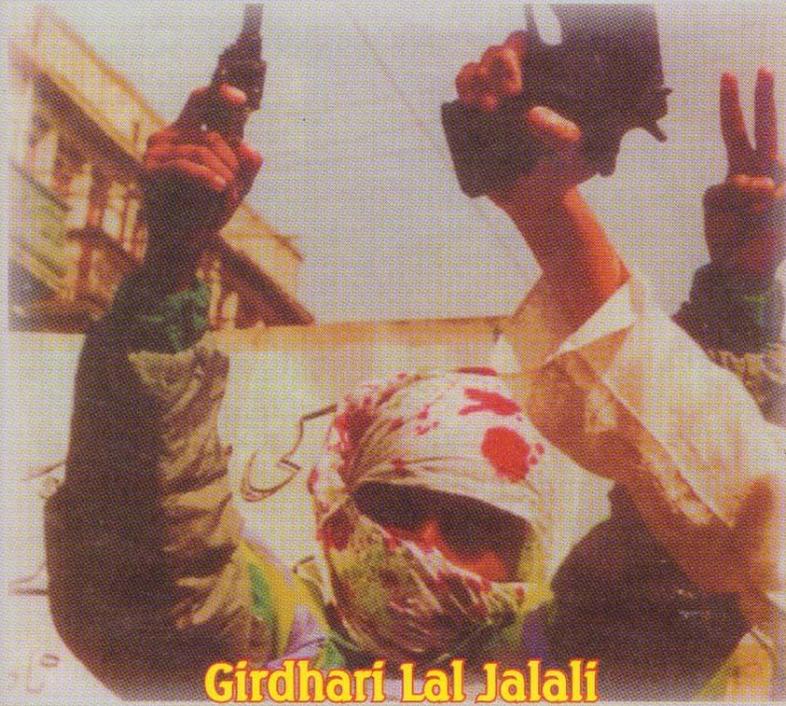


Untold Story

# Jihad in Kashmir

A Critical Analysis



Girdhari Lal Jalali

**Untold Story**

**Jihad**

**in**

**Kashmir**

**A Critical Analysis**

**Girdhari Lal Jalali**

**Vakil Publications**

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# **Dedication**

Dedicated to my mother,

**Tarawati Jalali**

Who passed away in 1971

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# Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali

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By Girdhari Lal Jalali

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	PROFILE .....	3
2.0	PREFACE .....	4
3.0	FOREWORD .....	6
4.0	SAINT KASHYAP'S LAND .....	7
5.0	INDIAN BUNGLING.....	26
6.0	PAK GAMEPLAN.....	30
7.0	AGGRESSION AND CEASEFIRE.....	33
8.0	FROM AGGRESSOR TO VICTOR.....	37
9.0	UN TILT TOWARDS PAKISTAN.....	40
10.0	FORMATION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY: SEEDS OF SEPARATION SOWN.....	44
11.0	RECALCITRANT SHEIKH: COMMUNAL POSTURE .....	48
12.0	PAKISTAN EXPLOITS SHEIKHS' ARREST .....	52
13.0	TASHKENT BLUNDER.....	56
14.0	SIMLA AGREEMENT: BACK TO SQUARE ONE .....	61
15.0	INDIRA-SHEIKH ACCORD: LUST FOR POWER .....	65
16.0	PASSING AWAY OF THE LION: END OF AN ERA .....	68
17.0	GENESIS OF ARTICLE 370 .....	72
18.0	GOPALASWAMY AYYANGER: MAIN ARCHITECT OF ARTICLE 370.....	76
19.0	OBSTACLE IN STATE'S INTEGRATION WITH INDIA.....	79
20.0	RELEVANCE OF ARTICLE 370 IN CHANGING SCENARIO.....	82
21.0	FAROOQ'S CORONATION.....	86
22.0	A BIG DISASTER.....	90
23.0	POLITICAL INTRIGUES .....	94
24.0	RAJIV - FAROOQ ACCORD.....	98
25.0	DANGER SIGNALS IGNORED .....	102
26.0	STATE POLICE IN HIBERNATION.....	106
27.0	OPERATION TOPAC .....	110

## Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali

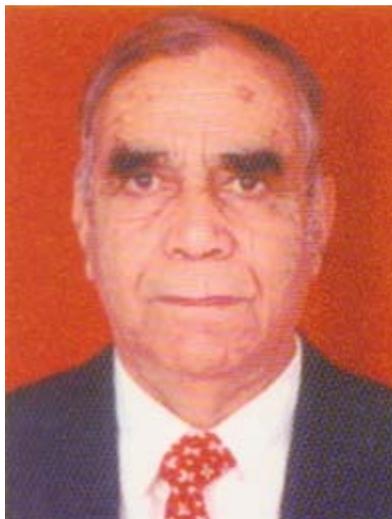
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By Girdhari Lal Jalali

28.0	"HIT OF THE FAITHFUL ON THE INFIDEL" .....	114
29.0	VILLAIN OF THE PEACE .....	118
30.0	MUSLIM FUNDAMENTALISM VIZ-A-VIS KASHMIRIAT .....	121
31.0	RUBAIYA'S KIDNAPPING .....	125
32.0	PUNDIT MAGNANIMITY .....	129
33.0	BIASED LAND REFORMS.....	133
34.0	POLITICAL LIGHTWEIGHT: SCATTERING OF PANDIT VOTES .....	137
35.0	BONANZA FOR MUSLIMS .....	141
36.0	LEGAL FIGHT .....	145
37.0	STIR OVER KIDNAPPING OF A PUNDIT GIRL .....	150
38.0	COMMUNALISM AND CORRUPTION DURING QASIM'S RULE .....	154
39.0	TARKI-MAVALAT SOCIAL BOYCOTT OF PRO-INDIAN ELEMENTS .....	158
40.0	PLAYING COMMUNAL CARD .....	162
41.0	DRESS REHEARSAL OF PRO-PAK DEMONSTRATIONS .....	166
42.0	BRUTAL KILLINGS OF PROMINENT PUNDITS .....	170
43.0	"APPLE SHEIKHS"- THE HIGH PRIESTS OF MILITANCY .....	174
44.0	UNABATED KILLINGS .....	177
45.0	JIHAD IS OUR STRATEGY, MARTYRDOM OUR ASPIRATION .....	181
46.0	SANGRAMA AND WANDHAMA CARNAGES .....	188
47.0	LOOTING SPREE WITH CONCURRENCE OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION .....	192
48.0	REFUGEES IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY .....	196
49.0	DISCRIMINATION .....	200
50.0	CERTAIN FALLACIES AND MYTHS .....	204
51.0	WHY SUDDEN ALIENATION.....	208
52.0	RETURN OF THE NATIVE.....	212
53.0	WAITING FOR PEACE.....	216
54.0	EPILOGUE .....	221
55.0	BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	225

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

### 1.0 PROFILE



**Girdhari Lal Jalali**

Born in 1934 in a middle class Kashmiri Pandit family in Sri Nagar, Girdhari Lal Jalali had his early schooling in rural areas of the Valley where his father was employed as a revenue official. He passed his graduation from Amar Singh College in Sri Nagar. He did his masters in English, History, and education in Punjab University and Kashmiri University respectively.

He joined State Education Department and served it in different capacities. Mr. Jalali is a voracious reader of books on politics and philosophy. Apart from being a well known educationist and teacher, he has currently earned reputation as a freelance journalist whose thought provoking write-ups have been published from time to time in national dailies and journals.

For sometime he was the Associate Editor of the Daily Samachar Post published from Sri Nagar and Delhi. At present he is the Executive Editor of the widely circulated and only English Weekly on the Jammu and Kashmir Affairs "The Kashur Gazette".

His "By The Way column in the Kashur Gazette" has won him kudos and enhanced his fame as veteran Kashmir Pandit Journalist whose range of the knowledge of Kashmir history, world- affairs and facile pen he wields touch the watermark of excellence.

### 2.0 PREFACE

Since the outbreak of the Muslim insurgency in J & K State a plethora of books on the Kashmir crisis have flooded the market. Most of these books were written by the journalists and political analysts who were born outside the State. They had no chance to witness the events that took place either before or during the course of the Jihad with their own eyes and as such these authors had to depend upon the writings of other people for purpose of relevant details on the basis of which they wrote their respective treatises. The ongoing insurgency, which I call Jihad, is not a sudden phenomenon or the unexpected tornado that lashed Kashmir's land with ferocity; it was a simmering storm that gathered its momentum over years and years. In December 1989, it started suddenly rattling the Valley to the utter surprise of our Rip-van-winkles who were ensconced in the seats of power in Delhi and elsewhere.

My book-Jihad in Kashmir: A critical analysis is the outcome of my observation and experiences in the Valley, for I was born, educated and brought up in the State all these years of turmoil which are very crucial to the contemporary history of J&K State. I had to watch the deteriorating political situation over all these years, during my service period in the State Education Department, in far-flung areas close to the Line of Control. I came across a cross section of the people in different regions of the State. I lived through the regimes of Sheikh Abdullah, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq, Mir Qasim, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Ghulam Mohammed Shall etc. and closely studied sociopolitical situation which ultimately snowballed into a revolt by a particular denominational group with the full backing of India's hostile neighbour Pakistan. This book is divided into five parts. After giving a bird's eye-view of the history of Kashmir, my main stress has been on the bungling of the Kashmir issue by the Government of India. The original complaint of India regarding the Pakistan invasion of Kashmir in the UNO was sidelined. With the signing of the Instrument of Accession by Maharaja Hari Singh, J&K State's Accession to India bore legal stamp, bearing no scope for the so called "Referendum." Holding referendum goes against the provision of India Independence Act of 1947 passed by the British Parliament, New Delhi, has willingly or unwillingly, created the so-called Kashmir problem which is the main plank of the Jihad unleashed by Pakistan.

Corruption within the State under different so-called pro-India regimes and New Delhi's inept handling of the Kashmir issue and giving free rope to anti-India elements in the Valley are the main factors responsible for creating ongoing adverse situation and political turmoil in the State. The disastrous fallout of the Jihad has been described copiously in the concluding chapters.

Mass migration of the Kashmiri Pandit community and the unprecedented killings of Pandits at Sangrampora and Wandhama have been narrated lucidly on the basis of the primary data collected by the author. All these details are being given for the first time by any author. That is why the book ought to have been captioned "Untold Story." For Pakistan Kashmir issue is all Islamic issue which, as per conception of their military rulers and fundamentalist elements, calls be solved through Jihad. It is an eye-

## **Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

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**By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

opener for the international community that the ongoing Jihad is no longer "Freedom Struggle" but a systematic attempt to separate J&K from India.

In the end I cannot forget to pay my homage to my mentor Late Pandit Poshkar Nath Koul Vakil who initiated me into Journalism. I also owe my thanks to Mr. Kamlaish Vakil, Mr. Sushil Vakil, Mrs. Neerja Vakil, Mr Sanjay Jalali, and other well wishers who encouraged me to write this book.

**Girdhari Lal Jalali**

### 3.0 FOREWORD

The fate of the Kashmiri Pandits is an extraordinary occurrence and perhaps unique in the annals of human civilisation. For the simple reason that I am not aware of any people having been subjected to ethnic cleansing in their own country by their own fellow citizens. In 1947, India was divided on the basis of religion. Pakistan was made for the Muslims of the subcontinent while Hindustan was to be the shelter for all non-Muslims.

The Muslim League led by Qaid-e-Azam M.A. Jinnah had repeatedly demanded that there should be an exchange of population. That all non-Muslims should cross over to Hindustan. And that all Muslims should immigrate to Pakistan. In April 1946, Sir Feroze Khan Noon, who later became prime minister of Pakistan, had gone to the extent of telling the League legislators of Bihar that if the Hindus did not deliver all the Muslims to Pakistan, he would organise the slaughter of Hindus on the scale reminiscent of Chengez Khan and Halaqu Khan.

True to their words, the Pakistanis chased out most of the Hindus from the western wing. The exodus from the eastern wing, now Bangladesh, has been more gradual although comparably vicious. Under the excuse of secularism, the Muslims were allowed to remain in Hindustan. To ensure that their locus standi in India did not become questionable, Jawaharlal Nehru, ironically also a Kashmiri Pandit, refused to hand over the Kashmir Valley to Pakistan. If he had done that and if the Pandits had been forced to migrate to India, it might have been understandable. But the way things have gone in total contradiction of history, human rights and national pride add up to a colossal tragedy. This book entitled Jihad in Kashmir tells the tale of this tragedy.

**Prafull Goradia**

### 4.0 SAINT KASHYAP'S LAND

Situated to the north of India and blessed with bewitching natural beauty, snow capped mountains, flowers, meadows, brooks, crystal clear cascades and salubrious climate, Kashmir has peculiar geographical features.

Pandit R. C. Kak writes in "Ancient Monuments of Kashmir," Kashmir proper is an irregularly oval Valley, 84 miles long from North-East to South- West by 20 to 25 miles broad. Its height above the sea level is everywhere over 5000 ft. It is surrounded on all sides by ranges of snow capped mountains, which vary at different points 12,000 to 18,000 ft. in height.

The correctness of local tradition regarding its lacustrine origin in remote prehistoric times has been demonstrated by the surrounding mountains and upland." The Valley is named after Saint Kashyap who, as per mythology, drained out the water of the lake, Satisar, through an opening into a mountain close to today's Baramulla town. In those prehistoric times the valley was a big lake Satisar as supported by the geological evidence. The submerged land was made a habitable place by the Saint Kashyap. "The most striking features of the Kashmir landscape are its mighty mountain ramparts, its beautiful lakes and rivers, and its dry brown "Karewas". The former have largely determined the political fortunes of the little country they encircle. It is the inaccessibility and impregnability of these natural defenses rather than the valour of Kashmir troops that has so often turned the tide of invasion from the Valley, when far more powerful kingdoms succumbed to it" According to Nilamata Purana, the Nagas were the earliest inhabitants of the valley. It is said that the Aryans moved into the valley after the Satisar waters were drained out by Saint Kashyap. The institution of Kingship owed its origin to the advanced thinking of the Aryans.

Gonanda is considered the first known monarch of Kashmir. He was related to the king of Magadha, Jarasandha. He was succeeded by Damodara. He ruled for a short period and was succeeded by Gonanda II. Political uncertainty followed the death of Gonanda II and ended when Kashmir came under the rule of Ashoka (272 BC-232 B.C.). He is said to have built "Shrinagar" as the capital of Kashmir. Jalauka, Ashoka's son, became the ruler of Kashmir after his father's death. Three hundred years later, the Kushans extended their way over Kashmir. Of all Kushan rulers, Kaniska left an indelible mark on the cultural history of ancient Kashmir. The Valley became the centre of Buddhism and the fourth Buddhist council was held by the Kashmirian King at "Kundalwara" in Kashmir." Kashmir played a notable part in the propagation of Buddhism in foreign lands, especially in China. Kumarjiva's distinguished scholarly labours in China during the regime of later Chin dynasty (384 A.D. - 417 A.D.) gained for him the title of Tlingsheo, meaning that "although young in years he was ripe in the wisdom and virtue of old age." He is referred to as one of the four swans of Buddhism "and is credited with the introduction of a new alphabet", writes Pandit R. C. Kak. The noted Kashmiri Pandit scholar monk Kumarjiva, was India's first cultural ambassador to any foreign country. The ferocious Hun warlord, Mihirkula ruled over Kashmir for a short time. It is said that he embraced Shaivism in later years of his rule. He was succeeded by the scion of Gonanda dynasty.

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

King Meghabana of Gonanda dynasty is credited to have stopped the killing of animals to propitiate Hindu deities. Of all the rulers of ancient Kashmir, King Lalitaditya (724 A.D. to 761A.D.) of Karkota dynasty was the most illustrious Hindu monarch. He extended his territory beyond Kashmir Valley "by incorporating big chunks of land as far as the banks of Cauvery in South India and Kathiawar and Konkan in the West" He built world famous Martand temple dedicated to the Sun God. He was a Hindu by belief; but was exemplary liberal towards Buddhists. His reign is reckoned as "The golden period of Kashmir Buddhism". Unlike foreign rulers, who ruled over Kashmir by the sword from twelfth century onwards, King Lalitaditya was the epitome of valour, religious tolerance and civilized norms that serve as the bed rock of Hindu ethos. Commenting on the architectural excellence of the Martand temple, the noted Indologist and linguist Stein says, "The ruins of this splendid temple are still the most striking objects of ancient Hindu architecture in the Valley." Historian Young Husband is all praise for Lalitaditya for choosing the picturesque site of the temple," No one without an eye for natural beauty would have chosen that special site for the construction of a temple and no one with an inclination to ephemeral and transient would have built it on so massive and enduring a scale", writes Young Husband. History won't forgive Sultan Sikander for demolishing this cultural relic of ancient Kashmir with the fury of a religious fanatic. "The temple of Martand, a gem of the Hindu architecture symbolizing the high watermark of the Hindu culture and civilization, was destroyed by digging deep its foundations, removing the well chiselled foundational stones, filling the gaping wounds with logs of wood and finally putting them to flames. Prior to this, huge hammers were used for one full year, only to break and vandalise its masterly sculptural works of high artistic merit. Says Tareiki Kashmir written by historian Hassan. Kashmiri Muslim insurgents fighting for the elusive "Azadi" could take the destroyer of Martand temple as their godfather, some of whom have literally followed into the footsteps of Sikander. King Avantiverman was another illustrious ruler of Kashmir who ruled with wit and wisdom in 9th century. He ruled for twenty eight years (855 A.D.-883 A.D.). Extolling the virtues of King Avantiverman as a benevolent king in an era of fanaticism that had swept the land across Hindukush, Jagmohan says," Never before were Kashmiris so happy and prosperous as during the 28 years rule of Avantivarman. Under his benign rule, Kashmir became a land of piety, peace and plenty. With the help of a local genius, Suyya, he was able to execute many drainage, irrigation and agricultural improvement schemes. Avantivarman showed concern for conservation and anticipated the modern movement in this regard." He founded Awantipur and Sopore which was named after the local genius Suyya. In Awantipur, he constructed two temples which were later vandalised and destroyed by Sikander Butshikan. Eight hundred years later Sopore has become the storm centre of Muslim insurgency and the birth place of the secessionist leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani. Suyya would be turning in his grave over the destruction of the town he founded at the hands of the fundamentalists. Avantivarman's successors proved men of straw; they exhausted their energy in military expeditions. It is pertinent here to refer to the role of Queen Didda, the daughter of the King Lohrin. She dominated over Kashmir for five decades as the queen and then as the regent for her son and grandsons. Gifted with physical charm and beauty,

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

she fell in love with a low-caste man, Tunga, whom she elevated as the Commander-in-Chief. It was the time when the shadows of Islam were falling on Kashyap's abode. Earlier, Mohammed Ghaznavi made an attempt to conquer it, but failed. Muslim adventurers and missionaries started their intrusion into the valley, adding a new chapter to the history of this peaceful land. Commenting upon the future course of the Valley's history Jagmohan writes "Viewed in the context of the deeds of its Kings and their courtiers, the history of Kashmir, with a few illuminating exceptions, is a long and lamentable tale of conspiracies and collusions; of incessant upheavals, intrigues; and counter intrigues; of repulsive pettiness and nauseating profligacy, and of monstrous vices and abominable crime. It has often been said that history repeats itself many times over both as a tragedy and as a farce. Vincent A Smith correctly remarked, "Few regions in the world could have had worse luck than Kashmir in the matter of government" (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir). After the death of the shrewd Queen Didda Sanigrailaraja of Lohara dynasty was installed the King of Kashmir. He ruled from 1003 A.D. to 1028 A.D. with lacklustre performance. He was succeeded by a weakling, Ananta (1028A.D. to 1063 A.D.). From 1063 AD to 1101 A.D. two weak rulers, Kalsa and Harsa sat successively on the throne. It was during the time of Harsa that a number of temples were destroyed and plundered." To defile the statues of Gods, Harsa had excrement and urine poured over their faces by naked mendicants" writes historian Kalhana in Rajtarangni. It is quite obvious that the king had come under the influence of Islam through some Muslim courtiers. Liccale (1101 A.D. to 1011 A.D.) and Jaya Simha were two prominent monarchs of Lohara dynasty. The former rebuilt the temples which were earlier destroyed by Harsa, while the latter followed the traditions set up by King Lalitaditya and King Avantivarman. Scholars were patronised, new Maths and temples were built, including Simhpura Math and revolts triggered off by, highly ambitious courtiers, were put down with iron hands. The succeeding two centuries marked the decline of the glory, of the land which, intact, had started during the time of enigmatic Didda and demonic Harsa and self seeking rulers paved the way for the consolidation of alien rule in the Valley. Two foreigners Shah Mir from Khorasan and Rinchana from Ladakh, played a disastrous role and changed the very course of Valley's history. True to the traditions of Hindu hospitality, Sachdeva granted "Jagirs" to Shah Mir and Rinchana Bhatta. In 1320 A.D. Duluch, a ferocious Mongol warlord from Turkistan, invaded Kashmir, killing people indiscriminately. King Sachdeva failed to protect the Valley and check the march of foreign marauders. Forgetting the favours conferred on him by the last Hindu monarch, Rinchana Bhatta took advantage of the disorderly conditions, and unmindful of the good done to him by King Sachdeva, plundered the area around Lir (Jagmohan in My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir ). Rinchana, thus, joins first the rank of foreign rulers who bled the blood of Kashmiris during the centuries that follow, with least whimper from the defenseless idolaters. Jotlaraja describes the heart rending situation thus: Dullclia was like a billow in the water; and on the hill, Rinchana, was like a tempest, while the chief men in the town (Srinagar), the prosperous and the rich, were struck with fear. As the kite swoops on the young ones of the birds thrown out of their nests, so the swift army of Rinchana, seized the people of Kashmir" (Jagmohan in

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir" pp 49). Renchan, being a trickster, murdered Ram Chandra, who was proclaimed king after the flight of Sachdeva in the wake of political turmoil caused by foreign invasion. To make his sinister move valid, the Udakhi Bhatta married Kota Rani, the daughter of the slain king Rama Chandr, Renchan was converted to Islam through the efforts of Bulbul Shah whose grave is found at Ali Kadal in Srinagar. The locality is named Bulbullanker after Bulbul Shah. Renchan assumed the name of Sadr-ud-Din. It is said that Renchan had earlier expressed his desire to adopt Hinduism, but his offer was spurned by the Hindu priests in view of the fact that "Hindus have no history of converting people" and that Renchan had no conviction; he was primarily concerned with the consolidation of his newly acquired power by posing as Hindu to the multitude. Professor Mohan Lal Kaul writes in his book "Kashmir past and present: Unravelling the Mystique", "The dominating factor motivating Renchan for conversion to Islam was only to entrench himself in the power structure of Kashmir. He had no spiritual upbringing or initiation and the statement made by the sectarian chroniclers that he was thirsty for spiritual peace and solace is a sheer myth. He was brutal which stands sufficiently demonstrated by the fact of his ripping open the wombs of pregnant women of Ladakhis who were his sworn enemies" Renchan died in 1323 A. D. Sandeva's brother, Udyan Dev ascended the throne. He tied the nuptial knot to Kota Rani and died in a miserable condition in 1338 A.D. He was succeeded by his widow Kota Rani. She lost the throne as a result of the coup staged 1)), Shah Mir. The latter made Kota Rani a captive after she refused to marry him. The brave Queen committed suicide in the best traditions of a patriotic Hindu woman for whom personal honour was more valuable than material wealth. It was through deceit and chicanery that the alien rule was ushered in the Valley. Shah Mir was a superb strategist who encouraged matrimonial relations between newly converted Muslims and Brahmins. This step disrupted the Hindu way of life which is generally guarded in every Hindu family. He and his son married Hindu girls. He ferociously assassinated two courtiers of Kota Rani, Bhatta Bhikshana and Bhatta Avtar, who entered the palace to enquire about the King's health. Commenting upon the deceitful game played by Shah Mir, Prof. Balraj Madhok writes in "Kashmir the Storm Centre of the World": "Thus the throne of Kashmir passed into the hands of a foreign Muslim adventurer whose conduct can be compared with that of Hider Ali, who usurped the throne of Mysore fourteen centuries later." While making an assessment of the Hindu period in the history of Kashmir; it goes to the credit of Kashmiri Hindu Kings that their period was marked by creative and civilizational activities. Hundreds of temples and Maths were established to diffuse moral education and, to secure spiritual upliftment of the masses. Almost all the Hindu rulers were patrons of art and literature. In the realm of philosophy and social sciences, Kashmiri Brahmin scholars earned world wide reputation. Religious tolerance was the watchword of Hindu rulers. New cities and towns were founded in keeping with the modern scientific norms of urbanisation. Canals were dug to irrigate parched agricultural lands. The very tranquil atmosphere of the Valley was marred by foreign invaders and missionaries who grabbed political power through deceitful means in the Valley. One may attribute the decay of Hindu rule to the lack of valour which was chilled by feeding those (Hindus) on diet of

