

AIKS naad

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19th January

Kashmiri Hindu Exodus Day

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Editorial

Remembering the Exodus

AN UNFINISHED QUEST FOR JUSTICE

In times of universal deceit, telling the truth is a revolutionary act.

— GEORGE ORWELL

Every January revives a painful memory for the Kashmiri Pandit community the memory of violence, terror, and targeted killings that forced an ancient civilization into exile. Thirty-six years have passed, yet grief persists, justice remains elusive, and questions continue to haunt a displaced people.

The exodus of the early 1990s was neither accidental nor spontaneous. It was the forced displacement of a living civilization, executed through fear, intimidation, and selective assassinations. Silence was weaponised, and terror normalised. Kashmiri Pandits, the aborigines and custodians of the Himalayan Sanskrit and Shaivite tradition were compelled to abandon their homes, temples, and centuries old legacy.

Overnight, an integral part of Kashmir's cultural and spiritual fabric was erased from the Valley. Calls from religious pulpits ensured the flight of the minority community, turning coexistence into fear. What followed was not merely loss of land, but loss of dignity. Refugee camps, cramped tenements, and uncertain futures defined life in exile. Elders carried memories of dispossession, children inherited trauma, and the youth grew up questioning their identity and abandonment.

Today, the tragedy risks being reduced to

symbolism and rhetoric. But for the community, the exodus is a lived reality preserved in memory, language, culture, and the unbroken hope of return, not as visitors, but as rightful inheritors.

This prolonged injustice reflects a monumental failure of the State. Successive governments avoided naming the crime for what it was a genocide. Political convenience replaced moral responsibility. Accountability was deferred, perpetrators went unpunished, and exile was quietly normalised.

Remembrance without responsibility is hollow. Justice delayed is justice denied. A secure and dignified return, acknowledgment of wrongdoing, and preservation of cultural heritage are not acts of charity they are constitutional obligations.

The Kashmiri Pandit exodus is not history alone; it is an unfinished indictment. Until truth is acknowledged and justice delivered, the wound will remain open echoing in memory, conscience, and the soul of Bharat.

“A people who lose their memory lose their future.”

— Milan Kundera

भनील मैन गणक



From the *President's* *Desk*

Respected All

Namaskar to All AIKS family,

At the dawn of this new Gregorian calendar year, the community enters 37th year of exile. No blue print, no road ahead, community is on crossroads. A memorandum after memorandum every year goes unnoticed and unattended. In this context Community and its organizations will have to put their heads together for a Common minimum Programme (CMP) with short term and long term goals. Martyrs need to be honored and in this context AIKS is working with Department of Culture Govt. of India for setting up a museum and martyr memorial. A communiqué from Ministry of Culture to President AIKS, has asked us to furnish the requisite documents under guidelines of the Museum grant scheme. We have to come together on the issue of identity front so far as Census 2026 is concerned. As we met Registrar General Census with a plea to count us as a 'Distinct identity' many pertinent points came up. Our delegation was made to convince that we will have to identify ourselves as 'Migrants' or "displaced" under the caste sub head in 2026 census that will be taken up in April next year. Our primary objective is to get our population census correct so that even if Central & State govt too wants to go for our return & rehabilitation process, our count should reflect a correct figure..Our community is facing crisis on preservation and promotion of culture, heritage and language. All prominent KP organizations will have to deliberate on this burning issue.

The first AGM of current AIKS team highlights the report card of its activities done successfully but lot needs to be done as we enter 2nd year of term. Another extraordinary Executive committee meeting was held on 10 January to prepare for some constitutional

amendments to review affiliates position & status, as well as ways to seek more memberships at a lesser fee from Valley community members.

AIKS team is also pursuing Dy.CEO of Noida authority as CMs secretariat has pushed a letter to Noida Authority for allotment of land for AIKS. Hopes are high but the rules are stringent regarding payment on basic price and quantum of land.

So far as demand of setting up of Kashmiri academy by Delhi Government on the lines of Punjabi, Sindhi, Urdu academy in Delhi is concerned we have done a couple of follow up meetings with concerned officers and minister as well. The academy will be kept in next budget of Delhi as assured by the minister himself.. We need to create a museum and Martyr memorial.

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. I have vouched for a core group of AIKS with introduction of experienced activists. Jammu members have to play a pivotal role in this regard.

The near future events particularly International mother Tongue Day are on anvil. A couple of meetings with department of Culture for 2 day Sharda festival is to be geared up. AIKS trust that has the foundation rudiments of assisting AIKS while in financial crunch needs to be stressed.

At the end, may the new year 2026 usher in a new dawn for prosperity of the community and I wish all community members a 'A happy new year 2026', once again.

May Sharda Mata bless us all !!

Er. RAVINDER PANDITA
Tel : 9811143024



 Sunil Kaul



General Secretary's Column



The key highlight of the month was the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the apex organization, AIKS. The AGM coincided with a historic milestone as AIKS completed 45 years of dedicated service to the Kashmiri Pandit community. AIKS remains the only organization with such a long and uninterrupted legacy, consistently upholding its Constitution, democratic values, and principles through changing times.

Guided by transparency, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to community welfare, AIKS has fostered strong leadership across generations, ensuring institutional continuity and credibility. To honour the contributions of its stalwart leaders, a Presidential Wall showcasing photographs and tenures of all past Presidents was unveiled and widely appreciated by the participants. As a commemorative gesture marking 45 glorious years, a 2026 Annual Diary was presented to all attending members as a souvenir.

AIKS AGM REPORT



The All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) held its Annual General Council Meeting (AGM) on 28th December 2025 at Samavar Banquet Hall GK-1 New Delhi. The meeting was initially adjourned due to the lack of quorum. However, the quorum was subsequently achieved, with the hall fully packed by affiliate heads and representatives. The event was attended by Institutional, Patron, and Life Members, along with several distinguished guests.

Meeting Highlights:

- ❖ **Tribute :** The meeting began with a two-minute silence for community members who attained nirvana.
- ❖ **President's Address:** Mr. Pandita presented a report card on AIKS' activities, highlighting challenges faced by the organization and the Kashmiri Pandit community.
- ❖ **Key Issues:** Growing alienation, official apathy, and financial difficulties faced by AIKS were discussed.
- ❖ **Notable Attendees:** Shri. Ravinder Pandita, Shri. Sunil Kaul, Shri Arun Shalia, Shri R. N. K. Bamezai, Shri Sudhir Shah, Shri M. K. Pajan, Shri Vijay Kashkari, Shri Aryan Ramesh, Shri Ashish Zutshi, Shri Sunil Raina Rajanaka, Shri Ashutosh Taploo, Shri Sanjay Sapru, Shri Shrawan Pandita, Smt. Kusum Shishu, Shri Vinod Trisal, Shri H. L. Wangnoo, Shri I. K. Pandit, Shri Ashok

Manvati, Dr. Etee Bahadur, Smt. Manorama Bakshi, Shri C. L. Bhat, Shri M. K. Raina, Shri Chintan Kaul, Shri A. K. Kaul, Shri Ramesh Kitchloo, Shri Ajay Thussu, and Shri Vikram Dhar.

The meeting explored strategies to address these challenges and revitalize the community's socio-cultural and political presence in Kashmir.

General Secretary's Report

General Secretary, presented a comprehensive report on AIKS' activities, highlighting key initiatives and achievements. The meeting approved the previous AGM minutes and audited financials for 2024-2025. Due to minimal life amount collection, membership additions were limited, leading to funds scarcity in the last 2 financial years. The AGM resolved to focus on increasing membership. M/s Parminder Kaur & Associates was appointed as AIKS' auditor for 2025-26.

Following agenda

items were discussed in detail:

- ❖ **Community Stand on Census:** AIKS resolved to work closely with the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, and engage with the community to increase awareness about the importance of the census. The aim is

to build consensus and ensure effective representation of the community's interests in the census process, ultimately contributing to the community's development and welfare.

- ❖ **Kashmiri Pandit Community & Special Intensive Revision Process:** AIKS discussed the SIR Process's impact on the displaced Kashmiri Pandit community, which may further marginalize and disempower us politically. AIKS resolved to work with other KP bodies and schedule a meeting with the Chief Election Commissioner of India to address the community's concerns.
- ❖ **AIKS Civil Writ Petition:** The AGM members were updated on the latest status of the case in Jammu Kashmir High Court. AIKS expressed appreciation for the dedicated efforts of its team of community advocates/lawyers, led by Shri P.N Raina, Shri P.N Goja, Shri Ravinder Bhat, and Shri Kashmiri Lal, who are representing the community's interest pro-bono. Their commitment to the cause was acknowledged and valued by the organization.
- ❖ **Return and Rehabilitation of the Community:** It was unanimously agreed that AIKS will highlight the Central/UT Government's inability to build a roadmap for the Kashmiri Pandit community's return. AIKS will advocate for policies facilitating safe return and rehabilitation, ensuring community well-being and societal reintegration. In absence of a firm plan from the Central Govt or UT Govt, AIKS resolves to lobby

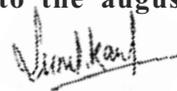
for Mr Vivek Tankha Ji's Private Member Bill in the Rajya Sabha with full vigour and strength.

Permanent Address for AIKS – New Delhi / NCR

Members were apprised during the AGM of the progress made so far in efforts to secure a permanent address for AIKS. Efforts are currently underway on two parallel fronts:

- ❖ **Noida Authority** AIKS is in correspondence with the Deputy CEO, Noida Authority, following a communication forwarded by the Chief Minister's Secretariat to the Noida Authority for the allotment of land to AIKS. While the procedural requirements are stringent, the prospects remain encouraging and the matter is being closely followed up.
- ❖ **Government of Haryana (Gurugram)** A delegation of AIKS, comprising the President and Executive Members, met Shri Manohar Lal Khattar, Hon'ble Minister for Housing & Urban Development, and submitted a formal proposal seeking a permanent address/ asset for AIKS in New Delhi/NCR. The meeting was facilitated by Mr. Raj Nehru on behalf of AIKS. During the interaction, the Hon'ble Minister expressed interest in exploring possibilities in the Gurugram area through the Chief Minister's Office. Subsequently, AIKS—both directly and through Mr. Raj Nehru—has applied for a plot in Gurugram with the Government of Haryana. Active follow-up on this initiative is being pursued by the President, AIKS.

AIKS VP-Ramesh Aryan presented the expression of gratitude to the august General Council members.



GLIMPSES OF AGM





 Dr. Ramesh Tamiri



EXILE'S ECHO

35 YEARS WITHOUT RETURN

Well-wishers across the country's Hindu Samaj often ask Kashmiri Hindus, "Will Kashmiri Pandits ever be able to return home?" A more relevant query—but one rarely posed—is this: "What is the government actually doing to enable the return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Hindus?"

The stark reality remains: As of now, there is no indication that this issue is on the government's agenda.

High Hopes Belied

The Kashmiri Hindu community pinned high hopes on the Modi government's rise in 2014. The BJP had projected itself as a party committed to addressing the long-denied legitimate aspirations of Hindus. Who could be more aggrieved than the Kashmiri Hindu community, victims of genocidal cleansing and frontline targets of jihadist terrorism in Kashmir? Before coming to power, BJP leadership had launched the Ekta Yatra to sensitise the nation to assaults on Indian sovereignty in Kashmir due to cross-border jihadist terrorism. It was also the sole national party to highlight the ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus, at a time when others were keener to court Muslim vote banks.

With a clear majority for NDA II in 2014, expectations soared that the new government would take up the issue of return and rehabilitation in right earnest. The government had a clear mandate for bold

“
Do Congress and BJP policies truly differ on the Pandit question? For both major national parties, addressing the genocide of Kashmiri Hindus is a non-issue—though for different reasons.
”

action. Yet the BJP cold-shouldered Kashmiri Hindus, for reasons best known to it.

Was the BJP government pursuing the same Nehruvian policy on Kashmir and Kashmiri Hindus that it had critiqued in public to consolidate the Hindu vote bank? Do Congress and BJP policies truly differ on the Pandit question? For both major national parties, addressing the genocide of Kashmiri Hindus is a non-issue—though for different reasons. Congress has long pursued selective Muslim appeasement to build a vote bank, an approach that influenced its major Kashmir decisions. Expecting it to prioritise genuine Kashmiri Hindu rehabilitation is fanciful.

For the BJP, Kashmiri Hindus represent an inconsequential vote bank—too few and too scattered to matter electorally. Genuine

rehabilitation requires confronting the core issues behind the genocide: powerful, institutionalized communal-fundamentalist structures in Kashmir. The current BJP leadership shows no such political will. Occasional election-time rhetoric substitutes for substantive policy. Without government commitment, return and rehabilitation remain impossible.

False Narratives

Successive governments since 1990 have resorted to politics to mask their failures. False narratives were crafted to blame the victims themselves for the failure to return: It was insinuated that Kashmiri Hindus had settled elsewhere and refuse to go back, or that their "disunity" made government action for rehabilitation impossible. Blaming victims rubs salt to their wounds.

Are Kashmiri Hindus truly uninterested in returning to their homeland—their heritage, homes, memories, and identity? Two points clarify this. First, would they return amid unchanged genocidal conditions? Second, does employment in Indian cities or abroad mean abandoning home? Lakhs of Kashmiri Muslims work elsewhere without forfeiting their valley ties. Economic diasporas are modern realities; they often serve to strengthen homeland bonds. You serve where opportunities lie, but your true home endures—tied by economic interests, vacations, extended family, and roots. This yearning for home found expression in the muse of celebrated poets from our older diaspora, who wove verses of longing, loss, and unbreakable connection to the Valley.

Brij Narain Chakbast wrote:

Shuteh huveh oos bagh ko guzarah hai zamana,
Taza hai magar iski mohabbat ka fasana.
(Ages have passed since this garden was abandoned, Yet the story of its love remains fresh.)

Bishan Narain Darsaid:

Hai arzuheh dil ki teri arzu karenh jab tak,
Zaban hai teri gupt goo karenh.
Jo hai hazar jan se tujh per nisar hai,
Gul se aziz hum ko tera khar khar hai.
Mudat seh ishtiaq hai,
Ek bar dekh leh bulbul
meh cheshm shok se gulzar dekh leh.
*(It is the desire of my heart to yearn for you.
As long as I have a tongue, I will speak of you
in secret.
Whatever is most precious—a thousand
lives—is offered to you.
To me, every thorn of yours is dearer than a
flower.
For ages, it has been my longing;
At least once, let the nightingale glimpse the
garden through eyes of desire.)*

Tribhuvan Nath Sapru 'Hijr' said:

Tailuk vohi quam ko hai watan se,
Ki jo hai ruh ko ho tailuk badan se.
*(The bond between the nation and its
homeland
Is the same as that between the soul and the
body.)*

Years ago, Dr. Manmohan Singh's Congress government sought to address rampant unemployment among Kashmiri Hindu youth by creating 6,000 supernumerary jobs under the Prime Minister's Package. Fully centrally funded, these positions drew nearly 10,000 applications from Kashmiri Hindu youth despite unappealing conditions and ongoing threats. What more proof is needed of the community's resolve to return?

The claim that government inaction on return and rehabilitation stems from Pandit 'disunity' is a false narrative with no takers. An earnest government does not condition policy on a community's imagined internal divisions. Successive regimes have stifled the emergence of strong, unified community leadership through selective

First, would they return amid unchanged genocidal conditions? Second, does employment in Indian cities or abroad mean abandoning home? Lakhs of Kashmiri Muslims work elsewhere without forfeiting their valley ties.

patronage, making the multiplicity of groups a consequence rather than a cause of discord. There is complete consensus within the community on core issues of survival and rehabilitation. The larger failure on Kashmiri Hindu rehabilitation lies with governments and national parties—a reality that must be accepted.

Nehruvian Policy

Since 1947, successive Jammu and Kashmir state governments have institutionalized communal discrimination against Kashmiri Hindus, fostering their economic destabilisation. Educational and job barriers drove our youth to exodus, while others endured in hope. As communal-secessionist politics entrenched itself, genocidal attrition deepened, eroding social bonds—neighbourly trust (*lihazdari*) gave way to suspicion and hostility. Jamaat-e-Islami and radical outfits operated freely, often with official or political patronage.

Kashmiri Hindus weathered this through sheer grit. But the 1980s marked a lethal turn: Pakistan-sponsored jihadist terrorism targeted them with genocidal fury, as

A Legacy of Neglect and Tokenism

It was the constitutional responsibility of the central government to counter the destabilizing forces targeting the Kashmiri Hindu minority in the Valley. The Nehruvian policy on Kashmir failed to address existential challenges to their survival. They sought to prioritise superficial promises of "peace" from local ruling parties while ignoring ground realities and their opportunistic maneuvers.

Thirty-five years after their genocidal exodus from Kashmir's ancestral homeland, successive governments have sidelined the issue or pursued tokenistic returns, falsely claiming that they fulfilled their party commitments on return of the Pandits. These flawed efforts—evading the genocide's root causes—have only invited further atrocities: Sangrampora, Wandhama, Nadimarg, Telwani, and others. Undoing a community's genocide requires first confronting what ignited it.

Sustaining Memory, Demanding Justice

History shows that victimised communities never relent: they keep their genocide in the spotlight, pressing majorities and those in

The claim that government inaction on return and rehabilitation stems from Pandit 'disunity' is a false narrative with no takers. An earnest government does not condition policy on a community's imagined internal divisions.

sections of the majority community fell under the sway of Pakistani agencies' subversive campaigns. Local collaborators became active instruments in instigating the ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus. Despite individual and collective pleas to Delhi, the central government downplayed the national security threat and the existential risks to Hindus' continued presence in Kashmir. Crass opportunism and policy of drift defined its response. The lack of institutional and political action from Delhi caused the state machinery to crumble, leaving Kashmiri Hindus abandoned as targeted killings surged. They fled to avert a Bosnia-like fate.

power for accountability until justice and return are realised.

Kashmiri Hindus sustain this resolve through annual observances—Martyrs' Day (September 14) and Holocaust Day (January 19)—which educate youth, preserve genocide memory, and mobilise public opinion. They also commemorate December 28 as Marg Darshan Day, when the community first articulated a blueprint to end the genocide and secure durable return, reaffirming it yearly. Heritage bhavans have proliferated, and hundreds of books now document the atrocities, safeguard cultural identity, and chronicle the struggle. By weaving genocide

memory, cultural preservation, and the vision of Panun Kashmir into a dialectical fortress, the Pandit community fortifies its long fight for justice and restoration.

What Needs to Be Done

Three interconnected challenges demand urgent action:

1.Obstacles to Return and Rehabilitation: The situation in Kashmir remains volatile. Pakistan-sponsored cross-border terrorism persists, radicalization has deepened, and communal narratives—brazenly promoted even by so-called mainstream political parties—prevail. Many local segments harbour a vested interest in opposing the return of Kashmiri Hindus, the Valley's original natives. These issues require not ad-hoc measures but a long-term, well-conceived national policy.

2.The Central Government's Role: The government must craft a nationalist Kashmir policy that secures durable peace, consolidates national forces, and enables holistic rehabilitation of Kashmiri Hindus. It should formally recognise the genocide against them, prioritising the reversal of genocidal attrition before any rehabilitation efforts. Simultaneously, it must bolster community-based leadership to advance national interests and facilitate sustainable return, ceasing selective patronage to favourite groups and reach out to the community.



The Nehruvian policy on Kashmir failed to address existential challenges to their survival. They sought to prioritise superficial promises of "peace" from local ruling parties while ignoring ground realities and their opportunistic maneuvers.



