS KASHMIRI PANDIT ORGANISATIONS)

AIKS Camp Office : B-36, Samavar Premises, GK-1, New Delhi-110048, Mob.: 9811143024

Web: www.aiks.org ; E-mail: hqaiks@gmail.com

PRESS RELEASE

New Delhi
03 October'2025

AIKS hails Govt Of Delhi decision on cash assistance to Kashmiri migrants

All India Kashmiri samaj Regd(AIKS) has thanked Delhi Govt for resolving a 18 month old issue of disbursement of cash assistance to kashmiri migrants on the pattern of J&K Govt. In a press release AIKS thanked CM Smt Rekha Gupta and Cabinet minister Ashish Sood for listening to the woes of displaced community in Delhi-NCR. President of AIKS Ravinder Pandita who had met CM Rekha Gupta and Cabinet minister Ashish Sood in their office in July this year with a detailed memorandum and discussed the income criteria, bifurcation of Adhar and release of AMR. AIKS had demanded that the process of AMR should be on the pattern of J&K govt. guidelines and AMR stopped on this account should be released immediately as KPs in and around Delhi are suffering on this account.

The cabinet decision taken approves removal of all such anomalies and amnesty to Kashmiri migrants receiving Cash assistance in Delhi that has brought relief to about 1800 families of Delhi-NCR.

The meagre sum of Rs. 13,000/- per month for a family of 4 persons should be enhanced to at least 30,000/- PM " Ravinder Pandita President of AIKS has demanded while thanking the present dispensation.

Ravinder Pandita
President
All India Kashmiri Samaj Regd(AIKS)

AIKS affiliated Units at:

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Overseas : U.K. & U.S.A.

Chief Secretary J&K Atal Dulloo Visits Sharda Temple at LoC Teetwal



Chief Secretary Sh. Atal Dulloo visited Sharda Temple at LoC Teetwal Kashmir today. This was the first visit of the present Chief Secretary to LoC. He was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Kupwara Shrikant Suse, SSP Kupwara Gulam Geelani and other officials. He was received at temple by Sharda Committee coordinator Ajaz Khan. The Chief Secretary, accompanied by his wife, offered prayers at the

temple. Chairman of Save Sharda committee Ravinder Pandita, hailed the visit of Chief Secretary. "I thank Atal Dulloo ji for appreciating our efforts" Pandita said. The Chief Secretary was greeted with Sharda shawl and was presented a copy of a book on Sharda authored by Ravinder Pandita on the occasion by Ajaz Khan. Ajaz Khan requested the Chief secretary for Yatri Niwas and other amenities.

Suresh Gupta Principal Chief Conservator of Forests J&K Govt Visits Sharda Temple LoC Teetwal Kashmir

Teetwal Kashmir, 4 Oct'2025

Suresh Kumar Gupta, PCCF, Govt of J&K visited Sharda temple LoC Teetwal Kashmir today. He was accompanied by his wife and top officials of the forest department.

He was earlier Secretary Dept. of culture and had known much about this historical site, that was reclaimed, rebuilt and inaugurated in 2023. He was received and briefed by coordinator Ajaz Khan and performed puja in the temple. He lauded efforts of Save Sharda Committee Kashmir Regd in rebuilding the temple & gurudwara that has boosted religious & border tourism. Save Sharda Committee's founder Ravinder Pandita spoke on phone with Suresh Gupta ji and thanked him for hailing efforts of the committee. He was presented with a Sharda shawl and a book on Sharda authored by Ravinder Pandita.



All India Kashmiri Samaj calls on Kapil Mishra Cabinet Minister of Culture - Demand Kashmiri Academy and Museum



New Delhi, 07 October, 2025

A delegation of All India Kashmiri Samaj Regd led by its President Ravinder Pandita called on Kapil Mishra Cabinet minister in Govt of Delhi in Tourism, Law & Justice, Art & Culture in New Delhi. AIKS demanded that a Kashmiri academy be set up on the pattern of Urdu, Sindhi, Punjabi academy in Delhi-NCR to be managed by AIKS with state government to promote Kashmiri language & scripture. A museum depicting Kashmiri Culture, Heritage & Art be also set up.