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

"nonviolence" which the Buddhist scholars preached in the Valley. But the nonviolence could not withstand the bloody sword of the zealot who came from the central Asia. "With the establishment of the Muslim rule in the Valley, the Muslims in general and Sayyids in particular felt encouraged to pour into the regions of Kashmir for the purpose of propagating Islam in Kashmir known world over as tile bastion of Hindu religion and philosophy" (Prof. Kaul in "Kashmir past and present: Unravelling the Mystique", Chapter I). Of all these Sayyids, Mir Ali Hamdani entered Kashmir along with a big batch of followers. The Muslim King of Kashmir Shihab-ud-Din (1354 A.D.-1373 A.D.), who was the grandson of Shah Mir, received the Mir and his followers with open arms. His aim was to serve the cause of his religion. In the process of converting Kashmiri Brahmins to Islam, Mir Syed Ali Hamdani played an important role. During his two visits in 1379 A.D. and 1387 A.D., he is said to have converted 37,000 Kashmiri Brahmins to Islam. It is said that lie was responsible for demolition of the Kalishwari temple and building up a wooden Khankah on the ruins of the temple in Fateh Kadal in the heart of the city. But the Hindu influence continued to loom large over the newly inducted religion says R. C. Kak, "The majority of the people were Muslim, but it was Islam of a type that would have astonished the orthodox Arabs. The old places of worship still retained their sanctity, the only innovation being the Hindu image which had given place to the tomb of a Muslim saint. The Muslim Kashmir teens, to this day, with numberless little Shrines and Ziarats which bear the unmistakable stamp of their Hindu origin. Conversion from one faith to another left the culture, the customs, and even the superstitions, of the people intact. As a rule the kings were far too busy with their own troubles and pleasures to, bestow much thought upon their subjects, who doubtless were content to plod their own way unmolested, happy if forgotten" (Ancient Monuments of Kashmir, pp 30. ) Sultan Sikandar alias Sikandar Butshikan was the fourth ruler of Shamira dynasty which was founded by Shah Mir. He was a Muslim fanatic at heart. "There was no city, no town, no village, no wood where the temples of Gods remained unbroken, "writes a chronicler about Sikandar's mania to destroy idols. He imposed "Jazia" on Kashmiri Pandits. He is said to have converted a large number of Hindus to Islam in the Valley. Writes Kak about the megalomaniac Muslim monarch," Cremation of the dead was interdicted, wearing of caste mark was prohibited and orders were issued prescribing residence of any but Muslims in the country. When the people began to leave inlarge numbers, the King and his minister permitted them to proceed to the frontier and then closed the passages of exit. There they were caught in a trap, driven -back and given the alternative of death or conversion. The majority succumbed and abjured their faith; a few brave men gave up their lives as willing martyrs to their cause." (Ancient Monuments of Kashmir, pp 32). The King was surrounded by a bunch of foreign zealots and advisers Mir Ali Hamdani was one of them. Jonaraja, the contemporary historian, remarks about these foreigners thus: "As the fledgling pigeon is surrounded on all sides by crows, so was the King surrounded by "Yavanas," who became his preceptors, his retainers, his servants, his favourites and even his relatives." King's special preceptor Mir Ali Hamadani has left to posterity his book, "Zakhiratulmaluk" which reflects the author's zeal to spread Islam and hatred against Kashmiri Brahmins. Prof. Mohan Lal Kaul has

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

referred to sixteen edicts for the non-Muslims enunciated in Zakhiratulmaluk. These include stopping construction of temples, disallowing "(a) repairing Hindu shrines (b) riding horses by the Hindus (c) wearing diamond studded rings by Pandits, (d) cremating dead bodies before Muslim graveyards, (e) moving with arms, (f) constructing houses in the neighbourhood of Muslims, (f) wearing the same dress etc. etc. One can clearly find in these edicts seeds of Muslim fundamentalist ideology which has been adopted as a religio-political creed by the Taliban in Afghanistan and their collaborators, the Muslim Mujahedeen, fighting Jihad (proxy war) in Kashmir. Sikandar banned singing and staging plays as was done by Aurangzeb three centuries later and the Kashmiri Mujahedeen in 1990 through the fiat issued under the seal of Allah-Tigers and Hizbul Mujahedeen, the two dreaded militant outfits in the Valley. Sikandar Butshikan was succeeded by his son, Zain-ul-Abadin. His reign proved a refreshing interlude for Kashmiri Pandits. He stopped their conversion and granted them full religious freedom. This change in the king's attitude was brought about by a patriotic Kashmiri Pandit physician (Hakeem), Shri Bhatt, who cured the King of a deadly carbuncle. His reign proved to be the Augustine era of Kashmiri Sanskrit literature". Unlike his father, he appointed Kashmiri Pandits to high offices in his court. His reign was marked by public welfare measures which endeared the monarch to his subjects as Badshah (the Great King) Whereas Sikandar Butshikan represented the virulent form of Muslim fundamentalism, his son, Sultan Zain-ul-Abadin alias Badshah, was the epitome of genuine secular values which are enshrined in India's Republican Constitution. Sultan Haider Shah (1470 AD -72 AD) succeeded his enlightened father in 1470AD. He was a capricious king and committed atrocities on Kashmiri Pandits, thus reversing the policy of his father. It is said that once in a fit of frenzy he ordered the chopping of ears and noses of the Kafirs (Hindus). To escape the horror, a good number of Bandits jumped into the river Vitasta (Jehlum). The same story was repeated in 1990 when Rehman War, the terrorist appointed judge of the Shariat Court, ordered the amputation of bodily organs of a number of Pandits in the Valley, not sparing even some Muslims on the charge of being Mukhbir (informers). The Shah Mir dynasty was replaced by Chak ruler Ghazi Chak, who was a scion of Lanker Chak, the founder of Chak dynasty. All the Chak rulers professed Shia faith and their reigns constituted a period of conspiracies and diabolical court intrigues. The Sayyids, the Magreys, the Chaks and the Dars indulged in their power game in the most unscrupulous manner. Yousuf Shah was the last Chak ruler. The romance between Yousuf Shah and Zoon alias Habba Khatoon, a village belle, is an unforgettable saga of Kashmir's cultural history. Habba Khatoon's love-lyrics remind us of Arnimal's lovelorn poems written on her separation from her husband Birbal Kachroo. Two Kashmiri Muslims, Sheikh Yakub Safri and Baba Daud Khaki implored Akbar, the Mughal emperor, to conquer Kashmir because of the political turmoil and lawlessness in the Valley. Akbar sent his forces under Raja Bhagwan Dass who inflicted a crushing defeat on the Kashmir's Muslim king and made him prisoner and lodged him in Patna fort where he died in exile. His son, Yakub Shah, showed some resistance but he too, was defeated. Thus, Kashmir became a part of the Mughal Empire in 1686 AD as a result of sinister conspiracy hatched by two Kashmiri Muslims. The last Sultan,

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Yakub Shah, wrote a letter to Akbar in the most humiliating language. It reads, "His (Yaqub Shah's) prayer now was that His majesty would send him his special slipper so that he might place it on the crown of his head and prostrate himself at the emperor's threshold.' This letter will continue to remain as a black dot on the name of the medieval Muslim kings of Kashmir who were least patriotic and were mostly impulsive by nature and fundamentalist in their credo. During the Chak rule the role of Iraqi proselytiser, Shams-ud-Din is worth mentioning. He proved an enemy of the Sunnis and Kashmiri Brahmins. Prof. Kaul writes, "Commanding absolute allegiance of Musa Raina, the Prime Minister in the time of Fateh Shah (1506 AD -16 AD) Shams-ud-Din Iraqi, launched upon a ruthless crusade against the Hindus of Kashmir. Temples were demolished. Twenty four thousand Hindus were converted at one stroke. At the instigation of Shams Iraqi, Kazi Chak gruesomely butchered about 800 prominent Hindus. The advent of the Mughal rule ushered in a new refreshing period in the turbulent history of the Valley. The Valley was tied with greater India for the second time first during the time of king Lalitadatiya. It, naturally, belies the contention of separatist leaders of the present day Kashmir that Kashmir always remained isolated politically". The country (Valley) now formed part of a mighty empire and became for more than a century the pleasure garden of the most magnificent court that India has ever seen, "writes R. C. Kak. The people of Kashmir were culturally influenced and excelled in arts and crafts. "Kashmir was brought into touch with the currents permeating the policies and administration of an extensive empire, and in the presence of mightier issues forgot its own pan- squabbles" It proved an era of peace and religious tolerance to some extent in the Valley which was earlier ravaged by the religious fanatics like under. On his visit to the Valley, Akbar repealed the Jazia which was imposed on the Hindus. We cannot say all was well and hunky dory in the Valley during this period. Rapacious Subedars amassed piles of ill-gotten wealth. (Most of them laid out gardens and parks in the Valley, adding to its superb natural beauty). Jehangir took steps in the field of social reforms; he banned the evil practice of Sati and infanticide; it is alleged that the Hindus were forced to marry off their daughters to Mughal officials and other state functionaries. He is said to have built Srinagar's Pather Masjid from the material obtained after dismantling the flight of steps leading to the Shankarcharya temple. His spouse, Nurjahan, is responsible for the dismantling of the flight of steps. His Subedar Khan, proved an anti- Hindu Mughal governor. Some historians have recorded that Shahjahan also ordered the demolition of temples. But Governor of Kashmir, Ali Mardan Khan, who was a fugitive from Iran, cultivated sound relations with the Kashmiri Pandit community. He is credited to have composed poems in Persian in praise of Hindu deities. A locality in the suburb of Srinagar is still named after, the Mughal Governor, Ali Mardan Khan. Shahjahan's fanatic son Aurangzeb ruled for forty nine years. He appointed in quick succession fourteen Kashmir Governors. One of the Governors, Iftikar Khan (1671 A. D- 1675 AD) persecuted Kashmiri Hindus. They approached Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru, for help. The great Guru said to the delegation of Kashmiri Pandits led by Pandit Krupa Ram, "Go and tell the Mughal rulers that if I they converted Guru Tegh Bahadur, they would all voluntarily adopt Islam, ' Aurangzeb took offence at the remark of Guru and ordered

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

the execution of the great Guru. His martyrdom will always be cherished by the people of this country with pride. After Aurangzeb's death, the Mughal Empire started crumbling. During the chaotic period, Kashmir came, for a brief period, under the rule of demonic Mukta Khan. For his anti-Hindu policies, Mukta Khan deserves to be given the name of second Sikander. "He, in his anti-Hindu Jihad, harassed the Hindus by erasing Tilak. Marks on their foreheads and snatching their turbans", writes Prof. Kaul. He was called the Sheikh-ul- Islam of Kashmir because of his zeal to persecute Kashmiri Hindus. He propagated Islam with crusader's exuberance. It is said that a good number of Kashmiri Pandits left their hearth and homes to escape the atrocity perpetrated on them by Mukta Khan in the same manner as almost entire Pandit community bade adieu to the Valley in 1990 in the wake of the mayhem unleashed by the ilk of the 17th century Mukta Khan. History repeats itself: first as a force, then as a tragedy. In Kashmir it reached the second stage in 1990 when the entire Hindu population was driven out of the Valley. Just as two Kashmiri Muslims were earlier responsible for inviting the Mughal ruler Akbar to rule over Kashmir, two centuries later the same episode was repeated. Two leaders, of Kashmir, Mir Muquim Kanth and Khawaja Zaheer Didamari, implored the ferocious Afghan freebooter Ahmad Shah Abdali to invade Kashmir to bring it under his rule. Abdali conquered Kashmir and put it under the charge of Abdullah Khan Isk Aquasi. He is said to have looted the inhabitants of the Valley in collusion with Muquim Kanth. "Those who invited Ahmad Shah Abdali did not realise that they were really calling a barbarous horde to their garden of nature. The unfortunate people virtually jumped from the frying pan into the fire, "writes Jagmohan. Afghan occupation of Kashmir lasted sixty seven years.

It was the period of religious fanaticism and gross economic exploitation of the Kashmiris. Aquasi returned to Kabul, leaving Kashmir in the hands of Abdullah Khan who appointed Sukh Jiwan Mal as the head of administration. Jiwan Mal became virtual ruler of Kashmir. The people were happy under his rule. Abdali reconquered Kashmir, made Sukh Jiwan Mal a prisoner who was got mercilessly trampled under the feet on an elephant. The incoming Governor, Faqir got hundreds of Kashmiri Pandits killed. Almost all Afghan Governors, Amir Khan Jawansher, Asad Khan, Ata Mohammed Khan, Jabbar Khan etc. were callous tyrants whose only aim was to harass Pandits. They exploited Kashmiris to the hilt. "The tragedy of The Afghan rule in Kashmir lay in predatory nature." The Valley was treated not as a province to be jealously administered as part of a larger empire, but as an area from which maximum amounts could be extracted everywhere ", writes Jagmohan. It was the dark period of the persecution of the Shias by Sunni Afghan Governors. Given to a life of voluptuousness, the Afghan Governors did not spare some of their courtiers who were beheaded mercilessly. In this atmosphere of gloom and despondency a noble Kashmiri Pandit, Birbal Dhar, did a yeoman's service to the people of Kashmir. But he suffered a personal tragedy. Birbal Dhar crossed over to the plains of Punjab on a horseback only to exhort Maharaja Ranjit Singh to capture Kashmir" and to rid the people of Kashmir of Afghan misrule.

Before leaving for Punjab, the Spartan Pandit entrusted his wife and daughter to the care of his friend and Muslim nobleman, Qudus Gojawari.

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

On returning to Kashmir Birbal Dhar found the two ladies missing. His daughter-in-law was sent as a gift to the Afghan King in Kabul and his wife had committed suicide. His friend Qudus Gojawari was made to kiss gallows and face the death for helping and colluding with a kafir. Afghan rule over Kashmir lasted till 1819 when the Valley was conquered by Diwan Mohakam Chand who was a general in the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Kashmir was incorporated into the Sikh empire. Sikh rule over Kashmir lasted only twenty seven years. It ended with the Treaty of Amritsar (1846) signed by Raja Gulab Singh and the British Government. During the Sikh rule, Kashmir was placed under the stewardship of ten Governors. Diwan Chand was the first Sikh Governor. He was succeeded by Dewan Moti Ram. He is said to have closed the Jamia Masjid of Srinagar to prevent the misuse of religious places by the Muslims because he had received intelligence reports that some Muslims were hatching conspiracies in the mosque. Phula Singh, who was deployed as commander of the Sikh garrison in Kashmir, was keen to demolish Khankah mosque built by Syeed Ali Hamdani on the site of a Hindu temple which was dedicated to goddess Kali. A deputation of Kashmiri Muslims led by Sayyed Hassan Shah Qadir Khanyari approached Pandit Birbal Dhar and requested him to persuade General Phi Singh not to demolish the Muslim Khankah. Rising to the occasion, Birbal Dhar prevailed upon the Sikh commander not to demolish the mosque. It clearly speaks of the catholicity of the Hindu ethos. Has any notable Muslim leader in Kashmir raised his voice against the destruction of scores of Hindu temples by the Muslim insurgents in Valley? The third Governor of Kashmir was Kripa Ram. He was a colourful ruler who loved music and dance. He spent much of his time in luxury in a Shikara (boat) over the calm waters of Dal Lake. Kripa Ram was succeeded by prince Sher Singh. During his time a severe famine ravaged Kashmir. To bring relief to the famine stricken Kashmiris, food grains were rushed into the Valley from Punjab. Imam-ud-Din was the last recalcitrant Governor of Kashmir. He was "made to surrender to Raja Gulab Singh in 1846 in pursuance of the "Treaty of Amritsar". Comparing the Sikh Governors of Kashmir to the Afghan rulers, Young Husband observes, "The Sikhs were not as barbarically cruel as the Afghans; but they were hard and rough masters." Sikh rule in Kashmir broke the political barriers of the Valley which were eventually affected by any subsequent political change outside Kashmir. Kashmir passed into the hands of Raja Gulab Singh who was a feudatory of Lahore (Sikh) kingdom.

He entered into a treaty with the East India Company on March 16, 1846 as a result of which the British recognised him de jure master of all the hill territories of Lahore Kingdom lying to the east of the Indus and west of Ravi. This territory was taken over by the British after the first Anglo Punjab war of 1845 in lieu of war indemnity of Rs. 75 lakh which the Lahore Durbar was not in a position to pay" (Madhok). Thus, Kashmir became an integral part of the Dogra Empire by virtue of the Treaty of Amritsar (March 26, 1846) which may not be termed as a "sale deed". Before the Treaty of Amritsar, it (Valley) was a separate province of Lahore kingdom. Prof. Madhok says, "It is alleged by his (Gulab Singh's) critics that he purchased Kashmir for Rs.75 lakh from the British but this is not correct. The British, at that time, were in no position to dislodge Gulab Singh and annex this territory to their expanding empire. Gulab Singh had to wage a war against the Governor of Kashmir who under secret

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

instructions from Lahore Durbar, refused to hand over Kashmir to him. This historical background of Kashmir Valley, the real bone of contention between India and Pakistan, is of vital importance for a proper understanding of the Kashmir problem. In handing over Kashmir to Raja Gulab Singh, the British had "subtle and long term purpose" which becomes evident from the contents of Lord Harding's secret despatch dated 19, 1846 to the East India Company. It said, "The Maharaja (Gulab Singh) is declared independent of the Lahore State and under the protection of the British Government. As it was of utmost importance to weaken the Sikh nation before its Government could be re-established, I considered the appropriation of this part of the ceded territory to be the most expedient measure I could devise for that purpose, by which a Rajput dynasty will act as a counterpoise against the power of a Sikh prince and both will have a common interest in resisting attempts on the part of any Mohammedan power to establish an independent state on this side of the Indus or even to occupy Peshawar." Kashmiri Muslim separatist leaders challenge the Treaty of Amritsar (March 16, 1846) as a fragile basis of Kashmir becoming a part of Dogra kingdom. B. K. Karkra wrote in The Hindustan Times dated August 24, 1998, "A point of dispute that is often raised by persons like Yasin Malik (JKLF leader) is that Kashmiris were sold like slaves by the British to Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu for payment of seventy five lakh Nanakshahi rupees under the Treaty of Amritsar, 1846. They forget that the State of Louisiana was also similarly ceded to the USA by Napoleon against a payment of fifteen million pounds in 1804" History is a pack of treaties, undoing the treaties would change the very stuff of history. No country originated in any present form; additions and alteration of territories took place under the treaties worked out and agreed to by the main contenders for power". To view the Treaty of Amritsar in partisan lights is nothing but twisting history for ulterior motives. The Treaty of Amritsar is a landmark constitutional provision in the recent political history of the State 14 Jihad in Kashmir as it was a major step to integrate Kashmir with the rest of the country. The Dogra rulers ruled over Kashmir from 1846 to 1947, Gulab Singh ruled from 1846 to 1857, Ranbir Singh ruled from 1857 to 1885, Pratap Singh from 1885 to 1925 and the last Dogra ruler Hari Singh from 1925 to 1947. Because of the British Government's pervasive interference in the affairs of J&K State, it is a misnomer to call it Dogra rule over J&K State. "It would be more appropriate to call the period 1846 to 1947 as the period of Dogra British rule rather than Dogra rule alone," remarks Jagmohan (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir). Although Kashmir differs from Jammu in geographical features, yet the two remained interlinked by historical and cultural events down the ages. Many fugitive Kashmiri rulers were given protection by the rulers of Jammu from time to time. There was close interaction between the traders of these two regions. Maharaja Gulab Singh is the founder of modern J&K State. His army Commander, General Zorawar Singh conquered Ladakh, thus widening the frontiers of J&K State which we find it in the present form. By 1850 Gulab Singh, the valiant Dogra ruler, became "both de facto and de jure master of the whole of Jammu and Kashmir, including the Kashmir Valley, Ladakh and Gilgit," The three petty states of Huzna, Nagar and Ishkuman, lying close to the Chinese province of Suikiang, were added by Gulab Singh's son, Ranbir Singh. The Shia ruler of Chitral also accepted the overlordship and

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

suzerainty of the Maharaja. All these remained tied with the State till Kashmir was invaded by tribesmen in 1947. Now a big chunk of their territories has been ceded to the China by Pakistan to buy China's support for Pakistan's stand on Kashmir. Dogra rule, unlike the Afghan, the Mughal and the Chak rule, proved a peaceful period in the Valley. Dogra rulers took effective steps to restore law and order in the Valley which had remained a hunting ground for fanatic rulers. "The credit for opening much of this far flung mountainous territory of snow covered peaks, deep ravines, extensive Valleys and and Himalayan plateaus to modern civilization and social and political influence of which the present Kashmir problem is a direct result, goes to its Dogra rule," writes Prof. Madhok in Kashmir the Storm Centre of the World, Chapter 1'. The second Dogra ruler, Maharaja Ranbir Singh codified laws and organized his army which won name and fame in the subsequent wars. The British Resident was appointed in the State. Maharaja Ranbir Singh wanted to reconvert the Muslims of the Valley to their original faith, Hinduism. But the secular and patriotic Kashmiri Pandits opposed the Dogra ruler's move and the latter was forced to abandon the move. They did not want to give Saint Kashyap's Land rise to any social upheaval that would disturb the peace. This prudent step vouches the secular credentials of Kashmiri Pundits who fell prey to Muslim fundamentalism a century later in the very land of their forefathers.

Commenting on this Prof. Madhok writes, "Later developments in Kashmir culminating in the enmasse forced exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley appears like the nemesis which has hit them for their un-Brahmin and myopic attitude at the crucial juncture of Kashmir's history." Ranbir Singh died in 1885 and was succeeded by a weakling prince, Pratap Singh.

The British Government wanted to tighten its grip over Kashmir. The Dogra ruler was charged with hatching a conspiracy in collaboration with Russia against the British. He was forced to hand over all his powers as ruler of the State to a council of five members which would work under the guidance of the British Resident. The Council was presided by Agha Syed Hussain, the scion of Shia Minister Maulvi Iftikar Hussain Ansari In the erstwhile Farooq ministry and the Hurriyat leader Maulvi Abbas Ansari. The whole of Gilgit remained under the control of the British Government. A political agent was deployed in Gilgit to watch the British interest, though the administrative control of this region was exercised by the State Government. It was during the reign of Pratap Singh that a network of roads was laid out to link the Valley with the areas outside the State. Some of the British officers served in the State. They undertook a number of steps to modernise the State. Direct intervention of the British was the cause of future political developments in the State. Growth of communalism and polarisation of political parties on communal lines may be termed as the direct fallout of British interference in the State affairs. All these events snowballed into a major crisis during the reign of Hari Singh who succeeded his uncle, Pratap Singh, in 1925. From the very day of his coronation, he mistrusted the British Government and did not take kindly to the interference of the British Resident in the affairs of the State. The British Government was alleged to foment Muslim communalism to embarrass Hari Singh who was bold enough to uphold the cause of Indian independence in his speech at the Round Table Conference in London in

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

1930. Said Maharaja Hari Singh, "While Indian princes value British connection, they have full sympathy for the aspirations of their motherland for an equal and honourable place in the comity of nations". To teach the recalcitrant ruler a lesson, the British imperialists took "Recourse to the convenient method of building up popular Muslim pressure on communal basis". This gave rise to various religio-politico movements in the State. One can trace the roots of ongoing Muslim insurgency in the Valley in the very strategy devised by the British rulers of India. The pro-Pak tilt on Kashmir issue in the British foreign policy has a historical background. It was the policy of the British rulers to fan Muslim fundamentalism to further their interests. Muslim landed gentry gave full support to the British rulers in their design to "counteract the national upsurge which had always been essentially Hindu in inspiration". It was largely due to the efforts of the British Resident that Muslim Conference came into being in the State. On the political side, the British succeeded in getting Gilgit on lease for sixty years from Dogra ruler in 1935. They were de facto "masters of tributary state of Hunza Nagar and Chitral". They raised their own force in Gilgit called the Gilgit Scouts which switched on their loyalty towards the newly created Dominion of Pakistan in 1947. The projected aim of the Muslim Conference was to awaken the Muslims of Kashmir politically but in fact its hidden agenda was to incite the Muslims against the Hindu Dogra ruler and extract some political concessions. The intensity of communal politics in the Valley can be gauged from the fact that six petitions were submitted by the Moulvis of Kashmir to the Viceroy, Lord Reading in 1924. "These petitions alleged that "the religion of Islam" was being dishonoured and the Muslims were being deprived of education and jobs, though they"always willingly responded to the call for men and material of the Supreme Governor": (Quoted by Jagmohan). It was the beginning of flaunting political demands in the guise of religion by the Kashmiri Muslims. In 1930, some patriotic Kashmiris exhibited their exuberance for the cause of India's independence by making the bonfire of foreign goods in some of the localities of Srinagar. A number of enlightened Kashmiris expressed their solidarity with the Indian National Congress for the cause of independence". These events set the alarm bells ringing for the British rulers. British agents had to work overtime to wean away the Muslims from secular politics. A virulent anti-Pandit tirade was launched in the Valley. The very political atmosphere in the Valley was conducive for Sheikh Abdullah, a young Aligarh educated Muslim endowed with "histrionic talents and fully conversant with the Muslim theology, to jump into the fray and carve out a niche in the heart of Muslim masses as the Messiah of new dawn". He led the "Reading Room" party which was eventually converted into Muslim Conference. Commenting upon his phenomenal rise, Prof. Madhok writes, His greatest asset was the support of the British political department," Muslim organizations and the Press of Punjab which wanted to project him as a leader of the Muslim majority in Kashmir." On July 13, 1931 communal riots broke out in Srinagar. Moulvi Qadeer, a Punjabi Muslim serving as a butler in a British household, instigated Muslims to revolt against Maharaja Hari Singh in a speech delivered by him at Khankah Mosque in Fateh Kadal in Srinagar. He was arrested and lodged in Srinagar Central Jail. Frenzied Muslim mobs assembled in front of the jail and disrupted peace. When the rioters went berserk, the police had no

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

option but to fire at the rioters. About ten people were killed on the spot. The rioters killed a number of Kashmiri Pandits and looted scores of houses belonging to Pandits. This was the first communal riot in which Pandits suffered heavy losses. The riots could be attributed to the anti-Pandit propaganda by the Punjabi Muslims at the behest of the British Resident. On the direction of the British Resident, an Enquiry Commission under the Chairmanship of a British officer, Bertrand J. Glancy, was appointed. The Hindu members on the Glancy Commission from Jammu tendered resignation on the plea that the Muslim members were vocal in changing Hindu Personal Law. It meant that the Hindus converted to Islam were entitled to inherit property after becoming Muslim. No respectable Hindu could agree to this blatant communal demand. Sadly, Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz, the representative of the Kashmir Pandit community, did not resign and continued to play the role of a quisling. The recommendations of the Commission gave a boost to Muslim communalism in the Valley. The commission "recommended the scaling down of academic merit in favour of the Kashmiri Muslims thereby blocking the entry of the Hindus with high academic merit into the state services" writes, Prof. Mohan Lal. Some ancient Hindu shrines, which were forcibly taken over by the Muslim kings and converted into open mosques, were placed in the proprietorship of Muslims vide the recommendations of the Glancy Commission. Muslim members on the Commission demanded that the state police force should desist "from intervening in the matters of fresh converts to Islam." To sum up, the main fallout of the recommendations of the Glancy Commission was:

1. Accentuating Muslim communalism in the State
2. Changing the administrative pattern on communal lines
3. Sowing seeds of future secessionist trends
4. Boosting local Muslim leadership
5. Tightening the hold of the British over Kashmir
6. Alienating Kashmiri Muslims from Dogra rule.

In 1932 the "Reading Room" party was converted into J&K Muslim Conference. In the beginning its main objectives were to work for social, economic and cultural betterment of Muslims and to secure for them a larger share in civil services and army jobs" (Jagmohan). Kashmiri Pandits, psyche was bruised with pro-Muslim recommendations of the Glancy Commission. The Pandits agitated for their rights; their subsequent stir was known as "Roti agitation". It was led by Pandit Kashyap Bandhu, who later joined his hands with Sheikh Abdullah to strengthen secularism in the State. The Pandit agitators were lathi-charged and incarcerated with the result that the stir failed to achieve its objective. Muslim communalism viral spread in the Valley with the tacit support of the British Government.