The government must craft a nationalist Kashmir policy that secures durable peace, consolidates national forces, and enables holistic rehabilitation of Kashmiri Hindus.



3. The Kashmiri Hindu Community's Role: Its leadership must launch effective campaigns to elevate rehabilitation as a national priority, compelling political parties to address the genocide and integrate it into Kashmir policy. The community's civil society should rigorously contest false narratives—such as genocide denial, claims that Pandits lack interest in return, or the legitimisation of tokenistic gestures over genuine restoration. Community leaders should intensify memorialization campaigns for the lost homeland and its recovery, prioritizing substantive action over rhetoric. Slanders against allied groups undermine the struggle and must stop forthwith. This only serves to undermine community activism. Democratic space exists for all community groups, including politically aware civil society sections. This should be respected by all, irrespective of group affiliation.

*The writer has authored *Pakistan's Invasion on J&K(1947-48)Untold Stories of Victims*, published in 2023.



 Dr. K N Pandita



Kashmir towards Islamization

On 19th of January 2025, we the internally displaced community of Kashmiri Pandits will enter the 36th year of our forced exile. Times have changed; for the Indian nation and also for us the displaced people. The Kashmiri Hindu (Pandit) youth is indianized: Kashmir for them is a fairy tale they heard from their elders or at the best a summer holiday resort.

They are not to be faulted if they do not know much about their origin and distant or near distant past. As the progeny of displaced persons, burdened by endless existential compulsions, the youth are busy fending for themselves. Knowledge of the past and its analysis is the windfall of sedentary and settled populations.

The cliché with the official circles and political leadership like “Pandits are part and parcel of Kashmir society” or “Kashmir is incomplete without Pandits” or “Pandits will return to their homeland” etc is nothing more than politicizing history. If any of these diabolic statements carried even a grain of sincerity, the Pandits would not have been subjected to genocide, general loot of their properties and finally their extirpation from Kashmir. What is more, let it be said that the question of their return and rehabilitation in the valley jointly agreed upon by Mufti Saeed, the then chief minister of the State and Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, flopped overnight when Kashmir valley saw

the unprecedented mass shutdown in protest of proposing the return of the Pandits. Not a single national or state paper touched upon the subject to ask why a proposal agreed by the top leadership in the country and the State met with such a massive and unprecedented opposition?

Retrospective analysis leads us to some important inferences. Firstly, if the State Chief Minister was honest in his intentions, he would have prepared the ground for such a decision much ahead and taken the stalwarts of his cabinet and party into confidence. Evidently, he did not do that exercise and had left space open for the dissident segments. The massive anti-Pandit shutdown in the valley clearly showed that some agency had pre-empted the plan. The grapevine has it that a telephonic call to the Jamat-i-Islami leadership in the valley swung into action when goaded by a message from New Delhi.

Secondly, those who stage-managed the protest shutdown were reported to be mainly those who had taken a leading role in illegally occupying or vandalizing the properties of the departed Pandits.

Ours is not the only community subjected to forced exile. History has numerous of such events from ancient times to present day. We need to read their history. One glaring example is of the Zoroastrians in Iran whom the Arab Islamic invaders treated the same way as we were treated in Kashmir by the Kashmir by the majority zealots.

In India, they are known as Parsees. Pars or Fars in the southern Iranian region which was the a predominant region of Achaemenian and Sassanian Empires. The latter ruling house fell to the invading Arabs around CE 630. With the passage of time, the proselytised nation threw up a section of Zoroastrian clergy called *mobid* which became more Islamic than the Islam brought by the Arabs.

In Kashmir this story was almost repeated when Islam overtook Kashmir in CE 1339. The learned Brahmans of Hindu Kashmir adopted the Central Asian title of Mulla to be used as prefix to their names. So we have a large group of *Mullas* in the early decades of conversion. For example, one Mulla Naderi is reported to have translated parts of *Rajatarangini* from Sanskrit into Farsi. Unfortunately, the Farsi rendition is lost to us. The surmise is that a proselytised Brahman, well-versed in Sanskrit language and literature had picked up Farsi soon after Kashmir passed into the hands of the Muslims, and could produce the great history of Kalhan Pandit in Farsi.

My thinking is that the group of Kashmiris known as mullas, are almost of the same status which the *mobids* of Zoroastrian times were after conversion. They dominated the society in their new avatar. In order to attain a superior status in the proselytized Iranian society, they undertook the task of propagating Islam much more passionately than the real or original Islamic clerics of Arabian Peninsula.

As we trace the history of expansion of Islamic faith and traditions in the vast region of Mesopotamia, Central Asia (Turkestan) and India, we find that this group of clerics, posing in various forms and avatars like Sufis,

Qalandars, Walis, peers, sajjada nashin *et al*, we find at least one facet common among them and that is they are far more Islamic zealots than the Arab Islamists themselves.

This formula became more result-oriented in the case of Kashmir. Islam came to Kashmir through Muslim missionaries; Amir-i-Kabir Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani (Shah-i-Hamadan), being the forerunner of them all. Hamadan, known to Greek historian Herodotus as Hagmatana, was a prosperous centre of Jewish and Zoroastrian people who had, in the course of history, converted to Islam during the invasion of Mesopotamia (Iraq-i-Ajam of Farsi historians) by the Arab warriors.

A closer study of social anthropology tells us that a proselytized community carries a baggage of nostalgic memories for a long time. It wants to secure itself against reference to the faith of their forefathers. One common protective shield adopted by them is of claiming descent from the line of the Prophet and in process use the prefix of Sayyid to their Islamized name. Under this theory, Ali of Hamadan became Sayyid Ali Hamadani. Now we have innumerable persons of Kashmiri Muslims prefixing the title of Sayyid to their name and in justification, claim to be the progeny of one of the Sayyids among the group of missionaries accompanying Sayyid Ali Hamadani. This is the background of a phenomenon of zealous advocacy of Islamic teachings and massive undertaking of spreading Islamic message among the Hindu population of the day. Obviously, obstruction to or contradiction of the missionaries had to be resolved through induction of muscle power. The wholesale destruction of Hindu religious-cum-cultural symbols was an unavoidable option for the missionaries who thronged in large numbers to Kashmir from the dry Steppes of Central Asia. How much of Islam did these earlier proselytized missionaries know and what they transmitted to the nascent Muslims in Kashmir needs to be analysed in a scholarly manner. This question is the key to the unending debate about true and spurious faith with the Islamic scholars.



The wholesale destruction of Hindu religious cum-cultural symbols was an unavoidable option for the missionaries who thronged in large numbers to Kashmir from the dry Steppes of Central Asia.



 Dr. Pankaj Kaul



KASHMIR EXODUS

History, Impact, Restitution



Those who look at the genesis of 1990 Exodus of Kashmiri Pandits as a culmination of the polarisation of 1980's or even 1947 miss the historicity of the previous seven Kashmiri Pandit exoduses.

The 1990 exodus is not an isolated tragedy, but a culmination of centuries of demographic attrition, making Kashmiri Pandits one of the world's longest displaced indigenous communities.

Ethnic Cleansing:

Using the modern legal and historical criteria (UN usage, ICTY jurisprudence) of ethnic cleansing (the deliberate removal of a population through violence, intimidation or coercion to change a region's demographic character), three of the eight exoduses described above qualify for this characterization.

Sikandar's reign (1389-1413) qualifies easily because of targeted religious persecution,

temple destruction, forced conversions and punitive taxes. Sikandar left flight or conversion as the only options.

Afghan rule (1752-1819), again, qualifies easily as the most faithfully documented eight-decade saga of systematic brutality, executions, extortion, terror, depredation against Kashmiri Pandits.

1990 exodus was probably the most explicit and complete ethnic cleansing in modern history which effected permanent demographic transformation, near-total removal of an indigenous minority through mass intimidation through posters and mosque-announcements and targeted killing of prominent leaders as well as laity bystanders.

Where now:

Six and half thousand Kashmiri Pandits remain in the seven districts of Kashmir today. 300,000 left in 1990 following targeted killings and threats of violence. 36th year into their eighth exodus in eight centuries since Rinchin came to power in 1320 CE, one is forced to ask: Will they return this time? If they do, will there be a ninth exodus and how soon? Should they return? What can we do to ensure they stay in Kashmir and are not expelled again? Also, what has been the impact of this exodus? What is the remedy? Where lies the mitigation?

This exodus has been a civilizational

displacement where an indigenous community living continuously for 3000 years on the land of its ancestors of 60 generations has been expelled without reason. The fact that this happened with little outrage then and now, in Kashmir, in India and internationally is a reflection of what we have become as a people.

Common themes that facilitate exodus:

There are some common denominators in all these acts that aim demographic change. Those indigenous minorities are targeted that have weak political protection.

Genocide is usually not necessary; selective violence and intimidation suffice. After the minorities have been hounded out, there is property seizure and attempts are made to erase cultural symbols. Rapid attempts are made to normalize altered demographics. No stone is left unturned to block the return of the expelled. Any attempts to provide the expelled some security is opposed by those responsible for expulsion by calling these acts as divisive and non-secular.

In Kashmir, violence, including targeted killings, rape and dishonour rather than active deportation induced flight. Return was persistently resisted by most of the majority community, calling any formal security arrangements as ghettoization. Eventually, demographic change became an enduring



1992, Garhi Camp of Kashmiri Pandit refugees, Udhampur



The fact that this happened with little outrage then and now, in Kashmir, in India and internationally is a reflection of what we have become as a people.



Kashmiri Pandit celebrate Holi in refugee camp in tents, 1993. Garhi, Udhampur, J&K, India.

political fact. Once demographic transformation through coercion became established, any reversal was politically difficult. Only things that would have helped reverse this vicious cycle would have been open acknowledgement, restitution, punishment of the guilty and early justice.

Impact of 1990 Exodus:

The demographic rupture and mass displacement of this exodus traumatized the populations at multiple levels. Entire families, and children in particular, suffered trauma from having been subjected to violence, fear, constant anxiety, the upheaval of sudden translocation and loss of security. Generations grew up in exile and often in extreme poverty. Jobs were difficult to find, rental accommodation was sparse and a large number of families had to make do in makeshift tents with lack of basic amenities whilst battling grief, loss of identity and privacy and intergenerational bereavement and stress.

Economic collapse was total. Pandits

lost homes, land, businesses, jobs and livelihoods. The government assistance was meagre for these proud people who would hesitate asking their neighbours for a bowl of rice under normal circumstances. Cultural and civilizational loss rankled more than anything else. Temples, shrines and heritage sites stood abandoned. Some of them were vandalized and encroached upon. Dispersal of communities led to attrition of distinct Shaivite traditions, Kashmiri language,

rituals and scholarship. Careers in administration, education, medicine and academia were abruptly disrupted. The loss of social capital was severe.

Resettlement:

Kashmiri Pandits had never carried any political voice in Kashmiri politics before 1990. Exile marginalized them completely. Return and rehabilitation became contentious, entangled in broader Kashmiri politics. The so-called mainstream leaders of Kashmir correctly saw that there was little support amongst the Kashmiri majority for the return of Pandits in any viable and secure manner acceptable to them. They continued to pay lip service to rehabilitation of Pandits in Kashmir whilst very little was done on ground to make it viable. Indian leaders, too, instead of seeing this as a civilizational problem where three millennia old Shaivite tradition of Kashmir was close to extinction requiring careful and long-term nourishment, instead chose to look at it purely politically. What had happened had happened. Any meaningful return of 300,000 KPs to Kashmir posed logistic and political problems too difficult to negotiate. There

Indian leaders, too, instead of seeing this as a civilizational problem where three millennia old Shaivite tradition of Kashmir was close to extinction requiring careful and long-term nourishment, instead chose to look at it purely politically.

would be a political price to pay if this was pursued energetically.

Although government rehabilitation packages enabled limited return of workers in government jobs, mostly in guarded enclaves, there was no large scale, meaningful or dignified resettlement anywhere due to security concerns, lack of trust, poor integration and incidents of attacks on the settlers.

The Kashmiri Pandit exodus thus is not just a humanitarian tragedy but a civilizational upheaval. The demands of Kashmiri Pandits for justice, security and meaningful return to Kashmir remain unmet.

Any resettlement of Kashmiri Pandits should restore citizenship, safety and dignity, not merely physical presence. Without comprehensive roadmap for social reintegration, security and, above all, justice, any half-hearted and engineered return risks becoming a second displacement en route a ninth exodus.

A credible and ethical settlement of Kashmiri Pandits must be voluntary. It will be voluntary only if it is secure and just and, therefore, dignified. Symbolism will not do. Often-heard clichés by majority community including statements like “we are incomplete without you”, “stay with us as long as you like”, “you are our long-lost brothers” etc will not suffice. Racial memory endures for generations and it has been only 36 years.

Firstly, security is a non-negotiable foundation. KP's will not return if their survival is dependent on their neighbours. That did not work only 36 years ago. Petrified 2- or 3-year-olds whose mothers hushed them and smuggled them to safety in the middle of night are middle-aged now. Temporary and ad-hoc protection will not convince anyone and credible long-term security guarantees have to be integrated into normal civilian life. There has to be zero tolerance for intimidation and religious hate-crimes and policing has to have a strong intelligence arm.

Isolated, fenced colonies deepen segregation and insecurity. Yet return of Kashmiri Pandits to the houses they lived in previously is not just impracticable because of the dangerous condition of the houses but is painful to their children because they bring

memories of persecution, violence and, occasionally, slaughter. Clustered resettlement needs to be enabled in, preferably, mixed neighbourhoods. Security should be embedded invisibly through institutions and not through ghettos and enclaves.

There has to be a time-bound mechanism for restoration of homes, land and temples, and where restoration is not possible fair compensation should be provided.

Public Apology:

Let alone offering an apology or recompense, Kashmiri and Indian governments and civil society have not even acknowledged the tragedy that befell Kashmiri Hindus and some Kashmiri Muslims on the night of 19th January 1990.

Kashmiri State is believed by many to have been, at worst, partially complicit, or, at best, criminally neglectful during the violent expulsion and exodus. Indian State had too many power centres, an effete coalition and a totally ineffective Home Minister, at that time, to respond meaningfully to the total and comprehensive erosion of its authority whilst Kashmir was being purged of its inhabitants of three millennia. Those who could have interceded to influence restoration of law and order were distracted by Babri Masjid shenanigans.

Kashmiri civil society was either complicit or scared or passively indifferent or deliberately uninterested to prevent the greatest instance of moral failure in the history of modern India. The number of people who raised their fists to say “not in my name” could not be even counted on the fingers of a single hand.

Indian civil society, disturbingly reminiscent of its behaviour of the last 1000 years, did not feel threatened enough to want to raise its collective voice against a yet another grab of its territory, within 43 years of the last grab of 85,793 km² or, alternately, 882,363 km², depending on how one understands grab.

Justice and Duty of Candour:

When the oppressed and the injured and the violated went to the Supreme Court, in 2017, the plea was dismissed summarily with the

comment that since a long time had passed since 1990, no evidence would be available to punish the guilty. Prosecution of Nazi criminals, on the other hand, began in 1945 and has extended 80 years to the present day. Clearly, passage of time cannot be an excuse for refusing justice. Wherever evidence exists or can be provided, past crimes must be prosecuted. At the least, there needs to be an official admission of wrong-doing, harm and moral failure. Adhering to this duty of candour will add to the stature and reputation of those in authority, not detract from it.

Employment:

There needs to be guaranteed employment opportunities in administration, education, healthcare and private enterprise in Kashmir. There has been a surfeit of relief-camp style welfare schemes. These are pitiable, unwholesome and ineffective. There have to be tangible incentives for Pandit entrepreneurship and professional return.

Political Empowerment:

There has to be a political and civic empowerment including meaningful representation in local governance and, in particular, into any decision-making regarding resettlement.



Minority Rights:

There need to be legal safeguards that protect KP rights as an indigenous minority that cannot be overridden by majoritarian politics. KP's were treated constitutionally and politically as a majority community in Kashmir, bereft of any minority rights, incredible as it might seem now.

Cultural and Religious Rehabilitation:

Concomitantly, there needs to be a cultural rehabilitation. There has to be a fool-proof mechanism for protection of Kashmiri Pandit religious sites and a revival of festivals, educational institutions and Kashmiri language. Kashmiri language should be made compulsory in schools and pupils should have a right to choose to write it in Devanagari or Nastaliq. In our home, Kashmiri used to be read and written in both scripts. Cultural presence should be public, lived and joyful, not limited to enclaves and museums.

Building Bridges:

There has to be trust-building with local KM society with public disavowal and rejection of past violence, shared civic projects and state-facilitated community dialogues. Resettlement needs much more than administrative clearance and cannot succeed without social acceptance.

Panun Kashmir:

One of the proposals of full return to the valley comes from Panun (“our own”) Kashmir group. This envisages a separate Pandit-administered homeland for Kashmiri Pandits within the Kashmir valley. General disgust with government and societal indifference to KP plight has made Panun Kashmir the most respected voice amongst KPs. Its advantages include the focussed security within demarcated territory providing protection against targeted attacks. This addresses the core demand of KP's that they would not return after being ethnically cleansed without protection against similar fate again.

Above all, it provides administrative autonomy and political agency to a group that has been marginalized historically and has been rendered voiceless in exile. It also

prevents dependence on the goodwill of the majority in the valley, a goodwill which changes frequently in response to cross-border diktats. Collective return to the land where their forefathers have lived for 60 generations or more restore cultural continuity and community confidence. Many Pandits see this the only viable alternative and reject any unsafe dispersal in small groups in the valley. Once such a stable cultural ecosystem is established, a sustained revival of educational and religious institutions, temples, and, most crucially, Kashmiri language can take place. This would also explicitly recognize the exodus as ethnic cleansing and assert a right to restitution rather than a piecemeal and conditional rehabilitation.

Critique:

Politically, Panun Kashmir proposal is infeasible. Any occupation of large areas of land leads to displacement of people already there. Look at Palestine. Any central allocation of land to one group is likely to lead to strong opposition from KM groups and civil society in general and foster further regional polarization and unrest.

There is territorial and legal complexity inherent in the proposal. Determining land boundaries, population ratios and jurisdiction is likely to be legally contentious apart from leading to competing territorial claims and displacement of large bodies of people.

Whilst initially safer, a concentrated territory of one group of people is quite likely to become a symbolic high value target during future unrests or conflicts with neighbours. The long-term security costs would be huge.

Internationally, it complicates India's position on Kashmir and is likely to be framed as demographic engineering. India, ironically, is the only country in the world which let itself be vivisected on the basis of religion, on the basis of imagined or expected insecurities of Muslims in a secular India, and yet let those who had earlier voted for the vivisecting Muslim League (in CP, UP, Bihar and Bengal) to then stay in divided India if they so wished. What generosity of spirit!

“

KP's will not return if their survival is dependent on their neighbours. That did not work only 36 years ago.

”

Compromise:

Panun Kashmir is advocated as the only viable model by its proponents. A balanced assessment, however, would suggest that whilst their proposal quite rightly prioritizes autonomy, safety and survival over integration and optics, the political and symbolic costs remain high. Whilst as a trauma-influenced security-first model it is coherent, it is not a reconciliation-driven, pluralistic solution.

Breaches of secular code in India or Kashmir need to be treated by the government of the day with utmost strictness and fairness and proportionality. The secular model should not be given up because the government on the day was weak-kneed and supine. The problem lies in the government not in the code of secularism or the existing laws to deal with the infringements.