Besides, Ravinder Pandita, who is also the President of Save Sharda Committee Kashmir regd. requested the minister to give

accord to organizing a 2 day 'Sharda Festival' in Delhi in October which shall further be organized in other parts of the country. On this occasion Ravinder Pandita presented his authored book on Sharda to the minister and requested him to visit the historical Sharda Temple at LoC Teetwal Kashmir. The minister agreed to his visit alongwith S. Manjinder Singh Sirsa, another cabinet minister in Delhi cabinet.

The minister assured the delegation that their demands will be looked into. The delegation comprised of AIKS Vice President Rajinder Premi, Jt. General Secretary Ashish Zutshi and Kusum Shishoo, an activist.



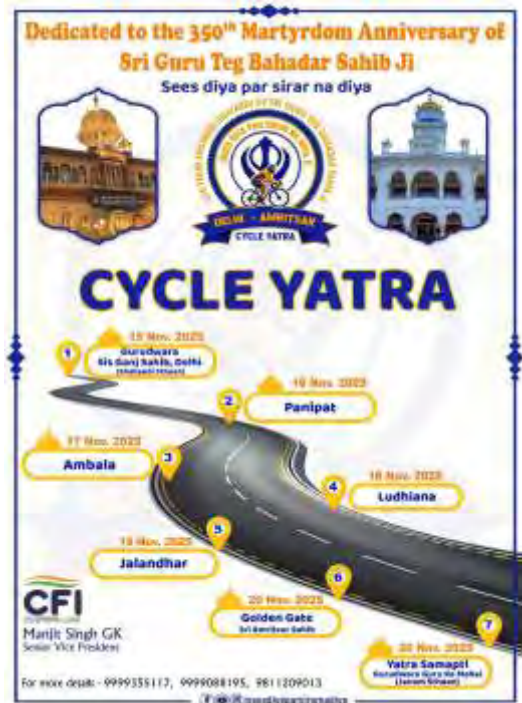
KPs to take part in Cycling event of 350th Martyrdom Anniversary of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji

New Delhi, 17 October, 2025

Cycling federation of India is organizing a religious yatra from 15 November onward to mark the 350th Martyrdom anniversary of Guru Teg Bahadur ji. Kashmiri Pandits will also take part in this event which is a part of martyrdom anniversary being observed this year throughout globe.

In a press conference held in Constitution Club New Delhi, Senior Vice President of Cycling federation of India said that this cycle tour will start from Gurudwara sis Ganj in Delhi on 15 Nov and will culminate on 20 Nov at Gurudwara Guru Ka mahal near Amritsar and will raise awareness about the supreme sacrifice of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji.

Speaking to press, President of All India Kashmiri Samaj Regd. (AIKS) Ravinder Pandita said that We owe a lot to Guru Teg Bahadur ji and in this regard the celebrations were kick started from Guru Teg Bahadur Gurudwara at LoC Teetwal on 1 Sept. This gurudwara was rebuilt and dedicated to Guru Teg Bahadur in 2023 after the same was burnt in 1947 during tribal raids called Pak proxy war. This gurudwara and Sharda temple has been built on same land where these existed prior to partition at Teelwal, the tip of north



India right on LoC. Issuing a whip to its affiliates of Ambala, Ludhiana and Amritsar, AIKS president has asked Kashmiri pandits to receive the yatra and be a part of larger celebrations of 350th martyrdom anniversary of Guru Teg Bahadur ji.



Vivek Tankha MP grants 10 lacs to Kashmiri Pandits for Culture & Heritage Centre



New Delhi, 20 October, 2025

Vivek Tankha, the only Kashmiri origin MP Rajya Sabha has given 10 lac from MPLAD to Kashmiri pandits for setting up Cultural centre in New Delhi. In a Diwali Milan function held at Samavar, Pamposh Enclave he presented the letter to KECSS head Padam Shri Rameshwar Bamzei in presence of many distinguished Kashmiri

Pandits. Earlier AIKS president, Ravinder Pandita had raised this demand privately with Vivek Tankha, a Kashmiri Pandit MP who had agreed and the it was decided to grant the amount to KECSS who own a space in Pamposh Enclave New Delhi and this grant will be used for setting up a museum and library. AIKS president has thanked Sh. Vivek Tankha for this gesture towards the community.