In 1934, serious differences cropped up in the Working Committee of the Muslim Conference "in regard to the attitude to be adopted towards the Franchise Committee which the Maharaja had appointed as a part of his scheme for limited constitutional reforms". Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas, a diehard Pakistani of Mirpur district, became the sole dictator of the party. He was arrested because of his call for the civil disobedience movement

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

which evoked a lukewarm response from the Muslims. In 1939, Sheikh Abdullah converted Muslim Conference into National Conference. He had two motives to convert the Muslim body into a secular forum. First, he wanted to widen his sphere of influence to satisfy his ego; second, he was under constant pressure from secular elements outside the state. No political leader in those days could match Sheikh Abdullah's political stature. He was a political leader and religious guide rolled into one. Whereas his rival, Mirwaiz Maulana Yousuf Shah, was simply a religious leader who was virtually under the influence of Maharaja Hari Singh and the ruling coterie, Sheikh Abdullah was a political leader with a big ego. He could enthrall the Muslim masses by reciting the Quranic verses in a melodious tone. The mosque was his platform, Dogra ruler his inveterate enemy and religion, his political ideology. In his presidential address to the workers of the newly formed body, National Conference, Sheikh Abdullah spelled out the objective of his party as under; "In order to secure responsible government, it is essential that we invite Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and Harijans to join us. They too are steeped in ignorance. They too pay taxes. They too face hunger. The institution of the responsible government is as necessary for them as for "us". Obviously, a responsible government under the Dogra ruler was the political objective of the party. Some of Sheikh's critics dub it a "cosmetic change" to enable non-Muslims to join the Muslim Conference which wore the mask of National Conference. "Abdullah lost nothing but gained much; Kashmiri Pandits joined in good number", writes Prof. Madhok. The conversion of the Muslim Conference into National Conference brought Sheikh Abdullah into the limelight outside the Valley. Sheikh's occasional communal outbursts put a question mark on his secular credentials as leader of National Conference. It is on record that in his speech on April 14, 1940 on the eve of Id-I-Milad-UI-Nabi (Prophet's birthday PHB) at "Mujahid Manzil", the Head Quarters of National Conference, Sheikh contemptuously derided the religion of the Hindus and to cap it all made a remark that Islam was the sun and other religions were stars". Taking offence at these remarks, some of the prominent Pandit leaders of National Conference resigned from the Working Committee of the party. In 1944, many top communist leaders of Punjab, including B.B.L. Bedi, his European wife Freda Bedi and comrade Dhanwantri of Jammu came in close contact with Sheikh Abdullah. It was directly under their influence that the National Conference adopted its manifesto called "Nays Kashmir" It contained an outline of social and economic programme to uplift the State from the feudal order to socialist el dordo. Within the National Conference itself a progressive group called "Friends of Soviet Union" (FSU) emerged. It was headed by, Khawja Ghulam Mayhemmed Sadiq. FSU organized study circles which were later stopped from functioning at the behest of Sheikh Abdullah. Since its inception, All India Muslim League under Ali Mayhemmed Jinnah had its eye on Kashmir Valley; In 1944 Mr. Jinnah paid a visit to the Valley to "establish his hold in J&K". He presided over the annual session of Muslim Conference. In his speeches Mr. Jinnah asked Kashmiri Muslims to come on one platform. "The Muslims have one Kalma and one God. I would request the Muslims to come under the banner of Muslim Conference and fight for their rights," exhorted the Muslim league supremo to Kashmiri Muslims. He tried to rope in the Sheikh, but failed in his efforts. Later, he called the

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

National Conference "a gang of gangsters". Sheikh Abdullah arranged black flag demonstrations when Mr. Jinnah left the Valley. Important political developments were taking place outside the Valley. The Cabinet Mission arrived in Delhi in early April, 1946 to solve the political tangle. It made clear to all political parties that the British Government would quit after it reaches a political agreement with the Congress and the Muslim League "about the shape of free India". It proposed a federation in which there would be division of powers between the Centre and federal units. The princely states were "advised to join the new Indian federation retaining the same powers as the federating powers". It was left to the choice of 20 Jihad in Kashmir rulers whether they would join the federation or remain independent. The Cabinet Mission paid a visit to the State. Sheikh Abdullah despatched a telegram to the Cabinet Mission. The gist of the telegram was: "The people of Kashmir do not want just a responsible Government; they want complete independence and the end of personal rule of the Maharaja. A hundred years ago, the East India Company had sold Kashmir for 75 Lakh to Gulab Singh. We challenge the moral and political basis of this "Sale Deed" miscalled "Treaty of Amritsar" and do not accept the right of the ruler over us any longer." (Quoted by Prof. Madhok) Yet in another telegram to the Cripps Mission, National Conference made clear its future strategy. It said "the people of Kashmir were sold away to servitude of Dogra's by the British. As such, Kashmir stands on a unique footing and people of Kashmir press their unchallengeable claims to freedom on withdrawal of British power from India". May 10, 1946 is a red letter day in the history of Kashmir because the first clarion call for insurgency was given by none other than Sheikh Abdullah on this epic clay. The Sheikh asked the Maharaja Hari Singh to quit Kashmir. His speech on May 17, 1946 from the Hazratbal shrine is the format of the speech we have been hearing from the Muslim insurgents fighting Jihad in the Valley since 1990. The Sheikh incited the Kashmir is thus: "The tyranny of Dogras has lacerated our souls. It is time for action. You must fight slavery and enter the field of "Jihad" as soldiers". The Sheikh was arrested on May 20, 1946 along with his band of followers. Large scale violence broke out, agitators attacked Government offices and bridges were burnt. Like a pan-Islamist leader the Sheikh presented historical events in a different context. He misinterpreted the Treaty of Amritsar as a sale deed. Gulab Singh had paid Rs.75 Lakh as ransom which the Sikhs could not afford to pay to the British. The first Dogra ruler conquered Ladakh and some hilly parts of Jammu and no amount was paid for the inclusion of the these territories in the State of J&K. Prof. Mohan Lai Kaul writes: "The posture of Sheikh Abdullah unto the Treaty of Amritsar smacked of pan- Islamism, emphasising that Kashmiri Muslims alone were purchased and sold for a few paise each, ignoring that the Kashmiri Hindus, Sikhs and Ladakhi Buddhists too met the same fate. Pan-Islamism with its fountainhead Dr. Iqbal had its reverberations in the utterances of Sheikh dilating the total annulment of the Treaty of Amritsar as an imperative condition for freeing Muslims essentially from the thralldom of the Maharaja, obviously a Hindu ruler, "(Kashmir: Past and Present: Unravelling its Mystique). What would have been Sheikh's political agenda had there been a Muslim ruler in place of Hindu Maharaja in Kashmir? Perhaps the history of Kashmir would have been different. Jawahar Lal Nehru was all fire and ironstone against the Sheikh's arrest

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

and lambasted the Maharaja and his Prime Minister, Mr. R. C. Kak. Nehru was prevented from entering the State and detained at Domel near Muzafferabad (capital of Pak occupied Kashmir). By arresting Nehru, the Dogra ruler earned Nehru's personal grudge against him in ample measure. Jagmohan writes; "This event besides causing stir, permanently impaired the relations between Maharaja Hari Singh and Nehru. As subsequent events showed, Nehru was never able to get over his hostility towards Maharaja and Sheikh exploited it to the hilt". Sheikh Abdullah was tried by a special court and sentenced to three years imprisonment for treason. Mr. Mayhemmed Ali Jinnah, who had already formed a bad opinion of Sheikh, called the Quit Kashmir Movement as an agitation carried by a few malcontents who were out to create disorderly conditions in the State. The Quit Kashmir Movement fizzled out because of the firm handling of the State administration under Prime Minister R. C. Kak. The Sheikh was released from die lockup on September 29, 1947 presumably on his unqualified apology to the Maharaja implicit in his letter dated September 26, 1947. The Sheikh wrote, "I assure Your Highness that I and my party have never harboured any sentiment of disloyalty towards Your Highness's person, throne and dynasty. I assure your Highness the fullest and loyal support of myself and my organization. Not only this, but I assure Your Highness that any party within or out the State which may attempt to create any impediments in our efforts to gain our goal, will be treated as our enemy and will be treated as such." In launching the Quit Kashmir Movement, Sheikh Abdullah had made it known that he was interested in the Valley alone because of its Muslim character. He cared the least for the Hindu-dominated Jammu and Buddhist-dominated Ladakh. "He built his whole case for Quit Kashmir Movement on the alleged sale of Kashmir to Gulab Singh by the Treaty of Amritsar of March, 1840 for Rs.75 lakh," writes Prof. Madhok, It could mean independent Kashmir under the kingship of the Sheikh. Secondly, the Sheikh wanted to keep his struggle for political emancipation separate from one that was being launched under the leadership of Congress stalwarts. It is said that the Sheikh launched Quit Kashmir Movement without seeking any consent from Congress leaders. The Sheikh was the protagonist of Kashmir nationalism sugar-coated with pan-Islamism. It is not correct to say that Sheikh's Quit Kashmir Movement was the logical conclusion of Quit India Movement. The Mountbatten plan of partitioning India and creation of a new Islamic state put the indecisive Sheikh in a catch-22 situation. Accession of Kashmir either to India or to Pakistan proved a brainstorming issue for all the main actors of the political drama - Maharaja Hari Singh, Sheikh Abdullah, Nehru-Jinnah etc. Jagmohan writes," The Maharaja was indecisive. Jinnah was impatient; Pandit Nehru was caught in between his idealism and the stark realities of the situation. Sheikh Abdullah with streaks of megalomania and duplicity embedded in deep layers of his mind and with door closed to him was nursing secret ambitions to carve out a Sheikhdom for himself and his coterie. It appeared that all these actors were pushed on the stage with illusions of their own. "At this time Sheikh was in a state of utter confusion. He could not join Pakistan, because Mr. M.A. Jinnah was his inveterate political enemy and bayed far the Kashmir lion's blood; if he acceded to India, the fear of the domination of the majority community was the Frankenstein; if he chose to remain independent, the Sultan had very few

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

resources to keep the Sultanate alive". Addressing a public meeting in Srinagar, the Sheikh expressed his ire against the main political actors thus; "If four million people living in Jammu and Kashmir State were bypassed and the Maharaja declared accession to India or Pakistan, I will raise the banner of revolt and launch a do or die struggle." There were hardly two or three Hindu members in the Working Committee of the National Conference and the rest were Kashmiri Muslims who were cronies of the Sheikh. Majority of Muslim members wanted to keep the status-quo in State's relations with Pakistan. Acting upon the advice of the members of Working Committee, the Sheikh sent a two- member negotiating team comprising Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed and G. M. Sadiq to meet Jinnah in Karachi. He hoped that the estranged Jinnah would come round and agree to the suggestions of the Sheikh. Refusing to meet the emissaries, Jinnah showed a lukewarm attitude towards NC leaders. However Bakshi and Sadiq met second-level Muslim League leaders, including Mian Mumtaz Daulatana, SardarAbdur Rab Nashtar and Sir Feroz Khan. These talks proved an exercise in futility. The Maharaja concluded a standstill agreement with Pakistan. This was perhaps the beginning of turning the Kashmir issue into an international controversy and discord. The Maharaja was toying with the idea of independence. It was due to the influence of his Prime Minister R. C. Kak and Raj Guru Swami Sant Dev. "The Swami says, "Jagmohan was a prototype of present-day Godman who, notwithstanding their apparent fraudulent claims, exercised to the misfortune of the country considerable influence over the minds of some of the top politicians of his country". He was to Hari Singh what three decades later, Swami Dhirendera Brahmchari was to Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Chandraswami to some Indian Prime Ministers. The failure of the State of Jammu & Kashmir to accede to India before the D-Day viz August 15, 1947 is the gravest blunder committed by Maharaja Hari Singh who had a strong ego. "There can be no doubt that the accession of the State to India before that fateful date would have simplified the issue. Most of the pro- Pakistan Muslims of the State would have surely gone over to Pakistan and this place might have been taken by the Hindu refugees from the adjoining areas of West Punjab and North Western Frontier Province. Such a development would have been in line with what happened in the princely States of Punjab and Rajasthan," comments Prof. Madhok. Pakistan violated the Stand Still Agreement with impunity by sending armed tribal hordes and regular army under the overall command of Major General Akbar Khan on October 26, 1947. Maharaja Hari Singh wrote a letter to Lord Mountbatten asking for help from the Indian dominion to drive out the invaders. He attached the Instrument of Accession for acceptance by your Government. 'Mountbatten dispatched the reply to Maharaja's letter on October 27, 1947 accepting Dogra ruler's request on the condition that" as soon as the law and order have been restored in Kashmir and its soil cleared of the invaders, the question of the State's accession should be settled by a reference to the people.' Indian army was airlifted to the Valley and the sweeping march of the tribesmen was halted. With the sacrifice of brave Indian soldiers, the raiders were routed. Kashmiri Pandits and Sikhs suffered much at the hands of marauders and freebooters. Twenty six thousand Kashmir Pandits and Sikhs were displaced and hundreds of them were killed brutally by the raiders. At this crucial hour, Sheikh Abdullah proved a beacon light of

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

secularism which stands in marked contrast with the policy of his counterparts in the subcontinent. On January 01, 1948 India knocked at the gates of the United Nations and registered complaint of aggression against Pakistan. Taking the case to the United Nations was yet another mistake, writes Jagmohan, "Nehru's idealism and fairplay were paid with chicanery and deceit by Pakistan. There has been no let up in creating problems for India by Pakistan. India's case on Kashmir got enmeshed in international politics. History abounds in soul-stirring ironies. One such irony is the arrival of Indian forces in Srinagar on October 27, 1947 under the command of Lieutenant Colonel D. R. Rai. Kashmiri Muslims who were led by their leader Sher-e- Kashmir, greeted Indian soldiers with the slogans of Hindustan Zindabad, Sher-e- Kashmir Zindabad, Hindu-Muslim Sikh Itihad Zindabad. On the same day in 1989 (42 years later) Valley was caught once again in the grip of raiders. It appeared that all the sacrifices made by the brave Indian soldiers since October, 1947 had been brought to naught" (Jagmohan). The very mausoleum of Sheikh who was once the icon of the Kashmir Muslims was guarded by soldiers lest the secessionists should dig out the Sheikh's body from his grave. These developments occurred due to the follies committed by self-seeking political leaders at the Centre who "betrayed their monumental superficiality, monumental confusion and an inexcusable lack of vision and history" (Jagmohan). Pakistan denied the Indian allegations that Pakistani army was fighting in Kashmir. Refuting the Indian allegation, the Ahmedia Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Sir Zafarullah Khan said, "The Pakistan Government emphatically deny that they are giving aid and assistance to the invaders or have committed any act of aggression against India." It did and said the same as Pakistan is saying these days to hoodwink the world community that she is not aiding and abetting Muslim insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir. But Pakistani rulers were compelled by the turn of events to admit before the United Nations Commission on India and Pakistan that their troops were present in Kashmir. The UNO passed as many as four resolutions on Kashmir. The resolution passed on August 13, 1948 made it incumbent upon Pakistan to withdraw immediately its forces from PoK (Pak occupied Kashmir). It further said, "The Government of India and the Government of Pakistan reaffirm in their wish that the future status of J&K shall be determined in accordance with the will of the people and to that end, upon acceptance of the Truce Agreement. Both Governments agree to enter into consultation with the Commission to determine fair and equitable conditions whereby such free expression of the will be assured". In pursuit of this resolution the two countries agreed to cease fire with effect from January 01, 1949. But Pakistan did not withdraw her troops from PoK called Azad Kashmir.

## **Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

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**By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

### 5.0 INDIAN BUNGLING

Varied may be our perceptions regarding the Kashmir issue, all of us agree on this point that the question was handled imperceptibly in a wrong way since its inception. A simple question "Kashmir issue" has snowballed into a major international question and concern, though most of us treat it simply an issue between India and Pakistan. Tracing the genesis of the issue Sisir Gupta in his book "Kashmir :A study in India-Pakistan Relations" sums up thus : "As charges and countercharges were being made by Pakistan and Kashmir, on October 22, 1947 fully armed tribesmen from the northwest of Pakistan and 'other Pakistani nationals entered Kashmir from two directions in motor vehicles in a full-scale invasion to march towards the capital of the State, occupy it, and decide the fate of Kashmir once again in its history with the sword. Rape and murder, arson and loot of unprecedented magnitude overtook Kashmir, making the living worse than dead. In the name of Islam - which had come to India as a religion of peace-was now operating a primitive sect, guided primarily by their thirst for satisfying the basest of animal instincts". (Chapter VI)

Pakistan was determined to grab the whole of Jammu and Kashmir State. The Maharaja of J & K was keen to save the State from the scourge of war. When the invasion of Kashmir by tribal hordes began trouble in and around Jammu had already spread. In the Poonch area, local Muslims had raised the standard of revolt under the leadership of Sardar Ibrahim Khan who was later appointed the President of Azad Kashmir (PoK). The Muslim soldiers of the 2nd Jammu and Kashmir Infantry which was deployed in the Poonch sector for purpose of maintaining law and order, had deserted and shown loyalty to Pakistan. Bhimber town had, already fallen to the enemy. The strategic town of Mirpur fell on 25 November, 1947 amidst blood bath. "Hardly two thousand people out of 25,000 living in this ill-fated town (Mirpur) managed to reach Jhangar in safety. The rest were ruthlessly butchered. The number of women abducted from there ran into thousands. Most of them were paraded and sold in the bazars of Jehlum, Rawalpindi and Peshawar. The barbarities of troops and civilians on these hapless women who were kept for sometime in Alibag camp before their disposal to different towns put to shame the worst orgies rape and violence, associated with the hordes of Chenghez Khan and Nadir Shah" ( Kashmir : The Storm Centre of the World, Chapter VII). Pakistan often raised the question of the Jammu genocide, but in fact it was the genocide of the Hindus and Muslims in Bimber, Kotli, Poonch and Mirpur. Chowdhry Zaffarullah Khan, Pakistan's first representative at the UNO, lashed at India for committing Jammu genocide. Perhaps it has been our big diplomatic mistake not to bring true facts of the Jammu story to the notice of the international community. Most of the Muslims in the Hindu majority areas of Jammu province migrated to Pakistan. This is the first part of "Untold Story". The fall of Gilgit can be attributed to the perfidy of local force called Gilgit Scouts. The latter was led by the British officers. Besides, there were some units of State army deployed in Gilgit which is the Western most part of trans-Himalayan region of the State. In 1947, a big chunk of the State forces stationed at Gilgit had been withdrawn to Bunji on the left bank of the Indus, about 35 miles south of Gilgit cantonment. It may be recalled that Maharaja Hari Singh had leased Gilgit

## Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali

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By Girdhari Lal Jalali

area to the British Government for sixty years in 1935 under political pressure. A British political Agent was posted in Gilgit to administer the hilly-area. He owed allegiance to the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir. After the transfer of power, Maharaja Hari Singh appointed Brigadier Ghansara Singh as military Governor of Gilgit. The British officers posted in Gilgit poisoned the minds of local Muslims, including hereditary Rajas of Gilgit states. In October, 1947 Muslim personnel of the army posted in Gilgit deserted and arrested local officers. Major Brown, the British Commandant of Scouts, formally raised the Pak flag in the Scout lines. Maharaja's soldiers, including Brigadier Ghansara Singh, were arrested and Pakistan virtually annexed Gilgit. The second part of the "Untold Story" is the nefarious role played by the British rulers. Had the British Government remained neutral, Gilgit would not have become a part of Pakistan. Even the Rajas of Gilgit states were pro-Maharaja till the end. "It was also clear that Maharaja's Government at that time was in no position to hold Gilgit militarily against the combined strength of Chitral and Swat levies backed by Pakistan Government and Gilgit. Scouts, particularly when the loyalty of the Muslim Officers and other ranks of its own, army had become doubtful"(Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World). The role played by the British officers clearly reveals the attitude of the British Government vis-a-vis Kashmir from the very beginning of the flare-up.

Before the winter was over, Pakistan army with the help of Gilgit Scouts and local recruits had occupied Askardu and Kargil. At Askardu, State forces, under Colonel Sher Singh Thapa, gave the best account of their valour, but were compelled to surrender under odd circumstances. The entire surviving troops were massacred by the enemy. The fourth part of the "Untold Story" is the gallantry shown by the State army. The glorious and brave deeds of Capt. Prithvi Chand, Brigadier Ghansara Singh and Colonel Sher Singh Thapa will always be remembered by their countrymen for ages to come.

Fall of Gilgit and siege of Askardu and genocide in Bhimber, Rajouri and Mirpur shocked Maharaja. He had no option, but to sign the Instrument of Accession. The Indian troops were sent by air at this crucial moment, for "a few minutes later the airfield might well have been in enemy hands" (Maurice Cohen in Thunder over Kashmir). The Governor-General of Pakistan, Mr. M.A. Jinnah, was highly infuriated over Delhi sending troops to Kashmir. He ordered the British Commander-in-Chief to send Pakistani troops to Kashmir. "General Gracey replied that he could not carry out his instructions without the approval of the Supreme Commander-General Auchinlek who was in charge of administering the division of the Indian army. General Auchinlek succeeded in persuading Jinnah to cancel his orders on the ground that such an illegal act would mean the withdrawal of British Officers from Pakistani army," says Sisir Gupta in Kashmir-A study in India-Pak Relations. A message was sent to Jinnah and Indian Prime Minister to meet in Lahore to discuss the Kashmir question. It was an astute move to politicise the military issue. Sardar Patel was a pragmatist and knew what would be the ramifications of Jinnah's move. Had not Nehru fallen ill at the last moment, the Indian Prime Minister might have gone to Lahore to discuss Kashmir issue with the Qaid-i-Azam. However, Lord Mountbatten flew to Lahore on November 1. At the Conference table the

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Pak Governor-General proposed the withdrawal of Indian troops. If you do this, I will call the whole thing off', said Jinnah to Mountbatten. It is said that Mountbatten "formally made the offer of plebiscite to Jinnah at the Conference." This was, no doubt, a diplomatic victory for Jinnah. "Jinnah had virtually got the effect of legal accession of the State of India nullified and got Lord Mountbatten committed to a course of action which would only internationalise an issue in which strictly speaking Pakistan had no locus standi after the Maharaja had signed the Instrument of Accession and the Government of India had accepted it" (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World). Thus ended the first direct contact between India and Pakistan. "It may be noted here that a section of the Cabinet in India was opposed to the Indian dignitaries proceeding to Lahore to discuss Kashmir with a Government which, to them, was clearly guilty of aggression", writes Sisir Gupta in (Kashmir: A study in India-Pak Relations Page 130). Thus, it was for the first time that a sort of legitimacy was conferred on Aggression committed by Pakistan. On December 8, 1947 direct talks between Indian Prime Minister Nehru and Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Liyaqat Ali Khan were held in Lahore for the first time. Detailed steps were discussed to solve the problem. Some of the steps included the withdrawal of Pak forces, cessation of hostilities, joint request to the United Nations for sending a Commission etc. "At the meeting in Lahore on 8 December, Mountbatten proposed that the two Governments should jointly request the UN to mediate" (page 130). But no decision was reached, despite Mountbatten's earnest endeavour to convince the opposite side. It was on December 31, 1947 that the Government of India formally appealed to the UNO under Chapter 35 of the UN Charter. Mr. Gopalswamy Iyyenger was nominated the head of the Indian delegation to the UNO. The referring of Kashmir issue to the UNO was a Himalayan blunder which had wider ramifications over the course of future events in the State. Why was Mountbatten inclined to refer the Kashmir issue to the UNO? This is, perhaps, a vital part of the "Untold Story" about Kashmir. Mountbatten was directed by the British Government to take this drastic step. Says Sisir Gupta, "At the last moment before referring the issue to the UN, the Indian Governor-General requested the British Premier to fly to India to try to resolve the crisis by personal mediation. Attlee, however, thought that the UN was the proper forum for discussing Kashmir".

Idealistic and dedicated to the cause of peace as he was, Lord Mountbatten had fascination for the United Nations. He found it the manifestation of brave New World. In due course of time the world organization changed its colours, bellying the fond hopes of the visionary- Lord Mountbatten.

With Kashmir on the UN Agenda, Indian diplomacy faced a major challenge. No self-respecting country would have voluntarily invited foreign powers to interfere in its internal affair. Of course, the Government of India played into the hands of some foreign powers. That is the worst and detesting part of "Untold Story". The role of Mountbatten is to be flagged on this account. Philip Ziegler writes in Mountbatten (Page 449). "The United Nations had two possible roles in Kashmir: to keep peace and to supervise a plebiscite. Mountbatten, for his part, felt that the organization had much to offer". In fact the world organization sidetracked the original issue - Pak aggression. It is said that Pandit Nehru had a mind to strike against

## Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali

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By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Pakistani territory in self-defence. "If Pakistan did not stop its aggression, said the Indian Government, they might be compelled, in self-defence, to strike against Pakistani territory". (Philip Ziegler, Page 449). Even Sardar Patel was in favour of this move, but Lord Mountbatten stood as a barrier and prevented Nehru from undertaking this radical step. "I have pointed out to Nehru that international bodies like the Security Council do not like working with a threat of this nature hanging over their heads", wrote Mountbatten sadly. (Quoted from Ziegler's book, page 449). By February, 1948, Nehru had realised the "grave mistake to pin any faith in the United Nations". He told the Governor-General, Lord Mountbatten, that the "UNO had been a great disillusionment to him, for it was clearly an American racket ". What part did this "American racket" play in, changing the contours of a simple issue, is still an unfinished and untold story. The story has passed through various stages and negotiated many nasty twists during the last five decades. To read between the lines is to discover new truths about the simmering conundrum. The state is bleeding profusely; the wounds are deep. Inept handling of the issue since it cropped up has opened the Pandora's Box.