A sustainable solution, like all sustainable solutions, will need to be built on compromise. It should borrow elements of security, autonomy, recognition and justice from Panun Kashmir but eschew its hard territorial segregation.

It is quite likely none of this will happen. After all, KPs have no voting power and any permanent rehabilitation threatens too many individual interests and challenges the stupor of status quo. That then will be the greatest moral and political failure of post-independence India.



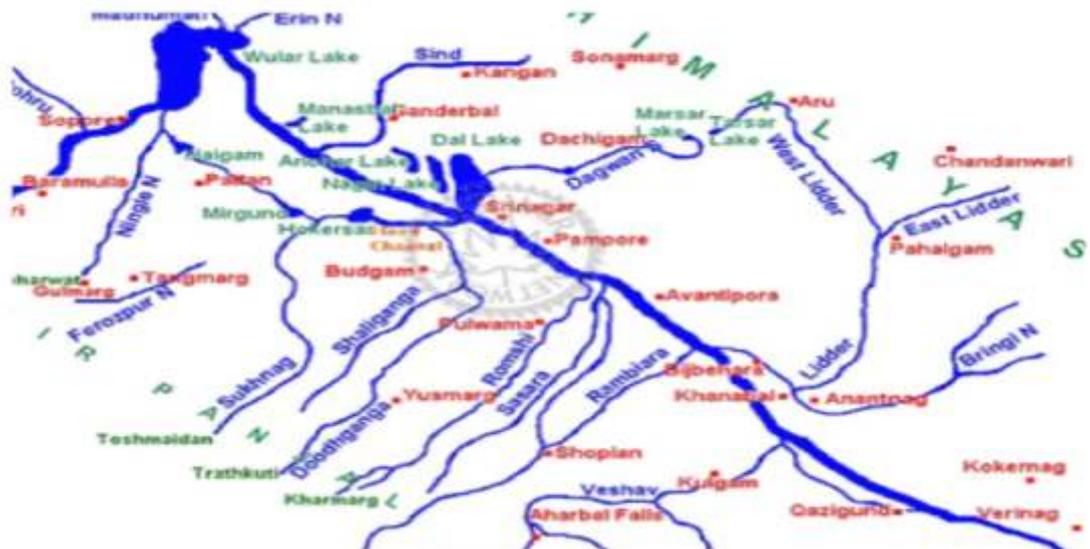
 Sanjeev Munshi



Impact of Exodus on KP SOCIO RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL LIFE

The Seventh Exodus from Kashmir (1990) has profoundly impacted Kashmiri Pandit society in many diverse ways. As our community of over five lakh souls moved southwards from Kashmir, we lost that connect to processes that had evolved over last 5000 odd years! Exodus was a brutal disruption of our lives – at least three generations of KPs got affected adversely. The elderly, people in their 60s and above, most of them never came out of the shock. There were people who had never crossed the Banihal tunnel in their entire lives – they got uprooted and never recovered! Those in

school-colleges had their education interrupted and lost precious years of their lives to uncertainty. The middle generation, busy earning their livelihood, had to jump into an abyss, not knowing what tomorrow held for them! People in businesses and those who were self-employed (shopkeepers, lawyers, and contractors, for example), lost everything and had to start from zero! A successful lawyer with established practice in Srinagar had to restart his life as a junior in Delhi! Another gentleman, running a successful chemist shop in Rainawari, Srinagar had to sell his wife's gold and his house in Srinagar to restart his life in



Tracing the Network of Vitasta across Kashmir Valley! One can see all its Tributaries!



M A Stein, who translated Rajtarangini into English in 1892 CE writes, "Kashmir is a country where there is not a place as large as a grain of seasam without a Tirtha [Shrine]".

Jammu. I shall never forget my interaction with a gentleman from village Haal with an established textile business in Srinagar – he lost everything and had to live in a refugee camp in Jammu; that he had to stand in a que, waiting for alms from people distributing vegetables in the refugee camp has seared his soul for ever.

In the process of resettling and reclaiming our lives, families got scattered – people travelled to places where opportunities for jobs and education beckoned – after all, our survival was at stake. Some of us found solace in the fact that having survived the radical arm of Islam, we could relax in the vast sea of India where our faith does not face a challenge every day!

Soon after, though, nostalgia struck – we started missing the way we celebrated our Herath and Pann, our Jyeth Aatham and Shraavan Punim, our Vohorvod and other 'baeyd doh'. The first thing we started missing was the extended family (including neighbours) that used to be an integral part of every celebration! Kids started missing their Matamaal because distances made frequent commute difficult! We started missing our Kul-Guru – the Revered Brahmin who was an integral part of our socio-religious

celebrations – unfortunately, the breed is near extinct now and one must make do with either the local pandit ji's or some gentlemen who claim to have 'learnt' the Logakshi Paddhati vidhi of Kashmiri Brahmins! In Faridabad, we have a clan of brahmins from Chitrakoot, UP who claim to have been 'trained' by late Pt JN Kaul (Papa Ji)- their branches have spread to cities like Pune, Hyderabad, Bangalore etc by now!

So, what did KPs lose following our Exodus in 1990? Well, first and foremost, we lost our habitat, our abode for last 5100 years! The geography and climate of Kashmir shaped, to a large extent, our lifestyle, and was the cornerstone of our culture! Our culture was shaped by the teachings of Rishis and Savants who made Kashmir a cradle of learning and spirituality! Harmukh and Amarnath evolved from being merely the symbols of the peculiar geography of Kashmir to lodestones of spirituality! One can find the exotic locales described in spiritual undertones in the Vakhs of Lal Ded (14th century), the poems of Arinmal (17th Century), to the compositions of Pt Parmanand (19th Century) and Master Zind Kaul!

M A Stein, who translated Rajtarangini

into English in 1892 CE writes, "Kashmir is a country where there is not a place as large as a grain of seasam without a Tirtha (Shrine)". As we moved out of Kashmir, we lost our Tiraths and sacred abodes – from Tulmul to Amarnath, from Bhadrakali to Gangbal, from Hari Parbat to Gopadri Hill (Shankaracharya)! These sacred abodes and shrines were the anchors of KP socio-religious existence, the epicentres of KP way of life. My grandparents would religiously go for circumambulation of the Hari Parbat every morning; hundreds of KPs, men and women would perform this 'yatra' daily from every part of Srinagar city! Every Sunday one of my uncles would carry an earthen pitcher full of water up the Shankaracharya Hill to offer Jal Abhishek to Lord Shiva. Every Ashtami (8th day of the fortnight, as per Kashmiri almanac), hundreds, if not thousands of KPs, men, women and children would flock to Tulmul for worshipping the Universal Mother (Tripurasundari Swaroop). Every festival, every celebration had a link to the history of Kashmir!

Interestingly, our socio-religious practices and cultural traditions were centred around water bodies – specifically, around fresh water carrying rivers, rivulets, and lakes. Even the 'naags'(ponds) associated with our temples (Nagbal, Tulmul, Mattan) etc had sources of fresh water because of which the water would not stink over a period – the 'nag' at Tulmul is said to have had 300 fresh water springs at one point in time – most of which have silted by now, unfortunately! Vitasta and its tributaries across the Kashmir valley have a natural network, mostly of fresh flowing waters, even lakes that had a continuous inflow of fresh waters. Srinagar city has the mighty Vitasta – and most KP's would reside on its two banks.

With loss of our habitat and abodes that were the anchors of our existence, KP society lost its moorings. We lost the way we lived our daily lives, the way we used to observe our rituals, festivals, and socio-religious events. While our community continues to celebrate festivals and perform rituals

associated with our culture, there has been a qualitative change, often necessitated by the hurdles one faces – from availability of material to availability of pandit ji, limited understanding, and knowledge of the concept of the ritual, finding adequate space and time for performing the ritual and finally, disposal of material!

In absence of flowing freshwater bodies our people started experiencing difficulties in performing day to day rituals and disposal of pooja/ havan/ shraad material. My mother passed away in 2003 at Vadodara and for disposing the ritual material into a fresh water body/ river after puja, I had to travel 40 odd km. Likewise, people in Jammu now visit the Muthi Ghat or Akhnoor Ghat for rituals related to death of a family member! People around Delhi NCR travel to different locations in UP (Muradnagar, Hapur, Ghar Mukteshwar-Ganga etc) for performing 10th day rituals, post demise of a family member. The society my son lived in at Hyderabad had banned keeping any eatables for birds, even on the terrace – so now, there is no place to keep the 'teher' that our family has been offering to birds every Tuesday and Saturday! In Kashmir, we had a tradition of offering the first morsel of food to gods before starting eating (hoony-myet) – which was later offered to birds or stray dogs. – those traditions have been lost since today most housing societies do not allow eatables for birds! At Vadodara, Municipal authorities have banned disposal of pooja material into most of the municipal ponds being maintained by the civic authorities – creating issues about disposal of flowers and other material after every puja (Herath, Pann etc)!

Distance and dispersal have also affected the way we used to celebrate our festivals and important days like Vohorvod (birthdays as per KP Almanac)! I remember our Kul-Guru Ji used to make a quiet entry around 8 am so that the menfolk could leave for their jobs/ shops by 9 am! Ladies of the house (my mom and Grandma) would have, by then, prepared all the good dishes, including non-veg dishes besides chaman (cottage cheese) and teher (rice cooked with a bit of turmeric and mixed

with salt and mustard oil). East facing arrangements for Puja would have been made with a proper seating for the Yajman (person celebrating his/ her birthday). The person would have to observe fast till the Puja would be over! Household would be up early, arranging puja-samagri (pooja material – flowers, incense, dhoo, ratandee, tchong, milk, curd, uncooked rice with a bit of salt and some dakshina in a thali for 'zang'; a set of utensils needed for the puza was kept ready before the Kulguru's arrival. As children, we would look forward eagerly to the Vohorvod events – kids would invariably get a set of new clothes! On my Dad's Vohorvod, my mom would get a new sari + athoru (an ear ornament). Neighbourhood kids and important relatives would come over for lunch/dinner. From the Matamaal would arrive Special Tandoori Roti (kandur chot in Kashmiri) and some curd! Traditional Vohorvod celebration is one thing I personally miss! Ditto for other important days like Shraads, Herath Puja, Shravan Punim, Kav Punim, Jarne Satam (Janamashtami), Gaade Batte, Kyeche Mavas, etc.

Pann, Herath and Sahibi Satam are festivals where the entire neighbourhood and

all the relatives used to receive prasad in Kashmir. Pann Naveed (Roth) used to be 'hand-delivered' to every neighbour and of course, to every relative. Ditto for the Doony (walnut) Naveed after Herath and Kheer on Sahibi Satam. I recall performing my role in the 'distribution' of Naveed during my growing up years! As we dispersed across cities and towns post Exodus, the distribution became tougher – finally falling on to postal service or to couriers. My cousin, living in Noida finds it tough to visit his sister in Gurugram due to traffic and time consumed in the commute! Now, of course 'drop off/pick up' services like Rapido and Porter have evolved in metro cities but such deliveries lack the warmth of a personal delivery!

As our children are taking up jobs in distant cities (and abroad), the fervour of festival celebrations has dimmed to a considerable extent for parents. Children have their own job-related limitations and life priorities; besides, travel is not only costly but also cumbersome! With intercommunity marriages becoming common, the relative importance of festivals like Herath, Pann, Gaad Batte, Kyetche Mavas etc gets diluted.



People who helped KP Children get 'quota' in technical institutions: Sh Keshubhai Patel, Gujarat CM, Sh SL. Shakdar, ex-Chief Election Commissioner, Sh Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, Rajasthan CM, Sh ML Khurana, Delhi CM and Sh CL Gadoo, July 23, 1993, Mavlankar Hall, New Delhi. Missing from the picture: Sh Eknath Khadse, Minister for Technical Education, Dr DS Ahir, Health Minister, Govt of Maharashtra and Sh KN Sahani of Delhi!

No KP boys and girls took up arms against the Muslim repression even though their struggle would have been entirely justified! There was no KP version of Intifada, no stone pelting and rowdyism by KP Children!

Importance of Diwali and Holi has, accordingly increased – even Ganapati Pooja (if your DIL is from Maharashtra)! A friend recently travelled to Pune to have certain basic 'samaskars' of his grandkids performed – Shraan-sundar, Shishur, Kah Nethar and Zar Kasay etc! Unfortunately, his son-DIL could not find time to travel to Jammu post birth of their kids!

While lamenting our losses, we also need to acknowledge the positives, the gains that our community has clawed from the chaos of despair and uncertainty that has prevailed since 1990. Thanks to the vision of Pt Amarnath Vaishnavi and the relentless follow up by Mr CL Gadoo (plus his team from KSD Delhi, Mr Sh MK Kaw of AIKS who was then Education Secretary, Govt of India and Dr MM Joshi, HRD Minister, Govt of India), with the blessings of Late Balasahib Thackrey, hundreds of our boys and girls started getting admissions in technical institutions in Maharashtra to begin with from 1995 (probably) onwards; Karnataka, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and a few other govts too followed with quotas for Migrant KP students. Thus, currently, almost 1500-2000 KP Migrant Children are getting admission in various technical courses (barring MBBS, perhaps) every year, across India. I can only contrast this with what used to happen in J&K during my time (1975) – just 3-5 KP children would get admission in the only Engg college J&K had at that time (Regional Engg College or REC), out of 75 admissions per year. The count for admission to the two Medical Colleges was even more meagre – merit never was a consideration in those good old times, particularly, for KP children! This admission

policy gave a hope to KP parents – and ensured that KP children were made to study hard by their parents, even under candlelight in the cramped and tattered tent colonies of Muthi. It also ensured that no KP boys and girls took up arms against the Muslim repression even though their struggle would have been entirely justified! There was no KP version of Intifada, no stone pelting and rowdyism by KP Children! Following the rule of the thumb, in three decades (1995-2025), roughly 30- 40,000 Kashmiri Pandit boys and girls would have received technical education; mostly, they have been able to secure decent employment across the country (outside J&K) – mostly, in the private sector! This has meant financial stability for thousands of KP households! As a community, we need to remember with gratitude the yeoman's service rendered by our community elders in 1990s. This thin stream of benevolence continues to irrigate KP community, three decades down the line!

Undoubtedly, the Seventh Exodus is a tragedy for the KP community. People lost their homes and hearths, lost their lands and orchards, jobs and businesses! Three generations of our families struggled for survival. Yet, our people never gave up to circumstances. Free ration was made available for migrants in J&K but people chose to move out from J&K to the vast expanse called India, looking for better opportunities. They struggled, strived but survived to carve out a niche for themselves in newer towns and cities! Most of them had education as their only surviving tool – with which they rebuilt their lives and helped the next generation get education!

The knowledge of how our lives in Kashmir were, what all we have left behind is the Virasat of our younger, post Exodus generations. The stories of our struggle, individual and collective, for survival post 1990 are awe inspiring. We need to document as much as is possible so that the coming generations know of the struggles of their elders! Who knows, this might attract the attention of our GenNext and they shall get to know the glory and grandeur of our culture!

sanjeevmunshi@hotmail.com



 Krishen K Kemmu



EXODUS OF Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir and Its Impact



“Aami panna sadras navi chas lamaan,
Kati bozi daya myon meti di taar.
Aamyen takyan ponya zana jamaan,
zuv chum braman gara gatsa haa!”

(Lalla Vakh)

The exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Kashmir Valley in the late 1980s and the decade of the nineties stands as one of the most tragic chapters in India's post-independence history. The Kashmiri Pandits, the indigenous Hindu community of Kashmir, have lived in the valley for centuries, making significant contributions to its culture, language, education, and administration. However, the rise of militancy and targeted violence forced a mass migration, deeply affecting both the community and the region as a whole.

19th January 1990, the darkest day in the history of Kashmir and Kashmiri Pandits in particular, is remembered by the KP community as the exodus day or the Genocide Day. It has left the deepest possible scars in our collective psyche. A systematic campaign of assassinations and intimidation; a period of mayhem, terror and torture or more appropriately, the ethnic cleansing had been unleashed. This culminated in the mass

exodus of the community on this day. In a matter of days, the peaceful and patriotic KP community became homeless and refugees in their own country.

It has been 36 years since then. Life may have moved on, we may have survived, but no matter how hard we try, we cannot forget that day. We cannot forget the injustice done, the price we have paid and continue to pay.

Background and Causes of the Exodus

The late 1980s witnessed growing political instability in Jammu and Kashmir. At the core of the exodus lay the collapse of law and order in the state. The rise of armed insurgency, instigated and supported by cross-border ideological and material assistance, transformed political dissent into violent extremism. Terrorist groups adopted a strategy of selective targeting aimed at eliminating symbols of Indian state authority and intimidating minority communities.

The preparation had started much earlier, perhaps from the early eighties. The agents of the neighbouring country exploited the discontent with the election process to sow the seeds of rebellion, and volunteers were influenced to cross the border. They would get trained, brainwashed and return with arms, ammunition and money. Then, some incidents of small fires and explosions started taking place. No arrests, no enquiries! Was the state govt complacent or complicit, or had the administration simply collapsed? The civil society seemed indifferent or uninterested in preventing the greatest instance of moral failure, or were they simply scared? These are the questions that are still begging for answers. The absence of effective security mechanisms and delayed state response exacerbated the situation. This institutional failure eroded confidence in the state's ability to protect its citizens, making the KP exodus a rational survival choice rather than a voluntary decision

Just before the 1990s, there were some disturbing incidents globally, which were fully utilised to brainwash the Jihadi camps in the neighbouring country into terror factories. These were:

1. Dissolution of the Soviet Union (1988-1991); Breaking away of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Tajakistan etc. from Russia, and some of them became Islamic states.
2. The Berlin Wall fell in 1989. The merger of East and West Germany was used to sow seeds of a possible merger of the Kashmir Valley with the POK
3. Russia quit Afghanistan in 1989, and this was sold as a victory for Jihad, and the Terror Infrastructure existing in Afghanistan was diverted towards Kashmir.
4. Ghazwa - e- Hind strategy of Pakistan/ ISI was already in place to recruit terrorists under various groups, and the timing for implementation was at its best.
5. In India, at the Central level, we had the weakest ever govt. (a prolonged period of coalitions and indecisive governments) And at the state (J&K), it was incompetence or a govt which was Complacent.

Slogans calling for the expulsion of Pandits, threats broadcast over loudspeakers, and assassinations of prominent community members created an atmosphere of fear. With little assurance of safety, nearly 4 lakh Kashmiri Pandits were compelled to leave their ancestral homes, often overnight, carrying only essentials. Most migrated to Jammu, Delhi, and other parts of India, leaving behind homes, temples, land, and livelihoods.

There may have been six exoduses of the community before 1990 but those had happened under the Afghan rule, Sultanate period, Mughal rule or due to the Kabali raid organised by Pakistan after partition. The exodus of 1990 happened in Independent India, Democratic India & Secular India. The exodus of KPs shall remain a blot on the concept of Secular India.

Humanitarian and Social Impact

The immediate impact on Kashmiri Pandits was devastating. Families that once lived with dignity were reduced to refugees in their own country. Many lived for years in overcrowded relief camps with poor sanitation, limited healthcare, and inadequate education facilities.

Psychologically, the trauma of displacement, loss of identity, and separation from one's homeland led to long-term emotional scars. Elderly migrants, unable to adapt to new climates and conditions, suffered greatly, and many died longing to return home. Younger generations grew up disconnected from their roots, language, and cultural environment. For the displaced population, social dislocation resulted in the fragmentation of extended family systems and the erosion of community networks. Life in temporary settlements and relief camps introduced long-term challenges related to health, education, and social mobility. Over time, displacement produced a generational divide—older members retained a strong sense of loss and nostalgia, while younger generations experienced cultural dilution and identity renegotiation.

