

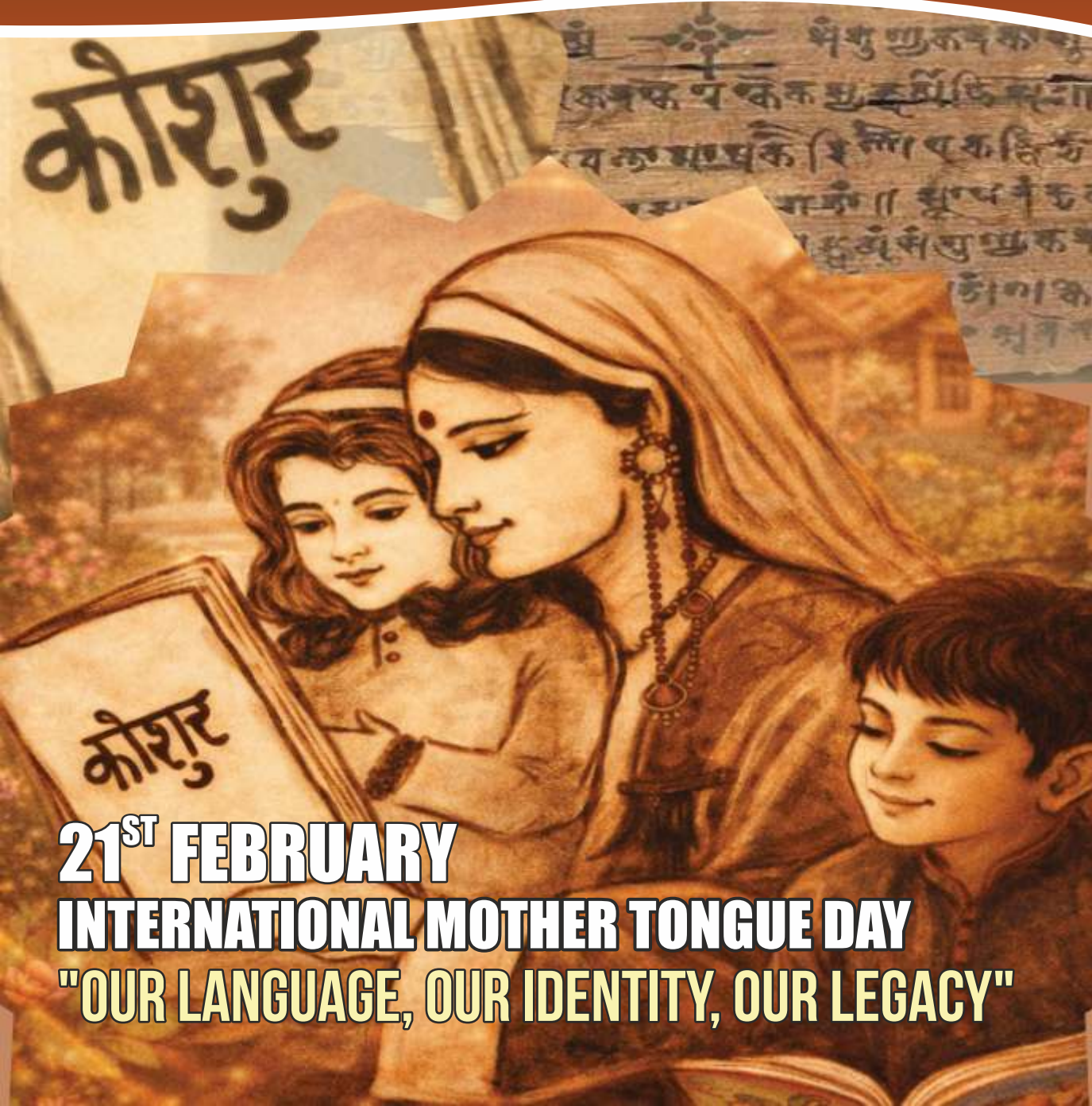
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A Monthly Publication of All India Kashmiri Samaj



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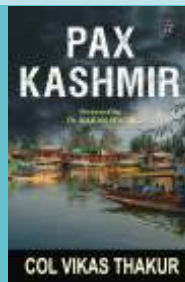
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Editorial

**Dear Readers,
Herath Poshte!**

It is with deep joy and reverence that I greet the community on the sacred occasion of Herath, popularly known as Shivratri. The epistemological foundations of this festival stretch back millennia, when our ancestors institutionalized a spiritual observance dedicated to Vatuk Bhairava and the emergence of Swacchand Bhairava, a divine manifestation made possible through Adi Shakti, revered in her terrestrial embodiment as Kashmir itself. Herath, therefore, is not merely a ritual commemoration; it is a civilizational expression of metaphysical insight, continuity, and sacred memory.

Ancient texts such as the Nilamata Purana, Bringesh Samhita, and the Rajatarangini document in rich detail the sacred geography, festivals, and ritual traditions of the Kashmir Mandala. These works testify to Kashmir's historic role as a living laboratory of Sanskrit civilization, a space where philosophy was actively practiced and geography imbued with spiritual meaning. This synthesis nurtured influential streams of thought, most notably the Trika tradition, widely recognized as Kashmir Shaivism, alongside Vaishnavite currents associated with the Panchratra system. Such philosophical pluralism enabled seekers to pursue spiritual realization in accordance with their temperament and inner aspiration.

Within this framework, Shivratri represents an inward journey, an invitation to transcend the ordinary rhythms of life and align with higher consciousness. The Kashmiri Pandit community, despite displacement from its ancestral homeland and sacred spaces, has preserved this festival with remarkable

faithfulness. This continuity is a testament to civilizational resilience and assures us that the spiritual essence of our traditions will endure across generations.

While cultural preservation continues in many forms, the gradual erosion of our mother tongue presents a serious concern. Despite sincere efforts by scholars and community organizations, intergenerational transmission of the Koshur language remains fragile. A community's rootedness is sustained through language, which serves as the primary vessel of memory, literature, ritual, and worldview. Without linguistic fluency, access to our intellectual and spiritual inheritance becomes increasingly limited.

It is therefore imperative that families consciously cultivate the use of Koshur within the home. Across Bharat, linguistic pride reinforces identity and continuity; our community must embrace a similar commitment. Without deliberate effort, the literary and mystical contributions of luminaries such as Lalleshwari, Rupa Bhawani, Parmanand, Krishen Joo Razdan, and Zinda Kaul risk receding from lived cultural consciousness into distant textual memory.

On this Mother Tongue Day, let us reaffirm a collective resolve: to speak, preserve, and transmit our language with intention and pride. In doing so, we safeguard not merely words, but an entire civilizational inheritance for future generations.

In the words of Bharatendu Harishchandra:

*“Nij bhāshā unnati ahai, sab unnati ko mool;
Bin nij bhāshā-gyān ke, mitat na hiy ko sool.”*

(“One's own language is the root of all progress; without knowledge of it, the heart's unrest cannot truly disappear.”)

मनील रैना गणवक



From the *President's* *Desk*

Respected All Namaskar to All AIKS family,

At the outset Shivratri Greetings to the whole biradari. AIKS is bringing out a special issue of Naad on this auspicious occasion.

As 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.

AIKS is gearing up for this year's International Mother Tongue Day event on 21 February. Besides release of a Book, Mushira, importance of Mother tongue day and felicitations of stalwarts will take place.

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. AIKS trust that has the foundation rudiments of assisting AIKS while in financial crunch needs to be stressed.

May Sharda Mata bless us all !!

Er. RAVINDER PANDITA
Tel : 9811143024



 Sunil Kaul



General Secretary's Column

During the month under review, a significant organizational initiative was undertaken concerning the constitutional framework of the All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS). A comprehensive review of the existing Constitution was initiated to evaluate its relevance, clarity, and alignment with the present-day functioning and long-term objectives of the organization. The review process aims to strengthen democratic practices, enhance administrative transparency, and ensure effective and accountable governance within AIKS. Special emphasis was placed on provisions relating to affiliates membership, election procedures, roles and responsibilities of office bearers, and decision-making mechanisms. This initiative reflects AIKS's continued commitment to institutional discipline, accountability, and sustainability, while upholding its core values and objectives.

An Extraordinary Meeting of the Executive Committee was held on 10 January 2026 at the KECSS Conference Room, under the chairmanship of the President, AIKS, and was attended by members of the Executive Committee. The Committee unanimously resolved to constitute a Constitution Review and Amendment Committee to examine the existing Constitution of AIKS in view of present and future organizational requirements.

Accordingly, the Constitution Review Committee was duly constituted under the Convenership of Dr. Col. Tej Tickoo (Ex-President, AIKS), along with selected members of the Executive Committee. The Committee has been entrusted with the

responsibility of undertaking a thorough review of the Constitution and deliberating upon necessary amendments, improvements, and structural refinements, so as to ensure that the Constitution remains robust, transparent, and future-ready, in consonance with evolving organizational and statutory needs. The Committee has been requested to submit its detailed recommendations on or before 28 February 2026, enabling further deliberation and approval by the competent body within the stipulated timelines. The President and the Executive Committee place high value on the collective experience, wisdom, and institutional knowledge of the Committee members and look forward to their considered recommendations.

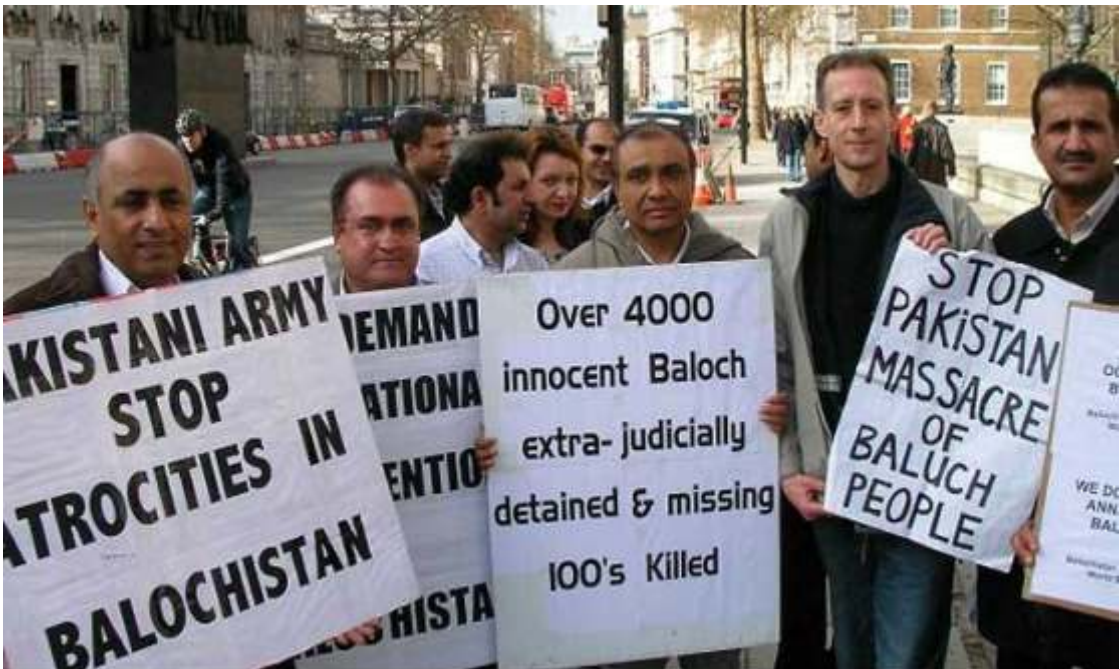
During the period under review, the Executive Committee also approved all new members and patron members whose applications were duly submitted along with the prescribed membership fee.

It was further informed that International Mother Tongue Day–2026 will be organized by the Centre for Kashmiri Language, Literature and Culture (CKLLC) under the chairmanship of Dr. Roop Krishan Bhat, along with his team, on 21 February 2026. All necessary arrangements for the event are being made accordingly, and official communication to all stakeholders will be issued before 10 February 2026. The main highlights of the programme will include two book releases, a Kashmiri Mushaira, Kashmiri songs, and a panel discussion.



Col. Tej K Tikoo

Balochistan on the Boil



For quite sometime Balochistan has been in the news- mostly because the Balochis have intensified their struggle to seek the end to Pakistan occupation of its vast territory. Though this political struggle has been going on for decades, it is only recently that the armed struggle has been seamlessly woven with its political struggle, making the movement very potent and violent. That it has come at a time when Pakistan is struggling with its failing economy, political instability and a post-operation Sindoor setback to its Jihadi outfits, has further added to the woes of Pakistan.

If one were to look at the unfolding events

in the light of two important developments; Chinese construction and use of Gwadar port and the offer of Pakistani military (hybrid) ruler Asim Munir, the Balochistan issue becomes truly headline-grabbing. It is in this background that the events of January 31, 2026, when Baloch Liberation Army, an armed wing of Balochi rebels, launches audacious attacks across Balochistan lasting 24 hours. The synchronized violence by BLA, as part of operation Herof-2, saw attacks being launched on government offices, banks, Frontier corps HQ and other military targets across the whole province including Kalat, Gwadar, Mastung, Nokshi,

Khasar, Turbat and Pasni. The attacks were confirmed by Hakkal, BLA's media unit.

One of the significant features of this attack was the use of Women Fidayee, as part of BLA'S Majeed Brigade, which inflicted heavy damage on Pakistani forces through their suicide missions. One of the two women, namely, Hawa Baloch, an aspiring writer from Kech district whose father, Nabi Baksh Baloch, a BLA member, too had been killed in operation in Sistan in Iran in 2021. Hawa had joined the Majeed Brigade immediately thereafter. The other women fidayeen was Asifa Mengal, who crashed an IED laden vehicle in Nokshi. She had joined Majeed Brigade in 2023.

After these wide spread and well-coordinated attacks, Pakistan claimed that it had killed 145 BLA cadres, while BLA claimed that it had killed 100 Pak soldiers.

Why did the situation reach such a pass? The reasons, though obvious, have remained hidden from public scrutiny for various reasons. Firstly, the area is remote, even by the subcontinental standard, besides being under populated. Its rough mountainous terrain and tribal culture, that keeps its society sequestered in small pockets, also help Pakistan keep the events in Balochistan from attracting public scrutiny. However, now that insurgency has achieved intense militant form, Pakistan can no longer brush the events there under a carpet.

Most territorial disputes, as also the struggle of many people in various areas of the undivided India has its origin in the unscientific and hurried partition of India by its colonizers, the British, in 1947. As far as Balochistan is concerned, its being part of Pakistan today, is a story of deceit and strong-arm tactics used by Pakistan to grab this resource- rich province.

Balochistan's actual name was Kalat, with its full name being Kalat-e-Sewa, viz, Sewa's fort. Sewa was a legendary Hindu hero of Brahmi-speaking Baloch people. Among the least known facts about Balochistan is that after the British had left, Balochistan remained independent for over seven months,

until it was occupied by Pakistani Military on March 27, 1948.

Historians say that Khan of Kalat (Balochistan) had offered accession to India, to avoid being occupied by Pakistan. In March 1948, Khan of Kalat sent his top leaders, led by Mir Bizenjo, to Delhi to plead with the top congress leaders to support Balochistan's resolve to stay independent. The delegation met Maulana Abu Kalam Azad, but the later refused to listen their plea. What, however, sealed the fate of Balochistan was the broadcast on All India Radio which referred to a press conference held by V.P. Menon, the Secretary of the Ministry of States, who was quoted to have said, "Menon revealed that the Khan of Kalat was pressing India to accept Kalat's accession, but added that India would have nothing to do with it."

The very next day Sardar Patel contradicted V.P. Menon by stating that no such request from Khan of Kalat was ever received by India. Two days later, on 30th March 1948, Nehru too denied that any such request had been received by India. Khan of Kalat too denied the report. However, by then the fate of Balochistan had been sealed, but at the same time the back stage machinations too had become public.

While Indian leaders were issuing contradictory statements, Pakistan Army had invaded Balochistan on 27th March 1948 and Khan of Kalat was forcibly taken to Pakistan's capital Karachi and was made to sign the instrument of accession, while Pakistani Navy had reached the coastal towns of the province at Pasni and Jiwani.

In an article written in February 2006, Vikram Sood, former Raw chief, wrote in an article, "the new rulers in New Delhi were too engrossed with Kashmir and Hyderabad to see the strategic significance of a sovereign Balochistan". According to another Indian scholar, Deepak Basu, "while the Pakistan Army occupied Kalat, India stood by silently. Lord Mountbatten, Nehru and Maulana Azad said nothing about the rape of Balochistan".

In retrospect, it can safely be said that the Indian leaders' lack of strategic foresight cost

India heavily in the later years.

Let us now understand why Balochistan is strategically so well placed as to impact the South Asian geopolitical imperatives. Balochistan's geographical assets are enviable. It occupies 44% of Pakistan's land mass, 70% of coastline, while accounting for less than 3.5% of its population. It also owns 49% of all of Pakistan's livestock. The province is also rich in natural resources like oil, gas, copper, iron and gold. But despite being endowed with such bounties, Balochistan continues to be the most deprived and poorest regions of Pakistan. Most Balochis don't have access to the basic facilities like gas, electricity and potable water.

India's connection with Balochistan go back to medieval times. Out of the population of roughly 1.5 crore, 20% is of Marathi descent. Many of the Balochi leaders, since it rose in revolt against Pakistan, are Marathi decedents. Marathas came to settle in Balochistan after the defeat of Marathas in the third battle of Panipat, at the hands of Mohammad Ghori. Nearly 75000 Maratha prisoners, belonging to Pune Peshwa, were

taken as slaves to Balochistan, which, at that time, was part of Afghanistan. Even today they are known by names which reflect their ancestry. These names are Peshawari Marathas, Bugti Marathas, Misani Marathas, etc. These names reflect 20 such castes which identify Marathas and are akin to the caste system of Maharashtra even today. These castes call their mother Aayee and not Ami (as is the case with Muslims in Pakistan), and worship Shivaji Maharaj and Peshwas, even today. At many places in Balochistan it has been observed that whenever a Bollywood movie shows a scene where *Har Har Mahadev* is chanted, the audience in the theatre stand up and join such sloganeering.

At one point, Balochistan used to be part of Oman, who gifted it to the British. The latter had given them the option of Independence. During the crucial phase between 1947-48, Nehru failed to help them, little realizing its strategic importance. It is pertinent to mention that lots of Balochis speaking Hindi are actually Omani by descent.

Cartoon by- Anil Nakhasi





 Upendar Ambardar



MOTHER TONGUE

A LIFELINE OF SOCIO-CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC IDENTITY



If so many good things are embedded in my native language, then my mother tongue Kashmiri has a most honoured place for all of us.