### 6.0 PAK GAMEPLAN

It was at the behest of Lord Mountbatten that Nehru referred the issue of Pak aggression on Kashmir to the UNO. The latter was convinced that the world body would invoke its good offices for a "peaceful settlement of the problem" and compel Pakistan to vacate its aggression on Kashmir which had become a part of the Indian dominion as a result of Maharaja Hari Singh's signing the Instrument of Accession. It is a part of the Untold Story that most of Nehru's cabinet colleagues were vehemently opposed to Nehru's suggestion of referring the Kashmir issue to the UNO. They considered it outside interference into India's internal affair. By referring the Kashmir issue, to the world body, the world would construe it as India's weakness from military point of view. That was the general impression of those opposed to Nehru's suggestion. On December 22, 1947 Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawabzada Liyaqat Ali Khan visited Delhi to discuss matters relating to the tribal Invasion of Kashmir. At the Joint Defence Council meeting, Liyaqat Ali Khan promised to "stop all kinds of aid to the invaders". On returning to Karachi, he completely backed out of the promise. Instead, "a fresh invasion was launched in Jammu," resulting in the annexation of Jhangar. When India got the case registered in the UNO, Liyat Ali Khan sent a long letter to Delhi. "It was a lengthy catalogue of countercharge. It contained the fantastic allegation that the Government of India was out to destroy Pakistan" (Kashmir-The Storm Centre of the World) It gave inkling into Pak-mind and what gameplan Pakistan was going to adopt. Nehru was basically an idealist who believed that things would ultimately turn in India's favour. "The principal causes for this decision (referring the issue to the UNO), however, were India's faith in the UN Charter, her conviction that a military decision was not always the most helpful and stable means of settling issues, her feeling that an armed conflict in the subcontinent sosoon after freedom would be infinitely worse than delay in solving the problem of Kashmir, and finally her feeling that, in the post War world, public opinion would prove to be a big enough compulsion for an aggression to be vacated. That purpose which India had in referring the issue to UN at this time was reflected in the opinion of the Indian Press", writes Sisir Gupta ( Kashmir : A study in India-Pakistan Relations, Page-138). This has been India's policy since then. Nehru thought that India stood on a strong moral plank. Lord Mountbatten's Press Secretary wrote to a British newspaper, "I think it would be quite wrong to indicate that India is appealing to the United Nations as the result of military desperation. On the contrary, India feels that she has a very strong case both morally and in law and that the Security Council is the proper forum in which to present it". It is said that Gandhiji was initially in favour of referring the case to the United Nations. But, later on, he had changed his views. On January 4, 1948; Mahatma Gandhi "appealed that conditions should be created by the two Dominions in which the issue (Kashmir) could be withdrawn from the UNO with dignity". The appeal to the UNO by India in those formative years was a major blunder the consequences of which we are reaping at present in abundance. On January 15, 1948 the Security Council started first discussion on a very simple question which related to the naked aggression of Pakistan on Indian territory. From the very beginning the Security

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Council placed both India and Pakistan at the same pedestal. On January 20, 1948 a resolution was moved by the Council

President, Dr. Von Langhen\_hare of Belgium in the Security Council. It provided that "a Commission of Security Council be established "to investigate facts and to exercise mediatory influence to smoothen the difficulties". The original complaint lodged by India against Pakistan was relegated to the background and new issues cropped up. It is alleged that Indian delegation failed to elucidate the case in the world forum. In an emotional outburst Chief Indian delegate, Mr. N. Gopala Swami Ayyengar said that the "Security Council was putting the cart before the horse". The hostile attitude of the world body came as a rude shock to Nehru who still cherished the hope that the UNO would prevail upon Pakistan in mending her ways. On February 15, 1948 he said in a public meeting in Jammu that "the world body had lost in power-politics" Philip Ziegler says, " From the beginning Nehru was telling Mountbatten that it had been a grave mistake to pin any faith in the United Nations. I asked him how he could feel this view of all that he stood for, in international ethics and belief of arbitration instead of force. He replied that the UNO had been a great disillusionment to him, for it was clearly an American racket" (pp-450). The most important part of the Untold Story is the gradual erosion of Nehru's faith in the UNO as a body to administer justice to the aggrieved country. The other point is the inept presentation of the "Indian case as opposed to the skilled professionalism, both legal and oratorical, of the Pakistani representative, Zaffarullah Khan". The head of the Indian delegation, Mr. Gopala Swami Ayyanger was, no doubt, an honest man, but he was a "novice to the ways of UN diplomacy." "He was too honest and simple- hearted to be a match for Pakistan's Zaffarulah Khan who apart from being a leading jurist was a man of wide contacts and great. Eloquence (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World) A member of the Indian delegation was "more interested in projecting himself and running down the Maharaja of Kashmir ".The Indian spokesman failed to highlight the legal aspect of State's accession with India. It may be recalled that there had arisen anti-Western and anti-British feelings in Delhi over the British Government's tilt towards Pakistan on the Kashmir issue. Mountbatten was alarmed at "the increasing anti-Western and even anti-British feeling in Delhi". He had impressed upon the British delegate to the UN, Noel Baker, to change the attitude as the ongoing policy "was endangering the whole structure of goodwill between Britain and India". But his advice fell on deaf ears. In the mid-fifties, the strategy of the Western countries was to contain the erstwhile Soviet Union. Since Pakistan had strategic importance in view of retaining Gilgit, India was placed in a disadvantageous position "The strategic importance of Gilgit in the overall Western strategy to contain the Soviet Union was immense and the British were fully conscious of it. Pakistan could treat it as a bargaining counter to win the support of the western Block for itself'. India was deprived of the western support because it completely aligned with the Soviet Union. Nehru shared in abundance the Marxist ideology which was overtly the ideological basis of this socialist country. The United Nation's Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) was formed on June 9, 1948. It composed of Czechoslovakia, Argentina, Belgium, Colombia and the United States. Its scope was widened with the result that the Kashmir issue,

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

became a very complicated affair. Very few of us know that Government of India thought in terms of withdrawing its complaint from the UNO but the Government had to yield to American pressure. "Indian skepticism, which had started after the first shocks at the UN, was strengthened by the resolution in the Security Council", writes Sisir Gupta. India was caught badly into the web woven inadvertently by mishandling of the issue since its inception.

Conclusion with the Constitution of the United Nation's Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) a new chapter was added to the Kashmir issue. Before concluding the first chapter it is pertinent to refer to two important factors that govern Pak-stance on Kashmir. First, Kashmir issue is a religious issue in the eyes of Pak-establishment. To settle the issue is to wage Jihad. It is no longer a political issue. Secondly, internal political compulsions and sociological urges in Pakistan are responsible for keeping the issue alive. Immediately after the division of the subcontinent, "movements for Azad Baluchistan and Azad Pathanistan" had gathered momentum. To divert it aggressive tribesmen were made to invade the Valley. One of the primary motivations for invoking the so-called threat from India was to destroy the political opposition to the monopoly of power concentrated in the Muslim League. Kashmir has remained the best "political-bet with the Pak-ruling clique since then. Commenting upon the state of affairs in Pakistan, Sheikh Abdullah's interview to The Hindustan Times on November 5, 1947 is an eye-opener. "The Government had to justify the establishment of Pakistan founded on the hymn of hate, by bringing peace and plenty to the people, for negative slogans could no longer provide emotional food to the asses. A countermove, preferably aggressive, was needed to kill the Pathanistan Movement. Pakistan could not afford to feed the Pathans from the central exchequer like the British; so by helping the tribal people to plunder - Kashmir, Pakistan hoped to solve the economic problem for the time being". This plundering of Kashmir has been a continuing process since then.

## **7.0 AGGRESSION AND CEASEFIRE**

The Pakistani delegation at the UNO concocted so-called charges against India and denied vehemently that Pakistan was officially involved in the tribal invasion of Kashmir. India had approached the world body with the complaint: "Such a situation that exists between India and Pakistan owing to the aid which invaders, consisting of nationals of Pakistan and of tribesmen from the territory immediately adjoining Pakistan on the North-West, are drawing from Pakistan for operations against Jammu and Kashmir, a state which has acceded to the dominion of India and is part of India.. The Governor-General of India requests the Security Council to call upon Pakistan to put an end immediately to the giving of such assistance which is an act of aggression against India". On January 15, 1948 Mr. Zaffarullah Khan, the Ahmedia Foreign Minister of Pakistan declared in categorical terms that the Government of Pakistan was not giving any military aid to the invaders and as such the newly, created Islamic State had committed no aggression against (Hindu) India. These ground rules of Pak policy were framed by Zaffarullah Khan and were continued by the succeeding Pak military dictators, elected Prime Ministers and nominated Presidents while dealing with the Kashmir problem. In spite of the fact that Pak-establishment has always abetted tribals, Jihadists, Mujahideens etc. just to grab Kashmir by hook or crook since 1947, God alone can set things right, making Pak-rulers fair-players in the chessboard of politics. In sharp contrast to the tone of Indian delegation while presenting the case before the UNO, the Pakistani delegation appeared to be on a warpath. Perhaps the political compulsions of the Government of Pakistan were to a large extent, responsible for Pak delegation toeing a hard and offensive line. Sisir Gupta reveals "Unfortunately, while the government on this side was fighting out a grim battle with the forces of communalism, in Pakistan the ruling party had decided to sail with the wind by making the disputes with India symbolic of the Hindu- Muslim differences. Thus while the Indian representatives were entrusted with the unenviable work of impressing upon the Council the need for vacation of aggression without making it that Pakistan had infinitely easier brief to relate Indo-Pakistan problems to Hindu-Muslim communal tension and to attract the world's sympathy as the weaker aggrieved party in the dispute". (pp: 143) From a very close analysis of the argument and counter-argument it was clear that for the Pak-establishment Kashmir was linked with pre-partition Muslim League politics which resulted in the division of the subcontinent. In the face of Pakistan's categorical denial in the tribal invasion and the Indian Government's apologetic and ambivalent attitude gave a different impression to the world community. If India had a strong case that Pakistan committed naked aggression on Indian territory, then there was the need for adopting appeasing and apologetic stance: that has been a blunder and crux of the Untold Story. As already stated, Pakistan had assumed strategic importance the moment it had annexed Gilgit which was a part of J & K State before 1947. The strategic importance of Gilgit in the overall Western strategy to contain the Soviet Union could not be ignored. For the newly-created Islamic State "Gilgit was a prize catch" and a bargaining point to buy the support of the Western block. Perhaps, Gilgit could serve as a launching-pad to start military operations, overtly or

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

covertly, against the enemy of capitalism- the Soviet Union. Discussing the strategic importance of Gilgit, Prof. Madhok says: "The comparatively favourable attitude of the Communist delegates towards India from the very beginning had also something to do with Gilgit. Control of Gilgit and Kashmir Valley by the Western Block through Pakistan was considered by Russia a major threat to her armament industries which had been shifted during the World War II to the East of Ural Mountains. They were within the reach of Gilgit-based bombers. This fact, coupled with the dominant position of pro-communist elements in Mr. Sheikh Abdullah's Government who wanted to use Kashmir as a springboard for communist revolution in India, influenced communist Russia to take the side she did. This, in turn, helped Pakistan to get further integrated with the Western Block which had the upper hand in the Security Council", (Kashmir-The Storm Centre of the World). It is evident that from the very start the Western countries led by the United States of America adopted anti-India and pro-Pak stance on the Kashmir issue. They treated Pakistan as a satellite State, Pakistan wanted to drag other issues into the vortex of the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP). The UNCIP arrived in India on June 10, 1948. Immediately after its arrival it started holding talks with the Governments of India and Pakistan.

Perhaps, it may have remained a part of the Untold Story that India was not happy with the way the (UNCIP) was constituted as most members of the Commission were India-haters. The Commission visited Karachi, met there high officials. Now, the cat was out of the bag. It was impossible for the newly-created Islamic State to hide the facts or put wool into the eyes of the honourable members of the Commission. Pakistan Government had denied its involvement in the aggression on India. Now, Pak Foreign Minister was compelled to reveal the truth. Sir Zaffarullah Khan, the crafty Foreign Minister of Pakistan, told the Commission in categorical terms that "regular troops had moved into certain defensive positions in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It was a big slap for Pakistan and a diplomatic victory for India. But, with the passage of time this diplomatic victory recoiled on us very badly. It needs to be elucidated in this Untold Story. While commenting on Pak confession on aggression, Pandit Nehru said in Parliament (September 7, 1948):

"The country which participates in aggression against a neighbouring country, may be in the name of defence or its own security, denies it for many month-, and then, in fact, when it finds that its guilt is proved, when it cannot hide it any more, then grudgingly admits it and gives some reasons for it – how shall we consider the politics of that country from any international or moral point of view".

Pakistan's perfidy was exposed before the international community. To this point, the Secretary-General, External Affairs Ministry, Sir Girja Spanker Bajpai took a serious note of "the changed situation". "India attached the highest importance to the declaration of Pakistan's guilt, for the issue in Kashmir was a moral issue", commented the top-ranking Indian diplomat. It was natural for India to demand the vacation of aggression and withdrawal of Pak troops. Nehru was all fire against Pakistan. It is evident from his plain-speaking with Korbel, the Chairman of UNCIP "Nehru had told him that Pakistan should never have been created and would not have

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

come into being if the British had not stood "behind the foolish idea of Jinnah" and the dispute between India and Pakistan was essentially a dispute "between freedom and progress and group of wealthy men. India had accepted the partition because it became inevitable" (Kashmir A study in India-Pak Relations: pp 177). While discussing and analysing the political situation during and after the departure of the UNCIP, it is to be noted that Nehru was not inclined to hold a plebiscite, but rather "expressed the thought that he would not be opposed to the idea of dividing the country (state) between India and Pakistan". This idea is supposed to have its origin in the tough opposition offered by an astute Sir Zaffarullah Khan. The Pak diplomat said, "Under no circumstances would his Government consider the partition of Kashmir as this would constitute a threat to Pakistan". Even the UNCIP assessed the problems relating to the holding of plebiscite. It thought of finding out other solution viz "to partition Kashmir on ethnic principles though giving due consideration to economic, geographical and strategic needs". On August 13, 1948, UNCIP passed a resolution, calling for stopping hostilities which was "to be followed by a Truce Agreement". It was also pointed out that a plebiscite would be conducted in the State under the auspices of a plebiscite administrator. The latter was to be directly appointed by the UNO. It laid the condition that Pakistan would have to withdraw her troops "as a first step towards the creation of conditions in which plebiscite would be held".

India accepted the resolution on the plea that her stand had been rightly vindicated: Pakistan is an aggressor. She pleaded to the UN Commission to press Pakistan to "withdraw troops from the Northern areas where a garrison of state troops in the fort of Askardu was still holding out against heavy odds". The crucial provision regarding Indian obligation contained in Part II (B) of the Resolution. It stated: "The Government of Kashmir (shall) take measures to make it publicly known that peace, law and order will be safeguarded and that all human and political rights will be guaranteed". The most notable plus point of the August Resolution was the acceptance of the sovereign rights of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan raised certain objections and wanted the Commission to clarify them. "In the first place, it sought information as to how the Commission would secure the agreement of the Azad Kashmir Government for its proposals, since only that Government could issue cease-fire orders to their forces" (Sisir Gupta). In other words, it was a deft move to secure the recognition of Azad Kashmir Government (PoK). India could hardly digest this cute suggestion. After discussing matters with India and Pakistan the Commission returned to Geneva in September, 1948. It submitted a long report to the Security Council in November, 1948. In its report the Commission stated, "The Commission observes with regret that the Government of Pakistan had been unable to accept the Resolution without attaching certain conditions beyond the compass of this Resolution, thereby making impossible an immediate cease-fire and the beginning of fruitful negotiations between the two Governments and the Commission to bring about a peaceful and final settlement of the situation". The Commission recommended the immediate withdrawal of Pak-troops as "a first step towards the final solution of the dispute. On November 25, 1948 the Security Council started debating the issue in the light of Commission's recommendations. In a unanimous Resolution the Security Council appealed to both India and Pakistan to end

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

fighting to secure conditions for carrying on fruitful negotiations. Consequent upon this Resolution, Dr. Alfred Lozono, a member of the UNCIP and UN General Secretary's personal representative, Dr. Erik Colban, paid visit to Karachi and New Delhi. They discussed certain matters regarding the resolution of August 13, 1948. The two-man delegation assured India that (a) "the Plebiscite Administrator would not usurp the functions of the State Government in the field of normal administrator and (b) large-scale disarming of "Azad Kashmir" (PoK) forces would be effected". Pakistan was given assurance that "A Plebiscite Administrator would be selected as soon as possible"

India made it clear to the Commission that "India is a secular state; the United Nations is also a secular organization. Pakistan aims at being a theocratic state. An appeal to religious fanaticism could not be regarded as a legitimate political activity. Mr. Lozono said that any political activity which might tend to disturb law and order could not be regarded as legitimate" (Sisir Gupta: pp 188). The UN delegation flew back to New York on December 26, 1948 and reported the resume of talks to the Security Council. In haste, the Government of India ordered a cease-fire with effect from the midnight of January, 1949. Pakistan reciprocated India's magnanimous offer promptly. Thus, the undeclared war, which was fought between the two countries for 15 months came to an abrupt end, widening the scope for the "proxy war" we see in the Valley today. Thus ended the second gory chapter of the Untold Story. It was now evident that (a) India acted in haste, without taking the cognizance of the repercussions of the cease-fire move (b) Western countries, led by the USA, directly interfered into India's internal matter. (c) India's original complaint to the UNO was relegated to the background. (d) Thrust into backwaters of cold-war diplomacy. Fourthly, the idea of plebiscite got under leverage at the behest of the imperialist countries. And lastly, the, cease- fire virtually resulted in the partition of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The rest is history!

### 8.0 FROM AGGRESSOR TO VICTOR

As already mentioned, the cease-fire between India and Pakistan came into force with effect from the midnight of January 1, 1949. Who was the first to moot this suggestion? How did Nehru accept it despite his initial hesitation to do so? Who were the main players on the political chessboard at the national level? These are the interesting events in the Untold Story. "Some have doubted if the cease-fire was really an achievement of the Commission: it is the view of Lord Birdwood, for example, that "in fact it was British initiative which should receive the honours and that "the worthy envoys from Lake success were comparatively inactive passengers so far as any influence at this stage on events on Kashmir is concerned. According to this account, General Bucher, inspired by the supreme desire to prevent a war between the two Dominions, approached Nehru for agreeing to a cease-fire; for the alternative was to carry the war into Pakistan. Having secured Nehru's approval the Indian Commander wired General Gracy of Pakistan (Kashmir: A Study in India Pak Relations, pp: 190) General Gracy approved General Bucher's politically motivated suggestion. The very timing of going in for cease-fire by India was wrong from the military point of view. Indian forces were on the offensive and a very "difficult military situation has been created for Pakistan" towards the closing months of 1948. In the spring offensive, Indian troops had far advanced into the Valley. By November 15, 1948, the Indian Army had broken the siege of Poonch by Pak troops. The siege had lasted one year. The Indian troops were advancing in all directions. "A definite position of vantage has thus been taken by the Indian army. If the latter had been given more time it could have made photo-finish of the invaders and cleared major part of the State, now known as PoK, of Pak troops. Mr. Brecher says in "The struggle for Kashmir": "The consideration which undoubtedly influenced Pakistan's decision to go in for the cease-fire was the marked improvement in India's military position." 'There are various reasons as to why a reluctant Nehru agreed to stop military operations. Nehru was keen to establish his credentials as a pacifist. He wanted to win the goodwill of the international community, particularly of the Angle-American bloc. He could hardly afford to displease Britain which was pressing the Indian Prime Minister to settle the Kashmir issue peacefully. There was the second reason as to why Nehru wanted to halt military operations temporarily against Pakistan. "Nehru perhaps was keen to stop the war immediately because he had contended an international conference at New Delhi to consider the situation arising out of Dutch aggression against Indonesia which had just wrested freedom from the Dutch Colonial Yoke" (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World). Consequently, the Indian Prime Minister wanted to set an example of being a pacifist by ending Pak-initiated war over the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The cease-fire proposal was finalised at Karachi where a joint military conference of India and Pakistan was held from July 18 to July 28, 1949. A cease-fire line was established and both the Governments agreed not to increase troops on the line of control. Thus, the cease-fire resulted in a "de-facto partition of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, leaving two-thirds of the territory to Pakistan which had committed aggression on the State in 1947. The Line of Control begins from the Siachin Glacier in the North and runs close to the

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Srinagar-Leh road near Kargil and then runs along the great Himalayan range dividing Kashmir from Baltistan. On the Western side it divides Uri from Muzafferabad. It leaves a major portion of Baltistan barring Kargil, and the whole of Gilgit along with Punjabi-speaking areas of Mirpur and Bimber to PoK. It may be noted that out of six districts, three linguistic and geographical units have been ceded to Pakistan - thanks to the political short-sightedness of some of our politicians who were obviously duped by the imperialist west. From the cultural point of view, the so-called division of the State benefited Pakistan immensely. Pakistan continued to consolidate its military prowess, caring least for the world opinion. She established direct control over the northern strategic areas of Gilgit and Baltistan. She ceded big chunks of the State's territory to China just to buy latter's support to Pakistan on the Kashmir issue. To hoodwink the world, she installed a puppet regime in the occupied areas where the process of islamising these areas was taken in right earnest. Even the names of rivers and towns were changed. For example, the Kishen Gangs River was given the name of Darya-Neelam. The district to the east of Teetwal was called the Neelam Valley. By accepting the cease-fire, the Indian Government virtually accepted partition of the state. 'The Cease-Fire Agreement did not mention the right of the State Government to administer the areas held by Pakistan or the so called Azad Kashmir Government. Those areas were left to be administered by the local authorities which practically meant the "Azad Kashmir" Government or any other authority sponsored and supported by the Pakistan Government.' (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World). By virtue of the cease-fire, Pakistan retained full control over the Zojila pass which links Gilgit with Kashmir. Its occupation proved of great strategic importance to Pakistan which could send easily her army to descend into Kashmir Valley from the Gilgit side at the time of war. Had the "Krishen Ganga" remained on India's side, it could have formed a natural frontier between the two countries. Rich timber resources of Teetwal and Karen forests remained on the other side of the line of Control, enabling the Government of the Pak-occupied territory to exploit these forests to their full economic advantage. As regards our position on the west of the cease-fire line, we allowed Pakistan to occupy the strategic town of I Domel and Muzafferabad. We consolidated our position at Uri which is encircled by Pak army outposts at higher mountain-tops in the vicinity of the town. There is no denying the fact that Pakistan made valuable gains at the cost of India. There is, of course, an important point in the Kashmir Story. Our rulers acted in haste, without pondering over the consequences of their actions. One such action was calling off the military operations against Pakistan which flouted the international law by committing a naked aggression in Kashmir. While drawing the cease-fire line, we ought to have kept strategic considerations in view. Our move was, no doubt, the greatest blunder. It proved a tactical victory for Pakistan which was militarily far inferior to India. "At a much less cost in men and material she was able to add to her dominion a territory roughly equal in size to East Punjab. It was quite a rich dividend for her unprovoked aggression. It confirmed the impression created in the minds of her leaders by the past policy of appeasement," says the author in "Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World" (Chapter The cease-fire agreement boosted the morale of Pak rulers and treated a new sense of

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

confidence. At the basis of future course of action stands this sense of confidence and "psychology of aggression" in Pakistan which is bent upon weaning Kashmir away from India. Politically, the cease-fire agreement proved disastrous for India as she had no choice but to dance to the tune of the Governments established in J&K State from time to time. It is alleged that Sheikh Abdullah was instrumental in making Pandit Nehru agree to the cease-fire proposal. The Sheikh was the acknowledged leader of the Kashmiris, particularly its Muslims populace. He had little hold over the Punjabi-speaking Muslims, living in other parts of the State which, as per the cease-fire agreement, formed the Azad Kashmir (PoK) territory. Chowdhry Abbas and Sardar Abdul Qayum Khan were the political opponents of the Sheikh. Both Abbas and Qayum were the acknowledged leaders of the Punjabi-speaking inhabitants living in Muslim-dominated areas of Muzafferabad, Mirpur, and Bimber etc. The best choice for the Sheikh was to draw the dividing line and carve out a separate fiefdom. On India-administered part of J&K State, he was free from any challenge to his leadership. That is also a part of the Untold Story about Kashmir. India was reduced to the pitiable position in which she depended on the good graces of Sheikh Abdullah and votes of the Communist Bloc rather than the unassailable right derived from accession and the heroic defence of Kashmir by her armed forces," writes Prof. Madhok. Thus, the Instrument of Accession signed by Maharaja Hari Singh was allowed to fall into the dustbin of cold-war politics. The gains for Pakistan were tremendous: Pakistan sought control over 34,000 sq. miles out of State's total area of 84,471 square miles. It got hegemony over 17,000 sq. miles of Gilgit, 12,000 sq. miles of Baltistan, and 5,000 sq. miles of Mirpur-Muzafferabad area (Zone). As per the census of 1941, the total population of Azad Kashmir (PoK) was eleven lakh out of a total population of 40 lakh. From zero, Pakistan became hero in Kashmir; from aggressor, it becomes the victor - that is of course the running theme of the Story. Thus, an important limb was chopped off from the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Our politicians may cry themselves hoarse that PoK is Indian territory. But the ground situation tells a different tale. During the Maharaja's rule, bulk of soldiers hailed from Poonch, Mirpur and Gilgit. In fact, military service was the prime occupation of the people living in Muslim-dominated areas of Jammu province. After the cease-fire, these areas went over to Pakistan (PoK). These soldiers who joined Pak army proved an asset to Pakistan. Inadvertently, the cease-fire ensured the division (though temporary) of the State on the basis of religion. Three Muslim majority zones of the State formed what is called Azad Kashmir, which in fact is Pak-held Kashmir. From henceforth, Kashmir Valley was the Muslim majority part of the State. The ongoing struggle of Pakistan is to annex this Muslim majority part of the State. To achieve this objective, Pakistan has been consistently linking it with the Pan-Islamic agenda. Precisely Kashmir Story is partly the comedy of errors and partly the tragedy of inept handling of the conundrum by our politicians.