Diwali Celebrated at Sharda Temple LoC Teetwal Kashmir



LoC Teetwal, 21 October, 2025

Candles & Diya lighting marked Diwali celebrations at the Sharda Yatra temple & Guru Teg Bahadur Gurudwara, at LoC Teetwal in Kashmir. Kashmiri Pandits, locals alongwith army jawans participated and lit oil lamps & candles to celebrate Diwali and distributed sweets. Led by Coordinator Ajaz Khan, it was as historical as Diwali in Ayodhya. In a statement Ravinder Pandita conveyed Diwali greetings to all Sharda followers across globe.

Save Sharda Committee has taken the lead of reconstruction of the temple and Sikh Gurudwara after reclaiming the same in 2021 year. Prior to tribal raids in 1947, Dharmshala and a Sikh gurudwara used to exist in the same plot that was burnt down in the raids. The Save Sharda committee has re-constructed the Sharda temple and Sikh Gurudwara, in last village of India and tip of North, right on LoC.

Ravinder Pandita
(President AIKS)
Tel: 9811143024



PNBMT holds Meeting with Temple Committees

Prem Nath Bhat Memorial Trust (PNBM) organised a meeting of the heads of various temple committees of Kashmir at Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra (SSK), Bohri in Jammu on September 24 2025.

The meeting was to review the progress on the temple land data forms initiative, monitor records concerning temple properties in Kashmir, and deliberate on other developmental issues related to the management and preservation of temples.

Sundri Lal Koul, secretary of PNBMT, presented a comprehensive overview of the prevailing socio-political situation and its impact on the community's efforts to safeguard temples and shrines.

The meeting was presided over by Moti Lal Malla, a senior community leader, who, in his presidential address, called upon the members to remain steadfast in their commitment and continue the struggle with patience and dedication.

Leaders of various temple committees actively participated in the deliberations, putting forward valuable proposals to expedite the passage of the Temples and Shrines Bill.

The meeting concluded with a unanimous resolve to intensify community efforts to protect, preserve, and restore temples and shrines in Kashmir, and to persist in advocating for the passage of the Temples and Shrines Bill.

Relief Commissioner

(Migrants) Visits Jagti Migrant Township

Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (M), J&K, Dr Arvind Karwani, on September 24 2025, visited the Jagti Migrant Township, Jammu, to review the pace

of ongoing developmental and welfare works.

During the visit, Dr Karwani inspected the progress of construction activities across various camps and noted the long-pending demand of residents for adequate water supply. He was informed that work on borewells has already commenced, bringing much-needed relief to the inmates.

The Commissioner also visited Higher Secondary School, Jagti, where he reviewed ongoing developmental works and actively participated in Swachhata Pakhwara activities, reaffirming the department's commitment to cleanliness and community welfare.

Dr Karwani asked the concerned officers for detailed feedback on the status of projects and impressed upon them to ensure the timely completion of works within the specified time frame.

One of the major highlights of the visit was the distribution of NFSA ration cards among the migrant families.

Besides this, an awareness camp was also organised in collaboration with the Social Welfare Department to raise awareness of various social welfare schemes and to inform and enable migrant families to avail themselves of these programmes.

Later, a public grievance redressal camp was held under the chairmanship of Dr Karwani at the Community Hall, Jagti.

Interacting with the people on the occasion, Dr Karwani assured them that all genuine demands and issues would be taken up on priority and reiterated the Government's commitment to the welfare of the migrant community.

KPS Shows Unhappiness Over the Government's Apathy Towards the Community

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Kashmiri Pandit Sabha (KPS) Jammu was held on September 25 2025, in Jammu to discuss government apathy towards the KP community. The meeting was chaired by the president, K. K. Khosa.

The members expressed their unhappiness that the elected Government was not addressing the urgent issues, even after being in office for more than 10 months. The members recalled that the Omar Abdullah-led NC Government had promised to address all problems urgently, as they considered the community an integral part of the Kashmir milieu.

The members expressed their concern that the community had been let down and completely marginalised by both the Centre and the UT Government.

The Sabha appealed to the Government to pass legislation/resolution in the forthcoming session of the UT Assembly regarding the long-pending issues to restore the Trust of Kashmiri Pandits in the Government.