Our mother tongue Kashmiri, popularly known as Koshur, is the first language to which we are exposed right from our birth. It is the language which is spoken at our home by the family members. It is the emotional pillar that binds and ties us with our nativeness, ethnicity and linguistic singleness. It also acts as the vehicle for the transmission of age-old wisdom and our socio-cultural history. Mother tongue also boosts our dignity, amplifies self-esteem and lays everlasting foundation for a strong indigenous society.

Mother tongue, as per the language experts, enhances the creativity of a child by increasing the critical skills and augments the knowledge retention capacity of a child. It also facilitates a clear expression of one's thoughts and ideas with precession and directness. Additionally, speaking in one's own mother tongue also fosters and cements the familial bonds, social cohesiveness, and the community togetherness. Mother tongue is also the language in which a mother addresses her just delivered child for the first time, while breast feeding and cuddling the

little one. Mother tongue, as such, like a mother, enjoys a time-honoured status in every social setup. It is the language in which a mother and a grandmother articulate the cradle songs and lullabies, while putting an infant to sleep. They run as, "*Ho ho karyau, audakalay*", "*Chyun thou rouni manzilis, kariyau gorou gorou, laaef chaie makhmalich Tae malmalich chaie voor*", "*Louktuoy mouktoyu tarkho, aech vataan mundchaan chuko*".

It is again the mother tongue, in which a mother refreshes the mood of a toddler by tickling, while uttering the lyrical words, "*Aumtyo kumtyo, khasus ba jaengay, mom daam maengay.*" It is also in Kashmiri language that our elders give us blessings and best of heartfelt wishes. Mother tongue is also used for age old "*Henzay Vunvoun*" and heritage "*Veginachoun*" folk songs at the time of wedding and mekhla occasions. They run as, "*Shouklum kaerthee hyout vunvuniyae, ruth phel dinai maej Bhavani*". "*Ditoum dayan, Tae rouchum Nani, mae dedi Kani saedayum*", "*Haer vaech nachnai, tae saer soun sinz hay, harie gachi mokhtae haar, su ti soun sundihay*". Likewise, folk songs, modern

melodies and devotional songs in the form of leelas and bhajans, sung in Kashmiri at the time of Mehndi Raat continue to enthrall and invigorate the occasion related gatherings.

Kashmiri language, deeply rooted in the fragrance of the nativeness, boasts of a rich literature in the form of prose, poetry, folk stories, folk songs, proverbs, riddles and love stories. All of them are layered with deep meanings, wisdom full thoughts and values inspiring truths. Our rich poetry is also embellished with beautiful metaphors, imagery, similes and irony etc, which open countless windows to a host of varied expositions and imagined perceptions. The heartwarming folk singing like "Chakri" and folk dance of "Bachikout", to the accompaniment of popular Kashmiri songs, continue to brighten up our wedding and other festive occasions. Also, the famous folk tales of "Akanandoun" and "Heemal Nagrai", rendered in Kashmiri, continue to entrance and captivate us.

The Spiritual poetry in Kashmiri, focusing on the realisation of the Absolute Self, has an indestructible mystic charm of its own. It stretches from the philosophical Shaivite thoughts containing Vakhs of Lal Ded to the Supreme truth conveying Shruks of Nund Reshi and Shlokas of Sharika Swaroop Mata Rupa Bhavani. Besides, a knower of Kashmiri, can also experience the spiritual fragrance of the devotional poetry of renowned Saint poets of Swami Parmanand, Sahib Koul, Krishan Joo Razdan, Master Zinda Koul, Pt. Mirza Kak, Lala Laxman, Pt. Govind Koul, Prakash Kurgami, Veshin Koul, Anand Ram

and Thakur Joo Manwati etc. Additionally, the mystic pearls of poetry, ranging from the renowned poets like Rasool Mir, Mahmood Gami, Ahad Zargar, Rahman Dar, Lala Argami, Soch Kral, Wahab Khar, Shamas Faqeer, Nyama Saeb, Ahmed Batwari etc. can be enjoyed only by those, who are familiar with the mother tongue Kashmiri. Likewise, the engaging and engrossing poetry of Arni Maal, Haba Khatoon and Mehjoor can be enjoyed, if we know Kashmiri.

The renowned Trikacharya Swami Ramji Maharaj, the reputed Shaivacharyas Swami Mahtab Kak, Swami Vidhya Dhar, Swami Govind Koul Jalalli and the world renowned Shaivite philosopher Swami Lakshman Joo, have also used Kashmiri language as a medium of expression to teach Shaivism related texts and Shaivite philosophy. Additionally, who can deny, the soul soothing upshoot effects, experienced by us, while listening to the famous Kashmiri leelas like, "Darsun dokh chali, Tribhavan lalie", "Harmokh ber tael prarai Madano", "Bael Tae madal vena gulab, pamposh dustai...." and "Akh chi Tae bayie Bae gunzar ma ba....". Their mere listening is sufficient to put a listener to a state of ecstasy.

It is only due to our familiarity with the language that, we can have the transformative experience by going through the famous mysticism laden poem of "Sheshrang" of Rehman Dar, which runs as "Aadan yikhna chum laden tai, sar ho vandai padan....". Our acquaintance with Kashmiri can also make us to enjoy the poetry of Lala Aragami where in one his poems he implores, "Bata koori vati Kani manz chui dai, Kari pooja, mai mashraav lai.....". Lastly, it is only in Kashmiri, that we venerate, pray and seek forgiveness and blessings from the Supreme Mother Goddess, at the famous shrines of Hari Parbat, Tulamulla and Jwala Bhagwati.

If so many good things are embedded in my native language, then my mother tongue Kashmiri has a most honoured place for all of us. It is the reason that makes us to say with an elated sense of pride that Kashmiri is my mother tongue!





 Dr. Ravi Dhar



Kashmir as Resh Vaar

Many Faiths, One Realization

Have you ever wondered why Kashmir has been home to mystics of multiple faiths, earning for itself the appellation Resh Vaar—the land of saints? From ancient Shaiva yogins and Buddhist siddhas to Sufi rishis and later spiritual streams, Kashmir has nurtured an extraordinary plurality of inner paths. On the surface, these faith traditions often appear to stand at variance with one another, sometimes even in apparent opposition to the native spiritual philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism. Yet this apparent contradiction dissolves when we move beyond doctrine and enter the deeper domain of lived consciousness.

Kashmir Shaivism, the indigenous spiritual philosophy of the land, was never a

creed competing for converts. It was a direct, experiential science of awareness. Its central insight—that all existence is the self-expression (svātantrya) of one universal consciousness—left little room for rigid boundaries. Reality, according to this vision, is not divided into sacred and profane, believer and unbeliever, Shaiva and non-Shaiva. All distinctions arise within consciousness and are ultimately resolved back into it.

This foundational openness helps explain why Kashmir could absorb, nourish, and transform diverse mystical traditions without losing its spiritual coherence. What entered the valley did not remain foreign for long. Buddhist emptiness (śūnyatā), Shaiva fullness (pūrṇatā), and Sufi annihilation in the Beloved



(fanā) found a shared soil in direct inner realisation. The forms differed; the depth did not.

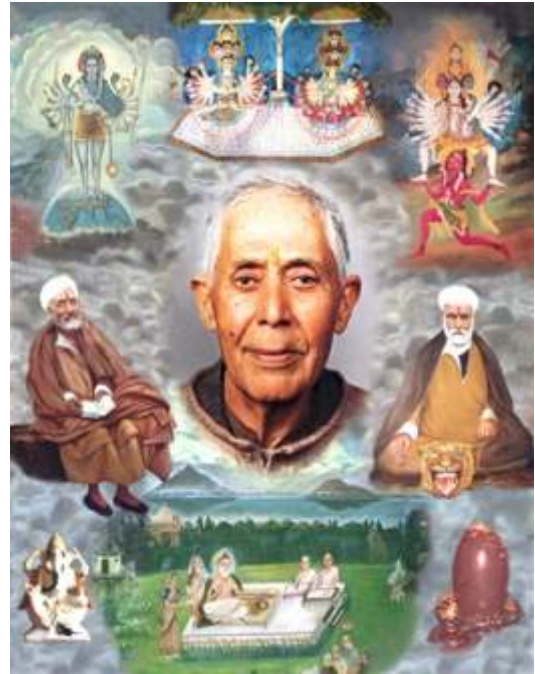
The tension arose largely at the level of the physical and doctrinal mind. As Sri Aurobindo observed, the physical mind clings to names, forms, and rigid oppositions. It insists on categorisation: this versus that, orthodox versus heretical, native versus foreign. When read through this lens, Kashmir's spiritual plurality appears chaotic or contradictory. Shaivism is seen as being displaced by Buddhism, Buddhism by Islam, and the Rishi–Sufi tradition as standing in opposition to earlier Shaiva thought.

Yet the mystic mind does not operate through exclusion. It recognises truth by resonance, not by affiliation. For the realised being, the test is not theological correctness but the depth of awakening. This is why Lal Ded could speak the language of Shaiva realisation while inspiring Sufi rishis who came after her. This is why Sheikh Noor-ud-din, Nund Rishi, could draw from Islamic imagery while echoing the ethical and experiential insights of Kashmir's older Shaiva heritage.

Abhinavagupta, the great synthesiser of Kashmir Shaivism, provides a crucial key to understanding this phenomenon. For him, all spiritual paths are valid insofar as they lead consciousness back to its source. Ritual, devotion, knowledge, and action are not rival roads but different temperaments of the same journey. Such a vision does not fear plurality; it expects it. Diversity is not a threat to unity but its natural expression.

Seen in this light, Kashmir's designation as Resh Vaar is not accidental. It was not earned because the land produced many religions, but because it cultivated many realised beings. The valley responded not to dogma but to depth. Saints were recognised not by the banners they carried, but by the stillness, compassion, and clarity they embodied. When inner realisation became the measure, outer differences lost their power to divide.

Over time, however, this subtle spiritual ecology suffered erosion. Political upheavals,



institutional religion, and later colonial modes of thinking hardened fluid traditions into fixed identities. What was once a shared mystic inheritance became compartmentalised into competing narratives. The physical mind, operating collectively, began to read difference as threat and faith as boundary rather than bridge.

Yet the deeper current has never entirely disappeared. It survives in poetry, folklore, shared ethical values, and the memory of saints who belonged fully to no single enclosure. Kashmir's mystic legacy reminds us that unity is not manufactured by uniformity. It arises from a direct perception of the One expressing itself as many.

In an age marked by religious polarisation and identity-driven conflict, the idea of Resh Vaar offers a quiet but radical alternative. It suggests that the highest harmony does not lie in converting others, nor in dissolving traditions, but in seeing through them—back to the consciousness from which they arise. Kashmir's saints did not erase differences; they transcended them. In doing so, they left behind not a single doctrine, but a living example of spiritual inclusiveness rooted in realisation rather than belief.



 Sunil Raina Rajanaka



Kashmir as Sacred Geography

TANTRIC CONSCIOUSNESS, TIRTHA TRADITION, AND THE ANTIQUITY OF NANDIWAN

Kashmir, since time immemorial, has stood not merely as a geographical entity but as a sacred landscape, a *living mandala*, where metaphysics, ritual practice, and cultural memory converged. The Valley has historically functioned as a melting pot of Vedic, Tantric, and later Buddhist streams of thought, each contributing to a refined and sophisticated civilizational ethos. Yet what distinguishes Kashmir uniquely in the Indic spiritual world is the degree to which its geography itself was sacralised through philosophy and practice.

Kashmir as Manifestation of the Divine Feminine

The *Nilamata Purana* (6th century CE), one of the earliest extant texts devoted exclusively to Kashmir, presents the Valley as a manifestation of Devi Parvati. It does not merely describe rituals; it maps sacredness onto rivers, mountains, springs, forests, and settlements. In its cosmology, Kashmir emerges from the draining of the primordial lake Satisar by Rishi Kashyapa, transforming the land into a field of dharma. Thus, from its mythic origin, Kashmir is conceived as divinely ordained terrain, a



“There is not a space equal to a sesame seed which is not a tirtha in Kashmir.”

bhoomi consecrated by tapas and revelation.

The text meticulously records festivals, seasonal observances, river worship, naga traditions, and temple rituals, demonstrating that spirituality in Kashmir was not abstract metaphysics alone but embodied cultural life.

The Tantric Flowering and the Sacralisation of Space

It was in this already sanctified environment that the Tantric tradition reached unparalleled philosophical heights. Kashmir Shaivism, particularly the Trika system, developed a profound metaphysical framework in which the entire universe is recognized as the manifestation of *Paramashiva*. This worldview did not isolate the divine in distant transcendence but affirmed its immanence in every atom.

Mahamaheshwara Abhinavagupta, the great polymath of Kashmir, encapsulates this vision in the *Tantraloka* by affirming that Shiva pervades every place in the Valley. Sacred geography in Kashmir is therefore not symbolic alone it is ontological. The land is sacred because it is a direct expression of divine consciousness.

Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* reinforces this understanding when he declares:

“There is not a space equal to a sesame seed which is not a tirtha in Kashmir.”

This is not poetic exaggeration but theological assertion. A *tirtha* in Indic understanding is a crossing point between the mundane and the transcendental a place where the veil between the human and the divine becomes thin. In Kashmir, the entire terrain was conceived as such a crossing.

Bringesh Samhita and the Cultural Mapping of Tirthas

The *Bringesh Samhita*, attributed to Rishi Bringesh (6th century CE), provides invaluable insight into the cultural and geographical mapping of Kashmir's sacred sites. Unlike purely mythological accounts, this text identifies specific routes, locations, and their spiritual merit. It is both theological document and sacred gazetteer.

Notably, it elaborates upon the pilgrimage route to the Amarnath Shrine, describing not only the cave's glory but also the sanctity of each halting point along the path. Every stream, meadow, and forest acquires spiritual resonance. Such detailed documentation reveals that pilgrimage in Kashmir was never accidental, it was structured, codified, and embedded in scriptural authority.

Mamaleshwara and the Ganesh Kshetra

Among the tirthas mentioned is Mamaleshwara near present-day Pahalgam. This ancient shrine, dedicated to Lord Shiva, stands as testimony to Kashmir's Shaiva heritage. The adjoining forested region, historically known as Nandiwan, forms part of a larger sacred zone identified in the *Bringesh Samhita* as Ganesh Kshetra.

The text narrates that Lord Ganesh himself created the stream Lambodari, today known as the Lidder River. The very etymology “Lambodari” invokes one of Ganesh's epithets, linking hydrology with theology. Thus, the river is not merely water flow; it is sacred narrative in motion.

The region extending from ancient Ashwapura (modern Ashmuqam) to Ganeshbal is described as sanctified terrain under Ganesh's divine presence. Ganeshbal itself historically functioned as a revered tirtha, reinforcing the integrated sacred geography of the area.

Nandiwan:

Oral Tradition and Cultural Continuity

Adjacent to Ganeshbal lies a dense forest region. While contemporary usage refers to it as Nunwan, the Kashmiri Pandits of Ganeshbal, Khatsu, Logripora, Ashmuqam, Sallar, Kellar, Martand, Hutmur, and Anantnag have consistently preserved the name Nandiwan through oral tradition.

The term “Nandiwan” (or Nandivan) is deeply symbolic. Nandi, the divine attendant and vahana of Lord Shiva, represents devotion, strength, and guardianship. A forest dedicated to Nandi suggests not merely association but consecration an ecological

zone under sacred guardianship.

Oral transmission within the Pandit community has functioned as living archive. Despite political upheavals, demographic shifts, linguistic alterations, and cultural disruptions, the name Nandiwan survived in collective memory. Such continuity reflects not nostalgia but civilizational resilience.

Linguistic Corruption and Civilizational Erosion

Over centuries, invasions, administrative changes, and the gradual decline of Sanskrit as a scholarly and liturgical language in Kashmir led to phonetic distortions of many original place names. “Nandiwan” gradually transformed into “Nunwan,” losing its explicit theological reference.

Toponymic corruption is not merely linguistic change; it often signals cultural dislocation. When sacred names are altered or forgotten, layers of memory fade. Restoring original nomenclature thus becomes an act of cultural archaeology unearthing submerged identity.

Restoration as Cultural Reclamation

Restoring the name Nandiwan (Nandiwan) is not an exercise in romanticism. It is an affirmation of documented textual authority (*Bringesh Samhita*), corroborated by oral tradition, and aligned with the broader sacred geography of Kashmir Shaivism.

Such restoration would:

- Reconnect the site with its scriptural foundation
- Reinforce the Ganesh Kshetra and Mamaleshwara sacred circuit
- Preserve intangible heritage transmitted by local Pandits
- Reassert Kashmir's identity as a civilizational space shaped by Vedic and Tantric consciousness

In the worldview articulated by Abhinava-gupta, every place in Kashmir is an expression of Shiva. Yet certain places, through ritual practice and scriptural mention, acquire intensified sanctity. Nandiwan stands among them.

Conclusion

Kashmir is not merely land—it is liturgy embodied in landscape. From the *Nilamata Purana* to the *Rajatarangini*, from the *Bringesh Samhita* to the *Tantraloka*, the Valley has been consistently described as sacred terrain where divine presence permeates existence.

The preservation and restoration of ancient toponyms like Nandiwan is therefore more than semantic correction—it is the revival of a spiritual cartography that once defined the Valley. In reclaiming such names, one reclaims memory; in reclaiming memory, one restores continuity; and in restoring continuity, one honors the civilizational soul of Kashmir.





THE TRAGIC ETHNIC CLEANSING & EXODUS OF

Kashmiri Pandits

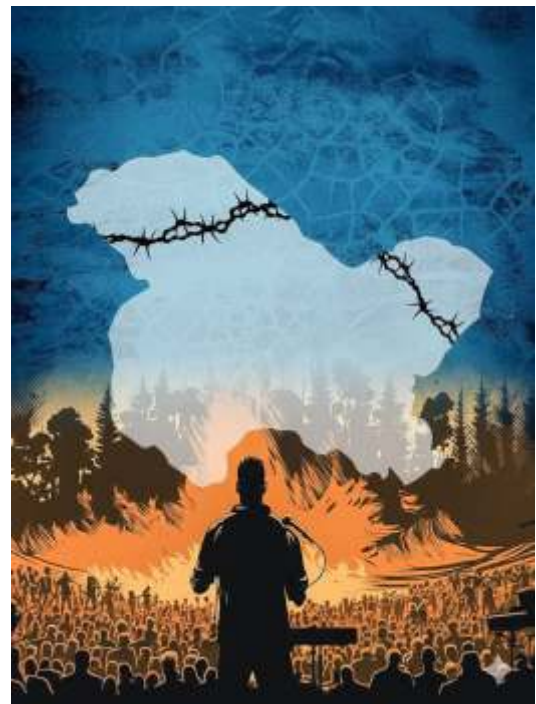
A WARRANT FOR JUSTICE

The Brutal Ethnic Cleansing

The displacement of Kashmiri Pandits from the Kashmir valley in the 1990's constituted a deliberate and brutal ethnic cleansing campaign, orchestrated by pan-Islamist forces, including Pakistan and extremist groups. The objective was to eradicate the Kashmiri Pandit community, thereby establishing a de-facto Islamic state in Kashmir and severing its ties with India. This egregious act exemplified the violent persecution faced by minority groups in the region.