The forced migration of approximately four lakh Kashmiri Pandits significantly altered the valley's demographic composition. The removal of a historically rooted minority disrupted the region's pluralistic social structure and weakened inter-community interaction.

KP's didn't pick up the gun. We were educated. Education has always been our most precious asset. We were resilient, we reorganised ourselves and rebuilt and resettled but we are scattered outside Kashmir and all over the world. In the process, we suffered a Loss of address, Loss of Language, Loss of Culture, and disconnection with the roots. In short, we Lost our identity.

Economic Consequences

Economically, the exodus resulted in severe hardship for KPs. They were government employees, teachers, scholars, and professionals who lost jobs and property. Rebuilding careers in unfamiliar regions was difficult, leading to unemployment and financial insecurity. The economic impact of the exodus was twofold. For Kashmiri Pandits, the loss of immovable property, employment, and professional continuity led to downward economic mobility. Although many eventually reintegrated into urban economies elsewhere in India and abroad, the transition involved

prolonged periods of insecurity and dependency on state support.

Kashmir itself also suffered economically. The departure of an educated and skilled community weakened administrative efficiency, academic institutions, and local entrepreneurship. The absence of Pandits disrupted the socio-economic balance that had existed for centuries.

Cultural and Civilizational Loss

Kashmiri Pandits were custodians of Kashmir's ancient Shaivite traditions, Sanskrit scholarship, and composite cultural heritage. Their displacement led to the neglect of temples, shrines, and heritage sites. Festivals, rituals, and linguistic traditions such as Kashmiri Pandit literature and music declined within the valley. The exodus also fractured Kashmir's centuries-old pluralistic fabric, undermining the idea of *Kashmiriyat*—a shared cultural ethos of coexistence and mutual respect.

Displacement poses a serious threat to the culture and language of the KPs. In the present state of being scattered globally, Language is likely the first victim, and language is the thread that holds the culture together. Culture connects us to our roots and gives us an identity. This dilution of the cultural ethos is going to become more acute from generation to generation. Marriages outside the community pose another serious threat to our culture and identity.

Impact on National Consciousness and Policy

For India, our exodus raised serious questions about internal security, minority protection, and human rights. At the national level, the issue remained under-discussed, adding to the sense of injustice felt by the displaced community. In recent times, post the Kashmir Files era, however, there has been growing recognition of our suffering through public discourse, literature, cinema, and policy initiatives.

Efforts have been made to provide employment packages, housing, and rehabilitation schemes, though challenges remain. The question of a safe and dignified return remains complex and sensitive.

Current Scenario

Times are changing. A lot of water has flown through the Ganges. Our neighbouring country, the mastermind of this catastrophe, is in dire straits today. They are facing turmoil and internal dissensions. Their Karma is catching up with them.

Article 370 and 35A have been done away with & dusted. Large-scale infrastructural changes are happening in the state. The railway network is being laid out, Cinema halls have reopened, Malls are being constructed, educational institutions are being reorganised, and the Muharram processions have restarted. The Tricolour is flying high in the valley. The old order is changing.

What about KP's? What has changed? When will they be in a position to return and reclaim their heritage and homes? Is it possible that someday, KPs can rebuild the bridges with their erstwhile neighbours and live in peace & harmony?

More To Be Done

We have to make sure this exodus is not forgotten and that all Indians and the nation must learn its lessons and ensure that no community or any other region faces a similar situation ever.

Pandits were the aborigines of Kashmir. The **aboriginal culture** of Kashmir needs to be broadly promoted and highlighted. The



historical greatness of King Lalitaditya and his empire, Shardapeeth, Kashmir Shaivism, Spirituality and so on need to be brought to the fore.

Monuments /memorials commemorating Lalitaditya, Lall-Eshwari, Abhinavagupta, Kalhana, etc. should be built across the valley.

The exodus of KPs needs to be recognised as **Genocide**. Fast track courts/ Judicial commission are required to enquire into the acts of terror & Conspiracies. The guilty need to be identified and punished.

Protection of the shrines. This is very important for preserving our identity and culture.

Need for a Community Census: Estimates put our numbers varying from 3.5 Lacs to 10 Lacs. The fact is that there has been no proper record or census. We do not know our count. Approx 60,000 families registered post-migration of 1990. One can extrapolate this to approx.3,60,000 individuals. The urban families were smaller than the rural families. Many might not have registered. Many KPs had migrated in the past. The need of the hour is to have a proper census of the community and record the data for posterity. Create a global community Database and establish lines of communication, coordination and consolidation. This is essential for the preservation of our culture and language.

Madrasa education should be regulated and brought under the mainstream education system.

Protection of KP Properties. The perpetrators of crime cannot be allowed to profit from the properties of the victims.

Minority rights to KPs within J & K. This may need some amendments in the constitution. KPs have been treated constitutionally and politically as a majority community in Kashmir, even though in reality they've been a minority. KPs need legal safeguards to protect their rights as an indigenous minority that cannot be overridden by majoritarian politics.

A museum on the exoduses of KPs & the Genocide of KPs over the last seven hundred years. This should be a part of the overall

museum on 'Hindu Genocides in India' during the Islamic invasion and the British rule. The story of the KP exodus should become part of history and be told in schools all over the country. We shouldn't allow a repeat anywhere else in the country. Prevent the possibility of Mini Kashmir getting created at any other place in future

For our success in future, we need to **harness the administrative power, the commercial power & the power of the media.** More KP children need to pursue administrative roles (IAS/IPS/IFS), economic roles (business and commerce) & Communication (Media).

Demographic changes in Kashmir are required if it is to develop into a modern state. It needs to become more pluralistic, diverse & cosmopolitan. With Article 370 gone, 35A gone, the Domicile Act, migrant property act, this should be feasible and reverse migration of KPs a possibility.

Engagement with the local population/Civil Society is a must. Confidence-building measures will be required. Ultimately, for a safe and happy return, we need to build bridges, not burn them. Social acceptance is a must for the resettlement of KPs. The state has to be the facilitator.

Political and civic empowerment, including meaningful representation in local governance and the resettlement process.

Conclusion

The exodus of Kashmiri Pandits is not merely a story of migration but a profound human tragedy marked by loss, resilience, and unanswered hopes. Kashmiri Pandit exodus is not just a humanitarian tragedy but a civilizational upheaval. Its impact extends beyond the community to the cultural, social, and moral fabric of Kashmir and India. A lasting resolution requires remembrance, justice, reconciliation, and sincere efforts to restore dignity and security to those who were forced to abandon their homeland. Only then can the wounds of the past begin to heal and the vision of a peaceful, inclusive Kashmir be revived. A durable resolution requires not only



material rehabilitation but also institutional accountability, historical recognition, and inclusive political engagement. Without addressing the structural causes that enabled the exodus, efforts at reconciliation risk remaining symbolic rather than substantive. Temporary and ad-hoc protection will not convince the KP community anymore. Lessons have to be learnt from the exoduses of the past, and credible long-term security guarantees have to be built into the system that leave no scope for another exodus in the future. There has to be zero tolerance for intimidation and religious hate-crimes and policing has to have a strong intelligence arm. *As a community, we must remember what led to the exodus.*

As a community, we must ensure that not just India but the world remembers our exodus.

As a community, we must record, preserve and carry forward the memories of the exodus to the next generations.

As a community, we must ensure that our traditions, culture and heritage survive, revive, and thrive.

As a community, we must resolve that sooner or later, we will return to Kashmir!



I Didn't See A Thing!

A shrill cry of a woman pleading for mercy rang across the neighborhood, filling the hearts of those who heard it with a sense of uneasiness and foreboding. Alarmed, yet eager to know what was happening, Santosh Kumar Kachroo* came out of his house and heard screams coming from a house nearby. His wife was in the garden talking to a young man, who was standing outside the five-foot high compound wall, only his head visible.

“What are you doing here? And why are you lingering around here?” he heard her asking the young man.

“Nothing Behenji, I was just walking,” he replied. The man seemed evasive, his voice unconvincing.

Sensing trouble, Santosh asked his wife to get inside the house, while keeping a watch on the man, who was now walking away. From the



Two young Muslim men, one perhaps a teenager and other in his early twenties, were dragging out a Hindu auto rickshaw driver from his home, with his mother in tow, crying and pleading for mercy. She was begging the terrorists to let go of her son.



“I didn't see a thing. I won't tell anyone,” blurted out Santosh, benumbed by the overwhelming fear that gripped him.

neighboring Hindu house, across the ten-foot side road, incessant shouts and wailing could be heard. Curious, Santosh went close to the compound wall and peeped over it. The scene he witnessed left him petrified—and, unknown to him at that time, his life affected forever. Two young Muslim men, one perhaps a teenager and other in his early twenties, were dragging out a Hindu auto rickshaw driver from his home, with his mother in tow, crying and pleading for mercy. She was begging the



terrorists to let go of her son. Weeping, she pleaded, “Balaya lagou, he is innocent. And if you think he has done something wrong I will make sure he behaves in future.” Her tearful appeals were falling on deaf ears; the radicalized youth were in no mood to spare him. The woman, sobbing and imploring, followed the terrorists, as they dragged her son towards the main gate of the house, which opened on to the side road. Somewhere during the commotion, the teenager lost his temper, pulled out an AK-47 from underneath his Pheran, and pointing it at the lady, shouted, “You shut your mouth and get inside your house, else I am going to shoot you right here.” Seeing the weapon trained at her the woman fell silent. Santosh, witnessing this frightening scene felt terrified, his legs shivering with fear. Before he could pull himself together, the terrorists were just a few feet away from him, having hauled the auto rickshaw driver out onto the side road. The ill-tempered teenager had spotted him peeking from behind the compound wall. Coming closer, he yelled at Santosh, “You better not tell about this to anyone, or else.”

“I didn't see a thing. I won't tell anyone,” blurted out Santosh, benumbed by the overwhelming fear that gripped him.

“Leave this man alone, he won't be any trouble,” the older terrorist, perhaps a local from the neighborhood, cut in.

Holding the victim by his collar and dragging him along, they quickly left the neighborhood. As he got hold of his senses, Santosh realized that the young man his wife had found lingering outside their house must

have been an accomplice of these terrorists, perhaps a lookout to alert them of any danger. The fact that the local boys too were involved in terrorism was deeply disturbing.

This blood-chilling experience unnerved Santosh, and other Hindus in the neighborhood. However, their faith in the syncretic cultural ethos of Kashmir gave them some hope, hoping they won't be targeted. Santosh had two Muslim households as his immediate neighbors. One of these was a decent family, always helpful and doing their best to reassure their Hindu neighbors in the trying circumstances. However, same could not be said of the other Muslim neighbor, a school teacher notorious for holding strong anti-Hindu views and actively involved with the radical elements in the colony.

Early morning, the following day, local newspapers reported the brutal killing of the auto rickshaw driver by the terrorists. The Urdu dailies always addressed them as 'militants' never as terrorists. Was it out of fear or were they in collusion with them or was it both? The vernacular print media in Kashmir needs to face the proverbial mirror and truthfully answer this question. Alongside this young man's dead body was found the bullet ridden body of a young Muslim woman. The newspaper reported receiving a letter from the 'militants' stating that the Kafir man and the Muslim woman were having a love affair, hence both of them deserved to be executed.

Though totally shaken by the terrifying turn of events, Santosh mustered courage and

decided to go to his office — two days after the abduction— to get his salary. Just as he was leaving his house for the office he bumped into his neighbor, the radicalized teacher.

“Where are you going, Mahra?” he asked.

“Ah, I am going to office to get the salary.”

“Okay, take care, you never know when a shootout might take place.”

Is he really concerned or is this a warning? wondered Santosh. Not sure of this man's intentions, Santosh bid him goodbye and moved on. Curfew had been lifted but hardly any public transport was on the road, so he had to walk all the way to his office, which was a few kilometers away. After collecting his salary, he wanted to have his usual hot cup of coffee at the nearby coffee house but instead decided to head back home, these were unpredictable times in the Valley and home felt safe—at least that is what he thought.

On reaching Natipora, he noticed a couple of young men trying to fix a stalled scooter, by the side of the road that led up to his house. After he had passed by them and walked ahead, one of the men, in a menacing tone and loud enough for him to hear, said “If you open your mouth and tell anyone what you saw, we will burn your house down along with your family.”

Caught off guard, the dire threat made his blood freeze and he found himself saying, “I have not seen anything and why should I tell anyone anything.”

Scared to death, his knees seemed to buckle, feeling he might pass out anytime. Gathering all his strength he carried on walking towards his house, not looking back once, all the time fearful of being shot in the back by these fanatics. A few meters walk to the main gate of his house seemed to take a lifetime. Finally getting inside, he slammed the gate, shut behind him, bolted it and rushed into the house. Seeing Santosh's panic-stricken face, his wife knew something was terribly wrong. Concerned, she asked, “Your face has turned pale, as if you have seen a ghost. What happened?”

With his brother's family, who lived in the same house, gathered around him, Santosh narrated the harrowing incident, shaking uncontrollably out of fear for his life. After he had finished, there was a shocked silence in the room, a suffocating feeling of dread gripped them all. Desperate, he called up his brother-in-law for advice and help. Indira Nagar, where his brother-in-law resided, was considered a safe haven, the presence of an army cantonment in the neighborhood there made the minorities felt secure. Like most Hindus he had been anxious about the safety of his young girls, so just a month back he had sent both his daughters to his brother-in-law's house at Indira Nagar. Now his own life was in grave danger. On hearing what had happened, his brother-in-law could make out that things were really serious, so he came over to their house.

Strung out by stress, Santosh told his brother-in-law, “We have decided to leave as soon as possible, it's no longer safe for us out here,”

Even Santosh's brother wanted to leave, worried that due to their similar looks he could be mistaken for his elder brother, and as a result get targeted by the terrorists. Grasping the seriousness of the situation, their brother-in-law offered to shift them to his house. Not to raise suspicion, Santosh took only his mother and wife along, pretending to the neighbors that his mother was sick and in urgent need of treatment at the hospital. His brother's family was to join them the next morning. The night at his brother-in-law's was perhaps the longest one for him, he just could not get sleep — the thought of being tracked down by the terrorists ceaselessly haunted him. At midnight he heard a vehicle stop outside the house, Santosh shuddered, fearing the terrorists had come for him. Jittery, he peeped out the window to find an ambulance waiting outside. His sister was a doctor at the government hospital in Srinagar and the ambulance had come to pick her up for an emergency case. Santosh was relieved but realized how fear had messed up his mind. After she left for the hospital Santosh worried for her safety, hoping she and her family

wouldn't get caught up in the danger he was facing. Until she returned, which was at 5 am in the morning, he was restless, getting only fitful sleep.

Later that morning, 18 March 1990, his brother's family came over in their car. Huddled together inside the old Fiat, Santosh, his wife, brother, brother's wife and two kids, left for Jammu. He could carry with him only a few clothes in a small suitcase. For the first time the old vehicle would be running on a punishing terrain, and this worried them. To make matters worse it was raining hard that day, even gods seemed to be testing their forbearance to the limit. And indeed, that seemed to be the case, in many places the road was partially blocked due to landslides. At one such spot they were horror-struck when loose mud, from the mountains above, fell onto the bonnet of the car. At last, they reached Jammu, the grueling journey finally coming to an end—unfortunately, not their woes. A relative put them up in his hotel, while they looked for a place to stay. In a few days, Santosh rented a two-room accommodation, while his brother moved into another relative's house. Meanwhile, Srinagar-Jammu highway got shut down for next 13-days due to major landslides—at least they were lucky in this regard, they thought.

In the hurry to escape, they had left behind everything that was needed to run a household. After a month or so, Santosh's wife travelled all the way back to Srinagar to retrieve essential household stuff. Though she was scared, she didn't allow Santosh to accompany her. Not daring to go straight to their own house, she went to Indira Nagar.

Santosh's brother-in-law, obviously surprised to see her come back, asked, “What happened? Why have you come back?”

Settling down in a chair, she replied, “I have come to take some of our belongings, we desperately need them there to Jammu. Can't afford to buy all those things, so I will take some stuff with me.”

“Are you out of your mind?” he retorted, “It's too dangerous to go back there. I won't let you take such a big risk.”

“I have to take this chance, we have left everything behind,” she insisted.

“Listen carefully to me. After all of you left, I and your daughters went to your house. Someone had dug up a pit in your garden. I fear they may be hiding weapons there. Your visit to the house could be perceived as a threat by the terrorists, putting your life in danger.”

Recognizing the risk involved, she agreed, “You are right, it's probably not safe to go there now.”

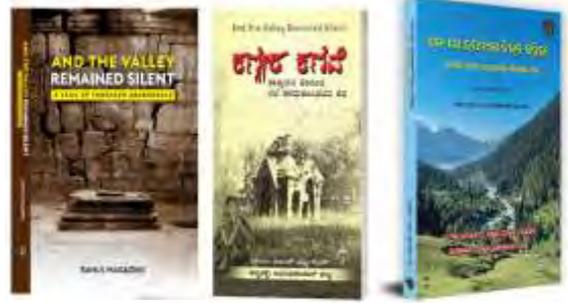
“We managed to retrieve from your house a small suitcase, carrying your girls' certificates, one two-in-one radio and a few other things,” he said.

Though grateful for his help, she felt dejected at being in such a helpless situation, their own home was out of bounds to her. The following day, along with her elder daughter, she left for Jammu in a truck they shared with another Hindu family. The younger daughter joined them after a month, along with her grandmother. Santosh's family had to set up their household from scratch, buying everything all over again—a challenging task for a middle-class family with limited resources.

This unprecedented upheaval in their life did not change Santosh's priorities—his daughters' education had to carry on, he insisted. Prepared to face any hardship, he ensured they got a good education. The elder daughter took a transfer from REC, Srinagar to REC, Jaipur, where she resumed her B Tech course. Notwithstanding the hot weather and the lack of basic amenities, the younger daughter, studying in 11th standard at the time of exodus, worked hard to secure an admission into MBBS. Concerned about their security, the authorities did not send the successful Hindu candidates Srinagar. Santosh's younger daughter, along with few other Hindu candidates, was put up temporarily as a 'migrant student', at Government Medical College, Jammu. After one-and-a half years of the course, when it was time for the first professional examination, the 'migrant student' tag became

a noose around their necks. Neither the medical college at Jammu nor the one at Srinagar took up the ownership of these beleaguered students, leaving them in a limbo —wasting one whole academic year deciding which college should conduct their examination. In the end neither of the colleges did! The students met leaders of all major political parties —even knocking at the corridors of power in Delhi— but to no avail, all just paid lip service, nothing concrete materialized. Gutted, they were almost ready to give up and pursue some other course afresh. As a last resort, they met the RSS chief, who was not only sympathetic but ensured they got transferred to medical colleges in states ruled by the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Delighted at the prospect of continuing their course in other states, all of them applied for the discharge certificate. Again, one more hurdle came up, the Government Medical College, Jammu expressed its inability to provide the certificate, as the 'migrant students' were registered under Government Medical College, Srinagar. Given the grim security situation in the Valley, Santosh, worried about the future of his daughter, having no clue how to get hold of this crucial certificate. One day, walking through a crowded Jammu market, he bumped into one of his very close friends, Riaz Ahmed*, a plant pathologist at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, Srinagar. Santosh was delighted to catch up with his old friend; he hadn't met with him since leaving Srinagar. During their conversation he mentioned the difficulty he was facing in getting the certificate from Srinagar. Quick to assure him of his help, Riaz Ahmed told him, "It shouldn't be a big deal to get this certificate. The principal of Government Medical College, Srinagar, is my relative, he will surely oblige." The forced exodus having created a deep mistrust between the communities, Santosh didn't want to get his hopes up about Riaz Ahmed's offer. Two weeks passed without any news from Srinagar, Santosh too by now had



forgotten about the promise made by his friend. Unexpectedly, one day, Riaz Ahmed's colleague, Shakeel* came looking for Santosh at Jammu Camp University office.