Col Tej Tickoo, Former President of AIKS, was Presented with the PNBMT Amateur Journalist Award

On September 27 2025, Col (retd) Tej Tickoo, former president of AIKS, was conferred this year's Pt Prem Nath Bhat

Amateur Journalist Award at an impressive function held at the Writers Club, Jammu. The other recipient of the award was Chander Mohan Bhat.

The award was presented to the duo in recognition of their outstanding contribution to journalism, society, and the Kashmiri cause. The awardees were honoured with citations, shawls, and mementoes.

The citation read at the function described Col. Tikoo, a war veteran and prolific writer and columnist.

Chandar Mohan Bhat, former Assistant Director, Postal Service of India, is a renowned author/ columnist and writer.

The citation of Chander Mohan Bhat was read by Kuldeep Raina, senior member of the Trust, while the citation of Col. Tej Tikoo was presented by Sundri Lal Koul, secretary of the Trust.

Col Tej Tickoo also spoke on the occasion and stressed the need to take the struggle launched by the community for the passage of the Shrines and Temples Bill to a logical conclusion. Ramesh Marhata anchored the programme.

The award underlines PNBMT's vision and mission in carrying forward the rich legacy of the late Pt. Prem Nath Bhat continues to inspire generations with his courage, intellect, and commitment to the Kashmiri cause.

Harmony India Awards BL Zutshi and Other Prominent People for their Remarkable Work

In Jammu on October 4 2025, the Harmony Cultural Foundation hosted the 11th Edition of the Harmony India Awards, along with the inaugural edition of its much-anticipated musical series, Saaz-o-Sukhan, at Abhinav Theatre.

Chief Commissioner of Income Tax, Mrs Nirupama Kotru, and others, including the Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner, Arvind Karwani, graced the event.

The inaugural performances marked the





debut of young singers Pranav Pandita and Gandharva, who mesmerised the audience with their melodious voices. The musical segment featuring performances by Saurabh Zadoo and Dr Deepali Wattal was appealing.

The talented artists of Jammu & Kashmir who have left us were remembered.

The 2025 awardees, besides Prof B L Zutshi, included Vijay Dhar, Prof. Amitabh Mattoo, Romalo Ram, Dr Deepali Wattal, Khalid Hussain, Brij Nath Pandit Betab, Ramesh Hangloo, Kaka Ji Safaya, Dr Milan Sharma, B. L. Kaul Deep, Pradeep Dutta, Ashma Koul, Rakesh Anand, Dr Sushil Wattal, Pintoo Ji Pandita, and Anil Koul Chingari.

Relief Commissioner, Migrants Reviews Development Works in Migrant Camps

On October 15 2025, Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (M) J&K, Dr Arvind Karwani, chaired a meeting with officers of line departments to review the ongoing development works in the migrant camps and to take stock of the day-to-day issues faced by the migrants.

Deputy Commissioner (Relief) Vijay Kumar Sharma, Chief Accounts Officer Shiwani Bhan, Assistant Commissioner (Relief) Kailash Devi, Assistant Commissioner (Relief) Sanjeev Kumar, and the officers from different Government departments and the Relief Organisation attended the meeting.

Damages due to recent incessant rains, ongoing development works, and works in

the pipeline were reviewed at the meeting. The Relief Commissioner emphasized on the importance of adhering to the directions issued by the General Administration Department, wherein responsibilities of Transit Migrant Camps at Jammu and Kashmir have been assigned to the Government Departments with the directions to nominate an officer, not below the rank of Executive Engineer for liaising /coordinating the execution/maintenance of works/projects about their department with the Relief Organization (M).

It was informed in the meeting that the construction of four bore wells in the Mini Township Jagti in the Camp Nagrota shall be completed by mid-November.

The other works in the pipeline are the installation of 150 street lights, the fencing work, and the clearance of all transformers in the camp areas. The meeting was informed that the construction of the Rs 6.5 Cr Multi-Purpose Community Hall is in full swing and shall be completed by March next year.

Deputy Commissioner Relief and Assistant Commissioners Relief were asked to ensure weekly visits to the camps assigned as per the duty roster and to take stock of all development works/ problems faced by migrants, including grievances related to immovable properties in the Kashmir Valley.