Extremist organizations, notably the JKLF and Hizbul Mujahideen, specifically targeted Kashmiri Pandits, perpetrating brutal attacks that resulted in hundreds of fatalities. The ensuing violence and intimidation compelled over 500,000 Kashmiri Pandits to abandon their ancestral homes, seeking refuge in Jammu, Delhi, and other Indian regions. The destruction and occupation of their homes, temples, and cultural institutions by extremist groups left the community bereft of material possessions.

This forced migration stemmed from a systematic campaign to purge the valley of its indigenous Hindu population, driven by the pan-Islamist ideology of extremist groups seeking to establish an Islamic state in Kashmir. The Indian government's inaction



and indecisiveness at the time enabled the situation to escalate, leaving Kashmiri Pandits to confront an uncertain future.

Human rights organizations, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, have extensively documented the atrocities committed against Kashmiri Pandits, and the Indian government has

acknowledged the forced migration. The ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Pandits is a well-documented historical fact, necessitating that perpetrators be brought to justice and the community receive justice and rehabilitation.

The Kashmiri Pandits are entitled to return to their ancestral homes with dignity and security, and it is the government's responsibility to ensure this occurs. The community's patience is wearing thin, and government inaction is exacerbating their suffering. It is imperative that the government takes concrete steps to address the community's grievances and facilitate their safe return to their homes.

A Government in Distress

The central government, a minority administration at the time, was inadequately equipped to address the unfolding crisis in Kashmir. Lacking the resolve to undertake decisive action, they permitted the situation to escalate, leaving Kashmiri Pandits to confront an uncertain future. The government's inaction and indecisiveness emboldened extremist groups, who perceived it as an opportunity to advance their agenda of establishing an Islamic state in Kashmir.

The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) and other Hindu organizations had alerted the government to the impending crisis, yet the BJP, a coalition partner, was criticized for its inadequate response to protect the minority community. The government's inability to take decisive action fostered a sense of insecurity among Kashmiri Pandits, compelling them to abandon their homes. This failure to protect the community constituted not only a policy failure but also a leadership failure.

The then Prime Minister, V.P. Singh, was accused of prioritizing his own political survival over the protection of the minority community. The government's inaction also

created a sense of impunity among extremist groups, who continued to target Kashmiri Pandits with impunity. The situation was further complicated by the coalition nature of the government, with different parties pursuing divergent agendas, thereby hindering a unified response to the issue.

The consequences of the government's inaction persist, with Kashmiri Pandits still struggling to reclaim their ancestral homes. The government's failure to protect the community has engendered a sense of mistrust among Kashmiri Pandits, who feel abandoned by the government in their time of need. Furthermore, the government's inaction had broader implications, emboldening other extremist groups to target minority communities and contributing to a surge in communal violence across the country.

A Blot on Indian Democracy

The forced migration of Kashmiri Pandits is one of the darkest chapters in post-independence India, raising serious questions about the government's commitment to protecting its citizens. The fact that citizens were forced to abandon their homes, with no security cover provided, is a stark reminder of the failure of the Indian state to ensure the safety and security of its citizens. This failure is particularly egregious given that India is a democracy that pretends to uphold the principles of equality, justice, and human rights. The forced migration of Kashmiri Pandits is a blot on India's democratic credentials, and it highlights the need for greater accountability and transparency in governance.

The government's failure to protect the Kashmiri Pandits has had far-reaching consequences, including the loss of cultural heritage, identity, and livelihoods. The community's displacement has also had a significant impact on the economy and social

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fabric of Kashmir. Furthermore, the government's inaction has emboldened extremist groups, who see the forced migration of Kashmiri Pandits as a victory and a sign of the government's weakness.

The international community has also taken note of the forced migration of Kashmiri Pandits, with human rights organizations and governments expressing concern over the situation. The Indian government's response to the crisis has been criticized for being inadequate and insensitive, with many calling for greater accountability and justice for the victims.

Cultural Genocide

The Kashmiri Pandits are the custodians of Kashmir's rich cultural heritage, with contributions spanning art, architecture, literature, and more. Their displacement has severed the region's cultural continuity, leaving a void that cannot be filled. The community's contributions to Indian culture are immense, and their loss is a national tragedy. Kashmiri Pandits have been the keepers of Kashmir's unique cultural identity, preserving its traditions, language, and customs for centuries. Their forced migration has led to a cultural genocide, with the

community's heritage and identity being erased from the region.

The destruction of Kashmiri Pandit temples, shrines, and cultural institutions has been a significant loss for the community and for India as a whole. These institutions were not just places of worship, but also repositories of the community's history, culture, and traditions. The destruction of these institutions has been a deliberate attempt to erase the community's identity and presence from the region. The loss of Kashmiri Pandit cultural heritage is not just a loss for the community, but also a loss for India, which has been enriched by the community's contributions.

The Kashmiri Pandits' cultural heritage is not just a part of India's past, but also a vital part of its present and future. The community's traditions, language, and customs are an integral part of India's cultural diversity, and their preservation is essential for the country's cultural richness. The government's failure to protect the Kashmiri Pandits' cultural heritage is a failure to preserve India's cultural diversity, and it is imperative that steps are taken to preserve and promote the community's cultural identity.

A Community in Distress

The Kashmiri Pandits who fled their homes have faced immense hardship and struggle. Shunted between makeshift camps and inadequate accommodations, they have fought for basic dignity and survival. Many have succumbed to disease, snake bites, and other hardships, while those who managed to escape have had to rebuild their lives from scratch. The trauma of displacement and violence has left deep scars, and the community continues to grapple with the psychological and emotional impact of their experiences.

The living conditions in the camps have been deplorable, with inadequate access to basic amenities like food, water, shelter, and healthcare. The Kashmiri Pandits have been forced to live in cramped and unsanitary conditions, leading to the spread of diseases and mental health issues. The community's youth have faced significant challenges in accessing education and employment opportunities, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and marginalization.

The government's response to the crisis has been inadequate, with insufficient support and resources provided to the community. The Kashmiri Pandits' struggle for justice and rehabilitation has been ongoing for decades, with little progress made. The community has been forced to fight for every small victory, from accessing basic rights to seeking recognition of their plight.

The government's apathy and indifference have only added to their suffering, making it imperative for the international community and civil society to take notice and demand action. The Kashmiri Pandits deserve to return to their ancestral

The fact that citizens were forced to abandon their homes, with no security cover provided, is a stark reminder of the failure of the Indian state to ensure the safety and security of its citizens.

homes with dignity and security, and it is the government's responsibility to ensure that this happens.

A Call for Justice

The plight of Kashmiri Pandits is a testament to the government's failure to protect its citizens. It is imperative that the authorities take immediate action to address the community's grievances and ensure their safe return to their ancestral homes. The Kashmiri

Pandits deserve to return with dignity and security, and it is the government's responsibility to ensure that this happens. The international community and civil society must also take notice and demand action, as the situation is a humanitarian crisis that requires urgent attention.

The government's inaction has emboldened extremist groups, perpetuating a cycle of violence and hatred. It is imperative that the perpetrators of violence against Kashmiri Pandits are brought to justice, and the community is given adequate compensation and rehabilitation. The government's failure to protect the community has led to a sense of mistrust and betrayal, making it essential to take concrete steps to rebuild trust and ensure the community's safety and security.

The Kashmiri Pandits' struggle for justice and rehabilitation has been ongoing for decades, with little progress made. The community's patience is wearing thin, and the government's inaction is only adding to their suffering. It is time for the government to take concrete steps to address the community's grievances, provide adequate compensation and rehabilitation, and ensure their safe return to their ancestral homes. Anything less would be a betrayal of the community's trust and a perpetuation of the injustice they have suffered.

Kashmiri Pandits have been the keepers of Kashmir's unique cultural identity, preserving its traditions, language, and customs for centuries. Their forced migration has led to a cultural genocide, with the community's heritage and identity being erased from the region.

Key Demands

The Kashmiri Pandits have several key demands that must be addressed to ensure their safe and dignified return to their ancestral homes. Primarily, they seek safe and secure conditions for their return, encompassing adequate security measures, protection from extremist groups, and guarantees against persecution or harassment. Secondly, they demand adequate compensation and rehabilitation for their losses, including destroyed properties, businesses, and livelihoods.

The Kashmiri Pandits also seek protection for their cultural heritage and properties, including temples, shrines, and cultural institutions, from destruction, desecration, or occupation by extremist groups. Furthermore, they demand justice for violence victims and their families, including prosecution of those responsible for atrocities. They also seek recognition as internally displaced persons (IDPs) with associated rights and benefits.

The Kashmiri Pandits' demands extend beyond their own rights, encompassing the future of Kashmir and India. They aim to preserve Kashmir's cultural heritage and diversity, promote communal harmony and tolerance, and uphold justice, equality, and human rights principles. The government's response will test its commitment to protecting all citizens' rights, regardless of religion, caste, or community.

A Lasting Impact

The coerced displacement of Kashmiri Pandits has had a profound and lasting impact on the community, the region, and the country as a whole. The community's displacement has resulted in a significant erosion of cultural heritage, identity, and livelihoods, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and marginalization. The government's inadequate response to the issue has fostered a deep-seated mistrust and disillusionment among Kashmiri Pandits, who perceive themselves as having been abandoned by the state.

The repercussions of the conflict extend beyond the Kashmiri Pandits, with the



The international community and civil society must also take notice and demand action, as the situation is a humanitarian crisis that requires urgent attention.

country's economy also bearing a substantial burden, as the government allocates billions of rupees towards security measures. The situation in Kashmir remains precarious, underscoring the imperative for the government to undertake concrete measures to address the issue and restore peace and stability to the region.

The Kashmiri Pandits' quest for justice and rehabilitation has become emblematic of the broader Kashmir issue, necessitating that the government addresses the community's grievances as part of a comprehensive effort to resolve the conflict and promote regional peace. The government's response to the issue will serve as a litmus test for its commitment to safeguarding the rights of all citizens and fostering communal harmony and tolerance.



 Upendar Ambardar



FESTIVITIES GALORE

Shivratri

Festivals and sacred days have deep roots in our socio-religious traditions. They form a significant part of our cultural heritage. Their celebrations lead to spiritual upliftment, soul purification, moral enrichment besides self-discipline. The festivals sustain our spirits, add colour, zeal, variety and zest to our existence and in the process help to keep our traditions and time-tested rituals alive. Kashmir has been a seat of spiritual and cultural strength since ancient times, Kashmiri Pandits are basically Shaivites and Shaivite philosophy has attained growth and strength in the serenity of cool and calm surroundings of Kashmir.

The worship of Lord Shiva and his Divine consort Parvati is an inseparable part of our tradition and culture. Shivratri, locally known as 'Hayrath', is sacred festival of Kashmiri Pandits. This ancient and auspicious festival has immense religious and cultural sanctity. It's sanctity finds a prominent reference in the sixth century Sanskrit text, 'Nilmat Puran' of Kashmir. Shivratri festival has also been highlighted in the famous philosophical work 'Shivastrotravali' of Utpal Dev, the great Shaivite philosopher of the eighth century. One of the greatest Shaivite, AbhinavGupt has also paid salutations and obeisance to Vatuk Bhairava in his famous Trika philosophical work called 'Tantraloka'. Even the renowned historian Kalhan's 'Rajtarangni' also bears an



invocation to Lord Shiva at the very start of the text. The famous treatises like 'Sivadrashti' by Acharya Somananda, 'Shivstotravali' by Utpal Dev and 'Pratyabhijna Darshnam' by Abhinavagupta have contributed immensely towards the enrichment of Kashmir Shaivism. Kashmir Shaivism, also called Trika Shastra is the philosophy of triad, which comprises Shiva-the Universal consciousness, Shakti-the Divine energy and Nara-the human soul. It regards the entire creation as His manifestation, which is real and not illusion. We worship Lord Shiva in His both forms of Shiva and Shakti. Shakti for us is the Goddess Raginya, Sharika, Kali or Durga, who are the energy aspects of Lord Shiva. Worshipping Lord Shiva leads to the cosmic mother, who offers solace, protection and divine grace to one and all.

Accordingly, the ultimate Truth or

Supreme Reality is Lord Shiva Himself and the whole creation is His manifestation.

He is consciousness and Bliss. Everything emanates from Him and everything merges in Him. He is in us and we are in HIM. In reality, Kashmir Shaivism is a spiritual quest for an inward journey and search rather than an outward one. It is the exploration and realization of the divinity within ourselves. Lord Shiva is also known as Mahadeva-the Great God, Triloki Nath-the Lord of three worlds, Umapati, Gauripati, Parvatipati, Chandrashekhar-the moon-crested, Gangadhar-the bearer of Ganga, Girisha-the mountain Lord, Mahakal -the Lord of death, Pashupati-the Lord of beasts and Vishwanath-the Lord of Universe. HE is the Lord of his spiritual consort, the Goddess Parvati, which in reality is the cosmic energy. The union of Lord Shiva with Shakti is Shivratri. Every Monday is sacred to Lord Shiva. Generally, the fourteenth day of the dark half of each month is called Shivaratri. But the one that falls on Phalgun (February-March) is Mahashivratri. Mahashivratri known as 'Hayrath' in Kashmir is a twenty-three days festival, which starts

from Phalgun Krishna Paksh Pratipada (Phadgun gatapach Oakdoh), the first day of the dark fortnight. It culminates in Phalgun.

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

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

Lord Shiva also represents the life cycle of living beings. It is due to this very fact that walnuts are used in the Shivratri puja. Walnuts, known in Kashmiri as 'doon' is a seed, which in reality represents a complete life-cycle i.e. the beginning and end of life. It is also a miniature representation of our



A Shivshakti Paining by artist GR Santosh

universe and is symbolic of our respect for the entire cosmos. The four kernels of the walnut are also believed to represent the four directions of the hemisphere and the four Vedas.

As Mahashivratri falls on the darkest night of the year, it symbolises the darkness of ignorance and Lord Shiva is said to manifest Himself during this night to enlighten the universe by removing the ignorance.

As per a prevalent belief in Kashmir, the Divine Couple of Lord Shiva, and Goddess Parvati visit the devotees' homes on the night of Mahashivratri and are said to stay as Divine Guests upto Amavasya, known as 'Doon Mavas' locally (fifteenth day of Phalgun Krishnapaksh). Preparations such as cleansing of the house and washing of the clothes for celebrating the Mahashivratri festival are done from 'Hur Oukdoh', the first day of Phalgun Krishnapaksh to 'Hur-Shaeyum' (Sixth day of Phalgun Krishnapaksh). 'Hur-Satam' is the day when special dishes as per the individual family ritual or 'reeth' are cooked.

On 'Hur-Athum', the devotees prior to their forced migration used to visit Hari-Parbat Srinagar for night long meditation and Bhajan Kirtan at Chakrishwar and Pokhribal temples. It is on 'Hur-Navum' that womenfolk visit their parental homes. On their return, they bring alongwith them the 'Kangri' (the

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

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



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

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

The 'Vatuk' is decorated by tying mouli (narivan) i.e. string of dry grass embellished with marigold flowers and 'bael-pater', which is known as 'Vusur'. Tilak is also applied to 'Vatuk'. Incense, dhoop, camphor and ratandheep form the main ingredients of ritualistic material called 'Vatak Samgri'. Milk and curds and conical sugar preparation called 'Kand' are offered to the 'Vatak-Raz', represented by the 'Nout' amidst elaborate ritualistic pooja and chanting of the holy mantras, collectively known as 'Vatak-Pooja'.

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

During Shivratri days, playing of indoor-game with the sea-shells, locally called 'Haren-gindun' is a usual practice especially among the children. Late in the evening of 'Amavasya'

known by the name of 'Doon-Mavas', pooja is performed either on the river bank (Yarbal) or at home as per the family tradition. The practice of performing pooja of walnuts taken-out from the 'Vatak-Nout' called as 'Vatuk Parmozun'.

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

It is a usual practice in most of the households, who perform pooja at the river-banks to allow the head of the family to enter the house only after he promises blessings and boons in the form of health, wealth, education, employment, peace and prosperity to each and every member of the family. The conversation in Kashmiri, which takes place between the head of the family (who is outside the closed door, and senior lady of the house goes like this,

"thuk or dubh-dubh', kous chuv?

Ram Broor 'Kya Heth?

Anna Heth, Dhana-Heth Doarkoth,

Aurzoo Heth,

Vidya, Kar-bar, Te Sokh Sampdha Heth.'

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

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



 Sanjay Pandita



Echoes of Blessings

THE VANISHING WANWUN OF KASHMIRI PANDIT WEDDINGS



There was a time in Kashmir when weddings entered a household not with clamour but with reverence, not with spectacle but with sound that moved slowly and deliberately through the air. Long before microphones, before decorated stages and choreographed celebrations, marriage was welcomed through voices—measured, trembling, and deeply aware of the unseen. These voices belonged to women, seated in quiet circles, wrapped in woollen pherans, their breath carrying prayer rather than

performance. The song they sang was Wanwun, a sacred, lyrical tradition that once formed the inner spine of Kashmiri Pandit weddings. It did not announce itself loudly, nor did it seek attention. It arrived gently, sanctifying the moment, binding the earthly to the divine through stretched syllables of belief.

Wanwun was never an embellishment. It was essential. A wedding without it was once unimaginable, for its absence would have meant a rupture in the ritual order. While priests recited Vedic mantras beside the sacred

fire, women completed the ceremony through Wanwun, offering what scripture alone could not—the language of lived devotion, of maternal blessing, of intimate hope. In this balance lay the spiritual completeness of the occasion: the masculine articulation of ritual and the feminine invocation of grace.

What made Wanwun profoundly unique was its absolute reliance on oral tradition. It was never written, never standardised, never fixed into a single authoritative version. It lived entirely in memory and breath, passed from grandmother to mother to daughter with gentle insistence. Each household carried its own variations, yet the emotional core remained unchanged. This fragility made Wanwun vulnerable, but it also made it alive. It was not learned formally; it was absorbed, remembered, and lived. In this sense, Wanwun was not merely a song—it was an inheritance of sensibility, a cultural instinct shaped over centuries.

Musically, Wanwun resisted structure as we understand it today. There were no instruments, no rhythmic accompaniment, no clapping to anchor the melody. A single voice would begin, slow and almost hesitant, allowing each syllable to stretch and settle. Gradually, others joined, their voices merging into a sustained, undulating sound that seemed to suspend time. The rhythm emerged not from measure but from collective breath. Notes lingered until they dissolved naturally into silence. It was music that asked for patience, for presence, for surrender.