On meeting with Santosh, the first thing he said was: "I am amazed at the close friendship between you and Riaz Ahmed. In fact, I haven't seen a sincerer friend than Riaz."

"He is a gentleman, no doubt," replied Santosh.

Shakeel went on to narrate the whole story: "After meeting with you here in Jammu, he left for Srinagar. Unfortunately, he fell sick on his way back. It was a heart problem, and his condition was quite serious. Rushed to Shri Maharaja Hari Singh (SMHS) Hospital at Srinagar, he was admitted in a critical condition. Just three days later, as his condition stabilized, he requested me to arrange for the certificate your daughter needed, and to deliver it to you here in Jammu. Even on his sickbed he hadn't forgotten the promise he made you"

Santosh was left dumbfounded. He marveled at his friend's sincerity and felt grateful for the incredible concern shown by him. Handing over the certificate, Shakeel remarked, "It's sad Kashmiri Hindus still don't trust us or value our friendship."

It was not true, at least not in Santosh's case, for he greatly valued his friend's sincerity and integrity. This kind and extraordinary gesture of a gentle soul was like a balm on the wounds inflicted by the terrorists.

Author is a Professor of Respiratory Medicine.

(This is an excerpt from his book 'AND THE VALLEY REMAINED SILENT', which has been translated into Kannada and Odia. Also, Tamil translation is in the works. The book is available on Amazon worldwide)



 Ashok Raina

Exile Without Return

A KASHMIRI PANDIT'S CHRONICLE OF LOSS, FAITH, AND SURVIVAL

Every Kashmiri Pandit carries a story etched in pain after the genocide and forced exodus of the early 1990's. Mine begins on December 28, 1989, a day that changed my life forever.

At around 11 a.m., I was entering the Nagabal Shrine in Anantnag to attend the last rites of Shri Prem Nath Bhat, who had been assassinated a day earlier by Pakistan-sponsored terrorists in broad daylight, in a densely populated area of Anantnag town. His killing sent shockwaves through the entire Kashmir valley and marked another brutal chapter in the unfolding terror.

As I reached the shrine gate, the then Director General of Police, Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Jitendra Narain Saxena, was coming out, accompanied by the then Superintendent of Police, Anantnag, Mr. K. Ilango. Mr. Ilango introduced me to the DGP, who expressed deep anguish over Shri Bhat's murder. I told him plainly that those in uniform need not offer sermons; what was urgently required was decisive action.

Moments later, a CID officer, DSP R. N. Tickoo, approached me and asked me to leave the shrine, saying my presence had created administrative problems. Four young men from the Kashmiri Pandit community—Surinder Dhar, Autar Krishen Raina, Kaul, and Bal Krishen Kaul and another youth from Hera



At around 11 a.m., I was entering the Nagabal Shrine in Anantnag to attend the last rites of Shri Prem Nath Bhat, who had been assassinated a day earlier by Pakistan-sponsored terrorists in broad daylight

Mohalla escorted me under grave risk and dropped me safely at my residence in Lal Chowk. They protected me at the cost of their own lives. That day, fear became personal.

Throughout the day, friends both Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits advised me to leave the Valley temporarily. I resisted. Who wants to sever ties with their roots? Even Mr. Ilango later called and urged me to leave. That evening, a senior Muslim IPS officer, a close friend of mine, telephoned me and said

quietly, “Your death would be a personal loss to me. Please leave the Valley.”

That call sealed my decision and at 3 a.m. on December 29, 1989, I left my home in complete darkness. On the way, I stopped near the gate of Government College, Khanabal, where I had graduated in 1972. Standing there, I broke down, asking myself why I was being forced to leave my birthplace for no fault of mine.

My only “crime” was that I was the only accredited journalist in the Anantnag and Pulwama districts who consistently reported facts in the national media. During the February 20, 1986 assaults on dozens of temples and Hindu localities, I was described by national media as a “lone crusader.” That honesty had now made me a marked man.

Accepting this as destiny, I moved toward Qazigund. Due to one-way traffic on the Srinagar–Jammu National Highway, I managed through a known police officer to travel in a petrol tanker and reached Jammu by evening.

That day, I too became a victim of genocide, an exile first in my own state and later in my own country, Bharat, but without ever being recognized as a community in exile.

Parents, Prayer, and the Paradox of Faith
The Kashmiri Pandit community was

suddenly left traumatized, abandoned, and uncertain of its future. One entire generation aged between 30 and 45 was the worst affected. They carried the burden of children and aging parents, while trying to rebuild shattered lives.

My parents were in Haridwar at the time, on their annual pilgrimage. We informed them that we had fled the Valley and would never return. The news reached them as they stood on the banks of the Ganges, praying for humanity and reciting:

“सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः। सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु। मा कश्चिद् दुःखभाग्भवेत्॥”

A prayer for universal well-being—spoken while their own lives were being torn apart by ethnic cleansing. The contrast was unbearable.

Elderly Kashmiri Pandits lost everything at the twilight of their lives—homes, dignity, stability leaving the younger generation to shoulder impossible responsibilities.

In those darkest years, the Rare Hands of Support were only two individuals that stood out for the Kashmiri Pandits.

Late Jagmohan, then Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, understood our suffering. He amended state provisions to grant “permanent leave salary” to displaced Kashmiri Pandit government employees. That single administrative decision became a lifeline for countless families, including mine. With three young children and a wife who was also a government



On the way, I stopped near the gate of Government College, Khanabal, where I had graduated in 1972. Standing there, I broke down, asking myself why I was being forced to leave my birthplace for no fault of mine.

teacher, this support allowed us to survive with dignity.

The second was Mr. Bal Thackeray, Shiv Sena Chief, who announced reservations for Kashmiri migrant students in Maharashtra. That policy enabled an entire generation to rebuild its future. Today, those young men and women are spread across the globe, contributing with distinction thirty-six years after exile.

Every Kashmiri Pandit started a fresh struggle by the end of January 1990 and it still continues even after 36 years in Exile in our own country. Kafi Azmi has rightly said,

“मिले ना फुल तो कांटों से दोस्ती कर ली
इसी तरह से बसर हम ने जिंदगी कर ली”

(milay na phuul to kāñToñ se dostī kar lī
isī tarah se basar ham ne zindagī kar lī)

and this generation continues to struggle amid thorns till date. This generation had an experience of 'Death' while living. We lost everything: Name, Fame, Position, Past, Status, Property, Cultural roots and everything and we could not claim for the same because we were bodily living otherwise dead.

I too was a part of the victimized generation as I was 39 years old and struggled for a few months in Jammu as a journalist but had to move to Himachal Pradesh. I was blessed to be in the vicinity of His Holiness Dalai Lama the Tibetan Spiritual Leader living in Exile near Dharamshala who had succeeded in preserving Tibetan Culture and language and Dharamshala was looking like a Mini Lasa now. Kashmiri Pandits were not even recognized as a community in exile and got scattered in the entire world.

Mostly KPs were stuck in Jammu because of different reasons and some others reached Noida, Gurgaon, Delhi, Pune Bangalore and a few others reached Himachal Pradesh. I remember 59 families had reached Kangra and nearby places like Gaggal, Nagrot, Bagwan but now there are only four families here. There was no one to support them and I remember that a senior citizen Kashmiri Pandit woman in exodus at Kangra had been waiting for the permission of the consecutive governments under section 118 of the HP Agricultural Act for purchasing 10 marlas of

land for the construction of her shelter even after the lapse of 30 years of her application moved before the government. Despite the BJP government in power at that time and the unfortunate senior citizen moved even PMO without any support.

It was a story of Struggle, Faith, and Survival.

In 1991, I struggled to survive on ₹125 per day, working until late night to support my family. One evening, my wife told me the children were falling behind in their studies because I was never home. That night, I stood at a crossroads, I did not have a wink of sleep fearing they would never even be graduates.

In desperation, I turned to the Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 18, Verse 66):

“सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।

अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः”

“Abandon all duties and surrender unto Me.

I shall deliver you from all suffering. Do not fear.”

With no one else to turn to, I surrendered before HIM because I had no other option. By the grace of the Lord alone, all the kids were settled down. The eldest son became a dental surgeon and the other two are well settled in the USA. This story is not unique—countless Kashmiri Pandit families experienced similar miracles born of faith and perseverance.

My generation who lived in exile for decades has now grown old and are fatigued, some have passed away, some are at the brink of their life. After this great struggle they feel while being in exile in their own country,

Today, I am 75 years old. and usually visit Jammu and in the morning hours I sit at the shop of local Kandur at Roopnagar only to meet people of my generation who had proved to be the great warriors against the unending traumas they had faced during the last 36 years of exodus.

Surprisingly, I found elderly people collecting 'Lawas or Ghee Roti' either one or two vividly confirming that they are either one or two in the family. Their children are settled out of Jammu within the country or outside.

Houses built with immense hardship in the 1990's now stand locked, silent witnesses to lives lived and lost.

Individually, Kashmiri Pandits rebuilt their lives with dignity. Collectively, however, the community lost direction. Even after 36 years of exile, it cannot point to a single tangible achievement as a community. Fragmentation, lack of sincere leadership, and the absence of political weight left us perpetually on the receiving end.

Kashmiri Pandits had every time been on the receiving end and there was no helping hand extended at any point of time by any potent power to bring it out of tremendous traumatic situation. Those, despite being too powerful, had been claiming that they were all behind this community but they too remained mute spectators of our agony, trauma and consistent struggle.

Kashmiri Pandits had an age-old history of religious tolerance and universal acceptance and lived with dignity and respect and have shown this resilience during the last 36 years of Exodus too. We must develop faith in our next generation, young generation

to have a sincere leadership, unity and a perfect goal and achieve which collectively we had failed to achieve for our community during the last 36 years of exodus and have faith in the Katho Upanishad verse,

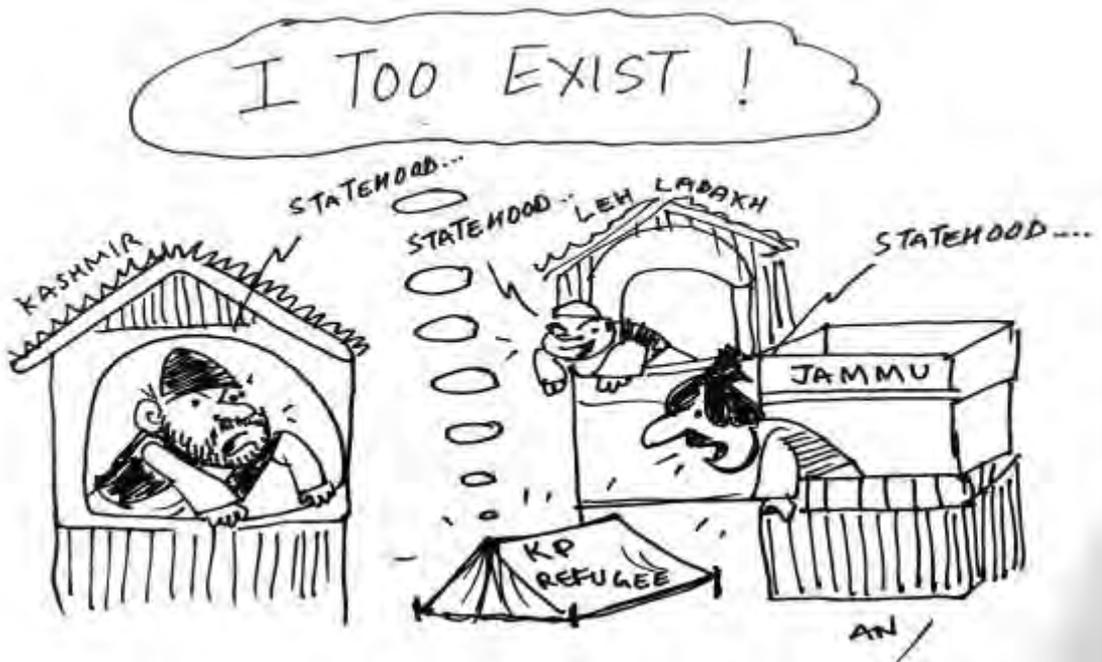
उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

"Arise, Awake, and stop not till the goal is reached"

Swami Vivekananda popularized this Verse meaning to rise, be aware, and learn until the highest goal is achieved, as the path is difficult like a razor's edge still Swami Vivekananda emphasized "Faith, faith, faith in ourselves, faith in God — this is the secret of greatness," and urged, "Have faith in yourselves – all power is within you – be conscious and bring it out," as he believed self-belief unlocks inner divinity and strength to achieve anything.

(The writer is a Correspondent of Aaj Tak, India Today and UNI based in Dharamshala, H.P.)

Cartoon by- Anil Nakhasi





WE WERE SILENT—NOT DIMINISHED

An old woman sits in a rocking chair by the window. She looks upward and smiles, as if recognising a familiar thought. The chair moves gently, keeping time with memory. For a moment, her face softens.

I sit beside her and rest my head in her lap. After a pause, I ask softly, “Kya soch rahe ho, Ded?”

Her hand moves over my hair, slow and deliberate, as she arranges her thoughts before speaking.

“Hum us jagah ko sirf ghar nahin kehte the,” she says.

“That place wasn’t merely where we lived. It was where the mind felt at home.”

She pauses, as if listening inward.

“Wahan log tez nahin hote the,” she adds quietly. “Gehre hote the.”

Her gaze lifts again. The smile returns, then falters.

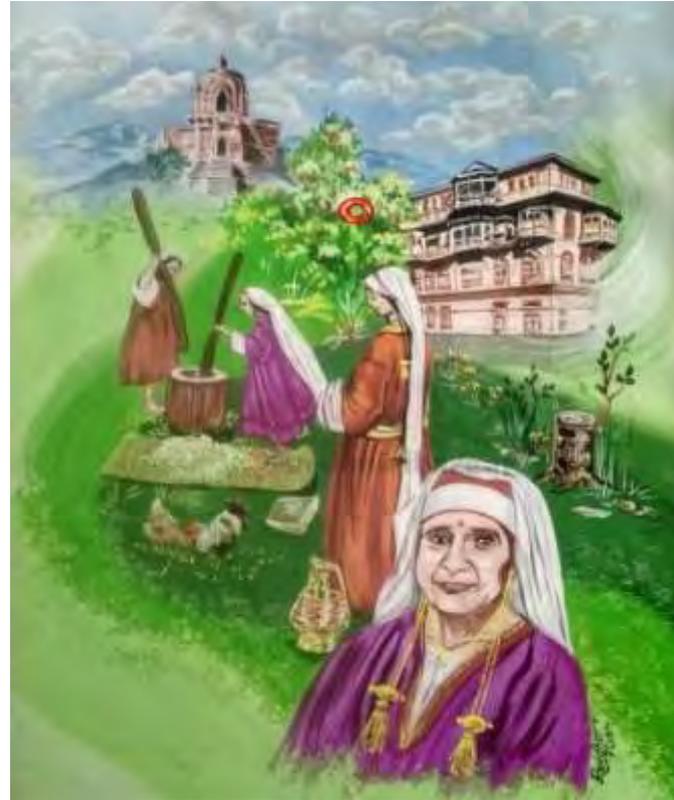
Then, almost to herself:

“Pata nahi kiski nazar lag gayi.”

The rocking chair continues its slow rhythm. The room remains still. She speaks of Kashmir with quiet pride. Hamara Kashmir mamooli nahin tha. A land shaped by scholars and seekers, where learning was inseparable from living. Thought was not displayed. It was inhabited.

Inquiry moved easily through homes and conversations. Asking questions was not disruptive. It was expected.

In older memory, the Valley was known as Rishi-var — a land shaped less by rulers and more by rishis. Tradition remembers Kashyap Rishi as giving the Valley its earliest civilisational form, not through conquest but through settlement and reflection. Authority here did



not announce itself through power, but through perception. Inquiry mattered more than command. Silence carried weight. Learning was not ornamental; it was elemental. To know was not to dominate, but to recognise.

It is within this cultural memory that Kashmir is remembered as the place most beloved of Saraswati. Not as legend alone, but as metaphor. Language, music, and thought found ease here. Words did not strain to exist. Silence did not feel empty. Knowledge felt at home.

This temperament shaped the Valley's intellectual life. Debate was prized over decree. Difference did not immediately harden into opposition. Ideas could coexist without demanding victory. Thought here was neither loud nor dogmatic. It was subtle. Spacious. Deeply human.

From this landscape emerged one of Kashmir's most luminous minds, Abhinavagupta — philosopher, aesthete, and polymath. He wrote of consciousness not as something to be achieved, but as something already present, awaiting recognition. Pratyabhijñā — recognition — lay at the heart of his thought: the belief that fragmentation is illusion, and that beneath difference lies an unbroken whole.

This understanding was not confined to texts. It lived in voice and verse. In the poetry of Lall Ded, truth appeared stripped of ornament — intimate, fearless, and direct. She spoke across faiths and forms, reminding the Valley that wisdom did not belong to institutions alone, but to lived experience.

Beauty, in this worldview, was not indulgence. It was revelation. Art did not distract from truth; it disclosed it. A poem, a gesture, a moment of stillness — each could become a doorway into understanding.

Centuries earlier, Adi Shankaracharya articulated a parallel vision: that unity precedes division, and that knowledge dissolves fear. Violence, in this sense, was not merely an act of the body, but a failure of perception. Ignorance produced rupture; understanding restored balance.

Even the figure of Shiva, so closely associated with the Valley, was understood less as an object of worship and more as a symbol of equilibrium — stillness amidst motion, presence without assertion. A reminder that power need not be loud, and that restraint can be a form of strength.

Education stood at the centre of this life. It was neither selective nor symbolic. It mattered equally for men and women. At a time when much of the world was still debating a woman's place in public thought,

Kashmiri civilisation assumed her presence without argument, without qualification. Learning was not gendered. Wisdom was not conditional.

The human whole was understood through balance — Shiva and Shakti together, not one over the other. Equal forces. Complementary. Complete only in relation to one another.

Pride did not announce itself.

It lived quietly.

This was not progress claimed.

It was continuity lived.

This was the inheritance every Kashmiri grew up with — learned not through instruction, but through example. In how elders spoke. In how disagreements ended. In how knowledge was treated as something to be shared, never displayed.

What fractured in the late 1980's and early 1990's was not only political order, but this continuity of mind.

The change did not arrive all at once. It crept in. Voices hardened. Fear began to replace familiarity. Names that once belonged to neighbours started appearing in whispers and warnings. The Valley's ease with difference, its patience with thought, began to fray.

A civilisation trained in listening was suddenly confronted by a language that recognised only fear.

Then violence made itself unmistakable.

What followed was not unrest in the abstract. It was terror, enacted at close range. Families watched loved ones being shot. People were dragged from their homes, kidnapped, or killed in public view. Women were raped. Threats were broadcast openly, naming individuals and communities. Fear was not incidental; it was methodical. It was designed to empty neighbourhoods, to make survival itself contingent on disappearance.