*Source : News Agencies
Editing : Vijay Kashkari*

Prize Distribution for 4th Online Essay Contest

(Valley Awardees, Sheikhpora)



A well-attended and lively event was held at KP Colony, Sheikhpora, to felicitate the Valley Awardees of the 4th Online Essay Contest 2024–25, along with winners of the Offline “On the Spot” Contest.

Chief Education Officer, Ganderbal, Sh. Oneel Kumar Bhat, presided over the function and congratulated all awardees for their achievements. He also appreciated the colony's cultural team for presenting a delightful cultural programme that received great applause.

In the online category, Aakanksha Sharma (Shemford Futuristic School, Wanpoh – KP Colony Vessu) and Mihit Safaya (Air Force School, Budgam – Sheikhpora) stood 2nd in the Senior and Junior English sections.

In the Offline “On the Spot” Contest, Ridhi Safaya, Chitesh Bhat, and Drishti Mattoo secured the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd positions, while Pahal Pandita, Taaisha Suri, Anaikait Dutt, Kahn Bhat, Arshia Misri, Mihit Safaya, Manas Bhat, Mannat Hali, and Keitan Bhat received consolation prizes.

Sh. Sunil Bhat, President of the colony, pledged to send the maximum participants for the 5th Online Essay Contest 2025–26, aiming for the Best Valley-Based KP Colony Trophy. Sh. Tej Krishen, senior-most veteran of the colony, assured full cooperation.

Dr. Ramesh Razdan from Team ESSAY thanked Sh. Neeraj Raina for guiding children in cultural activities and Gita classes, and urged families to encourage participation in Topic No. 5 – “Ideal Kashmiri Hindu Family”, linked with the Parivaar Rattan Award”, carrying cash prizes of ₹5000, ₹3000, and ₹2000 for the top three positions respectively.

Prizes were also presented to Bhaavya Bhat (St. Xavier's, Gurugram), Nirvaan Pandita, and Abhyank Handoo (Faridabad). Appreciation was extended to Sanjay Safaya of Sheikhpora for his efforts.

Team ESSAY announced that the Jammu award ceremony and Sunday online sessions with topic specialists will commence in October.

*Report By
Ramesh Razdan*

Jammu, among the two Cities in India that host IIT, IIM & AIMS

Jammu and Guwahati are the only two cities in India that currently host an IIT (Indian Institute of Technology), an IIM (Indian Institute of Management), and an AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Sciences). The presence of these institutions positions Jammu as a significant educational and innovation hub within the country.

IIT Jammu

The Indian Institute of Technology Jammu (IIT Jammu or IITJMU) is a public research university. The university was established in 2016, when a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Department of Higher Education, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, and the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India. The IIT campus is located in the village of Jagti, in Nagrota Tehsil, Jammu district.

Batches admitted to B.Tech. Programme in 2019 and onward, follow the IIT Jammu curriculum. The curriculum is designed in line with India's New Education Policy. In the first year, students are taught basic sciences and engineering. In addition, non-graded courses on language, professional ethics & social responsibility, and introduction to engineering are also included. The Institute follows a credit system, and the performance in a course is continuously evaluated. A relative grading system is followed for first-year students, and in subsequent years, it is determined solely by the Institute's academic and course coordinators.

The programmes followed at the UG level are Chemical Engineering, Mathematics and Computing, Civil Engineering, Computer Science and Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Materials Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering. In PG level, the

students are admitted in Computer Science and Engineering with specialization in Data Science and Information Security, Electrical Engineering with specialization in Communications and Signal Processing, Civil Engineering with specialization in Tunnel Engineering, Thermal Engineering - Combined course from Mechanical & Chemical Engineering Department, Computer Technology (RA) - Combined course from CSE & Electrical department. According to the NIRF (National Institutional Ranking Framework) Engineering College rankings in 2024, IIT Jammu was ranked 62nd in the 'Engineering' category. In 2025, the NIRF ranking placed the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Jammu at 56 in the Engineering category, up from 62 in 2024. It was 67 in 2023.

To be eligible for the B.Tech program at IIT Jammu, you must pass Class 12 with Physics, Chemistry, and Mathematics as compulsory subjects, achieving a minimum aggregate of 75% or being within the top 20th percentile of your Class 12 board examination. You must also qualify for JEE Main and then secure a good rank in JEE Advanced.