An elderly Kashmiri Pandit woman once said quietly, “When Wanwun was sung, it was not we who blessed the bride. It was the divine that spoke through us.” In that sentence rests the soul of the tradition. Wanwun was believed to be heard beyond the visible world. It was an invocation, a sacred act through which blessings descended gently upon the bride, the groom, and the household that would shelter them.

Wanwun accompanied almost every phase of the wedding cycle. Days before the ceremony, during *livun*, women cleaned and prepared the house, washing walls and floors

as they sang. This was not mere physical labour; it was ritual purification. Through Wanwun, the home itself was blessed, its thresholds made auspicious, its spaces prepared to receive new life. Engagement ceremonies, too, were softened and sanctified by song, as promises were cushioned in melody.

Even the act of sending invitations was not entirely secular. Wanwun ensured that blessings travelled with messages, that the wedding extended its sanctity beyond the immediate household. When the bride or groom underwent ritual bathing, Wanwun accompanied the act, purifying not only the body but the unseen aura. Water and sound worked together, cleansing what could be touched and what could not.

On the eve of the wedding, during *maaniziraat*, when henna was applied to the bride's hands and feet, Wanwun filled the room with warmth and meaning. Oil lamps flickered, *kangris* glowed, and elderly women sang verses likening the bride to spring blossoms and radiant light:

*“Yemberzal pholwun, vuchh ta'ras,
nav jandari roshan.”*

(See how the narcissus blooms, tender and bright, her new life glows with light.)

The bride sat modestly, palms extended, listening. The song was not directed at her alone; it was offered to destiny itself.

During *Devgun*, when the bride or groom symbolically crossed the threshold from singlehood into marriage, Wanwun again affirmed the transformation. On the wedding day, *Batte Wanwun* reached its most elaborate form, surrounding the rituals with sound that was as binding as vows. As the groom arrived, as fire was lit, as sacred steps were taken, Wanwun flowed quietly through the space, invisible yet indispensable.

The language of Wanwun was simple, conversational, yet layered with metaphor. Invocations to Shiva, Sharika, Vishnu, and other divine forces blended seamlessly with imagery drawn from everyday life. A verse might rise slowly:

*“Shiv Shambhu tsoli asivun,
navi diyi rang rosan.”*

(O Shiva, bestow blessings, paint her life in radiant colours.)

The word rosan—light—would be stretched until it trembled in the air, settling gently into silence as though the blessing had found its destination. Household symbols appeared often:

*“Kangri garmas roshan,
gharas andar suhan.”*

(May the kangri glow with warmth, may the home shine with joy.)

Such imagery made Wanwun deeply intimate. It spoke of warmth, shelter, seasons, and continuity. Unlike Sanskrit mantras, it spoke in Kashmiri—the language of daily life, of maternal advice, of lived experience.

Within Wanwun also lived henzey, a devotional form invoking Subhadra. Here, Subhadra was not bound to the bride alone; she embodied the eternal sister performing krul harun for her beloved brother Krishna. Symbolically, Krishna could be the groom, the bride's father, or the groom's father. Through this invocation, Wanwun extended beyond the immediate wedding, affirming bonds of sibling devotion and familial continuity rooted in cosmic myth.

To imagine a Kashmiri Pandit wedding of the past is to enter a world shaped by rhythm rather than haste. Snow lay silently on rooftops. Firewood crackled softly. Kangris glowed orange in dimly lit rooms. Women sat together, faces illuminated by flame, voices

rising slowly into the night. No one clapped. No one hurried. The song was not meant to entertain; it was meant to consecrate.

Because it lived orally, Wanwun absorbed influences across centuries. Shaivite philosophy mingled naturally with Vaishnavite devotion. Nature entered freely—chinar leaves reddening in autumn, almond blossoms breaking winter's hold, saffron fields glowing under autumn sun. Wanwun became an unwritten archive, recording not only belief but also the emotional geography of Kashmiri Pandit life.

The rupture came abruptly. The displacement of Kashmiri Pandits in the 1990s fractured the communal spaces that had sustained such traditions. Weddings moved from ancestral homes to rented halls in Jammu, Delhi, and beyond. The new soundscape was dominated by DJs and amplified music. In these environments, Wanwun—slow, meditative, unamplified—struggled to survive.

Occasionally, an elderly woman still hums a fragment at a modern wedding, her voice briefly cutting through the noise:

*“Shiv Shambhu yemberzal rangav,
sukh roshan ghar andar.”*

(O Shiva, colour her life like the narcissus, may joy shine within her home.)

For a fleeting moment, memory stirs. Then the fragment dissolves.

Yet Wanwun is not extinct. Like a seed buried beneath snow, it waits. Its revival requires no formal training, no stage, no instruments. It requires only time, patience, and collective will. It asks for women to sit together again, to remember, to sing without haste.

As long as almond blossoms bloom each spring, as long as snow rests on temple roofs, as long as memory endures, Wanwun survives. It waits for voices to rise again—not for applause, but for blessing. And when they do, perhaps the gods will lean closer once more, listening to a sacred sound that never truly vanished, only fell silent.

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 Sanjeev Munshi

The Persecuted HINDUS OF SOUTH EAST ASIA

Recently, I was re-reading Sarat Chandra's 1926 immortal classic – Pather Dabi (loosely translated: Claimants of the Path; Hindi: Path Ke Davedar), a novel about India's freedom struggle based in Yangon (Rangoon, the capital of Myanmar (Burma). Burma had a strong Hindu presence till the 20th century, mostly people of Bengali and Tamil ethnicity - according to 1931 census, 55% of Rangoon's (Yangon) population were Indian migrants, mostly Hindus. Today, the Hindu population in Myanmar is down to 0.5-1.7% only!

I also recall having witnessed the Annual Bali Jatra Festival at Cuttack (Odisha) on Kartik Poornima when thousands of paper boats (Boitas) with lamps are set afloat in the Mahanadi River, symbolizing the departure of Odia sailors to celebrate the ancient maritime trade with Southeast Asia (Bali, Java, Sumatra, Sri Lanka etc). To anyone traveling to what

From the trends visible all-over South-East Asia and even Europe, it is becoming clear that Muslim majority societies find it difficult to coexist with people of 'other' faiths.



once was known as Indochina, the civilizational and cultural influence of India becomes obvious - across Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Far East - Malaysia and Indonesia; we find a strong imprint of Hindu and Buddhist heritage, of Indian origin in these countries! Not just in the Indian subcontinent countries, but also in neighbouring countries like Afghanistan, Myanmar, Hindu-Buddhist presence becomes obvious.

Arabs captured Sind in 712 CE and with it, the floodgates opened for hordes from West - Central Asia (Turks, Mongols), Persians, and Afghans who attacked from across the Hindukush Mountains and did considerable damage to Hindu-Buddhist societies across India over

a 1000-year period! India saw considerable conversions to Islam, mostly forced, during this period.

India gained political independence from the British in 1947 but faced an immediate catastrophe- a religion-based partition of the country. Sind, NWFP, Baluchistan and western parts of Punjab became Pakistan; Bengal also got bifurcated – the Eastern part became a part of the newly created Pakistan while the Western part remained in India. Partition led to massive population transfer – an estimated 12-20 million people were displaced following the creation of an Islam based country. It is estimated that up to 2 million people perished in the communal violence following partition. However, partition remained incomplete in terms of population transfer – a big chunk of Muslim population continued to live in India (9.8% as per 1951 census). East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) had a Hindu population of about 22% in 1947. Likewise, West Pakistan, in 1947 had a significant non-Muslim population, primarily Hindus and Sikhs, estimated around 15-20% of the region's total, with Hindus being about 14.6% (1941 census).

What is the population status today?

- Population of non-Muslims in West Pakistan, as per 1951 census had fallen to 1.61%. It remains <2% even today!
- In Bangladesh, Hindu population has declined from nearly 22% in 1947 to 7.95% (2022 census).

Both countries have a consistent history of persecution of minorities. Sind province in Pakistan has earned notoriety due to regular 'forced abduction' of Hindu and Sikh Girls –

girls are abducted, forced to convert to Islam and, later forcibly married off to older men. In its Feb 2023 report, the *Human Rights Commission of Pakistan* expressed “considerable alarm” over the state of religious freedom in the country. The report highlighted several developments during that period that “belied the state's commitment” to freedom of religion and belief, specifically the incidence of forced conversions in Sindh [particularly of kidnapped Hindu women and girls being forced to marry Muslim men] has remained worryingly consistent.

Bangladeshi Muslims, too, have consistently exhibited their anti-Hindu bias over the years.

The stepmotherly treatment meted out to Hindus in East Pakistan became apparent soon after independence. Mr Joginder Nath Mondol, a well-known Dalit Bengali lawyer, sided with Muslim League and was appointed as the first Law Minister of Pakistan by Jinnah (only Hindu in his Cabinet) in 1947. He submitted his resignation to Liaquat Ali Khan, then PM of Pakistan on October 8, 1950 after getting thoroughly disgusted with the treatment meted out to Bengali Hindus, including Dalits, in East Pakistan. In his 14-page resignation letter, Mr Mondol has brought out the religious discrimination and persecution Hindus were facing in Pakistan. Mr Mondol returned to India in 1950 and died unsung on Oct 5, 1968!

A streak for Islamic orthodoxy : East Bengal/Bangladesh always has displayed a prominent streak for Islamic orthodoxy. Muslim League, the communal party that worked for partition of India, was born in Dacca on Dec 30, 1906. People like HS Suhrawardy and Mohammad Ali Bogra led the communal movement in the



1946 elections when Muslim League captured 113 out of 250 seats. HS Suhrawardy became the Chief Minister of Bengal and earned the sobriquet "Butcher of Bengal" for his negative role during the partition. There were major Anti-Hindu pogroms in East Bengal/ East Pakistan, in 1960, 1964 and 1970-71 (by the Pakistani Army).

Post Independence (1971) : Bangladesh continued to exhibit periodic outbursts of communal violence, directed mostly against the hapless Hindus. While under Awami League, the anti-Hindu & anti -India venom was mostly kept under control, ALL other political outfits had to play the anti-India/ Hindu card for sake of power! By now, Bangladesh, like Pakistan, has become another hub of Jihadi Islam. The *Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council* reported over 2,000 to 2,442 incidents of violence against minority communities— primarily Hindus—between August 2024 and June 2025. Incidents have included the burning of houses, looting of businesses, vandalism of temples, and targeted killings. Violence has been widespread, with significant incidents reported in 52 districts. Between November 26, 2024, and January 25, 2025, over 76 attacks were reported, resulting in 23 deaths and over 150 assaults on Hindu temples.

Can Muslims Coexist with Non-Muslims? From the trends visible all-over South-East Asia and even Europe, it is becoming clear that Muslim majority societies find it difficult to coexist with people of 'other' faiths. Till Muslims are in a minority, the slogan is "Islam is in Danger;" the moment Muslim population becomes substantial, they start demanding Sharia Law and Nizam-e-Mustafa for

EVERYBODY! Britain and several European countries are facing this ugly situation. Even while Muslims constitute just 6% of British population, there are open demands for Sharia Law in Britain. As a result, countries like Austria, France, Belgium, Bulgaria, Portugal, Germany, Italy, and Spain are seeing some kind of pushback (banning of burqa/ niqab). Hindu populations in Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan have shrunk dramatically over the last 30 years due to severe discrimination by the Muslim community!

The Kashmir Case Study : In Kashmir, we have a unique case study – within less than 5 centuries (1339 – 1819 CE), the blessed valley got converted from a Hindu majority to a Muslim Majority one. Most of the conversions were due to the persecution by the Sultans of Shahmir dynasty, Mughal kings (particularly Aurangzeb) and, later under the Pathan rule. In 1947, KPs constituted about 6% of Kashmir Valley's population (after 6 Exoduses)'; after the 7th Exodus in 1990s, numbers of KPs living in the valley have reduced to maybe less than five thousand (a charitable count, excluding the Govt employees working in the valley!).

What was our QOL in Kashmir? Kashmiri Pandits were gradually reduced to living as second rate citizens post 1947. On the technical education and job front, State Govt went out of its way to discriminate against KPs. Post 1970s, as the ideology of an aggressive Islam permeated the Kashmiri society (courtesy Jamat-e-Islami and Moulvis from UP-Bihar who penetrated Kashmir valley), harassing KP women by the roadside urchins with rude comments became



a regular feature of life. KPs were openly and derisively called Kafirs & Hunood! KPs unfortunately had learnt to accept the slurs and insults without reaction (a hangover from the Pathan Raj era?). When there was war between Israel and Muslim countries in the Middle East, our houses were stoned, as if KPs were responsible. When Zia-ul-Haq got Bhutto hanged (April 1979), KP houses were on the receiving end; when the tyrant Zia himself got blown up in an air accident (Aug 1988), again our houses were stoned. Renaming of Kashmiri names of towns, rivers and even personalities started. Vitasta was already called Jhelum; Hari Parbat became Kohi Maran in official records, Shankaracharya became Takht-e-Suleimani, Anantnag became Islamabad and even Lal Dyed, the 14th century saint was renamed Lalla-Arifa.

Post 1983, defiance of authority became common -several Muslim men unzipped their pants openly before Mrs Indira Gandhi during an election rally. Resurrection of Frankenstein like Qazi Nissar in Anantnag led to open defiance of Govt authority and ultimately, to communal riots in Anantnag, resulting in destruction and desecration of several temples and Hindu properties. As per Prof Satish Ganjoo, “The 1986 Anantnag communal riot was not a spontaneous outburst of communal anger but a calculated exercise in symbolic humiliation. It was designed to psychologically break the Kashmiri Pandits, undermine their cultural sovereignty and normalize their marginalization. By the mid-1980s, Kashmir was entering a dangerous transition. Centuries of syncretism were eroding under the weight of sectarian mobilization. The March 1986 riots in Anantnag, instigated by Islamist clerics like Qazi Nisar Ahmad, marked the first organized communal violence against Hindus in the Valley's history. This was the real rupture, where Kashmiri Muslims were mobilized to destroy Hindu shops, homes and temples under the banner of “Islam in danger.” It conditioned the social psyche to view Kashmiri Hindus as

legitimate targets. The Anantnag episode of August 1986 did not emerge in a vacuum but represented the symbolic intensification of this campaign. If March was the physical assault, August was the semiotic assault — a civilizational insult staged in broad daylight. For the Pandits, it was the unmistakable message that humiliation and erasure would define their future; for Islamists, it was a declaration of intent.”

My uncle, after migration in April 1990, was posted to Jaipur; he commented, “I had forgotten what 'normal life' meant. In Kashmir, we were living tense, uncertain lives. We were living in constant fear, were suppressed and had learned to accept insults and maltreatment. It was only when I started living in Jaipur that I realized that I could live without fear as a Hindu”!

On our recent Exodus Day (19.01.26), I was discussing the KP situation with a Bengali friend. One of his comments came as an eye opener, “You KPs should thank God that you left Kashmir en-masse in 1990. Your community, while coming out alive, saved its dignity, its honour and respect. Look at what is happening in Bangladesh. At least you are not, for last 36 years dying a daily death, are not living in fear like my relatives in Bangladesh!” My friend, whose family migrated from Anandapur in Sylhet Distt (East Bengal) in 1947, still has one branch of family living in their native village. The details he shared were unnerving for me.

In late December 2025 and early January 2026, a series of violent incidents, including mob lynchings and murders, targeting members of the Hindu minority community occurred in Bangladesh. At least six Hindu men were killed in targeted attacks within an 18-day period across different districts:

- ❖ On December 18, 2025, in Mymensingh district, a Hindu garment worker was lynched by a mob over unproven allegations of blasphemy. He was beaten, hanged from a tree, and his body was set on fire.
- ❖ On December 24, 2025, another Hindu man was beaten to death by a mob in the

Rajbari district.

- ❖ On December 29, 2025, a Hindu security guard and Ansar member was shot dead by a colleague inside a garment factory in the Mymensingh district.
- ❖ On New Year's Eve, a 50-year-old Hindu businessman was brutally attacked, stabbed, and set on fire by a mob. He died from his injuries in the hospital on January 3, 2026.
- ❖ On January 5, 2026, a 45-year-old factory owner and newspaper editor was shot and had his throat slit in the Jashore district.
- ❖ On Jan 5, 2026, a 40-year-old grocery shop owner was attacked with sharp weapons and killed in the Narsingdi district.

I had no response to my friend's observations. Loss of habitat, loss of moorings, loss of property all dwarf before one single entity – LIFE. That we are alive and free to live our lives the way we want is probably more precious than anything else. Would life under 'undeclared' Nizam-e-Mustafa have been worth living? Would we have succumbed to the pressure of Ayesha Andrabi for our womenfolk to wear Burqa? During my childhood years, young women and girls would rarely use Chaddars to cover their heads and bodies, the way we see womenfolk in Kashmir doing today. Return to Kashmir today would be akin to Hindus living in an Islamized Bangladesh!



It is natural for us KPs to miss our homeland. Lamenting loss of habitat is also a normal human emotion. I recall, in 1982, my landlady at Ludhiana would often talk about her hometown Sargodha – a town she had left in 1947. That there is a Sargodha Colony in Ludhiana City where probably migrants from that area have settled post partition speaks of the strength of nostalgia. “Not for a day, my Bengali friend recalls, did my grandmother reconcile to her life in Kolkata – she always missed the 'Amar Sonar Bangla' of her native Anandapur.” Kolkata used to have feuds between supporters of East Bengal Football Club (founders were from East Bengal) and those of Mohan Bagan (considered to be more of a West Bengal club). These supporters forgot that East Bengal was only a memory after the 1947 partition – their rivalry just lived on.

The Seventh Exodus (1990) was one of the cruellest cuts our community received because it came after 171 years of relative peace (1819-1947), at a time when India was free from foreign rule and had a 'Secular' Constitution that failed to protect this ethnic religious minority! Exodus of this scale obviously dealt a serious blow to the KP Community. People lost their homes and hearths overnight; families got scattered in quest for survival. Worst affected were those who sold their properties for a pittance since survival was at stake, people with private businesses, people who were self-employed. Exodus has been a socio-cultural cum religious shock for KPs. The uprooting has been like an amputation. We lost our 'tiraths' and temples, our sacred spots that have been the cornerstones of our existence for last 5000 yrs. We lost our moorings, our roots.

Currently, we are in the fourth decade of our Seventh Exile! We all are desirous of going back, of reviving our connect with our roots! It is, therefore important for the community to keep the flame alive in the hearts of our younger generations, those born post Exodus. It is important for parents to help keep our language, our cultural practices, our samskaras alive – no matter

what the odds are! Till the political conditions become conducive to our return, KPs must focus on shoring up and renovating our damaged shrines and tiraths, on rebuilding our cultural traditions, of reviving our connect to the valley thru religious tourism.