This violence was driven by a wave of radical Islamist militancy that was neither spontaneous nor purely local in character. Armed groups operating in the Valley drew training, weapons, funding, and ideological direction from across the border in Pakistan.

What arrived was not simply political dissent, but a violent, absolutist project — one that rejected pluralism, silenced debate, and treated civilians as targets.

Terrorism became a tool of demographic cleansing. The aim was not coexistence, but removal. The exodus of Kashmiri Pandits was therefore not an accident of chaos; it was the foreseeable outcome of sustained, targeted violence. People fled because remaining meant living under constant threat. Leaving was not abandonment. It was survival.

For those who left, survival carried its own quiet cost. Identity became provisional. Memory replaced geography. Home was reduced to what could be carried — photographs, keys, recipes, fragments of language. What endured was not possession, but persistence: the refusal to let history collapse into silence.

Our eyes carried tears while our lips learned to smile. Our hearts burned, but our minds were trained to steady themselves — a discipline every Kashmiri learns young, and one Sanatan thought has always held sacred.

The cost of this terror extended far beyond the immediate loss of life. It shattered trust between neighbours. It severed a civilisation from its custodians. A Valley once shaped by scholarship, dialogue, and restraint was forced into silence by violence that recognised no argument except fear.

Exile followed exile. Camps replaced courtyards. Calendars lost relevance. Children grew up learning their homeland as story rather than experience. Language survived in fragments. Rituals endured without geography. Memory floated, untethered from place.

The tragedy was not only displacement, but suspension — lives interrupted, histories paused, belonging reduced to recollection. When custodians of memory are removed, what recedes is a place's ability to remember itself fully.

To speak of return today is complicated. Geography has shifted. Generations have passed. Homes may no longer recognise their

former inhabitants. Return, therefore, cannot be imagined only as physical relocation. It must also be intellectual and moral.

To return is to acknowledge.

To listen.

To hold memory without weaponising it.

The old woman falls silent. Her hand rests on my head. Some memories, she seems to know, do not need to be carried further.

And yet, something endured.

In exile, stripped of protection and recognition, Kashmiri families returned to what had always sustained them. Education remained central. Knowledge remained non-negotiable. There were no weapons to inherit, no excuses to cling to, no institutions waiting to empower us. Human rights did not arrive with urgency. Our disappearance passed almost without notice, as if silence were expected.

We were silent — but not diminished.

Across borrowed homes and provisional lives, survival came first. Then rebuilding. We studied when resources were scarce. We worked when certainty was absent. We raised generations on the same quiet understanding that had shaped the Valley long before violence — that learning restores balance, that dignity does not need permission, that depth outlasts force.

In time, survival became something more.

We crossed borders with our knowledge. We learned the world, contributed to it, and carried forward a civilisation of thought in places far from its source. And now, after decades of restraint, we are ready to speak — not in anger, but with clarity.

To remember what was broken.

To honour what endured.

To tell stories shaped by memory rather than grievance.

Before it was fractured by violence, Kashmir was a conversation.

That conversation was never lost.

It was carried.

Quietly.

And it continues.



 Sunil Kaul



A Living Legend of OUR COMMUNITY



During my recent visit with Mr. J. L. Kaul, I had the privilege of engaging in deeply inspiring conversations drawn from his rich lifetime of experiences—both personal and professional. His reflections, marked by wisdom, resilience, and humility, were not only profoundly moving but also offered timeless lessons in courage, leadership, and selfless service. These real-life experiences stand as a source of motivation and inspiration for all who seek purpose beyond adversity.

Warrior of the dark—that's how he can be best described.

Mr. J. L. Kaul, the Secretary General of the All India Confederation of the Blind (AICB), has seen no ray of light for about 70 years of his life. His last visual memory of a human face or a chirping bird was as a child, five years

old, when he lost his sight due to smallpox. But Kaul was a brave heart. He never gave in to fate, or for that matter, the physical challenge that destiny had flung at him in one of its brutal ironies. This vision-robbled child fought his way through the lightless alleys of life and grew up to be the beacon of light for many others groping in darkness.

By dint of his outstanding merit and undeterred zeal, he passed Sanskrit (Hons.) from the Punjab University with a gold medal in 1967—the year that also witnessed the beginning of his journey as a messiah of the blind.

It was in this year that Kaul plunged into the cause of his vision-compromised fraternity, cutting short his illustrious academic career. A letter from Shri Madanlal Khandelwal, ex-principal of the special school he studied in, and off he went to Delhi secretly, leaving



behind his MA course, to join Khandelwal in the formation of a self-help centre—Training and Rehabilitation Centre for the Blind. What followed was a story of solitary struggle. Khandelwal had gone off to London, leaving the entire responsibility of the Centre on the inexperienced shoulders of his loyal follower. But Kaul was a fighter and a survivor too. After much endeavour, he managed means for the sustenance of the blind people he had shouldered the responsibilities of: Braille transcription contracts and re-caning of chairs.

This continued till 1970 and then Kaul went on to espouse the cause of the blind at the national and international levels. He founded the first two self-help organizations of the blind in India viz. National Federation of the Blind (1970) and All India Confederation of the Blind (1980)—an umbrella organization. These organizations ushered in the self-help

movement of persons with disabilities, enabling them to speak and act for themselves. He was also instrumental in ensuring the presence of the International Federation of the Blind (IFB) in the region. Thus the East Asia Committee of the IFB was formed in 1976 in Delhi. Kaul took over as the Executive Secretary of the Committee in 1977, a position he held with distinction till 1985. The organization at that time, consisted of blind representatives from countries in South Asia, South-East Asia and Australasia. And all this at a time, when resources were scanty and self-help movement in the region was either non-existent or at best, in a fledgling state.

The brainchild of Kaul, AICB has always championed the cause of education and employment with a special focus on, and concern for women, senior citizens and the under-privileged rural blind. Founded with a fund of Rs 300 and a small rented office space, AICB has now magnified into a beautiful campus of its own, about 90 employees, a budget of over Rs. 30 million and over 20 affiliates and branches all over India. This NGO has also spearheaded many successful rehabilitation programmes for the rural blind under the able leadership of Kaul.

However, Kaul's contribution in the field expands far beyond the precincts of AICB. Elected unanimously as the Secretary General of the Asian Blind Union (ABU)



consisting of 23 countries for a four-year term at the World Blind Union meet in Melbourne in November 2000, he was chosen for the same post for two more tenures. Honorary Life Member of the WBU in his own right, Kaul was also appointed as the Chairperson of World Braille Council in 2009 for a three-year period.

Kaul's life is a saga of triumph and transcendence: Triumph over his own visual challenge and transcendence of his physical boundary to help others live a better life. The phenomenal impacts that Kaul's work has had in the lives of many others of his ilk merit his selection for this prestigious award:

- Today school-going blind children in many states are getting copies of their Braille textbooks for the first time, thanks to Kaul's untiring efforts.



- He opened the doors of employment for the visually impaired through strenuous training in stenography at AICB.
- He has empowered women to take up leadership roles in organizations for the blind, through training in related courses.
- Under his leadership, hundreds of blind men and women received training and support for economic rehabilitation in the far-flung villages of India.

AWARDS & ACCOLADES SO FAR

AWARD	YEAR
Conferred Padma Shri by the President of India	2014
Louis Braille Gold Medal (Globally, he is the 5th one to receive this award)	2012
Marga Schulze Award (Germany)	2006
R.M. Alpaiwala Memorial Award	2006
NCPEDP – Shell Helen Keller Award	2003
T.P. Jhunjhunwala Award	2003
World Human Rights Promotion Award	2003
Man of the year Award by American Biographical Institute	2000
Thomas Memorial National Award	2000
FICCI National Award	2000

APPEAL!

Team NAAD, every month, brings to its readers articles and features of importance to the community. It has assumed larger importance as our next generation is increasingly drifting away from history and culture because of the scattered nature of the community. NAAD serves as a powerful tool of connecting the youth with its roots through its rich articles and features. Behind the scene, month after month, there is a lot of effort put together by the team NAAD to present to its esteemed readers this richness of our heritage. It needs your patronage and support in terms of articles and that is the smallest payback its readers can provide to it. Please write articles for NAAD and give it the strength to serve you uninterrupted.



 Ravinder Gurtoo

HINDU RASHTRA: A SLOGAN THAT FAILED KASHMIR

The genocide of Kashmiri Pandits in 1990 remains independent India's most profound civilisational failure. It was not a spontaneous breakdown of law and order, nor an unavoidable by-product of insurgency. It was a targeted, systematic, and ideologically driven campaign of terror aimed at erasing an indigenous Hindu community that had lived in Kashmir continuously for over five thousand years. Killings, rapes, torture, intimidation, religious threats, and mass displacement were not incidental crimes; they were instruments of demographic cleansing.

What compounds this crime is not only the brutality inflicted upon Kashmiri Pandits, but the moral fraud that followed it. For thirty-six years, their suffering has been ritualis-

1990: When Hindu Rashtra Was Silent

January 1990 marked the first full-scale religious cleansing of Hindus in independent India. Selective assassinations of Pandit leaders, judges, scholars, academics, doctors, and social figures created an atmosphere of terror. Women were raped not merely as acts of violence, but as instruments of warning. Torture, threats, and intimidation became routine. Mosque loudspeakers blared nightly calls demanding that Hindus leave, convert, or die.

The administration collapsed. Police stations were abandoned. Security forces withdrew. The Indian Constitution ceased to function in the Valley almost overnight. A modern republic failed to protect one of its oldest indigenous communities.

What compounds this crime is not only the brutality inflicted upon Kashmiri Pandits, but the moral fraud that followed it.

tically remembered and politically exploited, while justice, restitution, accountability, and dignified return have been deliberately postponed or denied. No political formation bears greater responsibility for converting a genocide into a slogan than the BJP and its ideological mentor, the RSS.

The Kashmiri Pandit genocide is the most devastating indictment of the BJP–RSS claim of “Hindu Rashtra.” More than any academic critique, more than any ideological debate, the lived reality of Kashmiri Pandits exposes the hollowness of this narrative.

Temples, shrines, cremation grounds, libraries, and cultural landmarks and symbols of a civilisation older than recorded history were destroyed, encroached upon, or desecrated. What could not be Islamised was vandalised. What could not be erased physically was erased demographically.

This genocide did not occur in a political vacuum. It took place under the V. P. Singh government, which survived in Parliament solely due to the BJP's external support. This is not interpretation; it is historical fact.

The BJP had leverage. It possessed

The BJP had leverage. It possessed bargaining power. It could have withdrawn support, collapsed the government, forced emergency intervention, or demanded decisive military and administrative action in Kashmir.

bargaining power. It could have withdrawn support, collapsed the government, forced emergency intervention, or demanded decisive military and administrative action in Kashmir. It did none of these things.

At the moment when Hindu civilisation in Kashmir faced annihilation, the BJP chose political calculation over civilisational responsibility. Hindu Rashtra, at its first real test, was not merely absent, it was irrelevant.

From Genocide to Management:

The Bureaucratic Burial of a People

After the exodus, the genocide entered its second phase not of violence, but of erasure through bureaucracy. Kashmiri Pandits were reduced from citizens to refugees within their own country. Camps replaced homes. Relief replaced rights. Temporary arrangements became permanent exile.

Murderers, rapists, and collaborators were neither identified nor prosecuted. FIRs gathered dust. Witnesses were silenced by fear or fatigue. Property encroachment became normalised. Temples decayed into ruins. Libraries and cultural spaces vanished without record.

Most significantly, the word “genocide” was carefully avoided. Because acknowledging genocide demands accountability, legal, political, and moral. It demands prosecution, reparations, restitution, and historical truth. The Indian state, and later the BJP, had no appetite for such reckoning.

Memory survived only through community resilience, not state protection. Culture was preserved not by institutions, but by displaced families refusing to forget. The survival of Kashmiri Pandit identity became an act of resistance, not a state-supported right.

Eleven Years of BJP Rule: Hindu Rashtra Without Hindus

When the BJP came to power in 2014 with a decisive mandate, and again in 2019 with an even stronger majority, it claimed unprecedented authority to “correct historical wrongs.” For Kashmiri Pandits, this was projected as the moment of justice, return, and restitution.

Eleven years later, the record is indefensible.

No genocide law was applied to Kashmir.

No special tribunals were established to prosecute crimes of mass violence.

No comprehensive legal process was initiated to identify and punish perpetrators.

No systematic reclamation of properties occurred.

No cultural restitution programme was launched to restore temples, shrines, or civilisational landmarks.

No community-driven, dignified, and secure return was ensured.

Instead, what was offered was symbolism.

The abrogation of Article 370 was sold as civilisational justice. It was not. Administrative control replaced political autonomy, but justice was postponed once again. Memorials were discussed. Committees were formed. Announcements were made. Accountability was avoided.

For Kashmiri Pandits, the removal of Article 370 did not restore murdered relatives, reclaim ancestral homes, resurrect destroyed temples, or erase decades of exile. Hindu Rashtra reduced genocide to optics.

The Myth of Protection:

Violence Travels, Failure Follows

The Kashmiri Pandit genocide was not an isolated failure. It became a template.

In Palghar, Hindu sadhus were lynched in front of police while the state watched helplessly. In Muzaffarnagar, Hindu families were displaced and quietly forgotten. In Manipur, prolonged ethnic and religious violence exposed total administrative collapse. In West Bengal, Hindu homes and temples are routinely attacked during political violence. In Karnataka and Kerala, targeted killings and ideological intimidation persist.

In each case, the BJP's failure was not due to lack of power, but lack of resolve.

Statements replaced action. Committees replaced justice. Silence followed outrage. Hindu victims were advised restraint, patience, and “law will take its course,” while perpetrators benefited from delay, dilution, or protection. This is not accidental governance failure. It is patterned abandonment.

Global Hindus: Hindu Rashtra Ends at the Border

Nowhere is the fraud of Hindu Rashtra more visible than in the treatment of Hindus outside India.

In Pakistan, Hindus face systematic persecution, forced conversions, abductions of minor girls, sexual violence, temple desecration, and legal apartheid. In Bangladesh, Hindu homes are attacked during political unrest, temples vandalised, land grabbed, and demographic erosion continues unchecked.

The BJP came to power promising strong leadership and enhanced global standing. Hindus across the subcontinent expected decisive advocacy: sustained diplomatic pressure, international documentation, legal challenges, and moral leadership.

They received none.

No sustained UN campaign. No global accountability framework. No consistent diplomatic red lines. Persecution was occasionally condemned rhetorically but never internationalised with seriousness. Hindu Rashtra, it turns out, is a domestic slogan, not a civilisational responsibility.

RSS and the Comfort of Abstraction

When confronted with these failures, the RSS retreats into abstraction. Hindu Rashtra, it claims, is cultural, not political, civilisational, not administrative.

Memory survived only through community resilience, not state protection. Culture was preserved not by institutions, but by displaced families refusing to forget. The survival of Kashmiri Pandit identity became an act of resistance, not a state-supported right.

These formulations sound profound. They collapse under real suffering.

A civilisation that cannot protect its most persecuted adherents becomes an idea detached from reality. A Hindu Rashtra that cannot ensure justice for Kashmiri Pandits is not inclusive, it is evasive. Culture without courage is theatre. Civilisation without protection is nostalgia.

The Core Truth:

Hindu Rashtra as Narrative, Not Reality

The Kashmiri Pandit genocide reveals one brutal truth:

Hindu Rashtra under BJP–RSS is a narrative designed for mobilisation, not protection.

It mobilises votes. It generates identity. It fuels emotion.

But when Hindus are killed, raped, displaced, or erased, whether in Kashmir, Manipur, Palghar, or Sindh, it fails consistently.

Thirty-six years after the genocide, Kashmiri Pandits remain exiled. Their temples remain broken. Their killers remain free. Their genocide remains unnamed.

This is not an accident. It is a political choice.

History's Indictment

History will record that in 1990, the BJP had leverage and chose silence. It will also record that with absolute power; it chose symbolism over justice. The RSS will be remembered not for civilisational courage, but for ideological comfort divorced from suffering.

For Kashmiri Pandits, Hindu Rashtra has meant nothing, neither protection nor justice. For Hindus across India and beyond, it should serve as a warning:

A civilisation is not protected by slogans.

It is protected by action, accountability, and moral courage.

Until the Kashmiri Pandit genocide is formally acknowledged, legally prosecuted, culturally restored, and morally confronted, the claim of Hindu Rashtra will remain what it has always been, a fake narrative masking the abandonment of Hindus.



 Rakesh Kaul



THE HERO RISES AGAIN

At Avantipura, in the late Hindu, pre-Sultanate years, the alarm came the way it always came to Kashmir—first as a tremor in rumor, then as certainty in the bones. A murderous band had crossed the high passes. They moved like hot, winter fire: fast, hungry, leaving blackened beams and broken thresholds behind them.

No messenger arrived from any far court with relief. No banner came riding down the road to say, *Hold on—we are coming*. The Kashmiri Pandit residents had learned, early and repeatedly, that the only hands that reached for it were usually the ones reaching to take.

They came for saffron and timber. They came for horses and taxes. They came for the Valley's wine, its gold, its crafts, its beauty—and when the Valley bled, they called it the cost of living at the Silk Road crossroads. So, the Valley endured, not by innocence, but by structure.

Kashmiri Pandits lived with a layered strength: the strength of stone and the strength of script. Their temples were not only sanctums; they were anchor points of memory—courtyards where children learned the old stories, where families marked the seasons with lamps, water, and verse. Their homes were not only shelters; they were schools. A father could read from a *bhurj patra*, birch-bark text by the light of a mustard wick; a mother could teach a child the discipline of a mantra and of a household; a grandfather could recite a line of poetry and make it feel like law. They understood that survival was not only the avoidance of death.



It was the refusal to become forgetful or forgotten.

And they understood another thing too, quietly, without announcing it: that no one would preserve them for them. Whatever they would remain, they would have to build—by hand, by habit, by stubborn love.

So, when the alarm came, it traveled through the Valley's unseen network: messenger to shrine, shrine to village, village to household. The priests rang the bells urgently in the temples and the people ran. An old man stepped onto his veranda and looked

toward the mountains, not with romance but with calculation. A woman set aside the brass bowl she was polishing and began to pack what mattered—grain, wool, a small icon wrapped in cloth, a string of beads, a family manuscript tucked into a dry pot.

And in one courtyard near Avantipura, before first light, Dāmodara Bhatta rose without ceremony.

He was not a king. He was not a general with banners. He was a Pandit householder—learned enough to carry the Valley's memory, hardened enough to carry its burden. Strong-featured, mustached, with the steady eyes of a man who had watched the seasons long enough to know that beauty does not protect itself. He had heard the rumors before they became panic. He had listened to the elders and understood the old rule of Kashmir: when danger descends from the passes, you do not wait for it to reach your doorstep.

His wife, Padmā, was already awake.

She did what Kashmiri Pandit women did when the world turned predatory—she made her warrior ready.

Not with speeches. Not with tears. With hands.

She brought out his quilted coat, stitched in a hard lattice to blunt a blade. It was not the shining armor of courtly tales; it was practical protection, the kind you could afford, the kind you could repair, the kind you could wear without noise. She pulled it tight at the shoulders, tested the seams with her fingers, then drew the baldric across his chest and knotted it firm. An apron-guard protected the lower abdomen and groin—because every woman who had lived through one raid knew the truth men liked to deny: survival is in the small, unglamorous details.

She set his round buckler where his hand would find it without thought, checked the sword and grip, and adjusted the strap so it would not slip when sweat made leather treacherous. Her touch was calm, exact, almost tender—yet it carried the precision of someone fastening more than cloth.