## **9.0 UN TILT TOWARDS PAKISTAN**

There is no denying fact that the Ceasefire Agreement put an end to the hostilities on the borders and the danger of an Indo-Pak war breaking out was temporarily averted, but the solution of the Kashmir issue as envisaged in UNO's Resolution of August 13, 1948 remains a distant dream. On January 5, 1949 a new Resolution was passed by the UNO. It was impressed upon Pakistan to withdraw her forces from the occupied territories of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. To expedite the agenda, the world organization decided to renew its efforts to mediate between the two countries. Pakistan started consolidating her position in the territories acquired by her as a result of naked aggression. She was in no mood to allow "the writ of the lawful Government of Jammu and Kashmir to run over the whole of the State on which India insisted". Thus, the issue revolved over (1) demilitarization of the Pak-occupied territories and (2) Administrative control over Pak -occupied territories. The attitude of Pakistan remained very rigid from the beginning. Cold war politics exerted its influence on the issue with the United States tilting towards Pakistan. The UN Commissioner for India and Pakistan never challenged the State's accession to India. On February 4, 1948, the US representative in the Security Council declared very clearly: "External sovereignty of Jammu and Kashmir is no longer under the control of the Maharaja. With the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India, this foreign sovereignty went over to India and is exercised by India and that is how India happens to be here as a petitioner". At the 765th meeting of the Security Council the representative of the USSR echoed the same views: "the question of Kashmir has been settled by the people of Kashmir themselves. They decided that Kashmir is an integral part of the Republic of India". (Quoted by M. L. Kotru in "The Kashmir Story")

"The legal advisor to the UN Commission came to the conclusion that the State's accession was legal and could not be questioned. The fact was further recognized by the UN Commission in its report submitted to the UN in defining its Resolutions of August 13, 1948 and January 5, 1949. Both these Resolutions were accepted by India and Pakistan "(The Kashmir Story, Chapter III). The UNCIP began to moot the idea of arbitration by a third party regarding the demilitarization and induction of a plebiscite Administrator. The Security Council had already nominated Admiral Chester Nimitz of the USA. On August 13, 1949 the Security Council submitted the proposal regarding arbitration over disputed points implicit in the Resolution of August 13, 1948 to the Governments of the two Dominions (India and Pakistan). The British Prime Minister, Atlee, and the US President, Truman, approached the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan to accept the arbitration proposal mooted by the world body. Such a candy suggestion was a boon for Pakistan. So, it lost no time in accepting the suggestion about arbitration. But India, on the contrary, rejected it outright on the "plea that the outstanding issue of disbanding and disarming of Azad Kashmir forces was a matter for not arbitration, but for affirmative and immediate decision". What was the impact of the outright rejection of the arbitration proposed by India? The result was obvious: the United States of America adopted a tough stand against India. Even the UK, an ally of the US in its world-domination plan, hardened its attitude. Thus,

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

the Western bloc sided with Pakistan and the Kashmir issue snowballed into a Cold War issue. The UNCIP submitted its long-awaited report to the Security Council on December 12, 1949. It admitted its failure to mediate between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir issue which had, by now - thanks to the Western bloc - changed into a very complex international issue. Admitting its failure, the UNCIP suggested that "the Security Council should designate as its representative, a single individual who could proceed to the subcontinent with the broad authority from the Council to endeavour to bring the two Governments together on all unresolved issues.' The UNCIP report was signed by only four members out of the five. The lone dissenter was Dr. Chyde, the representative of Czechoslovakia in the Commission. In his separate report to the Security Council, Dr. Chyde charged the United States of America and the UK with "interference in the working of the UNCIP". He suggested that the mediator should work independently. Thus, the report of the Czechoslovakian representative was a pointer to the fact that the, imperialist countries were keen to use the so-called Kashmir issue to further their vested interests. The Kashmir issue was no longer an issue between India and Pakistan; it could not be solved without the concurrence of the imperialist countries. "It was now evident that the Kashmir issue had caught up in the cold War vortex and that a dispassionate study and solution of the problem was going to become more and more difficult". (Kashmir: The Storm Centre, of the World, Chapter X) With Czech support coming to India's side, our foreign policy makers gave a new orientation to India's foreign policy. The Western bloc went all the way to support Pakistan on the Kashmir issue. Had it remained neutral, the Kashmir issue could have been settled once for all at the earliest stage. The rulers of Pakistan, who mostly came from the Punjabi landed gentry, played to the Western gallery. They continued pre-partition Muslim League politics at the centre of which was India (Hindu) bashing. They treated Kashmir issue as a religious issue with full support from the imperialist countries. On March 14, 1950 the Security Council passed a Resolution on Kashmir by a majority vote. It nominated Sir Owen Dixon, a retired Australian judge, as UN representative in Kashmir. He was entrusted with the job of seeking the demilitarization and organizing plebiscite under certain conditions. The Western Block pressurised India to accept Sir Owen Dixon as U.N. representative. Nehru had earlier rejected the names of Nimitz and Ralph Bunche. So, India had no choice but to accept the name of Dixon. The acceptance of Dixon was India's blunder, because the "term Plebiscite" got undue political mileage. Dixon set foot on the Indian soil on May 3, 1950. On reaching India, he toured the whole of the State. He held discussions with the leaders of India, including Sheikh Abdullah and his cabinet colleagues. Dixon did not find any meeting point or unanimity of opinions among the leaders of India and Pakistan on the question of resolving the deadlock over the Kashmir issue. He came to the conclusion that there was no hope of India and Pakistan agreeing to any formula. He submitted his report to the Security Council on September 15, 1950. The Dixon report was the most comprehensive report ever given by any UN representative. He admitted that Pakistan violated international law invading the State of Jammu and Kashmir on October 22, 1947. Admitting the heterogeneous character of the State, Sir Owen says, "If as a result of one overall plebiscite, the State in its entirety passed to India, there would

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

be a large movement of Muslims and another refugee problem would arise for Pakistan. If the result favoured Pakistan, a refugee problem, although not of such dimensions, would arise for India. All this would be avoided by partition. Great areas of the State are unequivocally Muslims. Others are predominantly Hindu. There is a further area which is Buddhist. No one doubts the sentiments of the great majority of the inhabitants of these areas. The interests of the people, the justice as well as avoiding another refugee problem, all point to the wisdom of adopting partition as the principle of settlement and of abandoning that of an over all plebiscite". Dixon pleaded for "Sectional plebiscite" and envisaged virtual partition of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. He held the view that the State could be divided into three regions or parts: "(i) the region about which there was no doubt that it wished to accede to India, (ii) the region which undoubtedly wished union with Pakistan and (iii) the region in respect of which there could be doubt about its wishes. He recommended that plebiscite should be held only in regard to the region falling in the third category". (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 91).

The uncertain areas could be "Vale of Kashmir and perhaps some adjacent areas". Dixon suggested that the Security Council should pull itself out of the dispute and let the initiative pass to the parties concerned". By and large the Dixon proposal was tailored in favour of Pakistan. It gave her fair opportunity to secure full control over other parts of the State. Indirectly, it meant India to exercise control over Jammu and Ladakh, Pakistan to have control over the previously occupied areas and plebiscite to be held to ascertain the wishes of the people living in the Valley. It was also suggested that the lawfully constituted authority in the Valley was to be replaced by the UN administrators who could be assisted by a posse of Pak and Indian troops in maintaining law and order. It amounted to repudiation of Kashmir's accession with India as a result of Maharaja's signing the Instruments of Accession and "bestowal upon Pakistan, the aggressor,

an equal status and right over Kashmir." The Dixon plan was turned down by both Pakistan and India. For Pakistan, "it meant a breach on India's part of the agreement that destiny of Jammu and Kashmir State as a whole should be decided by a plebiscite taken over the entire State. According to Sir Owen, Pandit Nehru, the Prime Minister of India, "was in agreement with the general principles underlying his proposals." But he was opposed to the proposals of disbanding the existing Kashmir Government under Sheikh Abdullah. To sum up the Untold Story, the Kashmir Question turned into an international issue because of India taking an anti-American posture in her foreign policy. Outwardly, India posed as a neutral country, but, in fact it had forged close relationship with the Soviet bloc. The Western Bloc kept the Kashmir issue alive just to browbeat India. India put all eggs in the Soviet basket. She openly bought enmity of the Western Bloc by working assiduously for China's membership in the UNO, for which China amply rewarded Nehru's India: Mao's army mowed India forces in 1962. Pandit Nehru realised that plebiscite could not be held in the State because Pakistan was adamant to exploit religion and mislead the Muslims of the State. So he was thinking of any other device as a substitute to the plebiscite. On May 1, 1951 Yuvraj Karan Singh issued a proclamation, instituting the Constituent Assembly for the State to contravene the

## **Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

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**By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

plebiscite. The trifurcation of the State as mooted in certain quarters has its roots in the Dixon Plan.

## **10.0 FORMATION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY: SEEDS OF SEPARATION SOWN**

The Security Council met on February 21, 1951 to discuss the Dixon report on Kashmir. It was decided to send another representative to India and Pakistan in place of Sir Owen Dixon to "effect the demilitarization of the State of Jammu and Kashmir on the basis of the proposal made by Sir Dixon". The incumbent was authorised to present to the Government of India and Pakistan a detailed plan for "carrying out plebiscite in the State of Jammu and Kashmir". The Indian representative opposed the Resolution on the plea that Pakistan had made a naked aggression and as such flouted the international law. But the Resolution was passed by a majority vote on March 30, 1951. Even India's friends - USSR and Yugoslavia - abstained from voting. In the place of Australian jurist, Sir Owen Dixon, a shrewd American diplomat, Dr. Frank Graham was appointed UN representative for India and Pakistan. Graham's appointment was India's diplomatic defeat. Graham arrived in India in June, 1951 and started discussing the process of seeking demilitarization with Indian leaders. Preliminary discussion related to the number of troops to be deployed on either side of the ceasefire line in terms of the UN Resolution of August 13, 1948. Dr. Graham could not arrive at any conclusion. He suggested holding a conference of the two countries at Geneva. Meanwhile, Pakistan was rattled by a political upheaval with the assassination of Prime Minister, Liyaqat Ali Khan. But Graham continued his parleys with the Governments of two dominions. It was agreed to induct the Plebiscite Administrator. "A provisional timetable or implementation of their decisions was also drawn up according to which the Plebiscite Administrator was to be inducted into office by April, 1954". This was the greatest blunder committed by our rulers. There was, absolutely, no need to agree to the appointment of Plebiscite Administrator. International politics was changing fast. Pakistan was completely aligned with the Western bloc. It served as the imperialist outpost to destabilize the Soviet Russia. Pakistan signed a military pact with the United States of America which led to massive military aid to the former. These developments did cast their grim shadows on the Kashmir issue. With Pakistan becoming a military ally of the USA, the whole chemistry of the Kashmir issue changed, asserted Pandit Nehru who had lost hope of UN branding Pakistan as the aggressor and making it quit the occupied territories.

"From 1954 onward, India persistently invited the attention of the world community to the material change that had taken place in the situation consequent upon Pakistan's acceptance of military aid from the USA and also her becoming a member of Western bloc." (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 92)

In the beginning, Soviet Russia and her allies adopted "a lukewarm attitude". Nehru was dubbed as "the running dog of imperialism". When Moscow realised that America was stockpiling arms in Pakistan against her, "India received a strong support." In January, 1952, the Soviet delegate accused both the USA and UK of interfering in the internal affairs of J&K State which was a part of India. He declared that the Constituent Assembly of the State would be the only legal authority to solve the ticklish problem.

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

In December 1955, Bulganin and Khrushchev, the Soviet ruling duo said in Srinagar, "The question of Kashmir as one of the States of India has already been decided by the people of India". Inside J&K state important political developments took place, culminating the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah on August 9, 1953. "The developments leading to the dismissal and arrest of Sheikh Abdullah in August, 1953 and the signing of USA-Pak military Pact were closely linked with the Cold War politics of the two power blocs. They, in turn, contributed to a further intensification of the cold War vis-à-vis Kashmir which made an objective approach and a negotiated settlement of the problem inside or outside the UNO all the more difficult". (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World, Chapter XI) As regards the internal administration, it should be noted that Sheikh Abdullah, the Prime Minister of J&K State, was becoming insolent day by day. "With Sheikh Abdullah's hidden ambition to carve out a virtual Sheikdom for himself and his coterie and with his uncanny technique of exploiting India's difficulties with regard to holding of plebiscite, differences arose between him and the Central leaders, particularly in regard to the issues of the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, Election Commission etc," writes Jagmohan. A broad agreement was reached between the Sheikh and Government of India. It is known as the Delhi Agreement which was announced by Pandit Nehru in Parliament on July 24, 1952. The State Constituent Assembly approved it on August 19, 1952. The provisions of the Agreement are: (a) Hereditary rulership of Dogra Maharaja is abolished (b) There shall be a separate flag for the State, with "the national flag also finding a supremely distinct place", (c) Certain limitations on "the extension of provisions of the Indian Constitution in respect of fundamental rights, emergency powers of the President and the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court". (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 95) On May 1, 1951, Yuvraj Karan Singh made a proclamation whereby the Constituent Assembly was convened. The preamble of the newly-formed constitutional body reads: "Whereas it is the general desire of the people of the State of Jammu and Kashmir that a Constituent Assembly should be brought into being for the purpose of framing a constitution for the State; whereas it is commonly felt that the convening of this Assembly can no longer be delayed without detriment to the future well-being of the State". Yuvraj's proclamation laid down a procedure for election to the Assembly. Commenting upon the formation of the Constituent Assembly, A. G. Noorani says in his book "The Kashmir Question" (pp 56) "It will be seen that the Constituent Assembly was nothing but the National Assembly contemplated earlier, not as alternative to but as a forerunner to the plebiscite. Moreover, it was specifically laid down in the proclamation that its task was to frame a constitution for the state of Jammu and Kashmir." Elections for the Constituent Assembly were held, giving steam rolling majority to the Sheikh's National Conference. On August 21, 1952 the State Constituent Assembly ratified the Delhi Agreement. The Head of the State was designated as the Sardar-i-Riyasat. He was to be elected by the State Assembly from amongst the person who was "State Subjects of Class I". He was required to hold office for five years. With these measures, the Kashmir issue assumed dangerous dimensions. What was the need of striking a deal with Sheikh Abdullah? What was the fun in forming the State Constituent Assembly? These measures, overtly or covertly, sowed

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

the seeds of separatism in Kashmir. A kind of emotional barrier was raised between India and the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The main objective of convening the State Constituent Assembly was to ratify the State's accession to India. Did Sheikh do it? No, Not, in the least. It was ratified by the State Assembly during Sadiq's time. Holding the Central Government responsible for it, Sheikh Abdullah addressed a press conference after his release from prison at Batote on April 15, 1964. He said, "I sought to ratify the accession and other commitments of mine through the Constituent Assembly. It was the Government of India which contested in the Security Council as well as in Parliament the Assembly's right to do so". On June 21, 1952, Nehru's remarks at a press conference in New-Delhi are quite revealing and surprising. "When the Constituent Assembly met in Kashmir for the first time, I might inform you that it was its intention to pass a resolution confirming state's accession to India. We asked it not to do so, as not to be embarrassed before the United Nations". (Quoted by A. G. Noorani in Kashmir Question PP 59). From the very beginning Sheikh Abdullah wanted the Constituent Assembly to enjoy an independent status. He allegedly bore rancour against the Dogra Dynasty. Addressing the State Constituent Assembly on June 10, 1952, Sheikh said, "The people under the guidance of National Conference, have sacrificed their lives, have gone to jails and have lived in narrow cells inhabited by serpents and scorpions. Hundreds of womenfolk have been dishonoured, hundreds made to crawl on their bellies and thousands rendered martyrs by shedding their blood." Through the State Constituent Assembly he wanted to "fulfill" his political agenda. "Sheikh Abdullah gave it (The State Constituent Assembly) quite a different idea of its powers and scope from the beginning". He asserted that it "was one hundred per cent sovereign" and that no Parliament, be it that of India or of any other country, has authorization here". (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World: Chapter XI).

The separatist tendencies were implicit in these measures-The Delhi Agreement, the setting up of the Constituent Assembly, Separate Constitution for the State, separate Flag etc etc. The Kashmir leader tried for retaining a separate identity for the State with special emphasis on its Muslim character. The people of Jammu, by and large, resented Sheikh's pro-Kashmiri Muslim measures. The opinion outside the State was turning against the Kashmiri leader. Sheikh took advantage of India's weakness to substantiate charges against Pakistan which had committed naked aggression and occupied big chunks of State territory. The resentment of the people of Jammu snowballed into a formidable agitation spearheaded by the 'Praja Parishad' Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookherji, the President of Jan Sangh, was arrested on May 11, 1953. He died in Srinagar on June 23, 1953. It was the first custodial death of a martyr who gave his life to cement the relationship between Kashmir and the rest of India. Pandit Nehru was severely criticized for working out the Delhi Agreement with the Sheikh. Jagmohan writes, "Even with regard to the Delhi Agreement, the stance of Sheikh Abdullah turned to be insincere. In fact, to let him abolish the hereditary rulership allows him to deal with the remaining items of the Delhi Agreement was another mistake. Had it been insisted that all parts of this Agreement should be implemented at one go, most of the subsequent troubles could have been avoided. After securing implementation of what suited him, Sheikh referred the remaining clauses of Agreement to the

## Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali

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By Girdhari Lal Jalali

subcommittees of the State Constituent Assembly, causing intentional delay. Even Nehru was dismayed by his crafty approach. He felt that he had been caught on the wrong foot". Nehru expressed these views to the Sheikh in his letter dated June 28, 1953, "To me it has been a major surprise that the settlement arrived at should be bypassed or repudiated. That strikes at the root of all confidence. My honour is to be found up with my word." The World opinion on the Kashmir issue was divided. The issue was raised in the UNO from time to time. Whereas the Soviet bloc was all out to help India, the Western bloc was for Shylock's's pound of flesh. Internally, the Kashmiri leader "began to rouse communal sentiments in Kashmir in the name of Kashmiri nationalism and demonstrate his indifference and disdain" for the Government of India. He would justify his action on the basis of `Kashmiriyat'. Obviously, there was a role for America to add a new posture to the Kashmiri issue which had now become a religious issue for Pakistan.

## **11.0 RECALCITRANT SHEIKH: COMMUNAL POSTURE**

Internally, Sheikh Abdullah was adopting anti-India stance. It was apparent from his public speeches which attracted thousands of Kashmiri Muslims as the latter considered him their true representative. In the most aggressive speech ever delivered by him at Ranbirsinghpora on April 10, 1952 the Sheikh "denounced the Indian Press and Indian Government and accused them of communalism. On July 13, 1952 the Sheikh delivered a fiery speech at Mazar-i-Shoda (Khanyar) in Srinagar. It may be recalled that on the same day in 1931 communal riots had broken out in Srinagar, resulting in the killing of ten persons in police firing. Since then a "Communal Riots Day" is observed as Martyrs' Day in the Valley. In the same month the Sheikh delivered an anti-India speech at Ganderbal in which he hundered, "Kashmir is not a Hindu bride who cannot be remarried." Perhaps, his reference was towards the State's accession to India which could be changed. The change in the Sheikh's attitude became conspicuous "after his last visit to Paris towards the end of 1951". Perhaps, he had realised that he could seek independence provided he received support from the Western bloc. Elaborating this viewpoint, Prof. Madhok comments, " Sheikh Abdullah, it appeared, had realised that his dream of independent Kashmir was more likely to come true with the help of Anglo-American bloc which dominated the UNO and the Security Council than the Communist bloc. He had, therefore, begun to shift his allegiance from communist friends inside and outside Kashmir to the Western friends. As the 'Praja Parishad' movement for fuller integration of the State with the rest of India gathered momentum, the Sheikh began to rouse the communal sentiments in Kashmir in the name of Kashmiri nationalism and demonstrate his indifference and disdain for the susceptibilities of the people of Jammu and the Government of India in different ways". (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World, Chapter 54 Jihad in Kashmir XI).

Why this sudden change in Sheikh's attitude? How did the protagonist of State's accession to India start distancing from India? Emotional to the very core of his heart, the Sheikh had somehow felt that he had committed a blunder by acceding to a land which he equated with Hindu India. The agitation led by the Praja Parishad for the State's full integration with India helped the Sheikh give vent to what was so dear to his heart. He now openly said, "A time will, therefore, come when I will bid them goodbye. It is not necessary that our State should become an appendage of either India or Pakistan" The Sheikh had realised, wrongly though, that he had harmed the interests of Muslims in the State by acceding to India. In order to rectify the wrong, he had gone out of his way to help them by providing them with a special quota in jobs etc. This fact was revealed to this author by the eminent freedom-fighter, upright politician and a close associate of Sheikh, late Prof. Jia Lal Tameri, who once served as the Labour Secretary of the National Conference. Before the National Conference took the decision on accession to India, the National Conference Working Committee comprising mainly Muslims was divided over the issue of the State's accession with India. Most of them feared death at the hands of Pak-rulers, so, they had no option but to go with the Sheikh and endorse his stand. America, as already stated, showed a keen interest in the Kashmir issue. US Ambassador to the United Nations, Adlai Stevenson, arrived in Srinagar

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

on May 3, 1953. The American diplomat met the Sheikh and had talks with him lasting three hours, but the resume of his talks was not made public. Naturally, it led to misgivings and apprehensions about the motives of Kashmiri stalwart. Surprisingly, a rough sketch of independent Kashmir was published in the New York Times of July 5, 1952. The attitude of Sheikh Abdullah caused consternation in New Delhi which thought in terms of dismissing the Sheikh. There was obvious rift in the State Cabinet. A majority of Cabinet Ministers led by the Deputy Prime Minister, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, levelled serious corruption charges against the Sheikh. On a directive from the Centre, 22-year-old Yuvraj Karan Singh, the Sadar-i-Riyasat, dismissed Sheikh Abdullah government and got him arrested under Defence of Kashmir rules.

Bakshi formed the New State Government. Before the Sheikh's arrest, Bakshi was the right hand man of the Sheikh who had reposed great trust in the mercurial-minded Bakshi. It is still a mystery as to who caused the rift between the Sheikh and Bakshi. Bakshi justified Sheikh's arrest in a radio broadcast, after succeeding him as the Wazir-i-Azam of the State. He said, inter-alia, "Betrayal of the country's interests was in the offing. The slogan of independence was highly misleading. An Independent Kashmir, under the influence of the imperialist powers will be a grave threat to the freedom and independence of the Indian and Pakistani people. Another Korea may be staged." It is said that Pandit Nehru was not internally in favour of deposing the Sheikh, but circumstances compelled him to change his mind. In an interview to Michael Davidson of Sunday Observer and New Scotsman, the Sheikh was reported to have remarked, "Accession to either side cannot bring peace. We want to live in friendship with both Dominions. Perhaps a middle path between them with economic co-operation with each will be the only way of doing it." As the Wazir-e-Azam of the State, the Sheikh had no liking for some officials deputed by the Central Government to the State. The commitment of the Government of India about plebiscite had emboldened him so much that he began to act as an arbiter", (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World). Sheikh Abdullah expelled Colonel Hassan Walia, the Chief of Indian Intelligence Bureau posted in Kashmir, from the state, because the intelligence chief was too close to Sardar Patel, the Union Home Minister. The Sheikh's fall was the result of his own actions which were contrary to his earlier commitments. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed was gifted with pragmatic common sense. He had realised "that to build a workable relationship between Union and the State, closer constitutional links had to be forged between the two", (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir). He scrapped the infamous Delhi Agreement. On May 14, 1954 the President of India extended certain provisions of the Constitution of India to the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The permit system (to enter the state) was abolished on April 1, 1959. Internal developments in the State cast their grim shadows on the Kashmir issue which had reached a most critical stage. Pakistan had taken strong exception to the declaration of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed that accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India was irrevocable. The Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly had ratified State's accession with India. Pandit Nehru remained adamant on the stand that the whole situation had changed completely as a result of the US military aid to Pakistan. The two Dominions disagreed on the question of "quantum of forces to be retained by either side" in the two parts of the

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

State. Changing the earlier stance, Pandit Nehru said, "What we said at the previous stage about the quantum of force has little relevance. We can take no risks now, as we were prepared to take previously and we must retain full liberty to keep such forces and military equipment in Kashmir as we may consider necessary in view of this threat to us." The Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Mohammed Ali, insisted on holding direct talks between the two Prime Ministers to resolve the deadlock over the quantum of forces to be retained in the two parts of the State. But Pandit Nehru questioned the utility of such talks in his letter addressed to Mr. Mohammed Ali on September 21, 1954. Said the Indian Prime Minister, "In the circumstances, I am bound to conclude that there is no scope left for further direct negotiations between you and me for the settlement of the dispute. This case, therefore, must revert to the Security Council." Thus a new twist was given to the Kashmir issue because of the impact of cold war politics in the mid nineteen fifties. For over two years, Pakistan remained under political uncertainty which exerted a direct influence on the Kashmir issue. Had our political masters shown courage, perhaps this thorny issue might have been solved as Pakistan was passing through political chaos. It took Pakistan two and a half years to take the issue back to the Security Council. The Pakistan Foreign Minister, Feroz Khan Noon, requested the Security Council on January 2, 1957 to take up the issue. On January 16, 1957, the Security Council started debating the issue, after an interval of five years. It did not come to any conclusion. Meanwhile, two important developments took place in the State. First, the State Constituent Assembly passed the historic resolution, ratifying State's accession with India. It strengthened the Indian stand and countermanded plebiscite. Second, Sheikh Abdullah's close associate, Mirza Afzal Beg, founded the Plebiscite Front on August 9, 1955. The Front demanded plebiscite to resolve the accession issue. "Plebiscite Front formed in 1955 as a rallying centre for secessionist forces posed a formidable challenge to the political authority of Bakshi, yet he remained in saddle with the tightest grip over the State machine", (Kashmir: Past and Present: Unravelling the Mystique by Prof. Kaul).

On all counts, plebiscite got political mileage and acceptance with the founding of the Plebiscite Front by the Sheikh's acolyte. The Front – a forerunner of the Hurriyat - demanded plebiscite which indirectly meant State's accession with Pakistan. Shrewd to the core, anti-Pandit at heart and pro-Muslim in his political cult, Mirza Afzal Beg did a great disservice to the secular cause in Kashmir. His U-turn on accession strengthened the hands of Pakistan politically in the international arena. Al Fatah was the first terrorist outfit established in the State. "It drew substantial support from the Plebiscite Front leaders, particularly Mirza Afzal Beg. The top leaders of Al Fatah were guided, trained and motivated by Pakistan Intelligence - Major Habibullah, Major Qaisar Qureshi, Major Tufail, Major Asgar and Zafar Iqbal Rather. They crossed the border several times. The Youth Wing of the Plebiscite Front worked in close liaison with Al Fateh's special organisation - Youngmen League and Student Federation. Mirza Afzal Beg remained in clandestine- touch with Ghulam Rasool Zehgir, the main organiser and leader of Al Fateh" (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 160).