We must remember that another persecuted community, the Jews of Palestine, hounded from the land of their forefathers for almost 20 centuries, kept the name alive in their kids' heart. At every Jewish wedding celebration, one of the toasts would be "Next Year in Jerusalem" (L'Shana Haba'ah B'Yerushalayim) – no matter where they lived, which language they spoke; Jews in exile had taken up the language of the land they were living in. One of the marriage rituals was crushing of a wine glass by the bride and the groom, symbolically mourning the breaking of the Second Temple in 70 CE by the Romans. One part of a wall in a Jewish home was left unpainted to mourn the Fall of the Temple in Jerusalem.

Return to the Land of our Forefathers shall take some more time because the local conditions in Kashmir have not changed. KMs remain unapologetic, unrepentant of what happened in 1990 – a look at the recent utterances of Farookh Abdullah should be enough to dispel any romantic ideas our people are harbouring. Every KM political leader pays lip service to our cause but no progress towards our return and rehabilitation has been 'allowed' by the ordinary man on the street!

Global geopolitics today is in midst of a huge churn. The powers that plotted our Exodus – Pakistan funded by the oil rich Shiekh of the Middle East is fighting for its survival. India is emerging as an economic powerhouse and our position as a military power is only going to strengthen further in the next decade! Am sure that next 5 years shall see defanging of Pakistan – whether it retains its current geographic form remains a question mark. As the funding from Gulf dries up, our Kashmiri Muslims too might find radicalization an expensive proposition. That time might be much nearer than what we can perceive today! Some of our KP brethren were expecting the BJP Govt to paratroop KPs into Kashmir once Art 370 was abrogated in 2019. Many of us are getting impatient at the perceived 'lack of progress' in our rehabilitation. They too need to remember the lesson from Old Testament – the Jews who became impatient at the base of Mount Sinai had to walk in punishment for 40 years before Moses led them to the Promised Land!

So, as a community, it is important to remember that we survived this catastrophe. Over 5L KPs are alive today is important! Over 1400 KPs sacrificed their lives for the privilege of seeing their brethren live in freedom! That we have not given up on Kashmir – is important! Life itself is more important than property! Jews have a greeting "L'chaim" – a Toast to Life itself! We KPs, too, need to remember and respect life! L'chaim!

APPEAL FOR ARTICLES!

NAAD is a monthly community magazine of All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) with circulation across the globe. The monolingual publication is in English. It needs support from its readership scholars by way of articles that relate to the Kashmiri community and also to the country. Please come forward and send your articles. In order to give space to maximum number of writers, we request to make each article of 3 to 4 pages in Times New Roman with Font size – 12.

Please send your articles on hqaiks@gmail.com.



 Inder K Koul

Bhuteshwar or Bhufisher or Naran Nag

(ANCIENT TEMPLE/TIRATH/HILL)



This sacred pilgrim site now represented by ruins of ancient temples (74° 58' 41" long. & 34° 21' 12" lat. –7,430 feet alt) is situated about 55 Kms from the capital city Srinagar, in District Ganderbal, 6 to 7 Kms above the present village **Wangath** or **Wangat** (previously known as **Vashishtashrama**),

along the **Kankanai** river which issues from the famous **Gangabal Lake**. The site consists of ruins of at least 18 temples of various ages and dimensions built by different Kings of Kashmir at different times (under different names) in honour of Shiva Bhutesha as per the description given below.

Name of the King	Year	Name under Which Built
Ashoka	1425 - 1374 BC	Bhuteshwar
Jaluka	1374 - 1314 BC	Jyeshthesha
Narendraditya (also known as Khinkhila)	308 - 272 BC	No details
Lalitaditya-Muktapida	699 - 736 CE	Jyeshthrudra (stone temple- perhaps the principal bldg of the western group of temples at Naran-Nag)
Uchhal	1101 - 12 CE	Rebuilt and repaired the old buildings repaired which had got burnt or been damaged.
Jayasimha	1128 - 55 CE	Built a Matha

Avantivarman is also stated to have been benefactor of Bhuteshwara. Similarly, the mendicant King Sandhimat-Aryaraja (69-23 CE) was also a firm believer in Shiva Bhutesha and used to visit the shrine of Bhuteshwara regularly. The tirath is invariably visited by the pilgrims from holy Gangabal lake on their way back usually on the eighth day of the bright half of September (Ganga Ashtami). However, for the sake of convenience and security reasons pilgrims or tourists also prefer proceeding to the holy Gangabal lake via Buthisher or Naran Nag adopting the same way back.

Nilmatpurana and Harmukutgamahatmya describe the mountain spur of Bhuteshwara as the abode of Shiva-Bhutesha. It was during the time of King Avantivarman (855-883 CE) that one of his trusted ministers, Shura by name, beheaded a fierce Damar, Dhanava about whom the Brahmins of **Nandikshetra** i.e the entire area towards the southern foothills of Harmukh range of mountains along and above Sindh Lar on its right side, had complained to the king that he had usurped the lands attached to the Bhuteshwar shrine. Shura got his decapitated body thrown into the nearby tank (most probably the present **Naran Nag**) in order to prove his loyalty to the King, because the Brahmins had alleged that the Damar Dhanava had been enjoying the patronage of minister Shura.

In the disturbed reigns of later periods, the temples at Bhuteshwara suffered many

depredations. Its treasury was plundered in Sangramdeva's time by his wicked minister Bhardreshwar (1003-28 CE) and by Trillaka's men in their rebellions during Jayasimha's time (1128-55 CE).

So far as the description of ruined structures is concerned, there are two groups of temples at Bhuteshwar comprising now the ruins of 11 and 6 temples. Ruins of the 18th temple can be found across Sindh (Ganga) river. Jyeshthrudra temple located in the western group of 6 temples is 25' in plinth area with 17' sq. worship area. It has two entrances in south-west and north-east direction with a dome shaped roof-top which has been put in position and repaired by the Archaeological Survey of India. Lime and meshed brick



powder mortar has been used in a very skilful manner so that it is difficult to detect the joints. Not far from Jyeshthrudra temple is a stone platform believed to have been got erected by Rilhana, a minister during Jayasimha's time (1128-55 CE). On one side of this platform there is an archway leading to a low balcony type of structure which must have been supported by a large number of stone pillars out of which now only eight are in position. Straight across these pillars must have been a varandah and a staircase leading directly to the eastern group of 11 temples. Both groups of temples are placed at a distance of about 200 yards from each other, each one having separate stone enclosure. The principal temple in the eastern group is considered to be dedicated to Shiva Bhutesha. The base of a colossal Linga found by Bishop Cowie at the S.W. corner of the enclosure of Western group of temples belonged perhaps, to the very emblem of Jyeshtha. Champaka a minister in Jayasimha's time (1128-55 CE), f/o Kalhan Pandit, used to spend at least seven days a year in Nandikshetra using the wealth acquired by him, in pious works. He also made King Jayasimha spend large sum on Ashadh Poornimashi (full-moon day of June) celebration at Nandikshetra by which he obtained prosperity in subsequent 5-6 years.



The last mention of Bhuteshwara in 'Raj Tarangini' is made in Sloka 3356 in Book-VIII when Sumanas brother of Rilhana, a minister in Jayasimha's period (1128-55 CE) got a matha built at this place.

Several new structures were excavated here by the renowned Archaeologist Mr. R.C.Kak in late Forties. However, almost all the excavated ruins continued to remain threatened by thick foliage till the entire site was taken over by Archaeological Survey of India which has taken pains in repairing/rebuilding some of the dilapidated structures. Among the eastern group of temples, a cella adjacent to the main temple contains a monolithic bath tub about 10 ft. X 4 ft. in size having well carved out inlets and outlets for insertion of stone conduit pipes. Fresh and sacred waters from the nearby Naran Nag which is located at the elevated portion of the ground in the lap of a mountain crevice, used to be conducted through a chain of these conduit pipes up to the bath tub where the members of royal families used to take bath etc. As per the local legend a large portion of water in Naran Nag itself used to be conducted through long underground chain of the carved conduit pipes from the holy **Gangbal Lake**, which is about 12-13 Kms from Naran Nag high above in **Harmukh** mountain range. This fact came to light when a shepherd on his way to the higher meadows in Buthisher mountains along with his flock of sheep and goats accidentally discovered a linear column of stone conduit pipes under the ground containing water flowing down the hill within them and found that the water came from the Gangabal Lake and fed Naran Nag Spring. This fine spring (74° 58' 33" long. & 34° 21' 12" lat) is located in the north-east corner of the **Bhuteshwar** or **Bhuthisher** ruins at an elevation of 7,487 feet. Performing ablutions on this sacred spring constitutes the final stage of Harmukutganga pilgrimage. The **Sodara** tirath which was frequently visited by King Jaluka (1374-1314 BC) is most probably the present Naran Nag at Bhuteshwar.



 Behari Lal Koul



Homeland

A POLITICAL TESTAMENT, AN EMOTIONAL GEOGRAPHY AND A LOGICAL IMPERATIVE



The story of Panun Kashmir is not merely a political assertion but it is a civilizational claim anchored in memory, an emotional cartography shaped by exile and a logical response to a historical disruption that began in 1339 and continues to echo and reverberate through contemporary Indian politics. It arises from a community's centuries-long engagement with an ancient land, its riverbanks, shrines, cultural rhythms and philosophical traditions that culminated in the demand for a distinct homeland within the Indian Union where the Constitution flows without interruption or compromise.

To understand the idea of Panun Kashmir, one must understand the unique

place Kashmir holds in India's civilizational consciousness. It is the land where Shaivism reached its metaphysical heights, where Buddhist monks once debated sutras, where Sanskrit scholasticism produced some of its finest works and where Hindu, Sikh, and Buddhist traditions intermingled for centuries. But it is also a land that has witnessed repeated ruptures of political, demographic and cultural beginning with the establishment of Islamic rule in the 14th century, followed by cycles of marginalization that culminated in the tragedies and repeated displacements even up to the late 20th century.

Panun Kashmir, as envisioned, is not imagined from nostalgia but from an acute

awareness of these ruptures. It seeks to answer a single pressing question, how can a community that has been repeatedly displaced reconnect permanently with its ancestral homeland while ensuring its democratic, social, civilizational and cultural survival? The answer proposed is the creation of a Union Territory carved out of the East and North of the river Vitasta, connected on one side to Ladakh and on the other to Jammu. This geography is not accidental. It holds political, strategic and emotional significance, symbolizing a continuity that was fractured and a future that demands resilience.

Historical Consciousness and the Logic of Continuity

The starting point of this idea rests on a long view of Kashmiri history. The year 1339 is often cited not as a mere chronological marker but as a symbolic moment representing a transformation of the region's socio-political landscape. Over centuries, the indigenous Hindu community of Kashmir, later known as Kashmiri Pandits faced successive waves of persecution, conversion pressures or forced migrations. These were not discrete events but part of a larger pattern that eroded their demographic presence and political agency.

The 20th century was expected to reverse these tides through the democratic ethos of independent India. Yet by the end of the 1980s, the community found itself once again displaced and this time en masse, turning into refugees within its own country. Thus, Panun Kashmir is not seen by its proponents as a new political invention but as a logical reclamation of agency lost repeatedly over centuries.

From this perspective, continuity becomes the bedrock of the demand. The Constitution of India, in its letter and spirit, stands as the only framework capable of ensuring a durable, equitable and secular environment for the community's return and long-term survival. The proposal to create a Union Territory is driven by this trust. It assumes that only the direct, unambiguous application of the Indian constitutional system can safeguard fundamental rights and prevent future cycles of marginalization.

The Geography of Aspiration

Geography is central to the idea of Panun Kashmir. The region east and north of the river Vitasta is not chosen arbitrarily but because it forms a contiguous cultural and strategic belt connecting Jammu and Ladakh, two regions that have remained politically stable and unequivocally aligned with the Indian Union.

This geography shapes multiple layers of significance

1. Political Significance:

Control over this corridor ensures that democratic administration remains unambiguous and that the UT is insulated from the instability that has periodically afflicted other parts of the valley.

2. Cultural Significance:

The region houses many of the sacred sites, monasteries and historical settlements that form the core memory of Kashmiri Hindu civilization.

3. Strategic Significance:

Its connectivity to both Ladakh and Jammu allows for robust governance, unhindered movement of people and resources and integration with the rest of India.

4. Symbolic Significance:

It represents the reassertion of an ancient civilizational presence in the very land where it took root and flourished for millennia.

Thus, geography becomes political and politics becomes civilizational.

Emotional Resonance:-

Homeland as Memory, Identity and Dignity.

For the displaced community, Panun Kashmir is not merely a territorial aspiration but an emotional necessity. Exile, for any person, is not just a physical dislocation but it is a psychological wound that corrodes identity and disrupts generational continuity. For decades, the members of this community have carried the memory of their homeland like an inherited trauma yet also as a beacon of hope. Every tale told in a migrant camp, every festival celebrated in a resettlement colony and every child taught to recite the



songs of the Vitasta underscores a profound truth i.e memory refuses to die.

In this sense, Panun Kashmir is a collective therapy as much as a political proposal. It offers the possibility of restoring dignity, healing intergenerational wounds and ensuring that a culture which survived 5,000 years does not vanish because of one catastrophic displacement. The assertion of a homeland is thus intertwined with self-respect, an affirmation that a community which contributed immensely to India's intellectual, cultural and administrative life must not be allowed to fade into the margins of history.

The Political Logic of a Union Territory

Beyond emotion, the proposal rests on concrete political reasoning. A Union Territory structure ensures that governance remains stable, impartial and free from local political volatility. It would allow for:

- a. Direct implementation of constitutional guarantees without dilution.
- b. A security environment strong enough to ensure long-term safety of returning populations.
- c. Transparent and accountable administration under central oversight.

- d. A pluralistic social order aligned with India's constitutional values.

This does not negate the aspirations of other communities in Kashmir, rather, it proposes a model that can ultimately contribute to the stability and integration of the entire region. Proponents argue that resolving the existential issues of one displaced group strengthens the overall democratic framework, promoting peace and progress based on justice rather than expediency.

A Broader Resurgence:- Why Panun Kashmir Matters to India?

Panun Kashmir is often framed not merely as a local or community bound initiative but as a part of a larger civilizational resurgence within India. This resurgence is rooted in the reclaiming of histories suppressed or interrupted, the reassertion of cultural existence and the strengthening of national unity grounded in constitutional democracy.

In this broader perspective

- ✓ Panun Kashmir is a healing of civilizational fractures.
- ✓ It is a statement that no community should be permanently exiled in independent India.
- ✓ It is a reclamation of a cultural narrative that contributed to shaping Indian philosophy, literature, spirituality and administration.
- ✓ It is a model for addressing historical injustices through constitutional mechanisms rather than discord.

Thus, the political logic of Panun Kashmir intertwines with an emotional and cultural logic that resonates far beyond the displaced community alone. It becomes a symbol of India's capacity to protect diversity and heal its own historical wounds.

The Imperative of Resolution

The issues that have loomed large since 1339, periodic persecution, demographic vulnerability, political marginalization and cultural erosion cannot be resolved through symbolic assurances alone. They require structural, territorial and constitutional solutions. The

idea of Panun Kashmir positions itself as such a solution, firm but not exclusionary, protective but not vengeful, assertive yet grounded in the democratic ethos.

For those who support it, the creation of this separate homeland is not merely desirable, it is necessity. It is the only way to ensure that a community with a long and uninterrupted civilizational lineage is not rendered invisible due to the tumultuous politics of the past seven centuries. It is a narrative of survival transforming into a narrative of resurgence.

Conclusion :- A Homeland Reimagined, a Future Reclaimed.

Panun Kashmir stands at the crossroads of history, memory and aspiration. It is a concept born from centuries of struggle, sharpened by recent trauma and envisioned through the lens of democratic resilience. It speaks simultaneously to the heart and the mind, honouring emotional bonds while offering a

logical framework for durable peace and justice.

More than a territorial demand, it is a profound civilizational declaration, that the land of Vitasta, of Sharda Peeth, of Abhinavagupta, of centuries of learning and spirituality must remain a living part of India's cultural continuum. And that the people who nurtured that civilization must be allowed to return, rebuild and reclaim the inheritance that history disrupted but never destroyed.

In this sense, Panun Kashmir is not just a place but it is a promise. A promise that a community's rightful place in its homeland will not be denied by the tides of history. A promise that the Constitution of India will be the final arbiter of justice. And above all, a promise that the idea of India, plural, resilient and civilizationaly rooted will find one of its finest expressions in the creation of a secure, dignified and enduring homeland east and north of the Vitasta.

KASHMIRI PANDIT MARTYRS List for February Month

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

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

S No.	Martyr's Name	Location Killing	Date
1	Sh. Ramesh Kumar Thusoo	Trehgam, Kupwara	01.02.1990
2	Sh. Satish Kumar Tikoo	Karfali Mohalla, Srinagar	02.02.1990
3	Sh. Ashok Kumar		04.02.2000
4	Sh. Unshoo		04.02.2000
5	Sh. Veer Ji		04.02.2000
6	Sh. Tej Krishen Razdan	Gawakadal, Srinagar	12.02.1990
7	Sh. Rattan Lal	Srinagar	13.02.1990
8	Sh. Lassa Koul	Bemina, Srinagar	13.02.1990
9	Sh. Anil Bhan	Kanikadal, Srinagar	16.02.1990
10	Sh. Ashok Qazi	Tankipora, Srinagar	23.02.1990
11	Sh. Mopti Singh	Kathua	27.02.1990
12	Sh. Naveen Saproo	Habbakadal, Srinagar	27.02.1990
13	Sh. P.L. Foteadar	Bijebehara, Anantanag	28.02.1990



 Bharat Bushan Bhat



Splinter that Pains

STONE- PELTING DURING DEMOLITION DRIVES:

A Repeating Pattern of Islamist Over-Activism and Ideological Defiance of the Indian State

Introduction

The violent stone-pelting witnessed during the demolition of unauthorized structures near Turkman Gate, Delhi, is not an isolated law-and-order incident. It is part of a repeating national pattern where civic enforcement actions—particularly those involving illegal religious or semi-religious structures—are met with organized street violence, mob mobilisation, and religious sloganeering.

These incidents raise a deeper and uncomfortable question:

Why does a section of society repeatedly respond to lawful state action with violence, even when court orders are known and procedures are clear?

The Pattern Is Recurrent, Not Accidental
Across multiple states, similar triggers produce similar outcomes:

- HALDWANI- (Uttarakhand) – Court-ordered removal of illegal encroachments led to large-scale violence, arson, and fatalities.
- NASHIK (Maharashtra) – Removal of an unauthorized religious structure resulted in stone-pelting and police injuries.
- CHOMU (Rajasthan) – Anti-encroachment action triggered mob attacks on administration.
- SOMNATH REGION (Gujarat) – Enforcement near illegal religious sites faced violent resistance.

- DELHI (Turkman Gate) – Despite High Court orders, police and civic officials were attacked.