In Kashmir, to dress a man for danger was not merely a domestic act. It was continuity. It

was a way of saying: *We have done this before. We will do it again. We will still be here when the snow melts.*

Padmā's eyes did not flinch. She did not ask him to stay. She had grown up hearing the Valley's older stories: of kings and builders, of sages and poets, of temples raised beside waters that looked eternal—and of invasions that came like storms, and receded, leaving the land bruised but not erased. She knew what every Kashmiri Pandit woman knew: the Valley's tenderness must be defended, not assumed.

She lifted her hand once and pressed a tilak-mark over his heart—simple, deliberate, not theatrical. A mark placed with the same care she used to draw sacred signs on the threshold: protection made visible. As if saying to whatever waited in the pass: *This life is consecrated. You may strike the body, but you will not break the vow.*

Dāmodara looked at her for a moment. Their marriage had been built not only on affection but on shared understanding: that Pandit love is a dharmic partnership with Kashmir's history.

He left for the pass with a band of brave men.

In the early light, the Valley still looked like a poem. Mist pooled in the fields. Poplars rose like lines of script against the sky. Somewhere, a stream sang over stones as if nothing in the world could be interrupted. But the men who climbed toward the heights did not mistake this gentleness for safety.

The pass narrowed where rock pinched the path into a throat. Above, the ridgeline stood like a blade. Below, the Valley opened into quiet villages that had no walls high enough to stop a determined fire. This was the logic of Kashmir's defenses: you hold the narrow places at the *daranga*, or you fight in your own courtyards.

What happened there did not return as a clean, heroic ballad. Battles rarely do. They return as fragments: a torn sleeve, a broken strap, a story told in three sentences because the throat refuses more. Yet one truth arrived with the first men who staggered back down

the slope: the attackers had been checked. Their momentum had been broken. Their arrogance had met stone and sword and a few men who refused to give them an easy road.

The raiders had been driven back!

Not routed with triumphal drums, but turned—forced to retreat into the harshness they came from, bleeding and cursing and suddenly less certain that Kashmir was a soft prize. The pass had not become a corridor for slaughter. It had become a wall.

Dāmodara and the handful who stood with him did not win because they were many. They won because they refused to give the attackers what attackers crave: an unguarded threshold, a people too frightened to stand. They held the narrow approach where a few bodies can become an army, where a single shield can block a path, where courage and terrain conspire. The Kashmiri Pandits were forever the few Pandavas facing the innumerable Kauravas.

The survivors came down with a fierce quiet. No official clerk recorded their names. No distant ruler sent thanks. The Valley would receive no proclamation for its endurance—only a new list of widows, a new set of repairs, and the old lesson repeated: *When you defend Kashmir, you defend it yourself for yourself.*

And they also brought back Dāmodara—held aloft on their shoulders, heavy not only with flesh, but with meaning. His buckler was scraped. His coat was dark where a blade had found its way through. His face, once stern, had softened into the stillness that comes after duty has been paid in full.

Padmā did not collapse. Not then. In Kashmir, grief was never allowed to be only private; it had to be translated into form, into memory, into something the next generation could inherit without confusion. There were rites for this. There were ways. There was **rīti**—order, custom, the disciplined channel through which Kashmir's River of pain could be made into continuity.

Padmā followed rīti, not impulse.

The family commissioned a temple sculptor, as families did when they wished to

make a life unerasable. In a land that could be conquered and reconquered, stone was one of the few arguments that outlasted swords. And in a land where the powerful often took the harvest and forgot the hands that grew it, a memorial was a declaration: *We will not be erased just because you do not bother to remember us.*

The sculptor did not ask Padmā to invent the design. He knew the sanctioned form, the canonical language of remembrance: a tall slab with an arrowhead crown—like a shrine-roof—its triangular pediment declaring what it shelters is sacred.

Above, the warrior would stand—weapon and shield carved so duty could not be softened by time. Not as a god, but as a guardian: the memory of someone who held the line so others could live. And below, the one who remained: a figure seated with palms joined in **añjali mudrā**—not ornament, but witness—seeking **āśīrvāda** for the one who had kept the threshold, and for the children who would now inherit his duty in a different form.

Padmā watched the chisels bite the stone. She watched Dāmodara's mustache reappear in relief, stern and familiar. She watched the shield take shape, the strap, the stance—his body turned into a grammar of protection. And then she watched the sculptor carve the lower figure: knees drawn close, hands pressed together, the posture of a wife who will not let a life vanish into rumor.

When the stele was raised, it stood not merely as a memorial to one man, but as a declaration. It said: *This was not loss for nothing. This was the price of a turning back. This was the moment the Valley refused to be taken quietly.*

Years passed. Kashmir changed as it always had—seasons turning, rulers rising and falling, new pressures entering through the corridors of geography. Kashmir was coveted. Its wealth was counted by outsiders. Its beauty was praised by those who did not live inside its vulnerability. People arrived with promises and left with taxes. They drank the Valley's wine, praised its gardens, wore its shawls, pocketed its gold, and spoke of Kashmir as if it

were a jewel that existed for their crown.

And when Kashmiri Pandits asked for protection, for fairness, for simple respect, the answers were often delays, distractions, a polite turning away. There was always another priority. Always another empire. Always another excuse. Don't upset the Kashmiri applectart.

So, they did what they had always done: they sustained themselves.

They practiced their quiet heroism: keeping lamps lit, keeping manuscripts copied, keeping festivals observed even when supplies were scarce, keeping the language of prayer alive even when mouths grew cautious. They defended themselves when they had to—at a pass, at a bridge, in a courtyard, in the press, in the hallways of justice—yet they also defended something harder: the inner life of a civilization.

Then, one night—centuries later—cowardice arrived.

Not with open battle, but with desecration.

Men came under darkness. They did not come to argue. They came to erase. They did not dare break the stone openly, because to do so would have admitted its authority. So, they did what cowards do: they dragged it, scraped and heavy, to the river and cast it into the Vitastā—as if water could undo what conscience could not face.

The stele disappeared into the silt.

Kashmir did what it does. It hid what it could not yet reveal. It held its breath in the mud, in the dark, in the slow patience of geology.

Centuries later, the much-abused river lowered in winter, and the stone rose again.

Worn, abraded, its details softened by time—yet still legible. Still stubborn. Still insisting that memory is harder than hatred. The warrior's stance remained. The strap across the chest still crossed like a vow. The shield still sat where a hand would find it. And beneath, Padmā still sat in stone with her palms joined, as if time itself had been held in prayer.

It is easy, from a distance, to misread that Kashmiri Pandit resilience is merely pride. But in Kashmir, resilience is practice. It is the ability to rebuild without applause. It is the

ability to carry culture without a sponsor. It is the ability to keep the inner life intact while the outer world shifts like sand—and while those who take keep asking for more: more sacrifices, more votes, more normalcy poster children.

The stone's return was not only an archaeological event. It was a moral one. It reminded anyone with eyes that attempts to erase the Kashmiri Pandit presence will never succeed. That even when stones are thrown into rivers, rivers have their own verdicts. That the Valley's memory is not a single narrative owned by whoever shouts loudest—it is layered, carved, and returned. And somewhere—this is the part the stone does not show, but the Valley always knows—Dāmodara's line did not end in that pass.

A child grew into a man who carried his father's name like a quiet blade. A grandson learned to read by lamplight and to stand straight when the world leaned in. A great-granddaughter lit a lamp in a new home far from the pass and still said the same prayers in the same cadence. Across centuries, across displacements, across the long argument of history, his descendants still stride the earth—doctors, teachers, soldiers, artists, parents—carrying in their posture a memory older than any single wound: that a people can be scattered and still remain. The Kashmiri Pandits are Global Damodaras now.

When the stone rose again from the silt—worn, abraded, yet still legible—Padmā's gesture was still there beneath her husband's feet: hands joined, knees drawn close, the posture of a people saying:

We are warriors. We remember. We endure. We rise again. We resurrect.

And in 2025, something simple happened: what was thrown away was found. What was meant to vanish returned to light. **What was buried in water returned to sight.**

Dāmodara forever bound by love and not by force

2025 was the year that **the Hero of Courage and the Heroine of Faith came back into our lives.**



Lenin Kumar Bhat



BUS NO. JKB 5741

A Silent Witness to Genocide and Exile



Warning hapless Kashmiri
Pandits to leave the Valley or
face death.



Before the fateful exodus from Kashmir, Bus No. JKB 5741 faithfully traversed the scenic roads of the Valley. Attached to the National Bus Stand, Anantnag, it formed an inseparable part of everyday life in South Kashmir.

Shri Prithvi Nath Kandroo and his brother Shri Chuni Lal Kandroo lived in Nazuk Mohalla, Anantnag. Shri Prithvi Nath Kandroo had been working as a counter ticket agent at the National Bus Stand, Anantnag, since 1965. At that time, the bus stand had ten buses under operation.

Mr. Gani Joo served as the President of the National Bus Stand, Anantnag, while Shri Shambhu Nath was its secretary.

While serving as a counter ticket agent, Prithvi Nath Kandroo nurtured a dream—to own a bus of his own. Through determination

and hard work, he took a loan from the bank and fulfilled this dream in 1970, purchasing a bus that would later become part of Kashmiri Pandit history.

That bus bore the number JKB 5741.

**From 1970 to 1990,
the bus operated on vital routes:**

Anantnag to Lamed village, Qazigund to Kulgam and from Qazigund to Verinag. The bus remained attached to the National Bus Stand, Anantnag. Shri Prithvi Nath Kandroo proudly drove the bus himself, while his brother Chuni Lal served as the conductor. Their entire livelihood depended on this bus—a lifeline that connected villages, people, markets, and memories.

On the way to Lamed village lies Kund, a village renowned for its vast apple and pear orchards. The residents of Kund village consistently preferred Prithvi Nath Kandroo's bus to transport their produce to Qazigund. There was deep trust in both the bus and its owner, as people firmly believed their fruit would always reach the market safely, intact, and without loss. From Anantnag, anyone living along this bus route who needed to transport tin sheets for roofing would invariably prefer Prithvi Nath Kandroo's bus, a testament to the trust he enjoyed among locals.

The bus also carried hundreds of wedding processions (baraats)—of Muslims as well as Kashmiri Pandits. Even today, people fondly recall, “Our wedding baraat travelled in Prithvi Nath's bus.” Many narrate cherished anecdotes of how the bus would suddenly stop near a bridge, with the driver calmly declaring that the vehicle was “refusing to cross.”

The wedding host would then offer a small customary expense, after which the bus would start effortlessly and cross the bridge. In those days, it was common for wedding buses to halt briefly before bridges. The symbolic offering given to the driver was locally known as “Kadale Taar.” These moments became part of shared folklore—memories spoken of with warmth even decades later.

Whenever schools in Anantnag planned excursions, they almost invariably chose Bus No. JKB 5741. Countless schoolchildren were taken by this bus to destinations such as Pahalgam, Gulmarg, Sonamarg, Daksum, Aharbal, Nishat Bagh, and Shalimar Bagh and many other picnic spots. For many students, their first journey beyond their hometown was aboard this very bus. But Fate Had Other Plans. Jihadi terrorism engulfed the once-peaceful Valley. Killings, bomb blasts, kidnappings, and the burning of homes, temples, and shrines became a daily reality. The government was nowhere to be seen. Administration, hospitals, and public institutions had fallen under the control of terrorists. Open threats were issued through newspapers and other means, warning hapless

Kashmiri Pandits to leave the Valley or face death.

The forced exodus of the Kashmiri Pandit community in 1990 turned lives upside down, and the Kandroo family was no exception. On April 14, 1990, the Kandroo brothers fled in the same bus—JKB 5741—and reached Battal Ballian Camp, Udhampur, leaving behind:

Their ancestral home, Their memories, Their roots and an entire way of life. The bus that once symbolized dignity and self-reliance now became a vehicle of exile. In the initial years of displacement, the bus plied on the Jammu–Purmandal route until 1992, but strong opposition from local transporters once again forced it into idleness. With no regular route permits available, Prithvi Nath and Chuni Lal were compelled to use the bus to ferry army personnel to Kashmir from 1992 to 2003. The income was meagre and uncertain, yet the bus remained their only means of survival amid displacement and hardship.

In 2004, they finally secured a route permit—but only for a dry and limited passenger route within the Udhampur–Battal Ballian Camp. Soon thereafter, the relocation of Kashmiri Pandit Battal Ballian camp to Purkhu, Jammu, dealt another devastating blow to the Kandroo brothers. The bus lost its daily passengers and once again stood idle, stripped of purpose.

Today, Bus No. JKB 5741 stands as a mute yet powerful witness to the genocide of Kashmiri Pandits and their long struggle for survival and dignity. With the passing of Shri Prithvi Nath Kandroo, the bus has been left an orphan, carrying within its silent frame the weight of a shattered past. Now stationed at the Genocide Survivor Camp, Purkhu, Jammu, the bus stands as a haunting memorial to the painful history of the Kashmiri Pandit community.

May the story of Bus No. JKB 5741 remind the nation of the unwavering spirit of Kashmiri Pandits—their suffering, their endurance, and their unbroken longing for justice, dignity, and return to their homeland.



 Arun Kaul



The Holy Azaan

I remember for as long as I can, I remember vividly – the meaning of FEAR.

The fear of vulnerability, of being unsafe, naked and brutally open to violence, the year was 1989/90; we were all confused, unclear and in search of answers for every day in the aftermath of sunset when darkness came, fear would embrace us with lights from main transformer at Badshahnagar switched off, with telephone lines being dead; the holy azaan piercing the dark night would reach our trembling ears calling the faithful to prayers.

The caveat here was that it was an unholy Azaan, followed closely by mobs banging our doors and those of our neighbours; asking all KPs to join the faithful in the prayers. For those days / times the KAFIRS were a welcome lot. Most of these times we were huddled together in our homes, in a single room with curtains drawn and peeking stealthily through the windows at the slightest sound that may break the eerie silence. Till dawn we would be sleepless waiting for the first rays of the sun to instill a level of bravado in us to brave through another day. This continued for weeks together for all KP families.

Till one dark night, as we were into the ritual of being huddled together to spend the night: a banging noise on the main gate of our home brought us to the edge of fear again, in walked a mob shouting out loud for my uncle to come out and join them in the mosque. My granny had the courage to speak back to them

through the window grill “su chuna yeti, yeli yi Bha sojun tohay nish” – HE IS NOT HERE, WHEN HE COMES, I WILL SEND HIM TO YOU.

Shivering we were behind her after this for quite some time, till the mob went back in the dead of the night and in next 24 hrs., we took a cab with whatever clothes and blanket we could pack and left in a “yellow black taxi” to Jammu; unaware of what future had in store for us.

For as long as I remember, I remember the fear, I remember the AZAAN; then I ponder now in 2025, how come almighty sought this to happen to the faithful.

For as long as I remember now, I remember how fear has occupied my mind; it has been more than 3 decades now and yet I get up in the middle of the night peeking through the grilled window covered by curtains; searching for any lurking shadows following me from the past. The existential fear stays unabated.

Authors Note -

It's important to share the horrors of our genocide truthfully without any exaggeration and obfuscation for acceptance of the truth serves both the sects well and may usher in the thaw in the ice for better days ahead. Its disrespectful to deny the truth its place in history for then none of us are actually working for course correction so that such incidents that Kashmiri Hindus have faced over and over again do not re occur. Both the sects need accept the truth and move ahead with reconciliation.

Om Namo Vasudevaya Namah.



ZDPC Hosts Sacred Hawan at Nardani, Jammu, on Auspicious Magh Purnima

Nardani, Jammu, January 4, 2026: The Zonal Displacement Persons Committee (ZDPC) solemnly conducted a sacred Hawan at Nardani, Jammu, marking the first day of the holy month of Magh—revered in Hindu tradition for its profound spiritual significance.

Devotees from all walks of life gathered in deep reverence as learned Panditji chanted Vedic mantras, with collective prayers offered for *Vishwa Shanti* (universal peace). Following the ceremony, prasad was distributed among participants. The event was graced by Spiritual Guru Swami Kumar Ji, Hon'ble Chief Secretary Shri Atal Dulloo, and esteemed heads of various organizations, lending added sanctity.

Dignitaries Honored by ZDPC: Shri

Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary, UT of J&K, Swami Kumar Ji, Spiritual Guru, Shri Anil Dhar, BJP/Social Activist, Shri MK Yogi, Apni Party/Social Activist, Shri Kuldeep Raina, President, Manzgam Temple & First ZDPC President post-1990, Shri BB Bhat, Ex-President, ZDPC, Shri Rakesh Koul, Social Activist, Prof. Virender Rawal, Social Activist, Shri Sanjay Dhar, KMETC, Shri Ashok Razdan, Bub Ji Ashram, Smt. Veena Mahaldar, First Female Co-opted Ex-Body Member, ZDPC, Shri Arjan Nath Bhat, President, Haridwar Committee, Shri Vikram Koul, KP Volunteer, Shri Roshan Pandita, KP Volunteer, Shri Ravinder Kak, BSNL, Shri Ajay Raina, Kheer Bhawani JMM, Shri MK Raina, ASKPC, Dr. Dileep Pandita, Social Activist, Shri Chetan Ji, Social Activist, Shri Chand Ji Bhat, Social Activist, Shri Ashok Kangan, Social Activist, Shri TK Koul Jigyasu, RSS Swayamsevak & Arya Samaj Office Bearer.

ZDPC President Shri Ravinder Kumar Jogi expressed heartfelt gratitude to all members and participants for their devoted contributions to this successful pious occasion.

PNBMT Observed Chetna Diwas on December 27 2025

Prem Nath Bhat, an advocate and journalist who was martyred by terrorists in 1989. He attained martyrdom as a result of an armed attack carried out by Jihadi terrorists. Pandit Prem Nath Bhat Memorial Trust (PNBMT) observes CHETNA DIVAS on December 27 each year, paying tribute to those who were martyred in J&K for the sake of the community, the Dharma, the nation, and the country.

This year, the event was held at Abhinav Theatre in Jammu to honour sacrifices, demand justice, and advocate for community



issues such as temple protection and the rights of displaced persons. Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh was among the dignitaries who paid tribute, emphasising the importance of remembering the community's history and struggles.

Paying tribute to Pandit Prem Nath Bhat, the Minister said Bhat Sahib's sacrifice symbolises the suffering endured by the Kashmiri Pandit community due to terrorism and targeted violence.

He said terrorism inflicted grave human suffering and severely disrupted the social harmony of Kashmir. He noted that for several years, the human rights of victims of terrorism, particularly Kashmiri Pandits, were overlooked due to a selective and inconsistent definition of terrorism. This, he said, aggravated the injustice faced by those who were forced to leave their homes and abandon their ancestral roots. He said the Kashmiri Pandit community has demonstrated extraordinary resilience and an inherent capacity to survive and thrive despite decades of displacement and adversity.

He assured the KPs that the temple issue would be raised with the Chief Minister, as the Government's primary concern is preserving the monuments of faith.

Earlier, Justice (ret'd) Bansi Lal Bhat, the community speaker, highlighted the issues faced by the displaced Pandits and said that 36 years in exile is a long period and that the Government should now take steps to ensure a dignified and honourable return for the community. He also strongly advocated for the passage of the Temples and Shrines Bill.

The event serves as a platform for the Kashmiri Pandit community to remember their martyrs and advocate for their rights and heritage.