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

The credit of sowing seeds of separatism goes to Sheikh's Man Friday, Mirza Afzal Beg. Pakistan began to blackmail India by referring to the internal conditions of J&K State. With massive military support at their disposal, Pakistan took aggressive postures on Kashmir coupled with diplomatic offensive against India. It encouraged terrorism and sabotage through the Plebiscite Front and its allied outfits. The Centre gave a long free rope to the anti-national elements and desisted from curbing their activities lest it should incur the wrath of the State Government. At the behest of Soviet Russia, India changed her attitude with regard to the holding of plebiscite in the State. "This change of attitude was reflected in the stand taken by the Chief Indian delegate, Krishna Menon, when the Security Council resumed debate on Kashmir". The Indian delegate accused Pakistan of making aggression and asked her to vacate it. He further added that India had redeemed its pledge to seek people's verdict on accession holding election to the Constituent Assembly which ratified State's accession to India. Mr. Menon asserted that the legal right of India over J&K State flowed from the Instrument of Accession which was signed legally and morally by the then Constitutional Head of the State, Maharaja Hari Singh. Had India taken this stand from the very beginning, the Kashmir issue would not have changed into a complex one that it is today. Our policy of appeasement has put paid on our sincere efforts to seek justice from the UNO. What is worse, India is fighting a proxy war on its own soil, with mercenaries from Islamic countries trying to disintegrate secular India.

## **12.0 PAKISTAN EXPLOITS SHEIKHS' ARREST**

As already discussed internal conditions in Kashmir had spelled grave repercussions on India's stand on the State's accession. Pakistan exploited the Sheikh's arrest and his dismissal in the international forums. The Sheikh was released on parole from Kud sub-jail on January 8, 1958. After his release, he delivered a fiery speech at Hazratbal shrine. He was re-arrested on April 29, 1958 along with his confidant, Mirza Afzal Beg under the Kashmir conspiracy case. Within Pakistan itself, a military coup brought Marshal Ayub Khan to the helm of affairs in 1959. Keen to consolidate his position in Pakistan, the dictator wanted to settle all outstanding issues with India. A Canal Water Treaty between India and Pakistan was signed in Karachi in 1960. According to the critics, the Treaty "gave much more favourable terms to Pakistan" than what was suggested by the World Bank in its award. In the early years of Ayub's rule, Indo-Pak relations stood at an amicable plank because the Pak dictator could hardly afford India's enmity. "Had Indian diplomacy shown any grasp of realities, it would have insisted upon a package deal embracing all Indo-Pak disputes such as the Canal Waters, Kashmir, evacuee property, partition debt and treatment of Hindu minority in East Pakistan, But Pandit Nehru bugled once again", (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World, Chapter XI). Marshal Ayub Khan was strong enough to take any decision on Kashmir, caring least for the public opinion. Pakistan was again at her old game and harped upon plebiscite in Kashmir on the accession issue. With the advent of military rule in Pakistan, Soviet Russia hardened her attitude against Pakistan. She became "more vociferous in her support to India over Kashmir." Kashmir issue came up for discussion in the Security Council twice during this period. Each time she (Soviet Russia) exercised her veto and stonewalled any anti-India resolution from being passed in the august world body. India won many brownie points in the Security Council because Indian representative, Pakistan exploits Sheikhs' arrest Krishna Menon, pleaded logically and vigorously. His counterpart, Sir Zaffarullah Khan of Pakistan, did not lag behind in maligning India by repeatedly referring to the arrest of Sheikh, levelling baseless charges against Delhi. However, the world opinion was, more or less, tilted in favour of Pakistan. There was a deep understanding between India and the Soviet Union on many world issues. So the Kashmir issue was entangled in the rivalry between the United States of America and the Soviet Russia. Our foreign policy had severe draw backs. "There could be no greater condemnation of the Indian foreign policy and its exponents than the fact that the people, all over the world have a greater understanding and appreciation of Pakistan's viewpoint about Kashmir than that of India in spite of the truth and justice of the Indian case." The emergence of China as a world-power did change, to some extent, the whole chemistry of Kashmir issue. Mao's China had covetous eyes on some of the northern parts of Ladakh which are vital from the strategic point of view. China's interest in the Kashmir issue "swelled directly from her expansion and absorption of Central Asian Khanates and Tibet, lying to the North and North-East of Jammu and Kashmir State, in the Chinese Empire". China's interest in Kashmir was not sudden and spontaneous. It grew over so many years. In 1956, Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, paid an official visit to

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Peking (Beijing). It is said that he had mooted 'the idea of the partition of Kashmir in his talks with the Chinese leaders. His suggestion was: Kashmir Valley goes to Pakistan, Ladakh to China and Hindu-dominated Jammu to India. However, there is no conclusive proof of this suggestion agreed to both by Chinese Prime Minister, Chou-en-Lai and Suhrawardy.

It was in July 1958 that the Government of India sent a protest note to the Chinese Government, alleging Chinese intrusion in Ladakh. It was now an accomplished fact that Pakistan was assisted by China in destabilising political unification of J&K State. On October 18, 1958, India got a bombshell from China in the form of a note, asserting that Aksai Chin area belonged to China and that Indian soldiers had intruded into the area which is Chinese territory. Perhaps these developments were direct fallout of our great diplomatic blunder, of accepting China's sovereignty over Tibet in 1954. We ignored the fact that Tibet had all along remained a sovereign State and was never a part of China. With an assured foothold in Tibet, Mao's China could easily stretch its wings over India's northern border. Chinese troops started patrolling the encroached parts of J&K State. China did not relent in its efforts to grab the northern parts of Ladakh. The Chinese troops killed Indian soldiers and even made some of them prisoners. The situation on the border, on all counts, was explosive, but New Delhi always minimized the gravity of the situation. Addressing in the Lok Sabha, the Indian Prime Minister said that the places occupied by China in Ladakh were desolate and that "not a blade of grass grew there." It shows that our political masters (leaders) were apparently too naive to take cognizance of the security threat from China. We allowed, wittingly or unwittingly, China to become the second player in the Kashmir issue. On December 16, 1959 Chou-en-Lai, sent a strongly worded despatch to New Delhi which asserted China's claim over the occupied territories in Ladakh. It said, "The area has long been under Chinese jurisdiction, and is of great importance to China. Since the Ching dynasty, this area has been the traffic artery linking up the vast regions of Sinkiang and Western Tibet. As far back as the latter half of 1950, it was along the traditional route in this area that units of the Chinese People's Liberation Army entered the Ari area of Tibet from Sinkiang to guard the frontiers. In the nine years since then, they have been making a regular and busy use of this route to bring supplies", (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World). China was adamant to merge the occupied territory from J&K State with the mainland. Relations between India and China started getting strained with every passing day. China, on the other hand, started cultivating close relationship with Pakistan. With China at her back, Pakistan launched a vigorous anti-India propaganda, portraying India as a villain of the piece in the Indo-China territorial dispute. In order to dupe the international community, General Ayub Khan, the military ruler of Pakistan, claimed an independent status on Azad Kashmir (PoK). Both China and Pakistan were tied up in military alliance which proved detrimental to both long-term and short-term strategic interests of India. Both of them, like the proverbial monkey, were interested in cutting big slices from Kashmir cake. "The process of Pakistan and China drawing nearer to each other that thus began culminated in the announcement of May 31, 1962, about the agreement between the two governments to enter into negotiations, to locate and align the border between Sinkiang on one hand and Baltistan

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

and Gilgit regions of Jammu and Kashmir State which had been illegally occupied by Pakistan, on the other. This was clear that China and Pakistan were getting together to achieve their respective territorial ambition at the cost of India" (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World, Chapter XII). Thus, India had to face two enemy countries: Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Communist China. It is really an irony of history that the two States based on diverse ideologies had forged unity to grab the State of Jammu and Kashmir. India was caught napping when China invaded it 1962. New Delhi relied upon false friendship. China never supported India on the Kashmir issue. She never admitted that Kashmir is a part of India by virtue of the Instrument of Accession signed by Maharaja Hari Singh. On May 31, 1962 Chinese Foreign Minister, in his note to New Delhi, asked "to cite any document to show that China ever said that Kashmir is a part of India". Pakistan's cake was thus buttered on both the sides - she received massive military aid both from China and the United States; both the countries supported her on Kashmir. The United States of America had serious apprehension of the extension of the Chinese influence over the South-East which could prove fatal to the American interests. The Chinese had made deep incursions into Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh. Both Great Britain and America sent a diplomatic mission to New Delhi to assess the political situation. It consisted of Mr. Averell Harriman, U.S. Assistant Secretary of States and Mr. Duncan Sandys, the Commonwealth Secretary. The two members met Pt. Nehru and Gen. Ayub Khan. On the conclusion of the tour, a press communiqué called upon both Pakistan and India to resolve their differences on the Kashmir issue through bilateral talks. This move triggered off a flurry of diplomatic activities to solve the Kashmir issue after a lapse of five years. It was suggested that the ministerial level talks should be started immediately. Holding such talks could mean that Pakistan and India were to be treated at the same footing. Pakistan was given a carte blanche to retain the fruits of aggression. It was not reprimanded for handing over big chunks of the occupied territory to China. Fundamentalist forces in Pakistan were in no mood to go in for talks with India. China was invariably opposed to any process, leading to rapprochement between India and Pakistan for her own vested interests. On January 30, 1963 Pakistan signed a border pact with China, legitimizing China's occupation of the territory in Ladakh. Under these circumstances, it was difficult for India to continue direct talks with Pakistan. "It was evident that Pakistan was interested in extorting fresh commitments and scoring diplomatic points over India for futures use against her, than in finding an honourable and equitable settlement of the dispute as such" Madhok). India had offered a "No War Pact" to Pakistan in her earlier talks with Pak Foreign Minister. Pakistan had rejected the offer. The very suggestion of offering a "No War Pact" to a recalcitrant Pakistan showed inherent fragility in Indian diplomacy. Had India taken a tough stand, Kashmir issue would not have changed into a political nightmare for India. South Block never took a pragmatic view of the situation. Pakistan joined hands with the Western bloc to secure its support on Kashmir issue. Communist China provided her with military hardware which she utilised against India. What happened further forms the tragic chapters of the Untold Story. Fundamentalist forces in Pakistan were thriving with the open support given to them by some Muslim countries. For them the Kashmir question was a religious

## **Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

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**By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

issue. Maulana Bashani of East Bengal had pleaded for launching Jihad. Kashmir leaders of the Plebiscite Front had forged close links with these outfits which preached separating Kashmir from India in the name of religion.

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

### 13.0 TASHKENT BLUNDER

In mid-sixties the Kashmir issue, entered the most critical stage. As already stated, Sheikh Abdullah, the deposed Chief Minister of the State, was rearrested on April 29, 1958. He, along with his former Revenue Minister and founder of the Plebiscite Front, Mirza Afzal Beg, was charged with conspiracy under the infamous Kashmir conspiracy case. The arrested leaders were accused of conspiring to merge Kashmir with Pakistan. At that time Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, the Chief Minister of the State, was given a long rope by the Centre just to liquidate Sheikh's political influence over the people, especially the Muslims. A sinister campaign was launched against Bakshi by the Plebiscite Front both inside and outside the State. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed resorted to corrupt means to stifle any form of opposition to his despotic rule. He built "a system of personal and political patronage and indulged in gross nepotism and corruption", (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir). The Central leadership was compelled to oust him from the exalted office under the well thought-out strategy called the "Karaj Plan". On October 4, 1963 Bakshi resigned as fallout of the agitation over the disappearance of the holy relic from the Hazratbal shrine. It is still a mystery as to how the holy relic disappeared from the sancto-sanctorum and who restored it back. The two week intense religious frenzy in the Valley helped Pakistan give a new dimension to the Kashmir issue. It was alleged that this sacrilegious act was the handiwork of "a Pakistani agent or some elements in the Plebiscite Front." This incident exposed the chinks in the State administrations armour. New Delhi learnt no lesson from it. The pro-Pak elements in the State, administration gained the upper hand. Such incidents changed, slowly and gradually, the chemistry of Kashmir issue. The Relic agitation was Pakistan's first attempt to present the Kashmir issue as a religious issue. Had New Delhi curbed anti-national elements during Bakshi's regime, perhaps the Relic agitation would not have taken a pro-Pak tilt. Sheikh Abdullah was released in 1964 after Maulana Mohammed Sayeed had a long meeting with Nehru who paid a visit to Srinagar. Immediately after his release, Pandit Nehru invited his estranged friend, Sheikh Abdullah, to Delhi for talks. Sheikh Abdullah suggested to Pandit Nehru to invite President Ayub Khan of Pakistan for holding talks on Kashmir. He expressed his wish to visit Pakistan for bringing about reconciliation between India and Pakistan. Pandit Nehru accepted Sheikh's suggestion. In his autobiography, Atesh-i-Chinar, Sheikh wrote, "Pandit Nehru was prepared to consider all earlier proposals as also any alternative proposals that may be brought forward during talks to arrive at just, fair and mutually acceptable consideration." In a strange coincidence, Sheikh Abdullah also received an invitation from President Ayub Khan to visit Pakistan. It is a mystery as to how two political foes-Sheikh Abdullah and President Ayub Khan - suddenly developed fraternal ties and forgot their past acrimony and bitterness. Perhaps it was a prearranged drama and not "just a coincidence". Sheikh made an air-dash to Pakistan in the third week of May, 1964. Before his departure for Pakistan, the Sheikh addressed media at Delhi airport. He made it clear that his visit would "strengthen the foundations of secularism and satisfy the urge for freedom of the people of Kashmir." From a close analysis of his remarks, it is evident that Sheikh was not satisfied with the present

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

constitutional relationship of Kashmir with India. Perhaps Nehru was unaware of what was lurking in Sheikh's mind. Sheikh was received warmly on reaching Rawalpindi where he met President Ayub Khan, and all the prominent political and religious leaders. Ayub Khan accepted Nehru's offer, to visit New Delhi on June 5, 1964. The Sheikh held long meetings with leaders in Muzafferabad, the Capital of PoK. "This Pak occupied district was of vital importance for Kashmir Valley because the roads which linked it with rail-heads of Rawalpindi and Havelian passed through it. He was, therefore, keen to woo its non-Kashmiri people to unite it with independent Kashmir of his dreams," (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World: Chapter X).

Sheikh Abdullah had to cut short his visit because of Nehru's demise on May 27, 1964. He air-dashed to New Delhi to participate in the funeral of his friend, Pandit Nehru. With Nehru's death, the Nehruvian chapter in the Kashmir imbroglio came to an abrupt end. The much talked-about meeting between President Ayub Khan and Indian Prime Minister stood aborted with any final settlement of the Kashmir issue remaining an elusive dream. The Sheikh realised that things would become difficult for him with the passing away of his friend. Commenting on Nehru's attachment with Kashmir, the Sheikh writes in his autobiography, *Atishi-i-Chinar*, "Pandit Nehru's love for Kashmir was more like a love for a beautiful woman whom he wanted to possess and that he had come to regard him (Sheikh) as a Rakib or rival in love for the possession of the beautiful Valley." (Kashmir The Storm Centre of the World, Chapter XIII). Both Nehru and Sheikh are the main architects of the Kashmir issue. If the former committed any error, wittingly or unwittingly, while dealing with the issue, the latter did not lag behind in extracting full political "quid pro quo" to satisfy his wounded ego. History alone will give verdict as to who followed the correct path and strengthened the secular fabric. What we see at present in the Cupid's Valley, is the offshoot of the Himalayan blunders committed by the top-brass of Indian leadership in updating Kashmir policy from time to time.

After Nehru's death, the Sheikh went for pilgrimage to Mecca. There he met some of the heads of Islamic countries. Strangely, the Kashmiri leader met the Chinese Prime Minister, Chou-en-Lai, at Algiers, the Capital of Algeria. It was not known what he discussed with the Chinese leader. New Delhi took a serious note of his meeting with Chou-en-Lai because the memories of Chinese invasion of India (1962) were fresh in the Indian mind. It was clear that Sheikh might have discussed Kashmir issue with the Chinese leader. Perhaps, he might have asked for Chinese support to further his political designs. One such design could be Independent Kashmir either within the parameters of the Indian Constitution or completely independent of it. On his arrival from Algeria, the Sheikh was arrested by the Lal Bahadur Shastri Government. Shastri had little experience of tackling Kashmir issue except the fact that he had gone to Srinagar and accompanied the reputed Muslim divine of Kashmir, Sayeed Mirak Shah Kashani (Shalimar) to the Hazratbal shrine to identify the Holy Relic on February 3, 1964. The arrest of Sheikh sent strong signals to Pakistan which was thinking of unleashing a proxy war to annex Kashmir. Pakistan was labouring under the misconception that the Chinese aggression had completely crippled Indian war machine. Their leaders

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

thought it was very easy to defeat India in the battlefield. Fundamentalist parties pressed Ayub Khan to wage a war against India to annex Kashmir. USA had given massive military aid to Pakistan. The Pak military dictator had an exaggerated notion of his country's military prowess. With the American military aid, Pak army was more or less modernised. Pak incursion into the Kutch region of Gujarat in early 1965 was in the pipeline. The fateful day dawned: Pak troops made a surprise attack in Kutch and captured some of the Indian posts. It claimed the whole of Rann of Kutch as Pak territory. With the intervention of the USA and Great Britain a ceasefire was forced upon India. However, the issue was referred to the International tribunal. Like the Kashmir question, Pakistan succeeded in creating a dispute out of its aggression. The Kutch adventure emboldened Pakistan to go in for a big adventure in Kashmir. In May 1965, thousands of armed infiltrators crossed the LoC. Pak rulers had planned to capture Srinagar on August 9, 1965, the same day Sheikh was arrested in 1953. Pakistan would blast Srinagar-Jammu highway, snapping Valley's main road link with India. Pak troops attacked the Chammb area on September 1, 1965. The operation was coded "Operation Gibraltar". It was a well thought-out plan to annex Kashmir through proxy war. Hundreds of Pak infiltrators had penetrated deep into the Kashmir Valley. Some of them tried to capture Srinagar airport. Local administration in far flung rural areas had collapsed. A Pakistani national, Khandey, was appointed "Deputy Commissioner of Badgam" which was reminiscent of Bach-Saks episode. In Srinagar city, Muslims remained neutral and did not co-operate with the infiltrators who were present in large numbers in Jamia-Masjid, the political platform of slain Maulvi Mohammed Farooq, the then Mir Waiz of Kashmir. In his Friday address to the congregation, the Mir Waiz had said, "See with eyes, hear with ears, but shut your mouth and tie your hands". In other words, he was, more or less, apathetic to the Pakistani game and refused to play second fiddle. In the Gulmarg sector, a patriotic Gujjar, Ghulam Din, gave timely information to the security forces about massive infiltration. On this valuable tip-off, Indian security forces foiled the plan of Pakistani rulers to annex the northern part of the Valley. Pakistani forces had to eat humble pie in the Chamb-Jaurian Sector. "The objective (of this attack) was to take over Kashmir through blitzkrieg. The military aid given by the USA had made the army rulers of Pakistan overconfident. Ayub Khan even boasted that he could launch an attack in the morning and have his breakfast next morning in New Delhi. But the overconfident Generals soon realised their limitations" (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp: 103). The infiltration bid proved a failure because "the local population did not rise in revolt as was expected by Pakistani authorities". To the surprise of President Ayub Khan, Indian forces mounted a counteroffensive on Lahore border on September 5, 1965. Pak advance towards Akhnoor and Jammu was thwarted by timely air action carried most successfully by the Indian Air Force. Now the theatre of war was extended beyond the LoC. The counter-attack on Sialkot and Lahore by the Indian forces touched Ayub's raw nerve. Pressure on Chamb-Jaurian sector was a little relieved as Pak troops tried to defend Lahore which had come within Indian firing range. Lahore was emptied of the civilian population and was likely to fall any time. On September 22, 1965 Security Council was able to affect a ceasefire. The capture of Haji Pir, Kargil Heights and a part of Pak territory

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

retrieved the honour of the Indian armed forces which had received a great setback in the war with China in 1962. Ayub's dream of annexing Kashmir stood shattered. For this achievement Indian Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, will go down in the annals of Indian history as a great hero and pragmatic diplomat. In fact, he proved the Saviour of Kashmir. The Kashmir issue continued to remain in the cockpit of international politics. The United States showed open sympathy with her ally Pakistan. The USSR "assumed the role of honest broker." It 'had abiding interest "in bringing about peace between India and Pakistan as it was apprehensive of China's increasing influence in this region." After the war, Soviet Premier Kosygin invited both Lal Bahadur Shastri and President Ayub Khan to meet at Tashkent for peace talks. The two leaders met at Tashkent on January 4, 1966. The efforts of Kosygin bore fruit: On January 10, 1966 the Tashkent Declaration was signed amidst a flurry of diplomatic activities. The operative part of the Declaration said, "The Prime Minister of India and President of Pakistan have agreed that all armed personnel of two countries shall be withdrawn not later than February 15, 1966 to the positions they held prior to August 5th and both sides will observe the ceasefire terms on the ceasefire line."

It meant that Indian forces had to withdraw from Haji Pir and Kargil Heights which were of strategic importance for India. These strategic posts had been illegally occupied by Pakistan in 1948. The Tashkent Declaration was "a rebuff to India" as it gave legal validity "to Pak occupation of the Indian territory which constituted a part and parcel of J&K State before the tribal invasion (1947). By handing over Haji Pir and Kargil heights on a platter to Pakistan, we allowed, advertently or inadvertently, Jihadis to infiltrate into the Valley. History alone will tell whether the Tashkent Declaration was our diplomatic blunder or not, keeping in view the future course of events in Kashmir. Clause I of the Declaration said "The Prime Minister of India and President of Pakistan have agreed that relations between India and Pakistan shall be based on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of each other." Pakistan was never sincere to implement the Tashkent Declaration. It was clear from the President Ayub's statement made at Hamburg in November, 1966. Said the military dictator, "Tashkent Declaration settled nothing. All it did was to enable the two countries to disengage their armies from each other." Had not Shastri died prematurely at Tashkent, the Kashmir issue might not have taken a different turn with the festering wound turning into a deadly carbuncle. Dame Luck played with her fickle-game, adverse to India's interests.

## **Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

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**By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

## **14.0 SIMLA AGREEMENT: BACK TO SQUARE ONE**

The Tashkent Declaration signed by India was India's diplomatic failure on Kashmir issue. India, obviously, signed the pact under duress. Had we retained the gains of the 20-day war for some months, perhaps the Kashmir issue, might have been solved 'permanently'. The USSR exerted undue pressure on India to sign the treaty with Pakistan. Soviet leaders were more concerned with the interest of their country. They wanted to please Pakistan and wean it away from the American influence. Pakistan was not sincere about the Tashkent Declaration as the future course of events subsequently proved. During her visit to the United States, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, who succeeded Lal Bahadur Shastri, said in New York on March 31, 1966, "It is now too late to talk of plebiscite. The second invasion of Kashmir by Pakistan last autumn has destroyed whatever marginal or academic value the old UN Resolutions might have had. Kashmir is now vital to defence of Ladakh against China. Any plebiscite today would by definition amount to questioning the integrity of India. It will rouse the demand for accession against which is fought a civil war. We cannot and will not tolerate a second partition of India on religious ground. It will destroy the very basis of the Indian State." To sum up, the Indian Prime Minister (a) ruled out completely the possibility of holding plebiscite in J&K State, (b) any such move will invite civil war, (c) retention of Ladakh was essential for India's defence. No other Indian leader had made such a bold and candid statement on Kashmir as did Mrs. Gandhi. She was a pragmatic leader who had fully grasped the situation. Had she taken due measures to fully integrate J&K State with the Indian Union, the history of the State might have been different. She was a strong lady, endowed with an iron will. She could easily undertake such constitutional measures. Perhaps, Sheikh's intransigence might have been a stumbling block. The Tashkent Declaration had a soothing effect on the political atmosphere in the State. The Sheikh was released from jail on December 8, 1967. His release gave an impetus to the activities of anti-India elements. The Plebiscite Front started a virulent campaign against the State Government which was led by G.M. Sadiq. The State Government was compelled to expel the Sheikh, along with his Man Friday Mirza Afzal Beg and Son-in-law, Ghulam Mohammed Shah on January 7, 1971 from the State. Beg's Plebiscite Front was banned on January 12, 1971. Its' leaders were detained in the Valley. Pakistan set up a terrorist outfit called Al-Fatah to intensify anti-India activities through a network of saboteurs. In the international arena, some interesting developments were taking place. All these developments had some effect on the Kashmir issue which was, on all counts, one of the conflicting international issues. Why did India withdraw from Hajji Pir and Kargil Heights under Tashkent Declaration? "Ambivalence of the Soviet Union at Tashkent which forced India to withdraw from Hajji Pir and Kargil Heights and accept the status quo ante in Jammu and Kashmir was the outcome of a number of developments in the international field after the Sino-Indian War of 1962 which had impelled its leadership to reassess and to reorder its global strategy. The most important of these developments was the rift between the Soviet Union and China because of conflict of national interests and personality clash between the leadership of the two giants," (Kashmir: The Storm

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Centre of the World, Chapter XIV). Pakistan was getting closer to China. The Soviet strategy was "to draw Pakistan away from China" in order to have a strong foothold in Afghanistan and assert her (USSR's) supremacy over the Indian Ocean. Moreover, America had established an airbase near Peshawar where from it could monitor the activities of Soviet war machine. So, Moscow was out to curry the favour of Ayub's Pakistan. One could mark a shift in the Soviet stand on Kashmir. In the East Pakistan, things were turning bad for Pak rulers. Coupled with the Sino-Soviet rift, political restlessness in Pakistan was taking a decisive turn. People of East Pakistan (Bangladesh) wanted freedom. A liberation movement under Sheikh Mujibur Rehman was gathering momentum. Sheikh Mujib's Awami Party had secured a clear majority in the general elections held in 1971, but he was deprived of Prime Ministership of Pakistan because this was not liked by the rulers of West Pakistan. A formidable rebellion was being crushed with an iron-hand. At the request of Sheikh, Indian army dashed to East Bengal to assist freedom fighters to liberate East Bengal from the shackles of the tyrannical rule of Pakistani military rulers. The struggle for independence lasted a fortnight. On December 3, 1971 Pakistan launched a military attack on Jammu and Kashmir State. The main objective of Pakistan was to secure Kashmir and divert India's attention from East Pakistan (East Bengal). This motive became clear from the findings of the War Commission which was appointed by the Government of Pakistan after the termination of war. The War Commission was headed by the Chief Justice of Pakistan. "While only 1300 Indian Jawans and officers died in the operation in Bangladesh, Indian casualties on the Western front exceeded 4,000. Indian armed forces not only foiled determined and persistent Pak attempts to push into Jammu and Kashmir State and capture the Valley, but also inflicted a crushing defeat on Pakistan in Sindh and Lahore sectors," (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of World, Chapter XIV). Indian forces occupied 5,000 square miles of Pak territory in the Lahore sector. At last, on December 16, 1971, Pak forces under Gen. Niazi surrendered in East Bengal and a new state of Bangladesh was chopped off from the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. In the Eastern sector, over 90,000 Pak troops were made prisoners of War. This was a crowning achievement of Indian defence forces. Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi and the President of Pakistan held bilateral discussions at Simla. On July 3, 1972 the two countries signed the Simla Agreement. Extracts from the Simla Agreement are as under "(i) That the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations shall govern the relations between the two countries. (ii) That the two countries are resolved to settle their differences by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations or by any other peaceful means mutually agreed upon between them. Pending the final settlement of any of the problems between the two countries, neither side shall unilaterally alter the situation nor shall both prevent the organisation, assistance or encouragement of any acts detrimental to the maintenance of peaceful and harmonious relations. (iii) That the prerequisite for reconciliation, good neighbourliness and durable peace between them is a commitment by both the countries to peaceful coexistence, respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty and non-interference in each other's internal affairs, on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. (iv) That the basic issues and causes of conflict which have bedeviled the relations between

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

the two countries for the last 25 years shall be resolved by peaceful means. (v) That in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, they will refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of each other. In order to initiate the process of the establishment of durable peace, both the governments agreed that: (i) Indian and Pakistani forces shall be withdrawn to their side of international border. (ii) In Jammu and Kashmir, the Line of Control, resulting from the ceasefire of December 17, 1971 shall be respected by both sides without prejudice to the recognised position of either side. Neither side shall seek to alter it unilaterally, irrespective of mutual differences and legal interpretations. Both sides further undertake to refrain from the threat or the use of force in violation of this line."