The actors, methods, and rhetoric remain strikingly similar:

- Stone-pelting as a first response
- Mob formation after midnight or early hours
- Claims of “religious persecution”
- Attempts to paralyse the state through fear and chaos
- This repetition across geography and administrations points to ideological conditioning, not spontaneous outrage.
- Ideological Roots: Over-Activism Driven by Islamist Supremacism

A critical but necessary distinction must be made:

This phenomenon is not about Islam as a faith, but about Islamist over-activism—a political ideology that:

- Rejects the supremacy of secular law
- Considers state authority subordinate to religious command
- Treats enforcement of civic law as an “attack on religion”
- Encourages confrontation as a form of resistance

This mindset draws from a distorted interpretation of jihad, not as spiritual striving, but as permanent resistance against non-Islamic authority.

Such thinking manifests as:

- Defiance of court orders
- Delegitimisation of police and civic bodies
- Readiness for street violence
- Glorification of mob action as “defence of faith”
- Why “Sar Tan Se Juda” Slogans Matter

Slogans like “Sar tan se juda” (beheading calls) are not casual expressions of anger. They represent:

- Dehumanisation of opponents
- Normalisation of extreme violence
- Psychological intimidation of the state and society

When such slogans surface repeatedly in protests or disturbances, they reveal a radical ideological undercurrent that cannot be ignored or relativised as “emotion” or “provocation”.

- No constitutional democracy can tolerate calls for murder under the guise of religious sentiment.
- Selective Victimhood and Legal Exceptionalism
- A troubling feature of these incidents is the demand for religious exceptionalism:
- Illegal structures must not be touched if they carry religious labels
- Civic law is portrayed as communal oppression
- Court orders are dismissed as illegitimate
- This creates a dangerous precedent where mob veto replaces rule of law.
- In contrast, no democracy can survive if laws are applied selectively based on fear of violence.

Why This Continues:

- Institutional Hesitation

This pattern persists because:

- Political appeasement discourages firm enforcement
- Delayed legal action allows encroachments to solidify
- Narrative manipulation converts law enforcement into “persecution”
- Lack of ideological accountability shields repeat offenders

- Violence becomes a successful bargaining tool, reinforcing the cycle.

The Way Forward:

- Ending the Cycle Without Demonising Communities
 - India must respond firmly, lawfully, and evenly, without falling into communal traps.
1. Absolute Supremacy of Law
Court orders and civic laws must be enforced uniformly, without hesitation or retreat.
 2. Zero Tolerance for Mob Violence
Stone-pelting, arson, and threats must attract swift criminal consequences, regardless of identity.
 3. De-Legitimising Extremist Narratives
Calls for beheading or religious violence must be treated as terror-adjacent incitement, not free speech.
 4. Clear Distinction
The state must repeatedly clarify:
Islam ≠ Islamism
Muslims ≠ Islamist mobs This protects peaceful citizens while isolating extremists.
 5. End Political Shielding
No vote bank justification should protect those who weaponize religion against the Constitution.

Conclusion: -

The events at Turkman Gate and similar flashpoints are not random disturbances. They reflect a persistent ideological challenge to India's constitutional order—one that uses religious mobilisation, street violence, and fear as tools of pressure.

India does not need mob rule or religious intimidation. It needs law, courage, and moral clarity. Only when illegal structures are treated as illegal, and violence is treated as crime—not grievance, can this cycle be broken.

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 I K Raina



WHEN HOME BECOMES MEMORY



Home is not always a place one can return to. Sometimes, it becomes a feeling carried quietly within the heart. For those who once lived in the valley, home was never only land or shelter. It was a way of life shaped by calm, balance, and quiet strength. Snow rested on the mountains with dignity, rivers flowed like soft prayers, chinar trees marked the passage of time, and life moved without hurry. People knew who they were, where they belonged, and how to live with respect for one another.

For Kashmiri Pandits, the valley was not simply a region on a map. It was a living inheritance. Learning was valued not for

reward but for duty. Homes were guided by discipline, reflection, and mutual respect. Elders were listened to with patience, teachers were honoured sincerely, and faith was practised quietly without display. Temples offered inner peace rather than noise. Festivals arrived gently and strengthened bonds instead of seeking attention. Life flowed with order and dignity, passing naturally from one generation to the next.

This balance did not fade slowly. It broke suddenly when fear entered a land once built on trust. Familiar sounds were replaced by uncertainty, and nights no longer brought rest. Slowly and painfully, families understood that

staying was no longer safe. Leaving was not a choice. It became necessary for survival. Homes built over generations were left behind in silence. Libraries, temples, orchards, courtyards, and memories remained as doors were closed without knowing if they would ever open again.

The departure was quiet but filled with sorrow. Mothers packed a few belongings with shaking hands. Fathers stood silently, looking at walls that had witnessed their entire lives. Elders touched thresholds, prayer corners, and doorframes one last time, unable to find words strong enough for the moment. They did not leave with anger. They left with disbelief, carrying faith, memory, and a fragile hope that the separation would be brief.

Exile does not end with distance. With time, it becomes a way of life. The early years away were harsh and unfamiliar. The climate changed, space became limited, and uncertainty entered daily living. Families used to open courtyards and mountain air found themselves in small shelters under a burning sun. The cool breeze of the valley was replaced by heat and dust. Elders fell ill, and some passed away with Kashmir still alive in their thoughts. Children learnt endurance before they learnt comfort.

Yet dignity did not leave them. Life had to



be rebuilt slowly and carefully. Once again, education became the strongest support. Parents, despite limited means, placed learning above comfort. They sacrificed quietly and made sure their children studied even when conditions were difficult. Books became shelter, knowledge became protection, and discipline became strength. Children studied with focus, guided by values carried silently from the past.

Culture survived in careful and simple ways. Language continued within homes. Traditional food was prepared not only for memory but for continuity. Rituals were observed even in the smallest spaces. Festivals returned each year with warmth mixed with quiet pain. Families gathered with sincerity, yet something always felt incomplete. The absence of home was felt most deeply during moments meant for togetherness.

With time, lives found stability. Temporary shelters became permanent homes. Children grew, succeeded, and moved forward. Many became doctors, engineers, teachers, scholars, and officers. Some travelled far, carrying their values to distant places. Parents felt pride in these achievements, yet a quiet sadness remained. Success brought security, but not closure. Building a new life was never the same as returning home.

Memory did not weaken with time. It grew deeper, especially in the evenings. Elders spoke softly of the past. They remembered misty mornings, snow resting on rooftops, rivers flowing beside familiar paths, and the distant sound of temple bells. These memories were not shared to burden the young. They were meant to connect them to roots they had never touched. Children listened quietly, understanding a pain they had not lived but felt through shared remembrance.

Years later, some returned to the valley, not as residents but as visitors. They came as guests, knowing they could not stay. The land was still beautiful. Mountains stood unchanged, and rivers continued to flow with



restraint. Pain has been borne without bitterness. A community rebuilt life without leaving its identity behind. It adapted without losing values. Dignity was chosen even when dignity was tested. Suffering deepened character rather than hardening the heart.

Kashmir lives on in quiet ways. It lives in soft speech, respect for elders, devotion to learning, and

grace. Yet homes were damaged or gone. Temples stood silent. Familiar lanes felt distant. The sense of belonging did not return. Fear had not fully disappeared. The valley could be visited, but it could not be lived in. The land remained sacred, yet it no longer felt like home. This understanding brought a quiet grief that stayed long after the visit ended.

Today, Kashmiri Pandits live across cities, towns, and distant countries. They are educated, settled, and respected. On the surface, life appears complete. Yet within, something remains unfinished. What is missed is not comfort but continuity. Not success alone but roots. Not safety by itself but belonging without fear. This longing is gentle, steady, and deeply personal.

This is not a story of anger. It is a story of endurance. Loss has been carried with

care for the young. It lives in prayers spoken softly, in discipline, humility, and silent faith. The culture that once lived in the valley now lives in hearts across the world, carried forward through habits, values, and memory. Still, the ache remains. When two Kashmiri Pandits meet, conversation returns to home. Voices soften, eyes grow moist, and no explanation is needed. Shared memory speaks clearly. Kashmir has not been forgotten. It is remembered daily, quietly and faithfully. It lives in the silence between words and in pauses heavier than speech, and in the certainty that identity can survive displacement. Values can outlast loss. Memory can resist erasure. When home becomes memory, it does not disappear. It becomes part of who we are. The land may remain distant, the longing gentle, but the bond remains unbroken. Home still lives within.

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.

Shadows of Homeland



Vijay Kashkari

Losing Home and Homeland

The earth remembers my footsteps,
But my feet no longer recognise the soil.
My tongue forgets the language of the wind,
And the stars above have rearranged their vigil.

In foreign streets, I trace the shadows,
Searching for the silhouette of what was mine.
The scent of cardamom and rain,
A ghostly whisper that cuts like a knife.

My homeland bleeds in silence,
A mosaic of memories shattered like glass.
The river's melody, now a dirge,
Echoes of prayers in a language lost in translation.

I carry fragments: a stone, a song, a scar,
Trying to rebuild a nest from feathers.
But like a bird with wings clipped,
I hover, grounded, between skies.

Losing a Place

The keys are gone, the door's ajar,
Empty halls where echoes used to play.
The map's been folded, the address lost-
How do I find my way back home today?

Walls that held my stories, now bare,
Windows blindfolded, secrets unaware.

The street's forgotten my name,
And rain keeps falling where we used to dance,
in vain.

Cherry blossoms fell like they did that spring,
But the bench is empty, and the air doesn't sing.
What remains is just a ghost town hum,
A place I knew, but now is gone.

Memory Lane

Old photographs, creased and worn,
Doorways to moments, long forlorn.
The scent of rain, a song half-heard,
Drops of time that made my heart stir.

Down this lane, the ghosts of joy play,
Childhood laughter echoes, fades away.
A forgotten bench, a summer tree,
Shadows hold the whispers: what could be.

The Past

Pages turned, inked in grey,
Moments lost in yesterday's haze.
Shadows linger, whispers low,
Echoes of what we used to know.

Fingers reach for fading light,
Trying to grasp what's lost in night.
But like sand between the cracks,
Memories slip, leaving only tracks.





Anita Chandpuri

THE KASHMIR DOSSIER: TERRORISTS, FREEDOM FIGHTERS AND NATIONALISTS

The book 'The Kashmir Dossier' examines Pakistan's role in the Kashmir conflict, beginning with its failed invasion of Jammu and Kashmir in 1947 and the subsequent UN Security Council Resolution 47, which Pakistan has misrepresented for decades.

The book highlights how Pakistan repeatedly deceived Kashmiris, drawing young men into armed conflict under the pretext of jihad and freedom, while using them as expendable tools to further its own strategic aims.

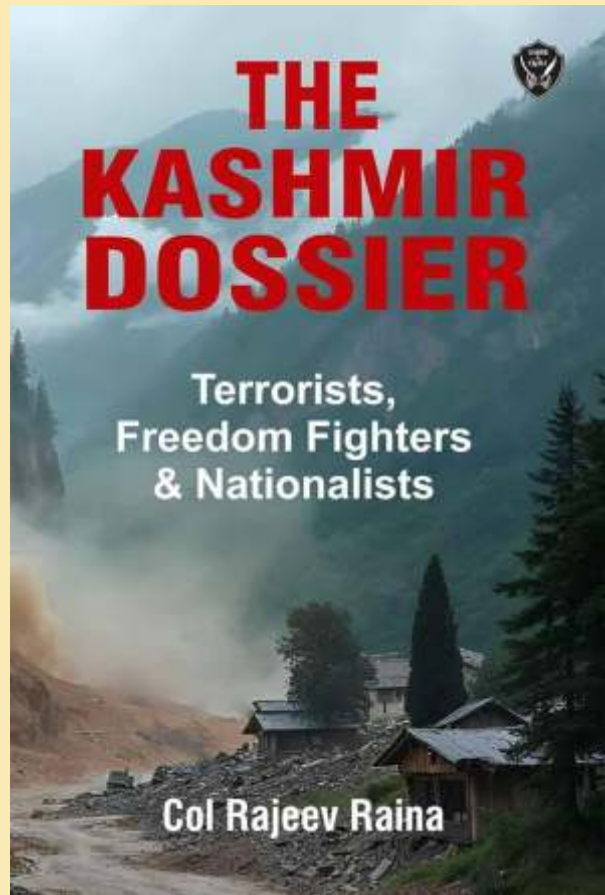
From 1947 through later wars and insurgencies, thousands of Kashmiri youths lost their lives after minimal training and false promises. The narrative also recalls the heroic resistance of Dogra soldiers that prevented an early takeover of Srinagar.

The book exposes Pakistan's propaganda, betrayal, and abandonment of Kashmiris. Over time, many Kashmiris recognised this deception, rejected extremism, and chose to align themselves with Secular India.

Col Rajeev Raina, a retired Army officer has the distinction of having served in all the Corps Zones of Indian Army particularly, in the Kashmir valley after abrogation of Article 370 was witness to how the govt

agencies operationalised this abrogation and was part of the team which went to the Kashmiri masses with a urgency of peace and development through "Wining of hearts and minds" which was the pre-eminent portion of India's strategy post 05 August 2019.

Born in Ganderbal, Kashmir into a devout Hindu family, Rajeev has continuously worked for the resurgence of its exiled Kashmiri Hindu community with marked contribution in revival of community values like the ancient script Sharda and the lost religious places to the destruction of invaders and looters. Besides helping own community to regrow after genocide, the author has been a bridge to inter community exchange with Dogras and muslims of the Union territory and is considered to have corrected the false narratives through his regular inking of papers in various magazines and events including Naad where he has contributed more than 20 Articles.





Tej N Dhar

PAX KASHMIR

Author : Col Vikas Thakur

Publisher : New Delhi: Sabre and Quill

Year: 2025 Page : 145 Price : ₹399: PB

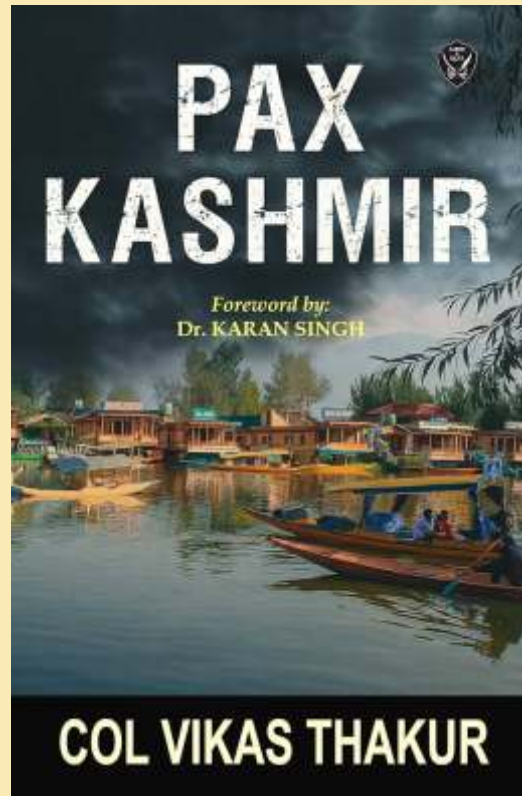
Vikas Thakur's book is the result of his two stints in Kashmir, as an army officer, which gave him the opportunity to see the place and make friends with its people, who he says opened their homes and hearts to him. The book records his meetings with such people, his impression of the places he visited with his family and friends, and his views about aspects of its history and art.

The “pax” in the title suggests that most of the pieces were written when the Valley had experienced a period of relative peace, after recovering from the devastating effect of the turmoil that disrupted the lives of its people for decades. The unhappy past figures in the opening piece titled “Dangerous Kashmir,” in which Tariq recounts his fearful brush with the Mujahedeen and how he managed to save himself because of the sheer presence of his mind.

The bulk of the short pieces in the book are like what the roving eye sees, observes, and makes sense of. Some describe the colourful and amusing names of shops and houseboats and interesting details about their origins. The first houseboat was built by Pandit Narain Joo for the foreigners, but they could not stay in them for more than two months. Houseboat making soon grew into a flourishing business. People had to buy water for creating space for stationing them and spend crores of Rupees on their construction and elaborate décor. Thakur describes their rich interiors, adorned with beautifully designed carpets, gleaming lights, and expensive furniture made of walnut wood.

Some pieces are about visits to places. These include a bicycle ride from the Dal gate to Nehru Park, Nishat Garden, and Hazratbal shrine. The account of the trip to the Valley of Lolab describes its beauty and the mythical origins of its caves and rivulets. The trip to Gulmarg provides details about its vast meadows, ski slopes, and beautiful hotels, like the Nedous and Highland Park. The short account of an evening in Amar Singh Club shows how it serves as an interesting socializing hub for its variegated clientele over shots of single malts.

Thakur also writes about the three iconic bridges of the state. The first one is the zero bridge, so called because it preceded the first of the seven bridges over the river Jhelum that connect the two sides of the city. This is known now for its well-decorated eating joints. The Kaman Aman Setu, named after Kaman Singh Pathania, who was martyred near the place, is famous for



becoming a part of the bus route to Muzffarabad, but the service was stopped after 2019. The last one is the recently constructed Chenab Railway bridge, an engineering marvel, which is taller than the Eiffel Tower.

Several pieces are short descriptions of famous sites and some prominent features of the place. One is about the ancient Hindu ruins of Kashmir, which survived the destruction of the temples by Sultan Sikandar. These include the Sun temple of Martand, built by Lalitaditya in the 8th century, without lime and cement, which has eighty-four small shrines around it. The temple at Parihaspora, near Narbal, has a Buddhist stupa near it. The last one is the Avantiswami temple, about 23 kilometres from Srinagar, near the saffron fields of Pampore, and dedicated to Lord Vidhnu. Another piece is about the temples that are still in good shape. These include the Shankaracharya Temple, located on a hill, also known as Takht-e-Sulaiman, which was visited by Shankaracharya in the 18th century; the Buniyar Temple near Uri, which was temporarily buried under a landslide, and rediscovered by Karl Hugel in 1835; and Pandrathan temple, a rock temple in the Greek style, near the Badami-bagh cantonment.

The piece on the three famous women poets of Kashmir include Lala Ded, who lived in the 14th century, inaugurated Kashmiri poetry, and influenced the poets that followed her, including Noor-ud-din, a known Sufi poet; Rupa Bhavani, who wrote spiritual Vakh in the style of Lala, and has a shrine dedicated to her in Chasma Sahi; Habba Khatoon, born into an ordinary peasant family of Pampore, who became the wife of the king Yusuf Shah Chak. After his arrest by the Mughals, she wrote sad songs of separation that are remembered even now.