KPs Show Concern Over Gastrointestinal Infection in Jagti

Some of the KP organisations have demonstrated their concern over the increasing Gastrointestinal cases in Jagti township, where it is claimed that about 77 people were infected in the last week.

Jagti township inmates have repeatedly complained about the impure supply of drinking water, but the concerned Jalshakti Department has failed to take cognisance of the issue. They demanded that an immediate filtration plant be constructed to supply pure water in the township. Additionally, people with the disease should receive appropriate treatment.

The Relief Commissioner (Migrants), Jammu, has taken up the matter with the Health Department. Water samples for testing were collected and sent to the laboratory at GMC, Jammu. It is to determine whether gastrointestinal disease is the cause of water-borne problems or the outcome of food-borne bacterial contamination.

The Relief Organisation has also urged the Jal Shakti Department to collect water samples from other camps and share the report with the organisation.

Enact Law for Protection of Hindu Shrines, Temples in Kashmir: PNBMT

On December 23, 2026, Pt Prem Nath Bhat Memorial Trust (PNBMT) held a symbolic protest in Jammu, demanding the passage of the much-talked-about Kashmiri Hindu Shrines and Temples Bill and the settlement of other pressing demands of the displaced Pandits, who have been living in exile for the last 36 years.

The speakers showed their dismay over the constant delaying tactics of the Government on the enactment of a law for the protection of shrines and temples in Kashmir. The protesters raised slogans in support of their demand and sought the immediate intervention of the Lt. Governor, Manoj Sinha, in the matter.

Migrant Status can't Dilute Promotion Under CAS: HC

The High Court held that migrant status cannot impede promotion once a person is eligible. It directed the retrospective promotion grant to migrant teachers at SKUAST under the Career Advancement Scheme (CAS).

The Division Bench of Chief Justice Arun Palli and Justice Rajnesh Oswal dismissed the

appeal of SKUSAT challenging the writ court judgment directing the Varsity to give effect to the promotion orders of these migrants under CAS as Associate Professors and Senior Scientists from the date they completed the requisite number of years of service as Assistant Professors and Junior Scientists, respectively.

Under the Government order dated 29.04.1992, migrant employees were directed to be considered for promotion, and the promotion was to take effect only upon their joining the promoted post.

SKUAST, Kashmir, through Notification No. 01/2002, amended Schedule II to Chapter 2 (Career Advancement Scheme for Teachers), making its provisions effective prospectively. However, by a subsequent order dated 19.01.2007, the effective date of the Career Advancement Scheme (CAS) for Teachers was retrospectively fixed as 27.07.1998.

The migrant employees asserted that they had completed the requisite years of service as "Assistant Professor/Junior Scientist". They were eligible for promotion under the CAS to the post of "Associate Professor/Senior Scientist". They pressed the SKUAST to give their cases immediate consideration, citing that the benefits had already been extended to similarly situated colleagues and even junior colleagues.

Following the recommendations of the Screening Committee, SKUAST issued promotion orders to these migrant employees, vide orders dated 28.10.2010, under the Career Advancement Scheme in their respective disciplines.

These orders stipulated that the promotions would take effect from the date the respondents rejoined SKUAST, Kashmir, in 2009. Upon receiving their conditional promotion orders, which took effect only on the date they rejoined the Valley in 2009. The respondents raised objections by citing various precedents. Specifically, they highlighted the case of Dr Wali Ullah, a similarly situated migrant from the Valley teaching at SKUAST,

Jammu, who had been granted the benefit of his entire migrant period for his promotion.

They, for this inaction on the part of SKUAST, approached the court. The court allowed their plea and quashed the condition imposed by the Screening Committee of the SKUAST in the orders of promotion of these aggrieved employees, whereby the effect of promotion was accorded from the date of active joining. The appellants were directed to give effect to the orders of promotion of the respondents under CAS as Associate Professors/Senior Scientists from the date they completed the requisite number of years of service as "Assistant Professors/Junior Scientists".

The Division Bench, while upholding the writ court verdict, said the migrant status cannot be used to dilute career progression once eligibility for promotion is established under statutory rules. The court dismissed the SKUAST appeal and upheld the retrospective grant of promotions under the CAS to migrant teachers, observing in clear terms that "similarly situated persons cannot be treated differently.

The court has held that the eligibility had already been examined and affirmed by the competent statutory bodies. "...it is an admitted position that the Selection Committee found the respondent-employees to have fulfilled the eligibility criteria for promotion, and it is also not disputed that the Board of Management duly approved the recommendations." The court said, adding, "...the Screening Committee had never held the employees to be unsuitable for want of active service as it is nowhere mentioned that the migrants were not in active service."

The bench, after examining the writ court judgment, concluded that there was no illegality, infirmity or perversity in the decision. The court has held SKUAST's appeal to be devoid of merit and dismissed it.

Courtesy: Daily Excelsior

Source: Agencies

Editing: Vijay Kashkari

Skill Development Courses

The National Education Policy 2020 emphasises making Education more holistic and practical by integrating general (academic) and vocational Education while ensuring the vertical and horizontal mobility of students and learners between academic and vocational streams.

Vocational Education in India started with organised efforts post-independence, notably with the Craftsmen Training Scheme in 1950 via Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) to meet industrial needs, followed by formal school-based vocationalization beginning around 1976-77, and a significant push with the Centrally Sponsored Scheme in 1988, formalised by the National Policy on Education.

The Directorate General of Employment and Training (DGE&T) launched the Craftsmen Training Scheme in 1950, establishing Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) to develop vocational skills to support industrial growth. Vocationalization was formally introduced in schools during 1976-77 to integrate skills with academics. The Malcolm Adiseshiah Committee (National Review Committee) recommended vocational streams at the higher secondary (10+2) level in 1978. The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Vocationalization of Secondary Education was launched in 1988, creating academic and vocational streams in classes 11 & 12, aiming to enhance employability. Focus shifted with the introduction of policies such as the National Skill Development Policy (2009) and the National Vocational Education Qualifications Framework (NVEQF) in 2012, which was later integrated into the National Skill Qualifications Framework (NSQF), thereby improving industry links and pathways. In

essence, while technical training began earlier, the systematic introduction of vocational courses within the general education system started in the late 1970s and gained significant momentum in the late 1980s.

Vocational Courses are career-oriented courses. These courses are designed to train students by developing Practical skills so that they are prepared for a specific profession or field. Vocational Education comprises courses tailored to different professions.

Vocational courses in India are overseen by multiple bodies, primarily the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) through the Directorate General of Training (DGT) for central programs such as ITIs. At the same time, the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) sets standards. It regulates the overall ecosystem, including awarding bodies, assessment agencies, and qualifications under the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF). Other key players include the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) for school-level flexibility, AICTE for technical diplomas, and UGC for university-based B.Voc programs, with state governments also playing a role.

The central Regulatory bodies that implement the programme are Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Directorate General of Training (DGT) that runs major programs like Craftman Training Scheme (CTS) and Apprenticeship Training Scheme (ATS) through Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET), the national regulator for quality, setting standards, recognizing awarding bodies, and approving qualifications aligned with the NSQF.

The Sector-Specific Bodies are:

AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education), which introduces vocational degree/diploma programs in collaboration with industry.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) oversees B.Voc Degree programs and community colleges within universities.

NIOS (National Institute of Open Schooling) offers vocational courses to provide flexibility and complement mainstream Education.

B.Voc stands for Bachelor of Vocation, a practical, skill-based undergraduate degree focused on specific job roles and industry needs, offering a blend of general Education (theory) and vocational training (practical skills) for immediate employability in fields like IT, Healthcare, Hospitality, and more. It's designed with multiple entry and exit points, preparing graduates for the workforce through hands-on experience and internships.

The course curriculum comprises 40% general education and 60% vocational training, often with industry involvement. The course offers multiple exit points (Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Degree).

B.Voc (Bachelor of Vocational) courses offer practical skills in diverse fields like Software Dev, Retail Mgmt, Hospitality, Media, Healthcare (MLT), Fashion Tech, Automotive, and Agriculture, with different universities specializing in unique areas, such as Jyoti Nivas College (Banking & Finance, Theatre Arts) or MS Ramaiah University (Automobile, Digital Marketing, Hospitality), focusing on job-oriented training with exit options at Diploma and Advanced Diploma levels.

B.Voc Courses & Universities:

- ❖ **IT & Software** : Software Development, Web Technologies, Data Analytics (offered by many, including Sullamussalam Science College, St. Thomas College).
- ❖ **Management & Retail** : Retail Management, Banking & Finance, Logistics & Supply Chain Management (Jyoti Nivas College, Mahatma Gandhi Chitrakoot Gramodaya Vishwavidyalaya).
- ❖ **Media & Arts** : Digital Film Production, Broadcasting & Journalism, Theatre Arts, Animation & Multimedia (St. Thomas College, Sullamussalam Science College, Wiztoon Academy).
- ❖ **Healthcare** : Medical Lab Technology (MLT), Operation Theatre Tech, Hospital Administration (St. Thomas College, ITEES College).
- ❖ **Design & Fashion** : Fashion Technology, Interior Designing, Jewellery Designing & Gemology (Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, St. Aloysius College).
- ❖ **Agriculture & Food** : Food Processing, Sustainable Agriculture, Tea Husbandry (St. Thomas College, Virohan).
- ❖ **Automobile** : Automotive Technology (MS Ramaiah University, Dayananda Sagar University).
- ❖ 10+2 or an equivalent qualification is the eligibility criterion for admission.
- ❖ Government of India websites provide consolidated lists of B.Voc colleges and courses across India.

Key Skill Universities by State:

- ❖ **Haryana** : Shri Vishwakarma Skill University (SVSU) - India's first government skill university.
- ❖ **Maharashtra** : Ratan Tata University (formerly Maharashtra State Skills University).
- ❖ **Delhi** : Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University (DSEU).
- ❖ **Gujarat** : Kaushalya - The Skill University, Team Lease Skills University.
- ❖ **Assam** : Assam Skill University (ASU).
- ❖ **Rajasthan** : Bhartiya Skill Development University (BSDU).
- ❖ **Punjab** : Lamrin Tech Skill University.
- ❖ **Sikkim** : Medhavi Skills University, Sikkim Skill University.
- ❖ **Telangana** : Young India Skills University (YISU).
- ❖ **Odisha/AP** : Centurion University of Technology and Management (CUTM).

Skill Development Universities Accredited by NIRF 2025

- ❖ 1st : Symbiosis Skills and Professional University (SSPU), Pune, Maharashtra
- ❖ 2nd : Symbiosis University of Applied Sciences (SUAS), Indore, Madhya Pradesh
- ❖ 3rd : Shri Vishwakarma Skill University (SVSU), Palwal, Haryana

The Best Skill Development Courses

Data Analytics, AI/Machine Learning, Software/Web Development (Python, Full Stack), Digital Marketing, Cybersecurity, Cloud Computing (AWS), essential Soft Skills (Communication, Leadership, Problem-Solving, Emotional Intelligence).

Entrance Exams for Courses After BCA

Most courses after BCA require clearing competitive entrance exams:

- ❖ For MCA Programs: NIMCET, CUET PG, MAH MCA CET, TANCET, LPUNEST
- ❖ For MBA Programs: CAT, XAT, MAT, SNAP, NMAT, LPUNEST
- ❖ For M.Sc Programs: CUET PG, IIT JAM, University-specific tests
- ❖ For Government Jobs: SSC, Banking exams, UPSC, State PSCs
- ❖ For Certifications: Online assessment tests

Maharashtra Registration for MBA/MMS & MHT CET (PCM/PCB)

State Common Entrance Test Cell, Mumbai, will conduct the Online Common Entrance Tests (CET) for MBA/MMS, Engineering, Pharmacy and Agriculture courses for the Academic Year 2026–27. The examinations will be conducted at various examination centres across the State of Maharashtra. The schedule for online registration and tentative examination dates is as follows:

Sr. No.	Name of CET Online	Registration & Confirmation of Application Form	Tentative CET Examination Date
1.	MAH-MBA/MMS CET 2026	End Date: 12/02/2026	1st Attempt 06/04/2026 to 08/04/2026 2nd Attempt 09/05/2026
2.	MAH-MHT CET (PCM/PCB) CET 2026	End Date: 12/02/2026	1st Attempt 11/04/2026 to 26/04/2026 2nd Attempt 10/05/2026 to 17/05/2026
	MAH-MCA CET 2026	End Date: 10/02/2026	30/03/2026

APAAR ID and Aadhaar ID are mandatory for CET registration. Information brochures for the above examinations are available on the official website: www.mahacet.org

SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds)

SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds) is an initiative by the Ministry of Education to provide quality online education free of charge to all. On the other hand, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) offers 48 courses spanning from Arabic to Zoology, which will begin on 26 January 2026. The Rashtriya Raksha

University (RRU) offers two courses: Defence & Strategic Studies and Forensic Accounting. Interested candidates can visit swayam.gov.in /INI to enrol in the course.

Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM) (January 2026 Semester)

The NTA will be conducting the above-mentioned Examination as per the schedule mentioned below:

Examination Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds

- ❖ Semester January
- ❖ Dates of Exam 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21 June 2026

National Council for Hotel Management JEE-2026

Admission at the affiliated 21 Central Institutes of Hotel Management, 33 State Government Institutes of Hotel Management, 01 Public Sector Undertaking, 2 PPP-run SIHMs and 25 Private Institutes of Hotel Management.

The National Council for Hotel Management Joint Entrance Examination (NCHM JEE) 2026 is conducted for admission to the B.Sc. (Hospitality & Hotel Administration) program.

It has been decided to reserve one seat, on a super-numerary basis, for the wards of Kashmiri Migrants and Kashmiri Pandits / Kashmiri Hindu Families (Non-Migrants) residing in Kashmir Valley, in each Central Institute in accordance with the Government guidelines. Such Applicants shall have to qualify the NCHM JEE 2026.

Online application submission may be made via the NTA official website: <https://exams.nta.nic.in/nchm-jee/>. Feedback:

- ❖ Online registration and submission of Application Form (complete in all respects) through the NTA Website up to 25.01.2026 (Up to 5.00 PM)
- ❖ Date of Examination 25.04.2026 (Saturday)

Feedback: vijaykashkari@gmail.com

Calendar of Month	
Gauri Tritya	21 st January 2026
Tripura Chaturthi	22 nd January 2026
Basant Panchmi	23 rd January 2026
Kumar Shahsti	24 th January 2026
Bheshma Ashtami (Shukla Paksha)	26 th January 2026
Ekadashi (Shukla Paksha)	29 th January 2026
Yaksh Chaturthi	31 st January 2026
Poornima	01 st February 2026
Hure Okdoh	02 nd February 2026
Sankat Nivaran Chaturthi	05 th February 2026
Hure Ashtami (Krishna Paksha)	10 th February 2026
Vijaya Ekadashi (Krishna Paksha) (Wagur Baah)	13 th February 2026
Shivaratri (Hearth) (Dwadashi)	14 th February 2026
Dooney Amavasya	17 th February 2026

Note | Panchak starts on 20th January 2026 ends on 25th January 2026

Maagh (Shukla Paksha) from 19th January 2026 to 01st February 2026
Phalgun (Krishna Paksha) from 02nd February 2026 to 17th February 2026



AIKS Matrimonial Service



Seeking alliance for my son, 5'9", B.E. (EXTC, Mumbai University), MBA (Business Analytics, Symbiosis Pune), born 28th May 1995 at 12:06 noon in Jammu. Working as Business Insights and Engagement Partner at TE Connectivity, Bangalore. Contact Ramesh Pandita (9419189513), 3/1 Anand Nagar, Borhi, Jammu; aryanramesh99@gmail.com



We are seeking a suitable alliance for our daughter. Date of Birth: 13.08.1996 (01:38 AM), Place of Birth: New Delhi, Height: 5 ft 4 in, Manglik: Anshik Manglik

Qualification: M.Sc. in Pharmaceutical Design and Engineering – Technical University of Denmark (DTU), Denmark. B.Sc. in Biomedical Engineering – University of Texas at Arlington (UTA), USA. Professional Details: Presently working in Denmark as a Senior Regulatory Affairs Specialist in a global organization providing medical devices and technologies for chronic care management. Career is well established with strong long-term prospects.

India Address: Faridabad, Delhi NCR (Currently residing in Denmark) Preference: Kashmiri Pandit boy residing in Europe (working and well-settled). Tekni Milap is a must.

Interested may kindly contact: +91 98104 21789 or Email: vinay@bhat.co



Seeking a suitable alliance for our well-cultured, and family-oriented daughter, born on January 21, 2000 at 8:46 AM in Delhi, holding Bachelor's in Forensic Sciences and a Master's in Digital Forensics, Cyber Security, and IT. Currently, employed with a leading Big 4 firm. Interested families are kindly requested to contact us at 9312007931 or 9999573333, or email at allianceckp65@gmail.com.



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.



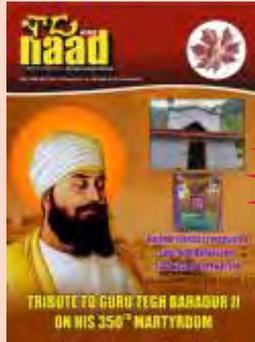
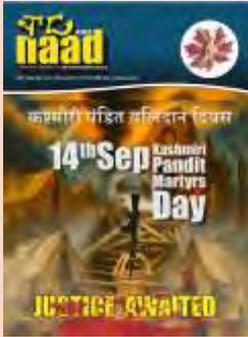
We are looking for a suitable match for our son born on 09th June 1995 at 9:30 am at Dehradun. Qualification: B.Tech in E&I from Amrita School of Engineering, Coimbatore, TN, India. MS from Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts, USA. Working in an e-commerce company in Boston. Ht. 180 cms. Parents: 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.



AIKS naad

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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.

KASHMIRI PANDIT MARTYRS

List for January 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
01	M L Bhan	Khonomoh Srinagar	15-01-1990
02	P K Kotru	Srinagar	19-01-1990
03	Satish Kr. Tickoo	Karfali Mohalla Srinagar	22-01-1990
04	Omkar Nath Wali	----	02-01-1991
05	Baldev Raj Dutta	----	19-01-1991
06	Pradeep Kumar Bhat	----	28-01-1994
07	Akshay Kumar	----	25-01-1998
08	Badri Nath	----	25-01-1998
09	Jyoti	----	25-01-1998
10	Kashi Nath	----	25-01-1998
11	Meenakshi	----	25-01-1998
12	Moti Lal Bhat	----	25-01-1998
13	Rakesh Kumar	----	25-01-1998
14	Sanjay Kr. Bhat	----	25-01-1998
15	Sarika	----	25-01-1998
16	Sarla Kumari	----	25-01-1998
17	Seema Kumari	----	25-01-1998
18	Smt. Choti	----	25-01-1998
19	Smt. Dulari	----	25-01-1998
20	Smt. Neeru Ji	----	25-01-1998
21	Sudarshan	----	25-01-1998
22	Vijay Kumar	----	25-01-1998
23	Vikas Kumar	----	25-01-1998
24	Vinod Kumar	----	25-01-1998



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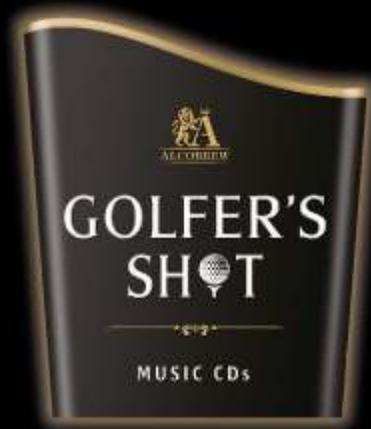


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