IIM Jammu

The Indian Institute of Management Jammu (IIM-Jammu or IIM-J) is a public, autonomous business school located in Jagti Nagrota, Jammu. It is the youngest Indian Institute of Management. IIM Jammu is currently (DBA) in Management as per the Indian Institutes of Management Act 2017. DBA means Doctor of Business Administration.

IIM Jammu currently offers Master of Business Administration (MBA), Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) in Management, Executive Education programme, and Faculty Development Programme. In 2021, IIM Jammu inaugurated its first IPM batch for students after class 12th.

- ❖ IIM Jammu admission criteria vary by program.
- ❖ For the MBA (Postgraduate Program - PGP), the candidate

Should have a bachelor's degree from a recognized university with a minimum of 50% aggregate marks. Candidates must have a valid CAT score. Selection is based on CAT score, personal interview (PI), and academic profile.

For the Integrated Program in Management (IPM), candidates must have completed 10+2 (or equivalent) with a 60% aggregate. Admission is based on JIPMAT scores. A merit list is prepared based on JIPMAT scores, academic profile, and available seats.

For MBA (HA&HM) (Health and Hospital Management), candidates must have a bachelor's degree with a minimum aggregate of 50%. A valid GMAT score is required. Shortlisting is based on a GMAT score of 650 and above.

For the Executive MBA (EMBA), the eligibility requirement is a bachelor's degree with 50% marks. Relevant test scores in CAT/GMAT/GRE are required. Work experience is mandatory for admission.

For IIM Jammu 2025 admissions, General male candidates need a CAT percentile of 90-91, while General female candidates need a percentile of 89-90. However, these are overall cutoffs for the Personal Interview (PI) round and may vary by category. A good CAT score also depends on achieving specific scores in the Verbal, Reading Comprehension, Data Interpretation, Logical Reasoning, and Quantitative Ability sections, with particular requirements for each category.

AIIMS Jammu

AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Sciences) Jammu is a public medical research university and hospital in Vijaypur, Samba district, in the Jammu division. The Institute is located 22.2 km from the Jammu airport and 24.4 km from Jammu railway station. On November 7, AIIMS Jammu was envisaged by the Government of India under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY). Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the Institute on March 3 and inaugurated it on February 20, 20

The Institute became operational with the first batch of 50 MBBS students. It became operational in the academic year 2020-21. The seating capacity was further increased with an intake of 62 MBBS students in the academic year 2021-22. From 2025-26, one hundred (100) seats are available for Indian Nationals for admission to the MBBS course. The Institute follows the Government of India's reservation policy, including 5% reservation for Persons with Benchmark Disability.

For seeking admission, the candidate must be a citizen of India. The candidate should be at least 17 years old as of December 31, the year of admission. The candidate must have passed the 10+2 or Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (CBSE) or Intermediate Science (I.Sc.) or an equivalent Examination of a recognized university/ Board of any Indian State with English, Physics, Chemistry and Biology as main subjects. The candidates who have passed 10+2 level with Biology as an additional subject will also be eligible for the MBBS Entrance Examination (as per Hon'ble High Court Order No.2341/-W/DHC/ WRITS/D-1/2019 dated 24/09/2019 in the Writ Petition (C) No. 6773/2019) Page 5 of 22 AIIMS Vijayapura, Jammu prospectus MBBS COURSE (MD/MS/MDS). The candidate should have secured a minimum of 60% marks in aggregate in the qualifying examination for the General categories. Admission is based on the rank obtained in NEET UG, with seats allocated through the Medical Counselling Committee (MCC). Eligible candidates are allocated seats in AIIMS Jammu through a centralized counselling process conducted by the MCC. Admission to MD, MS, and MDS courses at AIIMS Jammu is based on the INI CET (Institute of National Importance Combined Entrance Test) score. To secure admission to the MBBS program at AIIMS Jammu, candidates must have a valid NEET UG score, with expected cutoffs for the General category ranging from 695+ to 700+.