The piece on the Muslim rishis of Kashmir includes three of its known ones. Noor-ud-din, a rishi influenced by Lal Ded, whose newly built dargah is in Chaar-e-Sherif, forty kilometres from Srinagar. The original one was burnt in the 1990s because it was used as a hideout by a militant called Mast Gul. Makhdoom Sahib, whose shrine is on Hari Parbat. The last one is Baba Zainuddin of Aishmukam, near Pahalgam. His relics are preserved in the structure there.

Thakur writes about three striking tree species of the Valley. The first one is poplar, which adorns important highways, provides materials for building houses, raw material for the plywood industry and for making boxes for exporting apples. Bhojpatra is a rich source of holy and medicinal wood, which grows on high altitudes. The majestic Chinar grows in gardens and shrines and is known for the striking colour of its leaves that change in every season. The city of Srinagar boasts of groves of Chinars that are more than 700 years old.

Thakur has pieces on Kashmir's winter, during which the intensity of the cold is denoted by its three phases of 40, 20, and 10 days, named separately in the popular lore, and the different heating systems used by the residents to face it, which include the famous kangri. There is a piece on the delicate art of papier mâché, which records how it was brought by Hamadani from central Asia, patronized by Zain-ul-Abideen as kar-e-kalamdani and how because of the export of the shawls from Kashmir to France, the art got its present name. The art though is dying and needs state support for its continued life. Another dying thing is the famous Kashmiri Hangul, now found mostly in Dacchigam. His story is part of Thakur's piece on the hunting spots of birds and beasts in the Valley.

It is ironic that the volume that is full of bright and beautiful bits of writing has to be closed by Thakur with "After Pahalgam," which records how it gave a fierce blow to peace in the Valley. It dwells on the damage that it caused to the soaring tourist industry and various other small trades like that of the Kashmiri willow.

Thakur's book is like a brief introduction to the Valley's landscape, its historical past, and its changing fortunes, made attractive by his photographs of its places and objects. Written in a simple language, the book is an interesting read, and could be of special interest to people who do not know much about Kashmir.

OPEN LETTER

FROM A KASHMIRI HINDU REFUGEE TO THE HON'BLE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA

“A Civilization on the Edge of Extinction Appeals to the Only Leader Who Can Still Save Its Last Breath”

INTRODUCTION

I am Dilip Kumar Pandita, Contested Candidate for Parliament 2024 from Anantnag–Rajouri Constituency as an Independent, and Assembly 2024 from 46 Shangus as an Independent candidate a fate full Kashmiri Hindu who has lived in exile for the last 36 years, still struggling to find justice for my displaced community.

**Hon'ble Prime Minister of India
Shri Narendra Modi Ji
South Block, New Delhi**

Subject: A Civilization on the Edge of Extinction Appeals to the Only Leader Who Can Still Save Its Last Breath

Hon'ble Prime Minister Modi Ji, I am writing this letter from the Jagti Refugee Camp — yes, a refugee camp inside the largest democracy in the world.

A place where the original natives of Kashmir live as exiles in their own motherland.

And today, standing in this camp of abandoned souls, I am forced to ask a question no Indian should ever ask: If secularism has failed us, if democracy has failed us, then where will this marginalized Kashmiri Hindu — who is not even a vote bank — go? Where does a community go when a nation's promises do not reach them -and a democracy's machinery does not protect them?

From this camp, from this isolation, from this slow civilizational death, I bow my head before you —not only in respect, but in a desperation that has burned for seven centuries. We, the Kashmiri Hindus —the last surviving children of Sharda Peeth — stand today at the edge of extinction.

And we ask a question that shakes our bones: If not you... then who? If not now... then when? If not in your rule... then never.

OUR HISTORY IS NOT A WOUND — IT IS A MASSACRE THAT NEVER ENDED

Prime Minister Ji, our story is not a tragedy. It is torture stretched across centuries.

1. Medieval Kashmir — The First Attempt to Erase Us Temples crushed. Scholars hunted. A civilization nearly extinguished.
2. Post-1947 — Freedom for India, Slavery for Us. India became Independent. We remained abandoned.
3. 1990 — The Night They Declared Our Extermination That night did not “change” our lives —it ended them. Threats from loudspeakers. Killers roaming freely. Families fleeing barefoot into the freezing dark. And the most unbearable truth: Bharat watched — and could not save her own children.
4. 35 Years of Silence — A Violence Worse Than Bullets We breathed... but never lived. We existed... but never belonged. We stood like shadows in our own country.

WHY WE COME ONLY TO YOU

Modi Ji,

You corrected impossibilities. You restored a civilizational confidence the world thought was dead. Thus, the most painful question rises: If even a Hindu Hriday Samrat cannot deliver justice to the last Hindu of Kashmir... then is justice simply not meant for us?

LIVING TESTIMONIES, THEY HID FROM YOU THE TRUTHS YOUR OFFICERS WILL NEVER SHOW

PRIYA PANDITA—A Nation's Conscience on Trial

Widowed after two years of marriage. Mother to a six-year-old daughter. Owner of 26 kanals of land and a three-storey home in Kashmir.

And today — she begs for milk for her child. She cannot enter her own home. She cannot touch her own soil. She was thrown out of the land that gave her birth. And no system, no officer, no democracy protected her.

PYARE LAL—A Citizen India Left Behind

From Kupwara. Bedridden. His wife bedridden too. They cry for medicine, for food, for dignity.

Tell us, Modiji — which file, which desk, which careless officer will decide whether a dying Kashmiri Hindu deserves dignity?

NOT TWO STORIES —A THOUSAND BROKEN LIVES

There are not one Priya or one Pyare Lal. There are thousands. Waiting only for one thing: Your decision.

But those around you hide our reality. They show you reports — never our tears. Data — never the graves of our murdered families. I am a son of the soil — yet today, my patriotism feels like my only crime.

QUESTIONS HISTORY WILL ASK

Modi Ji,

If you cannot resettle Kashmiri Hindus — then who will? If you cannot protect the last survivors — then who will?

India calls you a global leader. A civilizational leader. Then why, Modiji —why can the world's strongest leader not secure justice for a few thousand uprooted Hindus from his own motherland?

Our expectations are not political. They are existential.

You alone have the mandate, the courage, and the authority to undo a 35-year wound.

OUR DEMANDS ARE NOT REQUESTS

THEY ARE THE FINAL BREATH OF A DYING CIVILIZATION

Declare the genocide of Kashmiri Hindus — officially and without apology. Create an irreversible, time-bound roadmap for safe and dignified return. Restore, protect, and secure our temples, our lands, our homes. And guarantee that the original natives of Kashmir will never again be abandoned.

We are victims not just of terrorism. Not just of exile. But of a cold bureaucracy and a failed democracy that strangled our voice for 35 years.

THIS IS NOT AN APPEAL THIS IS THE LAST HEARTBEAT OF A DYING PEOPLE

Modi Ji,

This is not politics. This is not emotion.

This is the final scream of a civilization that refuses to die silently. My folded-hand plea: If not now, then never. If not you, then nobody.

With truth that burns, with hope that trembles, with faith that refuses to die—

A Kashmiri Hindu A child of Sharda Peeth Writing from Jagti Refugee Camp — still waiting for justice after 36 years

Author can be contacted at
E-mail: d.pandita@vertex2.in Mob.7780869886



 Arun Koul

Roots

Conversations with Earth



Our lives connect with threads on a loom interwoven with each warp and weft in ways we never realise. This is a story of our ethos with mother earth that each one of us holds sacred for it holds the lives of our ancestors and ours too. We used to refer to her as “maej kasheer” or mother earth, a sacred place where joy was inherent, her womb carried us all in a cocoon of care, love and an everlasting embrace.

These are precious moments between the last breath on earth and the world beyond, we catch glimpses of “life” that we always sought & herein lay our granny with her journey at a point between this world and next with frail wrinkled hands, with eyes in search, seeking answers to questions of life knowing well that

she had journeyed in life more than anyone else.

She persisted with her questions, “how many times shall we rise from the dust to be confined to it again; over and over again. I have seen 1947 - the qabali raids, the 1971 war and turmoil in its aftermath and then the 1990 genocide; When will this cycle end? I am tired now, I want to rest eternally in peace on this soil.”

(kachi latiyevothuv aus, kachi lati yemav lithanavna, when thachis bha, when karhaa aaramha, aith maechi peth)

I did not have any answers, I just held onto her quivering hands, trying hard to give her solace: while knowing in my heart of hearts



that She was plummeting towards an end which she endured with the mother earth “maej kasheer” in equal measure and they bled and suffered immense pain enroute the journey when everytime the earth was soiled with the blood of innocent in the name of religion, when everytime a lady was violated just because she belonged to a sect or when everytime a temple was desecrated because it had an idol or a house was burnt down to instill fear and erase our very existence.

I am the mother, every child knows my origin, the story of pain, the consistent turmoils and the way I was soiled. I was born innocent a pious being with a kind and generous heart filled with abundance in all ways. As I grew older to my surprise I saw something beyond the world has known – a betrayal by my own blood and therefore rather than feeling blessed and in joy, I felt this vast emptiness, restlessness and

bloodshed. I sought meaning in all this chaos but alas no one answered and therefore I stay awake, awaiting answers, seeking a path that leads me back to my days of innocence.

Like Pablo said – why does the blue sky appear red in aftermath of change, why do the clouds appear angry when it rains, why do meadows on the other side always appear green and above all “when will my suffering end?”

Authors Note:

Does seeking peace mean letting go and walking away from everything. The general impression about BHAGVATAM is that it is purely Bhakti Yoga – however once when anyone journeys through, one discovers that it eventually is a confluence of Bhakhti, Karma and Gyana Yoga – therefore a call to action is inherent to our being an as the synopsis of Geeta also says “yudh uska aayojan hai” – the war is HIS calling.

Om Namo Vasudevaya Namah



On behalf of the President of AIKS and the entire AIKS family, warm and heartfelt congratulations were conveyed to Shri Brij Lal Bhat Ji on being conferred with the prestigious Padma Shri Award.

On 17th February, accompanied by Shri Aryan Ramesh Ji, the delegation had the honour of personally visiting and felicitating him on his remarkable achievement.

The AIKS family expressed immense pride in his accomplishment and conveyed their sincere wishes for his continued good health, strength, and success.

AFFILIATES' NEWS

KHST HYDERABAD ORGANISED OUR VARSHIK HAWAN ON 24TH & 25TH JANUARY 2026



and introduce meaningful initiatives focused on preserving and promoting our Kashmiri Pandit heritage. Along with our regular programmes such as “Speak in Kashmiri”, make Kashmiri Cuisine available, Bhajan Mandli and facilitating availability of Kashmiri essentials (spices, Jantri, Authoor, etc.), we strive to keep our community connected and involved.

A key focus of KHST is to provide a platform where our youth feel a sense of belonging, stay rooted in their identity, and develop an understanding of our history—especially the pain and reality of the Exodus from our motherland, Kashmir.

In this spirit, this year we introduced a special initiative for our children: screening Kashmiri cartoons and cultural stories, along with printed booklets featuring Kashmiri ABC with KP cultural themes.

The children were encouraged to read, follow, and reflect on the story of the Kashmiri Pandit Exodus. This initiative was widely appreciated, and the kids participated with great enthusiasm.

*Report by - IK Pandit
KHST Hyderabad*

We feel truly blessed to have had the full participation of our members from across the twincities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad.

Every year, KHST Hyderabad makes a conscious effort to go beyond routine activities





‘Hindu Samelan’ Attracts Hundreds of People from Different Walks of Life

A magnificent ‘Hindu Samelan’ held at Anand Nagar, Bohri, drew hundreds of people from different walks of life, reflecting strong community participation and cultural spirit.

The event was graced by Shri Shri 108 Mahant Keshav Das Mahraj as the Chief Guest. The programme began with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp, followed by Geeta Path and devotional bhajans presented by students and members of the lady folk.

Addressing the gathering, Mahant Keshav Das Mahraj delivered an inspiring discourse on dharma, unity, and the preservation of cultural values. Emphasizing the rich traditions of Hinduism, he urged people to follow the Hindu way of life for a secure, safe, and healthy society.

The main speaker, Prof. Verinder Koundal, elaborated on the essence of Hinduism and stressed the need for awakening to safeguard the future of coming generations. He spoke about the role of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in strengthening the nation and highlighted the concept of Panch Parivartan (five transformational acts) aimed at building a self-reliant and Viksit Bharat.

Ramesh Razdan underlined the importance of such gatherings in strengthening social bonds and encouraged youth to remain connected to their roots. A free medical check-up camp and a book exhibition were also organized on the occasion.

A special attraction of the Samelan was the felicitation of temple Panditjis and Safai Karamcharis serving in the area. Ramesh Pandita delivered the welcome address, while Mr. Chaman Lal Verma presented the vote of thanks.



Swami Vivekanand Jayanti – 2026 1st On the Spot Quiz Contest

Swami Vivekanand Jayanti was celebrated with enthusiasm at Dharmic Pustikaye, Subash Nagar, Jammu, through a youth-oriented programme highlighting spirituality, fitness, and knowledge.

The event began with devotional group songs led by spiritual poet Babli Ji (Lalpura, Kupwara). A special Wushu demonstration was presented by young National Champion Praznath Wangu, who impressed the audience with her fitness and also administered an oath

encouraging children to avoid junk food.

Dronacharya Awardee and National Wushu Coach Kuldeep Handoo addressed the gathering, stressing the importance of sports in education and motivating youth to remain “Physically Fit and Fit to Fight” in the digital age. Guest of Honour Ravi Jogi, President ZDPC, Zeethyar, assured support for initiatives connecting youth with their cultural roots and invited children to visit the valley during summer.

The highlight was the on-the-spot quiz on the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda.



Senior Category Winners:

	Winner Name	School
1 st Prize	Tanishka Sumbly	Heritage Jammu
2 nd Prize	Varun Kr. & Prashant Kr.	M.R.P.H.S School, Vikas Nagar
3 rd Prize	Namrita Pandita	KV Nagrota

Junior Category Winners:

	Winner Name	School
1st Prize	Nysha Bhat	G.D. Goenka Jammu
2nd Prize	Janvi Gorkha	Coventry Scholars Chinore
3rd Prize	Tania Thusoo	Sai Playway School, Jagti

Consolation prizes with medals and books were presented to Krishav Sumbly, Mihit Safaya, Saarthak Koul, Saanvi Pandita and others. Veteran music maestro Krishan Langoo paid tributes to Swami Vivekanand.

The programme concluded with Team Essay thanking parents, schools, media, and Vivekanand Kendra for their cooperation.

Report By Team Essay

Several Kashmiri Pandits Honoured for Their Contribution

Several Kashmiri Pandits from Jammu and Kashmir were honoured with awards for their contributions to Society on Republic Day 2026 in Jammu and Kashmir.

Shri Brij Lal Bhat, a prominent social activist, was named for the prestigious national award Padma Shree, in the 'unsung heroes' category.

Welcoming the award, Shri Brij Lal Bhat said he does not see it as a personal achievement but as recognition for the institution he works for, Sri Ramakrishna Mission Ashram and Vivekananda Kendra in Nagapattinam. Bhat said they are working to rebuild community bonds, celebrate traditional festivals, and foster youth leadership values. He is Chairman of the Administrative Committee, SRMA-Vivekananda Kendra, Nagdandi, Achhabal, Anantnag, Kashmir.

In recognition of their excellent work in media and arts the UT Jammu and Kashmir has announced the names of Avtar Krishan Bhat (popularly known as Avtar Bhat of Daily Excelsior), Sunil Ji Bhat (Deputy Editor & Jammu Bureau Head, Aaj Tak & India Today), Anil Tickoo (a stage actor in the Dogri and Hindi language, and a prominent figure in Jammu and Kashmir Theatre), Arhan Bagati, a 26-year-old social entrepreneur and founder of KYARI (Kashmir's Yumberzal Applied Research Institute),

According to an official order accessed by news agency Kashmir News Service (KNS), each awardee will receive a cash prize of INR 51,000 along with a citation.

Lieutenant Governor Releases Research Digest Sangarmal, Published by HESK

Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, on January 12 2026, launched the special edition of 'Sangarmal', a Research Digest special edition-2026, published by Hindu Education Society Kashmir (HESK), at Gandhi Memorial Camp College, Raipur, Jammu. Prof. B. L. Zutshi edits the Research Digest.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor spoke about social cohesion and how cultural and spiritual heritage, along with education, can serve as a unifying thread to create a blueprint for a thriving future. He emphasised values such as compassion, humility, and resilience to strengthen community bonds.

He further said, "Jammu Kashmir's rich spiritual heritage is a dynamic asset. Since the Vedic ages, traditional values have served as our guiding principles, building an ethical foundation for overall growth.

Addressing the gathering of intellectuals, he said that citizens must become more innovative, focus on intellectual growth to drive significant advances in research and development, promote creative industries, and invest in heritage.

Commending the Hindu Education Society, Kashmir (HESK), he appreciated its dedicated efforts to raise public awareness of culture, social responsibility, and the transformative power of education.

The prominent persons who attended the function included the Chief Secretary, Atal Dullo, who congratulated the HESK on publishing Sangarmal, a research digest. He said the topics discussed in the magazine are important to us, as they present the full picture to the public.

In his address, HESK president Prof. B.L. Zutshi said Gandhi Memorial College was established in 1943, and its founders were the community's iconic leaders who founded the Hindu Education Society. He said, however, that there was no grant-in-aid, and the employees worked selflessly for its promotion until 1975.

He said that, due to the 1990 turmoil, people were forced to leave. However, the Society tried to run the Srinagar School, but the Government took it over. Later, the School was established here, and several community philanthropists, including Ashok Raina, donated generously to the institute. He said it is a society-run institute and does not belong to any individual.

Prof. Veena Pandita, former Chairman of the J&K Board of School Education, read a

detailed paper on Sangarmal. Others who attended the event included the Commissioner Secretary, School Education, Ram Niwas Sharma, Padma Dr KN Pandita, Vice Chancellor, Mata Vaishno Devi University, Prof Pragti Kumar, Dr Ashok Bhan, former DGP, Kuldeep Khuda, former Chief Vigilance commissioner, Prof Ashok Aima, ex-VC Central University Jammu, and Dr Arvind Karwani, Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner.

Ramesh Marhata, a well-known broadcaster, managed the stage.

PNBMT Event Highlights Vivekananda Kendra Nagdandi Ashram

On January 31, 2006, Pt Prem Nath Bhat Memorial Trust (PNBMT) organised a function in Jammu to highlight the role of Vivekananda Kendra, Nagdandi Achabal.

The function was chaired by Justice (Retd) B.L. Bhat, and Dr K N Pandita Padam Shri was the guest of honour.

Shri Brij Lal Bhat, awarded with Padam Shree 2026, was honoured on the occasion. He highlighted the programmes of Nagdandi Ashram, Achbal, Anantnag (Kashmir), and discussed Swami Vivekananda's mission of nation-building, which he was advancing with dedication to serve Society.