Indian political leadership failed to clinch the Kashmir issue once and for all at the Simla Conference which proved a blessing in disguise for Pakistan. Sadly, India's astounding military victory over an intransigent neighbouring but defeated country turned into a diplomatic defeat for India as the subsequent events, clearly showed. "It has been the tragedy of India since freedom that its political leadership has proved singularly inept and unrealistic in the diplomatic and political follow-up of the war that was forced on it by Pakistan in 1947, 1965 and 1971. This failure of its political leadership in dealing with Pakistan can be attributed to (many) reasons" (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World, Chapter XV).

We failed to grasp the psychology of our enemy country and tried to appease it in whatever way we could. In the three wars we inflicted a crushing defeat on it, but could not settle our problems with Pakistan relating to Kashmir. At the Simla Summit Indian leadership should have forced Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to give in writing that the Line of Control was the permanent boundary between the two countries and not relied upon the verbal promise of Bhutto regarding acceptance of LoC. 'The only realistic and logical stand of India at Simla should have been an unequivocal demand for vacating of Pak aggression and return of 30,000 square miles of occupied territory to India in return for vacating of Pak territory occupied by the Indian armed forces in the war of 1971.' The interesting part of the Untold Story is that Bhutto was willing to concede India's demand in return for India vacating Pak-occupied territories and release of 90,000 Pakistani soldiers. Mrs. Gandhi's trusted diplomat, Mr. D. P Dhar, had rushed to Islamabad at the behest of the Indian Prime Minister before the commencement of the historic Simla Conference. It was said that the veteran Kashmiri politician had informed Mrs. Gandhi about Bhutto's intentions. Bhutto had gone on a short tour of Islamic countries before the Simla Conference. He was advised by his Islamic friends, particularly Libya, not to concede India's demand. He was assured of massive monetary aid to sustain Pakistan's tottering economy. He changed his mind forthwith. Pak leader "came to Simla determined not to accept the Line of Control as international boundary and relinquish his claim to Kashmir." Thus, the Simla Agreement proved a diplomatic fiasco for India. The Agreement had another disadvantage for India. Article VI of the Agreement stipulated in clear-cut terms that "both governments agreed that their respective Heads, will meet again and in the meantime the representatives of the two sides will meet to discuss the modalities and arrangements for the establishment

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

of durable peace and normalization of relations including the question of repatriation of prisoners-of-war and civilian internees, a final settlement of Jammu and Kashmir and the assumption of diplomatic relations". From a close analysis of this clause, it is clear that the Simla Agreement reopened the Kashmir case which was, for some time, in a state of limbo and oblivion. Where was the logic in India's oft-repeated aphorism that the "Kashmir question is settled for all times, accession is irrevocable." Could we say that the Agreement opened the Pandora's Box? India treated Pak prisoners of war nicely: lodged them in air-conditioned rooms, provided them A-grade food, and supplied them with religious books to read. But in times to come, Pakistan paid India in a different coin. In Kargil War, Indian Air Force pilots and soldiers captured by Pakistani troops were tortured and killed – a treatment that has no parallel in war history. It is said that Mrs. Gandhi's Cabinet Ministers vehemently opposed the Simla Agreement because Pakistan was largely benefited. But nobody except the Defence Minister, Babu Jagjiwan Ram, dared to oppose the Iron Lady in the open. "Defence Minister Babu Jagjiwan Ram, was the only senior leader of the ruling Congress Party who felt really sore about the Simla Agreement. He was particularly opposed to restoring the Chambb area of Jammu to Pakistan while India had agreed to vacate 5000 square miles of Pak territory of great strategic and economic importance which Indian troops had occupied during the war." (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World, Chapter XV).

By signing the Simla Accord, we missed a historic opportunity to settle our score with Pakistan on Kashmir for good. And we were back to square one.

## **15.0 INDIRA-SHEIKH ACCORD: LUST FOR POWER**

In arriving at an accord between India and Pakistan, the Soviet Union played a significant role. Simla Agreement brought the Kashmir issue to the stage where it stood when the first ceasefire was announced in 1949. The issue became a bilateral one and could be resolved through diplomatic parleys. As a result of Pakistan receiving a drubbing at the hands of India, "the recalcitrant leaders of Kashmir like Sheikh Abdullah and Mirza Afzal Beg underwent a change in their designs. Their zest for Pakistan lessened to some extent. They thought that Pakistan was no match to India so far as military prowess was concerned. Both these leaders were eager to go in for reconciliations with New Delhi. Thus, Sheikh Abdullah started political negotiations with New Delhi. From the Indian side the ace diplomat, G. Parthasarathi, conducted negotiations which lasted three years and ultimately resulted in Indira-Sheikh Agreement. The Sheikh was forced to go in for negotiations because his political influence was slowly being eroded as a result of pro-Muslim (call it liberal) policy adopted by G.M. Sadiq, who succeeded Khawaja Shamas-ud-Din as the Chief Minister of the State in 1965. The text of the Indira-Sheikh Accord is as under :- (1) The State of Jammu and Kashmir which is a constituent unit of the Union of India, shall in its relation with the Union continue to be governed by Article 370 of the Constitution of India, (2) The residuary powers of legislation shall remain with the State, however, Parliament will continue to have power to make laws, relating to the prevention of activities directed towards disclaiming, questioning or disrupting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India or bringing about cession of a part of territory of India from the Union or causing insult to the Indian National Flag, the Indian National Anthem and the Constitution, (3) Where any provision of the Constitution of India had been applied to the State of Jammu and Kashmir with adaptations and modifications, such modifications and adaptations can be altered or repealed by an order of the President under Article 370, each individual proposal being considered on its merits; but provisions of the Constitution of India already applied to the State of Jammu and Kashmir without adaptation or modification are unalterable, (4) With a view to assuring freedom to the State of Jammu and Kashmir to have its own legislation on matters like welfare measures, cultural matters, social security, personal law and procedural laws, in a manner suited to the special conditions in the State, it is agreed that the State Government can review the law made by Parliament or extended to the State after 1953 on any matter relatable to the Concurrent List and may decide which of them, in its opinion, needs amendment or repeal. The State Government shall be consulted regarding the application of any such law to the State and the views of the State Government shall receive the fullest consideration. A close analysis of the main provisions of the Indira-Sheikh Accord reveals :- (a) Article 370 would continue to remain in vogue without any minor or major alterations or modifications, (b) Residuary powers "would continue to vest in State Government", (c) President of India alone is empowered to seek any modification as provided under Article 370. (d) Each proposal in this behalf would be considered on its merits, (e) Provisions of the Constitution of India already applied to the State of Jammu and Kashmir under the regimes of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, G.M.

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Sadiq and Mir Qasim "are unalterable". The Accord was simply to bring the Sheikh back to power which he lost in 1953. "In essence, the Kashmir Accord did not change the constitutional relationship between the Union and the State. It was primarily a device to bring Sheikh Abdullah back to power and give an impression that certain aspects relating to autonomy, could be revived " (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp: 14 3). Flattering the Sheikh, Mrs. Gandhi made a statement in Parliament on February 24, 1975: "Nobody had denied Sheikh Abdullah the previous role. In between, he seemed to have changed his mind and there was disagreement and estrangement. Now that he is again expressing his willingness to work for unity, for secularism, we welcome him." Under the Kashmir Accord, Mir Qasim resigned as the Chief Minister of the State. During Qasim's lackluster rule, "Sheikh Abdullah was the defacto ruler of the State. The Congress Party had an absolute majority in the State Assembly. It chose Sheikh as the leader of the majority party. These events served as anticlimax to what happened in August, 1953 when the Sheikh was deposed and arrested. Was the bringing of Sheikh back to power a big blunder? In other words, it vindicated the Sheikh's stand. Sardar Swaran Singh had hailed the Accord as "an accession of heart and mind and act of faith." The Kashmiri leader refused to toe Mrs. Gandhi's line: the Congress party lost its shine as Sheikh Abdullah revived the National Conference and his confidant, Mirza Afzal Beg's Plebiscite Front. Hundreds of Congress party workers joined the National Conference at the behest of Sheikh Abdullah. On March 26, 1977 Congress Party withdrew its support to Sheikh Abdullah who called Congress leaders as "dirty insects in a street gutter".

Thus, the so-called superstructure of confidence collapsed abruptly, sending rumblings to the corridors of power in Delhi. "The Accord was a failure not only because a section of the Congress (I) Party of J&K was hostile to it from the beginning but also because the basic contradictions and incompatibilities were not resolved and the concept of autonomy was allowed, as in the past, to degenerate into licence under the democratic dictatorship of Sheikh Abdullah" (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp: 144). The Plebiscite Front gained the upper hand, thus giving a fillip to separatist tendencies which snowballed into Muslim insurgency in 1990. On this account, the so-called Accord proved to be a grave political blunder by unimaginative leadership in Delhi. "Whatever the language of the accord, the very fact that Sheikh Abdullah was being put back in power even though he had not a single member in the State Legislature sent wrong signals to the people of Kashmir. There was a general feeling that the hands of clock had been put back and things had returned to square one after 22 years during which Pakistan had forced two wars on India to grab Kashmir and Indian people and armed forces had made huge sacrifices to foil her plan," (Kashmir : The Storm Centre of the World, Chapter XVI). Thanks to the Accord, the political situation in the State took a different turn. Anti-national elements penetrated deeper into the administration. Pro-Pak forces rallied under the National Conference flag. Moulvi Mohammed Farooq, the then Mirwaiz of Kashmir and Sheikh's political adversary with leanings towards Pakistan joined hands with Sheikh and conceded to operate on common political platform with the National Conference. The Accord proved a grave- yard for pro-India parties, including the Congress (I) in the State. The Accord cemented Article 370

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

which has caused an emotional barrier to be erected between India and the then Muslims of Kashmir. "The emotional ingredients of Article 370 remained intact. The forces which had, in the first instance, created a situation that led to the events of August, 1953, were not really vanquished. Nothing was done to ensure that the communal card and the card of Kashmir's identity were not played to strengthen the personal power and position of Sheikh Abdullah and his family. Nor was any remedial measures taken to stop the unhealthy fallout from the politics of deception and duplicity." Pakistan was watching the internal situation in Kashmir keenly. A big plot to grab Kashmir through proxy war was in the offing. Conditions were becoming congenial for this daredevil act to be launched meticulously by the ISI in the State. The local leadership was, advertently or inadvertently, playing in their hands. In the general elections of 1977, the Congress Party was pushed to the wall and the Janata Party attained majority in Parliament. Sheikh Abdullah, the Chief Minister of the State, hobnobbed with the Janata Party. Consequently, the State Congress withdrew its support to Sheikh and staked claim to form a Congress Government in the State. Sheikh Abdullah recommended the dissolution of the State Assembly to the Governor who was none other than L. K. Jha, a protégé of Sheikh Abdullah. On the recommendation of the Chief Minister, Governor Jha dissolved the State Assembly. History alone can give verdict whether Jha's step was in the interest of State or not. Elections to the State Assembly were held in July, 1977. National Conference under the Sheikh contested as an independent party, having no truck or alliance with the Congress Party. During election campaign all pro-Pak forces joined hands with the National Conference with the avid aim of defeating Congress at any cost. The election was fought on communal lines with Sheikh as a star-figure.

### 16.0 PASSING AWAY OF THE LION: END OF AN ERA

In the elections held in July, 1977, Sheikh's National Conference won a landslide victory bagging 50 seats out of 75 in the State Assembly. The National Conference won some seats even in Jammu province as well. The Congress Party levelled serious charges of rigging elections by the National Conference. During election campaign, National Conference leaders and workers raised the religious sentiment of the Muslims. Some of them allegedly reported to have said that "vote for National Conference is vote for Islam". Election meetings were held in mosques. As was the practice with the National Conference leaders, Hazratbal shrine was used every Friday for conducting election campaign. For Sheikh and his acolytes the shrine served as a political pulpit to air grievances, imaginary or real, against "India". To go back a little in the past, National Conference had its birth in the shrine of Hazrat Ali Hamdani at Khankah-Mohalla where Sheikh Abdullah and Mirwaiz Mohammed Yousuf Shah (great-grand-father of Mirwaiz Umar Farooq) addressed the first political gathering in 1931 along with a Punjabi Khaksar Worker, Maulana Qadir, who was sent by the Khaksar party to foment communal trouble and dethrone Maharaja Hari Singh, the Dogra ruler of J&K State. In Kashmir, politics has always taken religious hues. Even 'Quit Kashmir Movement' launched by Sheikh Abdullah in 1946 against Maharaja Hari Singh was couched in religious propaganda. What we see today in the Valley is the fallout of this misconceived communal overtone of so-called secular polity in the State. Sheikh Abdullah's grip over the "minds of Kashmiri Muslims had not been affected by the developments since 1953". During Sheikh's second term as the Chief Minister of the State, communal elements got a new lease-of life in the State. He asserted as a strong man, filling up important slots in the administration with his own loyalists. "He dispensed with the Central food subsidy which ensured supply of wheat, rice and sugar to the citizens of the States which he had begun, as soon as he came to power in 1947, which was continued more or less by his successors, was now accelerated. His distrust of Kashmiri Pandits grew. He began to look upon them as the fifth column of New Delhi who could desert him again in any new confrontation with the Centre", (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World, Chapter XIV).

With failing health and advancing age, Sheikh was actively thinking of crowning his doctor son Farooq, the Prince Charming of Kashmir politics, as the Chief Minister of the State. Internal developments of the State will be dealt with in coming chapters of the book. The period from 1979 to 1985 forms the crucial chapter in the history of India's neighbouring countries. The developments in these countries had a direct impact on the Kashmir issue. Soviet Union had intervened in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. It was determined to weed out anti-Soviet elements from Afghanistan and strengthen the Soviet-backed regime in this economically most backward, region of Asia. Proverbially known for perennial tribal warfare, peace has always remained an elusive dream in this backward country. History bears testimony to the fact that marauders from Afghanistan attacked Kashmir Valley a number of times and indulged in the most inhuman practice of killing people and looting the peace-loving inhabitants of the Valley. Pakistani rulers started backing the Afghan insurgents against the "Soviet

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

backed new Afghan regime" with the full support of the United, States. Since its preoccupation with Afghanistan, Pakistan could not get time to plead the Kashmir issue vigorously at the international forums. The issue remained, more or less, in a state of dormancy. A military coup was staged, Bhutto was dethroned and hardnosed fundamentalist military dictator Gen. Zia-ul-Haq assumed the reins of power' in Pakistan. The military dictator of Pakistan was "at a bigger game" which subsequently added new dimensions to the Kashmir issue. The political drama that was being enacted in Srinagar with the full concurrence of New Delhi had disastrous effects on India-Kashmir relationship. Referring to the transfer of power from Syed Mir Qasim to the Sheikh, Prof. M. L. Kaul writes in his book, "Kashmir: Past and Present - Unravelling the Mystique". Mir Qasim played a treacherous role by misinforming Mrs. Gandhi about the change of heart that Sheikh and Beg had undergone. The crux of his intent was only to abdicate in favour of secessionists and separatists. By paving the way for Muslim vacillators, Mir Qasim identified himself with the forces of disintegration and disunity, thereby destabilising the entire State fraught with tremendous perils for total polity of India. Sheikh Abdullah and Mirza Afzal Beg never reconciled to the merger of the State with India. No autonomy as guaranteed under Article 370 could satisfy them. Their inner motivations were only to capture power and fuelling passions against what they called Hindu India" (Chapter Thirteen). It was during Qasim's lackluster rule that Jamat-e-Islami came into limelight by bagging five seats in the Assembly. He uprooted the Congress, the only secular party in the State, from the Muslim-dominated State of Jammu and Kashmir. Perhaps, there might have been a secret understanding between Mir Qasim and Jamat-e-Islami. It is the same Jamat-e-Islami which is in the vanguard of the ongoing Jihad and mayhem in Kashmir. Founded in 1938 by a Muslim theologian, Maulana Abdulla Mandoodi at Gurdaspur in East Punjab, Jamat-e-Islami stands rids for the imposition of Muslim rule and supremacy of one religion. Mandoodi wanted "to mould the social, moral, political and economic system of the world in accordance with the tenets of Islam". It is an irony of history that the "Maulana was opposed to the creation of a separate State of Pakistan". He thought that unless Islamic ways are practiced "Pakistan would be another unIslamic Godless State". In Pakistan, the Maulana actively participated in anti-Ahmedia stir in West Punjab in 1953. Under Gen. Zia-ul-Haq Jamat-e-Islami became a potent political force as the military dictator was himself an active member of the outfit. In Kashmir, the Jamat-e-Islami was established in Shopian in 1942 by Moulvi Ghulam Ahmad Ahar, In mid-fifties, Jamat-e-Islami struck deep roots in Srinagar and Bandipore. Master Sad-ud-Din, Master Saif-ud-Din Qari, Master Mohammed Sidiq, Master Mohammed Razak, Maulana Bader-ud-Din, Maulana Mohammed Amin, Dr. Bandey etc were some of zealous activists of the Jamat who strove hard to spread the network of the organization. The outfit contested three elections in 1972, 1977 and 1983. In 1987, the Jamat fought election "as a constituent of the Muslim United Front (MUF). In 1972, the Jamat secured, thanks to the then State Chief Minister, Syed Mir Qasim, five seats, polling 7.18 per cent of votes polled. In 1977, it secured only one seat with 3.59 per cent of the total votes polled. However, its vote percentage increased to 3.88, but got only one seat. It was under the stewardship of Syed Ali Shah Geelani that Jamat-e-

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Islami was reckoned, as a political force in the Valley.

"In the 1977 and 1983 elections, the National Conference by its very communal, parochial and pro-Pak stance virtually displaced the appeal of the Jamat-e-Islami. It did exactly what the Jamat-e-Islami was intending to do. The youth organisations, now aligning with Jamat-e-Islami, are, in essence, no different from the youth organisations which aligned with the National Conference at the time of elections in 1977 and 1983. The programmes of the Jamat-e-Islami and National Conference looked similar when the National Conference adopted pro-Pakistan and anti-India attitude. Their public appeals merged. They looked like two sisters. During the 1983 Assembly elections, for instance, Dr. Farooq Abdullah fulminated against "Indian domination." He even threatened to hold elections under the supervision of the United Nations and not of the Election Commission of India", (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 181).

From 1974 to 1981, two important developments are to be taken cognizance of in the Kashmir story: virtual photo-finish of the Congress Party, and, secondly, the rise of Muslim fundamentalism preached by Jamat- e-Islami outfit. Both these factors were responsible for fanning out anti- India sentiment in the minds of Muslims who had traditions of living in peaceful coexistence with the non-Muslims. New Delhi did not take the cognizance of new developments which, in 1990, fuelled full-fledged insurgency abetted by Pakistan. The situation was slipping out of New Delhi's hands. In 1980, a delegation from Madina University visited Srinagar at the behest of Jamat-e-Islami. The delegation was officially entertained by the State Chief Minister, Sheikh Abdullah. A member of the delegation, Prof. Abdul Samad, made it clear that the time had come when Islamic revolution should be brought about. In 1979, Jamat-e-Islami held an All-India Conference in Hyderabad. I was posted in Karnah in those days. A big deputation of Jamat-e- Islami led by Master Mohammed Yousuf Masudi, a school teacher of Kupwara, went from Karnah to Hyderabad. The delegation included scores of Government teachers. All the top officials of Education Department were in some way or other connected with Jamat-e-Islami. The outfit had established a number of schools all over the Valley to indoctrinate the young children in the fundamentalist ideology. Jamat had established a strong foothold in Kupwara district through school teachers who, enjoyed official patronage. If Kupwara is at present the hot-spot of insurgency, the blame rests with the State Education Department which is still manned by diehard Jamat activists. "For these institutions substantial funds flowed from Saudi Arabia. The oil in the middle-east also placed a lot of wealth in the hands of Saudi Sheikhs and enabled them to provide substantial funds for such activities. Practically, nothing was done to close these schools or to control them in any way", (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir: pp 180). Government school libraries were stuffed with Jamat literature under the instruction of Director, libraries, who were later promoted as Director, School Education and the Secretary, Education Department. Sheikh Abdullah passed away on September 8, 1982 after protracted illness which was kept secret by the "coterie". Thus ended a long chapter in the history of modern Kashmir. He was like a colossal who strode over six decades in Cupid's Valley. In his last days he was dominated by a coterie of vested interests. During his lifetime, he had

## Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali

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By Girdhari Lal Jalali

become a legend and icon of the toiling masses. He started his political career as the President of Muslim Conference and ended his life as India's most powerful Chief Minister whose political influence extended beyond the boundaries of J&K State. His life-story is the political history of J&K State. He was a man of strong ego which was responsible for his parting of ways with his life-long friend Nehru in 1953. Whatever may be on the flip side of the Kashmiri leader, nobody can refute the fact that he saved the miniscule Kashmiri Pandit community from the vandalism of the tribal hordes in 1947, though his political existence was at stake in those days. He was surrounded all along his political career by a cabal of self-seekers who made him commit some political blunders for which the country is paying enormously. The cabal exerted its full pressure on the Sheikh not to undertake such measures as would seek the full integration of the State with India by abolishing the much maligned Article 370 which still serves as an emotional barrier between the Muslims of the Valley and the rest of the people down Pir Panchal. A good man at heart, a devout Muslim, flip-flop in his political ideology, the Lion of Kashmir, as Sheikh's followers called him in the Valley, was one of the, builders; of modern India, ranking with Nehru and Gandhi. Just to have a bird's eye view of Article 370, it is essential for the dialectical understanding of the explosive situation, following Sheikh's demise, in the context of the Muslim insurgency in the nineties.

## **17.0 GENESIS OF ARTICLE 370**

Right from 1950 Valley's politicians had assiduously worked for the retention of Article 370 as a permanent provision in the Indian Constitution. It rather became a weapon to beat New Delhi if the latter ever charged the State Government with corruption. Under its veneer secessionist and separatist forces came to the foreground which ultimately paved the way for Pak-abetted Muslim insurgency in the State, particularly in State's Muslim-dominated areas, barring Kargil. "One of the strongest roots of Kashmiri separatism and alienation lies in Article 370 of the Constitution of India which gives special status to the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It is an issue which involves not only historical, constitutional, political, social and economic considerations of far-reaching consequences, but also psychological and emotional ones", writes Jagmohan (*My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*, Chapter VI). In a speech delivered by Sheikh Abdullah in the State's Constituent Assembly on August 11, 1952, the Kashmiri leader referred to the historical background of the Article. He said, "There are historic reasons which necessitate such constitutional safeguards .... The Hon'ble Members are perhaps aware that in the late twenties, the people of Jammu and Kashmir agitated for the protection of their "bonafide" rights against the superior competing interests of the non-residents of the State. It was in response to this popular demand that the Government of the day promulgated a Notification in 1927 by which a strict definition of the term "State Subject" was provided. I am glad to say that the Government of India appreciated the need for such a safeguard. No definition of special rights and privileges of the residents of the State can afford to remain State. The need may arise at one stage or the other to liberalize such a definition". The concept of "State Subject" born during the reign of Dogra ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh had wider ramifications. State Subject vis-a-vis non-Subject had its roots in the despotic rule of Dogra rulers who gave preference to non-Kashmiris in the choice of employment. During the time of Maharaja Hari Singh (1925-1947) all key posts were held by persons hailing from outside J&K State. Even ministerial slots were reserved for persons who were not bona fide residents (citizens) of the State. The Dogra ruler could justify his stand that the selection of the personnel was made on the basis of merit. But the enlightened and educated section of the Valley's poverty-ridden masses, including Kashmiri Hindus, were not prepared to buy this argument. They considered these measures unjust and an outcome of the dictatorial propensities of the Dogra ruler. In the early nineteen twenties, a batch of Kashmiri Pandits and Kashmiri Muslims went to Aligarh, Varanasi, Lahore, Lucknow and Allahabad for higher education. These included Pundit Shankar Lal Kaul, Pundit Parmanand Darend, Pandit Tara Chand Wazier, Pundit R. C. Pandita, Khawaja Ghulam Mohammed Ashai, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, Khawaja Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq, Pt. Shiv Narayan Fotedar, Khawaja Ghulam Rasool Mir, and Hassan Khan etc. After their return some of them could not be absorbed in the state civil service and preference was usually given to persons, living outside the State. A strong pro-Punjabi lobby had emerged in the bureaucracy. It was alleged that the Dogra ruler was badly caught in the web woven by the Pro-Punjabi (anti-Kashmir) lobby. It was but natural that widespread resentment against the policy of the Dogra ruler had

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

arisen in the mind of the educated Kashmiri youth. In those days there were limited job opportunities for the educated youth in the State. The ongoing resentment snowballed into a minor revolt against Maharaja Hari Singh. Although a storm in tea cup, it had wider political ramifications in the State which stood on the threshold of socio-political awakening of the masses. Outside the State some of the educated Kashmiri youth had started a virulent press campaign against the policies of the Dogra ruler who was disposed towards, the "Punjabi-coterie placed too comfortably in the state civil service. The leader of the movement was none other than a young, brilliant Kashmiri Pandit, Mr. Shankar Lal Koul, who had secured top position in MA. (English) examination from the then prestigious Agra University. Wielding a facile pen under the pseudo-name "Kashmiri Kas", Koul wrote profusely against the policies of Maharaja Hari Singh in The Hindustan Times of which he was the first Kashmiri Pandit Assistant Editor. Pandit Koul had the unique honour of being the first Kashmiri Pandit fearless journalist whose superb style of writing sent shock waves to the "Royal Circles" in the State. Maharaja Hari Singh was forced to think of a political answer to the question raised by the educated Kashmiri youth. In pursuance of this objective, the "Sarkar" issued a notification in 1927, making it mandatory that "any State employee must be invariably the bona fide resident of the State". With the publication of the historic notification the ground was paved for the employment of the unemployed educated youth. In the beginning the concept of State Subject was reserved for purposes of employment. But in the years to come its scope was enlarged because of certain vested political interests. Under the impact of communal politics, holding or disposing, of moveable or immoveable property came under the purview of "State Subject". Still scores of Punjabi "Nawabs" had acquired landed property, in the State worth crores of rupees. At present the landed property is under the custody of State Directorate of Evacuee Property. The rent of the property is credited to the account of the original holders of the property. To recount the genesis of the Article 370, it is pertinent to refer to the Instrument of Accession executed by Maharaja Hari Singh with the Government of India. The Maharaja surrendered the jurisdiction of three subjects, Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communication, to the Government of India. "The format of this Instrument of Accession was the same as was executed by other heads of princely states", (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp, 231). Government of India agreed that the "final decision with regard to accession would be taken by the Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir" and in the intervening period "a temporary provision had to be made in the Constitution of India". Thus, Article 370 was born out of the womb of uncertainty amidst political chicanery and evil designs of politicians, who overtly or covertly, brought the J&K State to the choppy waters of all-round destruction and chaos. Article 370 runs as tinder: - Temporary provisions with respect to the State of Jammu and Kashmir (1) Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution

(a) the provisions of Article 238 shall not apply in relation to the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

(b) the powers of Parliament to make laws for the said State shall be limited to those matters in the Union List and the Concurrent List which in

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

consultation with the Government of the State, are declared by the President to correspond to matters specified in the Instrument of Accession governing the accession of the State to the Dominion of India as the matters with respect to which the Dominion Legislature may make laws for the State; and such other matters in the said lists as, with the concurrence of the Government of the State, the President may by order specify :- For the purpose of this Article, the Government of India means the person for the time being recognised by the President as the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir acting on the advice of the Council of Ministers for the time being in office under Maharaja's Proclamation dated the fifth day of March, 1948.