Scholarship

SBI Platinum Jubilee Asha Scholarship 2025-26

The SBI Platinum Jubilee Asha Scholarship 2025-SBI Foundation initiates 26. The scholarship is designed to empower meritorious students from economically weaker

backgrounds. The scholarship is offered under the following categories:

- School Students
- Undergraduate Students
- Postgraduate Students
- Medical Students
- IIT Students
- IIM Students
- Overseas Students

Awards range from Rs 15,000 to up to Rs 20 lakh, depending on the course and level of study. Renewal is subject to students maintaining minimum eligibility criteria each year.

To be eligible, students must have scored 75% marks or 7 CGPA in the previous academic year, with a family income limit of Rs 3 Lakh Per Annum for the school category and Rs 6 LPA for all other categories.

- Deadline: November 15 at www.sbiashascholarship.co.in

SU Launches Special Admission, Scholarship for Migrant Students

On September 10, 2022, 10ania University, located in Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan (SU), announced a special plan to provide higher education opportunities for migrant students and economically weaker communities in Jammu and Kashmir.

In this regard, a delegation from SU, led by Pro President & CFO Sunil Kumar Sobti and Neha Tyagi from Jhunjhunu (Rajasthan), met with Arvind Karwani, Relief Commissioner (Migrants), to discuss the program.

The initiative aims to support students residing in migrant camps at Jagti, Nagrota, Purkhoo, Muthi, Mishriwala and border migrant families, including Kashmiri Pandit children still living in the Valley.

The details of the financial support as revealed, students securing 85% and above in qualifying exams will get 100% scholarship plus monthly stipend of Rs 2100, students scoring 75-84% to get 50% scholarship plus stipend of Rs 1100, students scoring below 75% will get special fee concessions and scholarships based on achievements in sports and other fields and all female candidates will get flat 35% tuition fee concession.

Admissions will be open for programs including B.Tech and Diploma courses in

Engineering (AI, Civil, Mechanical, Electrical, Mining), B.A. LL.B (Hons.) recognised by the Bar Council of India, Diploma in Architectural Assistance recognised by the Council of Architecture and over 100 other academic courses.

For more details about the admission process, students can visit the official website: <https://singhaniauniversity.ac.in>.

Four Indian institutes in top 500, IISc sees rise in Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2026

The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore has risen to the 201-250 rank band in the latest Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2026, retaining its position as the top Indian university. Among India's ranked institutions, IISc is the only university to secure a spot in the top 250.

In The World University Rankings 2026, Chennai-based Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences is ranked 351-400. Last year, it was in the 401-500 band.

While Jamia Millia Islamia (Delhi) and Shoolini University of Biotechnology and Management Sciences (Bajhol, Himachal Pradesh) have been ranked among the 401-500 category, Banaras Hindu University, Indian Institute of Technology Indore, KIIT University (Bhubaneswar), Lovely Professional University (Phagwara, Punjab), Mahatma Gandhi University (Kottayam, Kerala), and UPES (Dehradun) are ranked 501-600.

In the 601-800 belt, over 15 Indian institutes have got positions – Aligarh Muslim University, Amity University (Noida), Bharathiar University (Coimbatore), Central University of Punjab (Bhatinda), Chitkara University (Chandigarh), Graphic Era University (Dehradun), IIT Patna, IIIT Hyderabad, Malaviya National Institute of Technology (Jaipur), Manipal Academy of Higher Education, NIT Rourkela, Panjab University (Chandigarh), Sharda University (Greater Noida), Symbiosis International University (Pune), Thapar Institute of Engineering Technology (Patiala), University of Delhi, and VIT University (Vellore).

Feedback: vijaykashkari@gmail.com



AIKS Matrimonial Service



Looking for a suitable match for our younger Son. Masters in Engineering, presently employed with leading Indian Auto Multinational as Asst Manager International Operations @ Chennai. Date of Birth: 07/06/1996, Time of Birth: 2.57am, Place of Birth: Noida. Family based at Noida. Pls respond on shahnshah108@gmail.com / 9910076101



Seeking alliance for my daughter. DOB: 8-06-1994, Time: 15:45(PM) in Chandigarh, Height: 5.1" Qualification: B.Sc in Microbiology from Punjab University Chandigarh. MBA in Marketing, Diploma in Computers applications. Working as Product Manager in Torrent Pharma one of the leading Pharma Company in Ahmedabad. Valley Address: Nai Sarak, Srinagar. Present Address: Ahmedabad/Chandigarh. Please contact on WhatsApp 9417687460 for Takini and Biodata.