The Chairman of the Trust, C L Pandita along with Justice (retd) Sunil Hali, Justice (retd) Bansi Lal Bhat, Prof AN Sadhoo, district and Session Judge (retd), B L Saraf and Prof Koul, M L Malla honoured Brij Lal Bhat for his contribution and development of Nagdandi Ashram as a Centre of Sanatan Dharma in Kashmir Valley.

Dr Ramesh Bha read the welcome address. The programme's anchor was Sundri Lal Koul, general secretary of the Trust. The vote of thanks was proposed by C. L. Pandita, vice chairman of the Trust.

KPs and others Take Serious Exception to Dr Abdullah's statement

Various political and social organisations expressed serious concern over the statement of the National Conference president and

former Chief Minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah. He was flayed over his recent statements accusing the BJP of promoting a Hindu-Muslim divide, while speaking on the return of Kashmiri Pandits to the Kashmir Valley.

Kashmiri Pandit Sabha (KPS) in its Executive Committee meeting held under the chairmanship of its president K. K. Khosa, deliberated upon the statement of the president of Dr. Farooq Abdullah observed that while supporting the return of displaced Kashmiri Pandits are welcome, suggestions that the community should return on its own, without a clearly defined policy framework or institutional backing, fail to acknowledge the gravity and complexity of the issue.

Members expressed concern that, despite decades, no comprehensive, credible, and time-bound return-and-rehabilitation policy has been implemented.

The Sabha further noted that a significant portion of Kashmiri Pandit properties in the Valley have been encroached upon, damaged, or alienated under distress conditions. We cannot expect displaced families to return to their ancestral homes without legal safeguards, administrative facilitation, and institutional support.

Dr Abdullah is rubbing salt on the wounds of exiled Pandits by his misleading and misconceived statements just to exonerate Pakistan, its terrorists and secessionist elements who put the Valley into fire and destroyed its age-old composite culture, was the observation of Dr Ramesh Bhat, a community social activist.

37th Holocaust Day Observed

January 19 is the Day of the Holocaust, when thousands of Kashmiri Pandits were terrorised and forced to leave Kashmir for safer places in India.

The Day was observed on 19th January 2026 through protest demonstrations, public meetings, wearing black badges, and paying tributes.

Terming the Kashmiri Pandits the victims of genocide, the leaders of various organisations highlighted the pain and agony of the community, which they faced due to

cross-border terrorism.

The Youth 4 Panun Kashmir, which organized programme at Jagti township and held a massive demonstration yesterday, held a public meeting today to highlight the sufferings and pain of the community, leading an exiled life for the last 36 years now outside Kashmir.

The leaders, while reiterating the demand for a separate homeland, urged the Government to address all issues facing displaced Pandits within a time-bound period. To hear the protestors' concerns today, Additional DC Jammu visited Jagti and spoke with the leaders of Youth 4 PK, who assured them that the administration will arrange a meeting with senior officials in the Government.

In addition to Jammu, the Day was observed in New Delhi by several organisations. Holocaust Day was observed with solemnity and resolve at the Press Club, Jammu. The programme was organised by the All State Kashmiri Pandit Conference

(ASKPC) and the Shree Sanatan Dharam Yuvak Sabha (SSDYS), under the leadership of its president, Shri Moti Lal Malla. The socio-religious and community organizations joined them included Samajik Vikas Sanasthan, Prem Nath Bhat Memorial Trust, Zeeshta Devi Prabandhak Committee, Akura Prabandhak Committee, Mochch Fali Saet Athrot Trust, Nadi Marag KP Sangathan, Tral Awantipora Temples & Shrines Prabandhak Committee, Mata Bhaderkali Asthapan Committee, Kheer Bhavani Prabandhak Committee, Manzgam, Mata Kheer Bhavani Asthapan Committee, Tikker Durga Nagar Welfare & Coordination Committee, Guru Teg Bahadur Singh Ji Sangathan, BJP, Kashmir Displaced District, Amar Balidan Trust, All Displaced Kashmiri United Forum, Representatives of many other socio-religious organizations also participated.

Shradhanjali was paid to the martyrs. Speakers strongly reiterated the long-pending demands of the community.

*Edited: Vijay Kashkari
Source: Agencies*

Calendar of Month

Kumar Shahsti	22 nd February 2026
Ashtami (Shukla Paksha)	24 th February 2026
Ekadashi (Shukla Paksha)	27 th February 2026
Poornima (Holi)	03 rd March 2026
Sankat Nivaran Chaturthi	06 th March 2026
Ashtami (Krishna Paksha)	11 th March 2026
Dashmi (Thaal Bharun)	13 th March 2026
Ekadashi (Krishna Paksha)	15 th March 2026
Chaturdashi (Thaal Bharun)	18 th March 2026
Amavasya	19 th March 2026

Note

Panchak starts on 17th February 2026 ends on 21st February 2026

Phalgun (Shukla Paksha) from 18th February 2026 to 03rd March 2026
Chaitra (Krishna Paksha) from 04th March 2026 to 19th March 2026

Overview of MAH MBA CET

Maharashtra Common Entrance Test or MAH-CET is a state-level MBA entrance examination. The exam is conducted by the Directorate of Technical Education, Maharashtra, for admission to management courses such as MBA, MMS, PGDBM, and PGDM at institutes across the state. MAH CET MBA 2026 will be held from 06 to April 08 2026.

The MAH MBA CET 2026 syllabus covers four main sections :

- ❖ Logical Reasoning (75 Qs)
- ❖ Abstract Reasoning (25 Qs)
- ❖ Quantitative Aptitude (50 Qs)
- ❖ Verbal Ability/Reading Comprehension (50 Qs).

In total, 200 questions must be answered. The examination is of 150 minutes. There is no negative marking.

Logical Reasoning emphasises analytical skills. Topics include Puzzles (linear/circular/parallel), Seating Arrangement, Blood Relations, Coding-Decoding, Syllogisms, Direction Sense, Input-Output, and Critical Reasoning (Statement-Assumptions, Cause & Effect, Strong/Weak Arguments).

Abstract Reasoning measures visual/spatial ability. Topics include Series Completion, Missing Figures, Analogy, Pattern Matching, and Odd-One-Out.

Quantitative Aptitude covers arithmetic and data interpretation. Topics include Data Interpretation (Tables, Pie Charts, Graphs, Caselets), Arithmetic (Percentage, Profit & Loss, Time & Work, Speed-Distance, Ratio), Algebra, Geometry, Mensuration, and Probability.

Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension tests English proficiency. Topics include Reading Comprehension passages, Para Jumbles, Vocabulary (Synonyms/Antonyms), Grammar, Sentence Completion, and Error Correction.

Compilation and Display of Result-MAH-MBA/MMS-CET 2026-

The first attempt of MAH-MBA/MMS-CET 2026 will be conducted in multiple shifts. Percentile scores will be calculated based on the raw(actual) marks obtained by each candidate.

The second attempt of MAH-MBA/MMS-CET 2026 will be conducted in multiple shifts. Percentile scores will again be calculated based on the raw(actual) marks obtained by each candidate.

Percentile scores for candidates who appeared only in the first attempt and candidates who appeared in both attempts will be declared on the State CET Cell website.

If a candidate appears for both attempts, the more serious of the two percentile scores will be considered for admission to A.Y. 2026-27.

The date for the announcement of results will be communicated separately in due course.

MAH MBA CET is generally considered a moderate difficulty examination, easier than CAT/XAT but challenging due to high speed, volume, and unpredictable section weightage, especially Logic (LR), which dominates; it's manageable with strong basics and focused practice, especially for those familiar with other MBA tests. Its key challenges are managing the sheer number of questions quickly and adapting to varying section proportions in different slots, notes IMS India and Shiksha.

The difficulty percentage is a key driver of the paper, making it time-consuming and a major factor. Quantitative Aptitude is generally easy to moderate, with occasional challenging questions. Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension is considered easier than CAT, with moderate Reading

Comprehension passages and simpler Vocabulary questions.

The questions are designed to be solvable by most candidates if they have prepared well in advance. There are mock tests available online. Please prepare for the examination.

A good MAH MBA CET score depends on your target college, but generally, 150+ marks (99+ percentile) is excellent for top colleges like JBIMS/SIMSREE. In contrast, 100-110+ marks (90-95 percentile) get you into good second-tier colleges like MET/SIES. Aiming for 95+ percentile opens doors to many reputed Mumbai/Pune institutes, but even a 60-70 percentile can secure admission in decent colleges.

Cutoffs are highest for Jammalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies, Mumbai, and gradually lower for other good institutes, so define your target first. SIMSREE and K J Somaiya are among the top-tier colleges. Other reputed colleges, such as L. N. Welingkar Institute of Management Development & Research, Mumbai Educational Trust, and South Indian Education Society, also accept 90th-97th percentile scores.

Key Percentile Ranges and Colleges (Based on 2025/2026 Data)

- ❖ 99–99.99+ Percentile: JBIMS Mumbai (99.99), SIMSREE Mumbai (99.97), Welingkar Mumbai (99.92), SIES Mumbai (99.85), PUMBA Pune (99.83), and St. Xavier College Mumbai (99.86).
- ❖ 95–98 Percentile: K.J. Somaiya Institute of Management, Xavier Institute of Management & Research (XIMR), and Chetana's Institute.
- ❖ 80–95 Percentile: Indira Institute of Management Pune, MET Mumbai, N.L. Dalmia, and Sheila Raheja School of Business Management.
- ❖ 60–80 Percentile: M.K.E.S. Institute of Management Studies, Dr D.Y. Patil Institute, Talegao, and J.D.C. Bytco Institute, Nashik.
- ❖ Below 60th percentile: Various private institutes across the state.

Bill to set up single higher education regulator gets Cabinet nod

A bill to set up a higher education regulator, which will replace bodies such as the UGC and AICTE, was approved by the Union Cabinet on Friday (December 12 2025), officials said.

The proposed legislation, earlier titled the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) Bill, has now been renamed the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhikshan Bill.

The single higher education regulator proposed in the new National Education Policy (NEP) aims to replace the University Grants Commission (UGC), the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), and the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE).

While the UGC oversees non-technical higher education, the AICTE oversees technical education, and the NCTE regulates teacher education.

The Commission is proposed to be established as a single higher education regulator, but medical and law colleges will not fall under its scope. It is proposed to have three major roles: regulation, accreditation, and setting professional standards.

Funding, which we consider the fourth vertical, has not been proposed to fall under the regulator to date. We propose funding autonomy be with the administrative Ministry.

The concept of HECI has been discussed previously in draft form. A draft Higher Education Commission of India (Repeal of University Grants Commission Act) Bill, 2018, which sought to repeal the UGC Act and establish the Higher Education Commission of India, was made public in 2018 for stakeholder feedback and consultation.

Renewed efforts to make the HECI a reality were then initiated under Dharmendra Pradhan, who took over as the Union Education Minister in July 2021.

Underlining the need for a single higher education regulator, the NEP-2020 document states, "The regulatory system needs a complete overhaul to re-energise the higher education sector and enable it to thrive."

It adds that the new system should ensure that the distinct functions of regulation, accreditation, funding, and academic standard-setting are performed by distinct, independent, and empowered bodies.

The Hindu Admission Alerts

Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIITEE - 2026)

Apply Online

- ❖ Last date to Apply online (1st Phase): 08-04-2026
- ❖ Date of Entrance Examination (1st Phase): 16-04-2026 to 20-04-2026
- ❖ Last date to Apply online (2ndPhase): 30-05-2026
- ❖ Date of Entrance Examination (2nd Phase): 04-06-2026 to: 08-06-2026
- ❖ Last date to Apply online (3rd Phase): 01-07-2026
- ❖ Date of Entrance Examination (3rd Phase): 05-07-2026 to 07-07-2026

Website: www.kiit.ac.in,
www.kiitee.ac.in

Karnataka Examination Authority

Candidates who register for Medical courses must compulsorily fill out the application form to qualify for the counselling. Since the application is common to all courses, candidates appearing for NEET/NATA must register with KEA, complete the CET-2026 application, and pay the fee to be eligible for KEA counselling.

Eligibility of J & K

Migrant Candidature for Maharashtra

The candidate should have passed 10+2 examination or its equivalent examination with Physics and Mathematics as compulsory

subjects along with Chemistry or Biotechnology or Biology or Technical Vocational subject or Computer Science or Information Technology or Informatics Practices or Agriculture or Engineering Graphics or Business Studies or Electronics or Entrepreneurship and obtained at least forty-five per cent. marks in the above subjects taken together; and should have obtained non zero positive score in Joint Entrance Test (JEE) (Main) Bachelor of Engineering (B.E.) or Bachelor of Technology (B.Tech.) or the candidate should have appeared in all the subjects in PCM MHT-CET 2026 and should obtained non zero score in PCM MHT-CET 2026 conducted by the Competent Authority;

Provided that, preference shall be given to the candidate obtaining a non-zero positive score in Joint Entrance Test (JEE) (Main) Bachelor of Engineering (B.E.) or Bachelor of Technology (B.Tech.) over the candidates who obtained a non-zero score in MHT-CET 2026;

(The candidates are eligible to apply for all 29 major disciplines declared by AICTE)

An Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR)

An Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR) is India's unique, lifelong digital ID for students (pre-primary to higher ed) under the "One Nation, One Student ID" initiative, creating a 12-digit ID to store all academic records (marks, credits, achievements) in DigiLocker, linked to the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC), enabling seamless credit transfers and easy verification for admissions or jobs, acting as a digital passport for a student's entire educational journey.

Feedback: vijaykashkari@gmail.com

**EDUCATION
IS THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON
WHICH YOU CAN USE TO
CHANGE THE WORLD**



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.



KASHMIRI SABHA, BARODA ORGANIZED HAWAN

“ॐ अग्निमीळे पुरोहितं यज्ञस्य देवम् ऋत्विजम्॥
होतारं रत्नधातमम्॥”

It means invoking Agni, the sacred fire, as the divine witness of the yajna.

Kashmiri Sabha, Baroda, organised a sacred Hawan ceremony on 11th January 2026 at the serene premises of Ashapuri Mandir, Gotri, Vadodara, Gujarat. Away from the land of our ancestors, the ceremony became a powerful symbol of unity, faith, and collective identity for Kashmiri Pandits residing in Vadodara, reaffirming that our traditions and bonds remain strong wherever we are.

Performed strictly in accordance with traditional Kashmiri Pandit rituals, the hawan invoked divine blessings for peace, prosperity, and well-being of the entire community. The pooja was solemnly conducted by the Guru ji, with Shri Ashok Dullu ji and his wife, Smt. Pratibha Dullu ji, seated alongside as the yajmans. Together with fellow community members, they offered oblations into the sacred fire as Vedic mantras resonated through the mandir, creating a deeply spiritual and emotionally uplifting atmosphere.

The sacred fragrance of hawan samagri blended with ghee and herbs filled the air, reminding everyone of the timeless rituals that continue to connect Kashmiri Pandits across generations and geographies. The presence of families and elders reflected a shared resolve to preserve and pass on our cultural and spiritual legacy, even while living outside the Kashmir Valley.

Following the hawan, the gathering was warmly hosted with traditional Kashmiri Kahwa chai and Nadru Manji (lotus stem fritters), fostering informal interactions and heartfelt conversations among community members. The ceremony concluded with the distribution of Hawan Naivedya—a traditional Kashmiri satvik meal comprising Dum Aloo, Haakh, Hawan Dal, Chok Wangun, Mujj Chatni, and Halwa—whose authentic flavours were fondly enjoyed by all.

The dedicated efforts of Shri Ravi Mawa ji (President, KSB), Shri Sanjay Dhar ji (Vice President, KSB), and other core members played a vital role in bringing together Kashmiri Pandits scattered across Vadodara, strengthening the spirit of togetherness and collective belonging.

The event stood as a heartfelt reminder that even away from our homeland, the Kashmiri Pandit community remains united in faith, culture, and value-carrying the essence of Kashmir in our hearts and reinforcing bonds that transcend distance and displacement.



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

Application No. :

Date :

The President

All India Kashmir Samaj

AIKS Camp office at Samavar Club,
Pamposh Enclave New Delhi

Dear Sir,

I hereby apply for Patron/Life membership of the All India Kashmiri Samaj.
My Particulars are as under :

Name (In full) :

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

Address :

.....

.....

..... **Pin :**

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

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

With best wishes
Yours Sincerely

Signature

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

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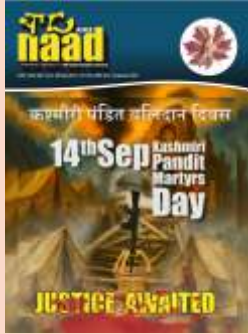
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*Heartiest
Congratulations*

Shri Brij Lal Bhat Ji

On being conferred the

Padma Shri Award 2026

On behalf of the President and the entire AIKS family, we extend our heartiest congratulations to you being conferred the **Padma Shri Award 2026**.

This prestigious national honour is a well-deserved recognition of your outstanding and selfless contributions to society, particularly your lifelong service to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Your dedicated work across various assignments during your distinguished service career, as well as your continued commitment to social causes even after retirement, truly reflect a life devoted to the welfare of others.

Your unwavering zeal for social activism stands as a shining example for the younger generation to emulate. You have lived the principle so eloquently expressed by Swami Vivekananda: *"They alone live who live for others; the rest are more dead than alive."* By following this noble ideal as the mission of your life, you have earned not only this national honour but also the deep respect and admiration of society at large.

Once again, we extend our warmest congratulations and wish you continued good health, strength, and fulfilment in the years ahead.

With respectful regards,

Sunil Kaul
General Secretary

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Shraddhanjali



Late Shri Makhan Lal Raina(Ganhar)

With deep sorrow and folded hands, we would like to inform that **Shri Makhan Lal Raina (Ganhar)** attained Shivlok on 30th December 2025 at his residence in Faridabad, Haryana in presence of his loved ones.

Shri Makhan Lal Raina lived a life guided by Dharma, dignity, and compassion. A proud Kashmiri Pandit, he remained deeply connected to our traditions, rituals, and cultural ethos. His life reflected simplicity in living and firmness in principles.

He was a man of wisdom and restraint, whose blessings and guidance shaped the lives of his children and those around him. His calm presence, spiritual inclination, and humane outlook earned him respect across generations.

May the departed soul attain Sadgati.

While his physical presence will be missed dearly, his values and teachings will continue to illuminate our path.

Deeply missed and remembered by

Smt. Nancy Raina (Wife)

Mansi Raina & Deepak Raina (Daughter-in-law & Son)

Neetu Raina Koul & Vikas Koul (Daughter & Son-in-law)

Sunita Raina Jetly & Rajan Jetly (Daughter & Son-in-law)

Tannay, Saanvi & Vivaan (Grandchildren)

Ganhar, Bhat, Dhar, Tikoo, Malla, Kaul, Pandita & Jetly families



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