We are looking for a suitable match for our son born on 09th June 1995 at 9:30 am at Dehradun. Qualification: B.Tech in E&I from Amrita School of Engineering, Coimbatore, TN, India. MS from Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts, USA. Working in an e-commerce company in Boston. Ht. 180 cms. Parents: Father retired from ONGC as GM & Mother retired as Gazetted Officer from Central Government department are settled in Dehradun & Chennai. Sister working in Microsoft is married and settled in USA. Preferences: US based girl & ht. 5.6 feet or above. Interested family may contact on +919445005028, +919840345098 kamalzutshi60@gmail.com.



Seeking alliance for our daughter DOB October 1999, born in Jammu. Height 5'-8". Qualification: - BA in Mass Communication (Journalism), diploma in International Humanitarian Law, Post Graduation in Rural Development (result awaited). Working as partnership manager in Edu. Tech Company at Hyderabad. Valley Address: - Safa Kadal, Srinagar, Present Address: - Talab Tiloo, Jammu. If interested please contact or WhatsApp Tekni & Kalawali on 9796220711, 8899284050.



Seeking Suitable Alliance for my Daughter, DoB-21.02.1996, ToB - 10.40 AM, Place of Birth - Jammu, Height - 5'4" (165 cm), Prof. Qualification - MBBS from Manipal College of Medical Science, Pursuing DNB Anesthesiology at Medanta Hospital. Family Background: - Father running own Business M/s Imperial Pack Masterz (www.ipmasterz.com), Mother in a Government service, Sister MBBS Graduate. Valley address-Rainawari, Srinagar, Kashmir, Home address - Jasola Vihar, New Delhi. Preference-Co-profession/ Civil Servant, Mobile / WhatsApp Number - 9818879945 Email Id- vakilrajinder@gmail.com/ vakil@ipmasterz.com



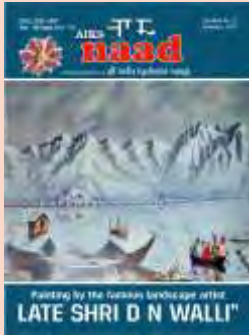
Seeking Alliance for my Son Date of birth:-19-12-1990, Time of birth:-9.25 pm, Place of birth:-Jammu, Height:-5'10", Qualification:-B.tech(EEE) from MDU Rohtak. Job Discription:- Marketing Director VaYu (Vivekanadayoga university), Work from home/ anywhere. Previously worked as Marketing Manager, Sewa International (USA) Delhi. Permanent address (Valley) Proper Budgam-Town. Present Address:-Durganagar Jammu, Email:-Chandkishankoul@gmail.com, MobileNo:-8899511408, Whatsapp:-8717071706



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2. Subscriptions can also be remitted directly online to the following
A/C Punjab National Bank : A/c No. 0151000100442202
A/c Name : All India Kashmiri Samaj IFSC Code : PUNB0015100 MICR Code : 110024094

Note : After making the payment through Internet the subscriber must send intimation to AIKS on
Email-Id: hqaiks@gmail.com or Mob No. 92119 64133 through WhatsApp/SMS/Sending snapshot of the payment receipt.

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Application Form for Patron/Life Member
All India Kashmiri Samaj (REGD.)

AIKS Camp office at Samavar Club, Pamposh Enclave New Delhi
Web : www.aiks.org E-mail : hqaiks@gmail.com

Application No. :

Date :

The President

All India Kashmir Samaj

AIKS Camp office at Samavar Club,
Pamposh Enclave New Delhi

Dear Sir,

I hereby apply for Patron/Life membership of the All India Kashmiri Samaj.

My Particulars are as under :

Name (In full) :

Date of Birth : **Father's/Husband's Name :**

Address :

.....

.....

..... **Pin :**

Tel : (Res.) : **Office :**

Mobile : **Email :**

I have studied the AIKS Constitution and agree to abide by the policies and programmes of the AIKS.

With best wishes
Yours Sincerely

Signature

A cheque of Rs. 10,000/- for Patron Member and Rs. 5,000/- for Life Member favouring All India Kashmiri Samaj is enclosed here with.

Cheque No. : **Drawn on (Bank) :**

Amount : **Date :**

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