(c) the provision of Article (i) and of this Article shall apply in relation to the State.

(d) such of the other provisions of this Constitution shall apply in relation to such exceptions and modifications as the President may by order specify : Provided that no such order which related to the matters specified in the Instrument of Accession of the State referred to in paragraph (1) of sub- clause shall be issued except in consultation with the Government of the State; (2) If the concurrence of the Government of the State referred to in paragraph (11) of sub-clause of clause or (1) in the second provision to sub-clause (d) of that clause be given before the Constituent Assembly for the purpose of framing the Constitution of the State is convened, it shall be placed before such Assembly for such decision as it may take thereon. (3) Notwithstanding anything in the foregoing provisions of the Article, the President may, in public notification, declare that this Article shall cease to be operative or shall be operative only with such exceptions and modifications and from such date as he may notify. Provided that the recommendation of the Constituent Assembly of the State referred to in clause (2) shall be necessary before the President issues such a notification" (Adapted from My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 664). From a close analysis of the Article 370, we may conclude some of its features as under: -

a. The clause inserted in the Constitution is a temporary one; it is purely transitional in nature. The framers of the Constitution never wanted it to remain permanently etched to the code-book. While addressing the Lok Sabha, Pundit Nehru had assured the members that "Article 370 of the Constitution would disappear by getting time and again eroded (Samvidhaan ki Dhara 370 ghiste ghiste ghis jaayegi). It was only Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, after resigning his office under Kamraaj Plan, said for the first time that "Article 370 of the Constitution is a permanent provision and that Kashmir's destiny is tied up with it." It has become customary on the part of Valley's Chief Ministers and politicians to indulge in anti-India rhetoric from time to time. Such arms-twisting methods are employed to browbeat New Delhi rulers and win the goodwill of pro-Pak elements operating in the Valley at the behest of Pakistan. On November 27, 1963 Pandit Nehru made it clear on the floor of Lok Sabha that "Our view is that Article 370, as is written in the Constitution, is a transitional arrangement. It is not a permanent part of the Constitution. It is a part so long as it remains so." The second important erroneous impression about Article 370 is the special status it confers on Kashmir. "For, remember, Article 370 was not a device to give Kashmir some special status vis-a-vis India. It

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

was a device for extending provisions of the Constitution of India a step at a time to Kashmir. The very text of the Article makes this manifest. And it was to be a temporary device - one that was to be used for this purpose till a Constituent Assembly of the State could be constituted and could, as was expected then in Delhi, do the job in one go. This too is as evident as anything can be from the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly of India" (A Secular Agenda by Arun Shourie, pp 144).

When Article 370 (It was then numbered 306A) was introduced by the then Union- Minister, Mr. N. Gopaldaswami Ayyanger in Parliament, members flayed Ayyanger's move. The noted Congress member and celebrated Urdu poet Mohani exclaimed "Why this discrimination".

"As was to become evident soon, what Maulana had in mind was not that Kashmir was being given a status and a mechanism which had not been given to other states which had after all signed the identical Instrument of Accession. He was indignant at the fact that an indulgence was being shown to Maharaja Hari Singh, the ruler of Kashmir, which had not been shown to the ruler of Baroda. But Gopaldaswami Ayyanger thought the interruption referred to the mechanism which was being set up in the case of Kashmir for extending the Indian Constitution step by step" (Secular Agenda : Page 145). He said that the discrimination was due to the special conditions of the State.

## **18.0 GOPALASWAMY AYYANGER: MAIN ARCHITECT OF ARTICLE 370**

Pandit Nehru had inducted Gopaldaswami Ayyanger into the Union Cabinet as Minister without Portfolio just to deal with Kashmir affairs. This step was taken by Nehru in view of the fact that Ayyanger had served as the Prime Minister of J&K State from 1937 to 1943. Nehru was convinced that Ayyanger would be able to seek the speedy integration of the J&K State with India. He did not consult Sardar Patel regarding Ayyanger's induction into the Union Cabinet.

Gopaldaswami Ayyanger carried out Nehru's orders and ignored Sardar, the Iron Man of India, much to the chagrin of the pro-Patel lobby in the Nehru Cabinet. By way of reconciling the Sardar, Panditji wrote a letter to the Sardar on December 23, 1947, stating "Gopaldaswami Ayyanger has been specially asked to help in Kashmir matters. Both for this reason and because of his intimate knowledge and experience of Kashmir he had to be given full latitude. I really do not see where the State's Ministry (the Sardar's Ministry, that is) comes into picture, except that it should be kept informed of steps taken", (quoted by Arun Shourie in *Secular Agenda*, page 149) Panditji owned his full responsibility in appointing Ayyanger in charge of Kashmir affairs. The Sardar took offence at Nehru's letter and decided to resign from the Cabinet. But, due to the timely intervention of Mahatma Gandhi, the crisis was averted and the Sardar continued to remain in the Nehru Cabinet. Ayyanger was the main architect of Article 370. "It transpires that Panditji had finished the draft of Article 370 in consultation with Sheikh Abdullah. The Sardar had not been taken into confidence. The draft finalised, Panditji had proceeded abroad on a tour, instructing Ayyanger to see the draft through the Constituent Assembly ", (Arun Shourie in *Secular Agenda*, pp 150).

In the Congress Party, there was a strong difference of opinion on Article 370. Some members were vehemently against the idea of conferring a special status on J&K State. Writes V Shankar, the then Private Secretary to India's Home Minister Sardar Patel, "In the Congress Party there was a strong body of opinion which looked askance at any suggestion of discrimination between the Jammu and Kashmir State and other States as members of the future Indian Union and was not prepared to go beyond certain limits in providing for the special position of Jammu and Kashmir. The Sardar was himself fully in accord with this opinion, but due to his usual policy of not standing in the way of Pandit Nehru and Gopaldaswami Ayyanger who sorted out problems in their own light, he had kept his own views in the background. In fact, he had not taken any part in framing the draft proposals (Article 370) with the result that he heard the proposals only when Gopaldaswami Ayyanger announced them to the Congress Party". As the draft proposal was first introduced in the Congress meeting, there broke-out a storm of angry protests from the members "Gopaldaswami Ayyanger found himself a lone defender with Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad an ineffective supporter. Metaphorically, the situation may be succinctly described by saying that both Gopaldaswami Ayyanger and his proposal were torn to pieces by the Party", (V Shankar: in *My Reminiscences of Sardar Patel*, volume II, pp 64). Ayyanger requested the Sardar to intervene to salvage the situation. Sardar Patel convened the meeting of the Congress Executive

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

in New Delhi in the absence of Nehru who had gone abroad. As per Shankar's verdict, the meeting proved a stormy one; each member disapproved of Ayyanger's formula. "The opinion expressed, and the issue even brought in the sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly to draw up the Constitution without being tied down to the apron-strings of the State Constituent Assembly", writes V Shankar. The Sardar did not like to cause a split in the Congress ranks and sour his relations with Nehru. He intervened "to plead that because of the international complications, a provisional approach alone could be made leaving the final relationship to be worked out according to the exigencies of the situation and the mutual feelings and confidence that would have been created". (Shankar) All the amendments to the draft proposals (Article 370) were withdrawn. Still Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah wanted to amend it more in favour of the Kashmir Government. Disapproving of Sheikh's new stance, Sardar Patel wrote to Ayyanger, "I don't at all like any change after our party has approved of the whole agreement in the presence of Sheikh Sahib himself. Whenever Sheikh Sahib wishes to back out, he always confronts us with his duty to the people. Of course, he owes no duty to India or to the Indian Government, or even on a personal basis, to you and the Prime Minister who have gone all out to accommodate him", ( Secular Agenda, pp 152).

However, the original draft of this landmark constitutional provision (Article 370) "went through without murmur". V Shankar was not reconciled to the situation. In order to assuage the feelings of his private secretary, the Sardar made a cryptic remark: "So you are annoyed with me for having accepted Gopalaswami's formula. I was deeply concerned at the situation. Gopalaswami had acted under Panditji's advice. If Jawahar Lal Nehru were here I could have had it out with him. But how could I do with Gopalaswami who was acting under orders. If I did, people would have said that I was taking revenge on his confidant when he was away. Gopalaswami had appealed to me for help. How could I have let him down in the absence of his chief' (Secular Agenda, pp 153). It clearly reveals that India's two top leaders - Nehru and Patel - were so much emotionally tied with each other. Patel was not prepared to take any row or controversy with Jawahar Lal. In his heart of hearts he was convinced that the insertion of Article 370 in the Constitution would lead ultimately to an acrimonious situation. In his book Sardar Patel Centenary Volume (pp 517) Rajmohan Gandhi quotes the Sardar as having said, "Jawahar Lal royega" (Jawahar Lal would weep over the insertion of Article 370 in the Constitution of India). Sardar Patel passed away on December 15, 1948 after seeking the full integration of princely states, barring J&K, with the Indian dominion.

Article 370 is basically at the root of the ongoing turmoil in the State. Self-seeking politicians, both within and outside the State, have justified the insertion of the constitutional provision on the ground of retaining the so-called Muslim character of the State. It keeps the embers of two-nation theory, which resulted in the division of country into two separate units, sizzling to attract the attention of international community. "One of the strongest roots of Kashmiri separatism and alienation lies in Article 370 of Jammu and Kashmir. It is an issue which involves not historical, constitutional, political, social and economic consideration of far-reaching

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

consequences, but also psychological and emotional ones. A fierce nationwide controversy has often been raised about it. Its deletion or retention has been advocated with equal vehemence. But one fundamental aspect has been lost sight of that pertains to its misuse by vested interests", (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, Chapter VI).

Because of the presence of Article 370, a Kashmiri Musalman thinks it his Constitutional right to supersede academically bright Kashmiri Pandit boy or girl in any professional college or grab top slot in the State bureaucracy. It is the story of from rags to riches with heart pulsation for the Muslim El dorado. "Article 370 is nothing but a feeding ground for the parasites at the heart of paradise. It skins the poor. It deceives them with its mirage. It lines the pockets of the "power-elites". It fans the ego of new Sultans. In essence it creates a land without justice, a land full of crudities and contradictions. It props up politics of deception, duplicity and demagoguery. It breeds the microbes of subversion. It keeps alive the unwholesome of the two-nation theory. It suffocates the very idea of India and fogs the very vision of a great social and cultural crucible from Kashmir to Kanyakumari ". (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir) With the passage of time, Article 370 became an instrument of exploitation in the hands of ruling political elites and members of bureaucracy. It breeds separatist tendencies and serves as an emotional barrier between Kashmiri Muslims and the people living in other parts of India. Under the facade of Article 370, some useful laws relating to Urban Land Ceiling Act and Wealth Tax etc have been kept out of the ambit of the State laws. Common masses (Muslims) have been denied "their due share in the economic achievement of the country as a whole."The sum and substance of Article 370 is that with regard to Jammu and Kashmir, in addition to Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communication, the Union Parliament can make laws with regard to the items in the Union and Concurrent Lists but only with the concurrence of the State Government. This puts the Jammu and Kashmir on special footing. While the Union Parliament has unfettered powers to make laws for all the States in respect of items included in the Union and Concurrent Lists in the Constitution, it can do so with regard to Jammu and Kashmir only with the consent of the State Government". (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir: pp 232) As already stated, Article 370 was purely a temporary provision in the Indian Constitution. In February 1956, the Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir State ratified the State's accession to India. Perhaps it was the only task of the august body. As luck would have it, for the future political development of the State, "the issues in regard to jurisdiction of Parliament to subjects other than Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communication were kept flexible."The President of India was vested with the Constitutional authority to extend all the provisions of the Indian Constitution to the State of Jammu and Kashmir "with the concurrence of the State Government." But New Delhi hesitated to undertake such steps to keep local Muslim leadership in good humour and to please some super powers which blew hot and cold (on the Kashmir issue) in the same breath just to serve their own ends. Jammu and Kashmir has a separate constitution which "is an unfortunate by-product of Article 370. India comprises 27 States; no State, barring J&K, has a constitution of its own, a flag that flies side by side with the Indian tricolour. It is the example of "one country with two flags and two constituents".

## **19.0 OBSTACLE IN STATE'S INTEGRATION WITH INDIA**

The provision of Article 370 has stood in the way of J&K State's full integration with India, despite the politician's cacophony contradicting this view point. On a very close analysis of this Article, it becomes quite evident that "it has created a number of problems in regard to hold property, right to citizenship and right to settlement." A citizen living in any part of India is no longer the citizen of Jammu and Kashmir State. As per the provisions of Article 370, he or she cannot settle permanently in any part of Jammu and Kashmir State. Such a person can't own any property in the State. The citizen of Jammu and Kashmir State is a privileged denizen, for he or she enjoys the fruits of dual citizenship, that is; the person is both the domiciled citizen of the State and bona fide citizen of India. Paradoxically, the Constitution of India, for all purposes, recognises only one citizenship. Then, why this dichotomy and contradiction! A person (de facto citizen) living outside J&K State is not entitled to vote in the election of the State Assembly or Local bodies, Village Panchayats, Municipal Committees, Co-operative Societies, Notified Area Committees etc.. If a woman, born in J&K State, marries a person who is not the resident of the State, loses her property and voting rights. She is even debarred from inheriting any landed (moveable or immovable) property from her parents as ordained under the Shariat law or Hindu Succession law. Elaborating the concept of dual citizen provided in Article 370, Arun Shourie says in "A Secular Agenda" (pp 174), "Three things will be obvious at once. First, while permanent residents of Jammu and Kashmir are citizens of India and thereby are on a par with all other citizens of India in every respect, the latter are not on a par with the "permanent residents". Second, as to who is and who is not a "permanent resident" of Jammu and Kashmir is a matter to be decided wholly and exclusively by the legislature of that State alone. Third, that no law passed by it which discriminates in favour of the "permanent residents" and against the citizens of the rest of India can be challenged on the ground that it violets the Fundamental Rights of the latter. We cannot, therefore, challenge any law of that kind on the ground, for instance, that it denies us the equality before law which Article 14 guarantees us; that it discriminates against us on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, a discrimination which is prohibited by Article 15 etc".

From 1975 to 1989, communal elements in the State bureaucracy are alleged to have played a disastrous role, tilting this obnoxious clause in Article 370 in favour of the majority community in the State, particularly in the village. During this period thousands of vendors, selling sweetmeat, toys, clothes etc. who hailed from UP, Bihar and Bangladesh were clandestinely settled (permanently) in the downtown of Srinagar, Sopore, Baramulla, Shopian and Anantnag. They were enrolled as permanent residents (State Subjects). Most of them had come with a political mission and utilized mosques and shrines to indoctrinate the people and thus paved the way for the ongoing political turmoil. They cemented the relationship by marrying Kashmiri women. There was apparent nexus between these "outside elements" and law-enforcing authorities. Rip-Van-Winkle in Delhi was still in slumber. What was the impact of this Constitutional barrier? "These provisions of the Constitution are anachronistic, legally and

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

constitutionally antiquated, create emotional barriers between the State and the Union, and are otherwise incompatible with the fundamental principles of justice and (airplay," writes Jagmohan, former Governor of J&K State. Local politicians argue that Article 370 stops Indian bourgeoisie from acquiring land in the Valley and thus save the Muslims from exploitation. Well, it is accepted that the rich from the plains "will gobble up the land." But what about the rich within the Valley. "The law does not prevent the rich within Kashmir from gobbling whatever they want. By foreclosing competition, it only makes easier for them to do so and by paying prices that are lower than they would have to pay if others too were allowed to bid for the property. The laws which today safeguard the assets which are of direct concern to the ordinary Kashmiri, say, agricultural land which is protected by land reforms legislation, will continue to protect such assets," argues Arun Shourie (SecularAgenda, pp 175).

Today the average Kashmiri Muslim is the victim of economic and political exploitation at the hands of neo-Muslim middle class which has deep roots in the political and power- structure of the State. The forlorn Muslim in the Valley has become the "hewers of wood and drawers of water for this domineering middle class. It is all due to Article 370 which prevents State from adopting all the reformatory and anti-rich legislative measures passed in the Indian Parliament from time to time. The Pro- Article 370 lobby says that some form of Article 370 exists in Himachal Pradesh and the North-East. But its protagonists forget that the "situation in Kashmir is not comparable at all to the situation in these other areas." Of course, "there is no insurrection in those areas of the kind the country is faced with in Kashmir. And there can be no doubt at all that this insurrection has been easier for Pakistan to ignite, and it has been more difficult for the country to deal with because the population of the Valley has been overwhelmingly Muslim." Article 370 provides ammunition for the kind of insurgency that we are witnessing in J&K State, particularly in the Muslim-dominated areas of the State. Article 370 confers a kind of Muslim character on the State which is, obviously, the primary cause of the insurgency in the State. Mixed population is an antidote to any kind of separatist tendency flowering into any form of internal political rebellion as we find in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Taking note of this factor Arun Shourie says, "If nothing else, the priority which the insurrectionist assigned to clearing the Valley of Hindus and what they are beginning to do in Doda now should show how important an obstacle to secession a mixed population is in such areas. There are several reasons on account of which Punjab did not go as out of hand as Kashmir has gone- the apparatus of governance, for instance, was not corroded from within in Punjab, as it was by corruption and subversive infiltration in Kashmir. But one of the reasons for the difference surely has been that 45 to 50 per cent of Punjab's population was non-Sikh, that it was Hindu; as a result the more secessionist movement donned the apparel of Sikh fundamentalism, the more it alienated the non-Sikh population (Secular Agenda, pp 176). Those who raise their voice against the abolition of Article 370 are, advertently or inadvertently, the enemies of secularism and the concept of plurality of culture. Article 370 has proved instrumental in building a kind of political oligarchy and perpetuating dictatorship of the ruling clique. It is pertinent to make reference to the anti-defection law which was not adopted in toto

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

by the J&K Assembly. "The local legislation is so designed that it virtually vests the party chief with dictatorial powers. In the State law, now in force, it is not the Speaker, but the party chief, who decides whether a particular member of the legislature has defected or not. In other words, he is the head of the Government as well as the head of the party. He is the one who sits in judgment and takes the final decision" (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 37). As per amendment of the law, it is the leader of legislature party who is the final authority to decide whether a particular member should be disqualified or not in case of any defection. Such a law clearly promotes and entrenches the personality cult and "virtually sanctions constitutional dictatorship of the party leader." Some persons justify the retention of Article 370 to serve as a "bulwark for preserving the identity of Kashmiris." A pertinent question may be: if Article 370 is there to protect and preserve the cultural entity or identity of Kashmiri Muslims, then such a provision is required to be enshrined in the Constitution of India to preserve the identity of other States as well. What do they mean by the Kashmiri identity? Does it mean Muslim identity? One can read a deep meaning in this line of argument. "It is a tacit acceptance of the two nation-theory." "Article 370, they say, is necessary for saving the identity of Kashmiris. As the Constitution does not contain any corresponding provision for the overwhelming majority of our people, is it then designed to, is its effect to-smother the identities of others? Or, is it that the identities of others, Maharashtrians, Tamilians, what have you, are not worth preserving? (Secular Agenda, pp 171). We is vehemently opposed to the two-nation theory because it is fatal to our secular polity. By accepting Article 370, we are "applying the two-nation theory in Kashmir" How can a lasting relationship between Kashmir and the rest of India be cemented when there stands such an emotional barrier. A segment of Indian leadership often "argues that the retention of Article 370 is necessary for giving substantial autonomy to the State." Autonomy is a vague term when analysed within the parameter of Article 370. It is not understood what has autonomy to do with Article 370. When other Indian States raise the demand of granting internal autonomy to them, they don't first ask for some kind of Article 370. These States "do not mean separation of identities". For them autonomy denotes decentralisation of power at the grassroots level. Article 370 for the State of Jammu and Kashmir stems from the motivation to keep the State and its people away from the mainstream of national life. "It emanates from a clever strategy to stay away from the mainstream, to set up a separate fiefdom, to fly a separate flag, to have a Prime Minister rather than a Chief Minister and a Sadar-i-Riyasat instead of a Governor, land to secure greater power and patronage, not for the good of the masses, not far serving the cause of peace and progress or attaining cultural unity amidst diversity, but for serving the interests of new elites, the new Sheikhs." (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 240).

## **20.0 RELEVANCE OF ARTICLE 370 IN CHANGING SCENARIO**

As already elucidated, Article 370 carries within its womb the two-nation theory which resulted in the division of the subcontinent in 1947. It gives an impetus to communal forces and thus aims at the polarisation of the people on communal lines. When we talk of preserving the spirit of Article 370, it essentially means the retention of the Muslim character of the State. The protagonists of Article 370 argue that if Article 370 is scrapped, "Kashmir's link with India would be snapped." It is a fantastic argument which is devoid of any logic or substance. "Would India become a colony again if the British Parliament were to amend the Indian Independence Act retrospectively, which it is legally competent to do? (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 252). Article 370 has nothing to do with the question of J&K State's accession to India which was executed through the Instrument of Accession signed by the then Constitutional ruler of J&K and later ratified by the State Constituent Assembly. It is argued that Article 370 ought to be retained because of our solemn commitment to the people of Kashmir. This is also the line of argument of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference and other secessionist groups which have taken up the gun to free the State from the so-called Indian hegemony. "But where is the commitment? The Constitution speaks of the contents of the Article as "Temporary provisions". We have seen what Pandit Nehru, for instance, said and thought of it. And if there was a commitment it was to subject. The Accession itself to the decision of the people through a plebiscite. None of these chanters of "solemn commitment" says that the commitment ought to be honoured. All are agreed that as the circumstances have changed - the violation by Pakistan of what were to be preconditions - that commitment no longer holds. But that which was never committed must hold in perpetuity! (Secular Agenda, pp 168). Those who talk of the so-called commitment present the issue in a partisan context. Article 370 has serious ramifications on the financial health of the State, How can a State, with meager internal resources, improve upon the economic conditions of its denizens. Financial integration of the State with Indian Union is the best guarantee for the speedy economic development of the State. "In the absence of full financial integration with the Union, Jammu and Kashmir would be nothing but a medieval anarchy like in the Maharaja's time when the per capita income was only Rs.11 and out of that, too, 21 per cent had to be paid as taxes; 93.4 per cent of the population was illiterate; there was only one boy's primary school for every 66 square miles; and one girl's primary school for every 467 square miles; and the total annual expenditure on agriculture, public health, industries, roads, irrigation and education was only Rs. 36 lakh." What a tremendous economic progress and big leap forward has the State taken during the last four decades, though a proxy war within the State has been continuing for the last fourteen years? In 1988-89 its per capita income was above national average, thanks to New Delhi for its liberal financial assistance to the cash-strapped, bankrupt State. To have a proper understanding of the financial position of the State vis-a-vis other Indian States, it is pertinent to go into the statistical data which reveals "in the year 1989-90 the per capita Central grant for Jammu and Kashmir was Rs. 1122, while it was Rs. 552 for Himachal Pradesh, Rs. 425 for Assam, Rs. 109 for Bihar, Rs. 91 for

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

UP and Rs. 67 for West Bengal." In view of the poor economic health of the State, autonomy - as implicit in the controversial Article 370, is an undesirable gimmick and an exercise in futility. Article 370 is fraught with serious consequences in so far as the application of Article 356 to the State is concerned.

Under this Article the President of India is authorised to impose President's Rule in any State. Article 370 debars President from applying this yardstick to the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The votaries of Article 370 reject the application of Article 356 on the plea that "the extension of this Article constitutes encroachment on the State's autonomy." Supposing, this line of argument is accepted, one important question arises : if there is a breakdown of constitutional machinery in the State or the State goes bankrupt, triggering off instability detrimental to the sovereignty of the country as a whole, what "will happen in the absence of President's powers under Article 356" ? The President, as per Article 370, shall have to abide by the instructions of the Sadr-i-Riyasat who is invariably appointed by the President of India on the recommendation of the State Assembly (He or she is rather elected by the State Assembly and then formally appointed by the President). In this matter, the Sadr-i-Riyasat has the final say, not the President of India under any circumstances. Such a premise downgrades the position of the President, "subordinating the Union to the State". Such a measure props up corruption and paves the way for disunity and disintegration of the country. "Recall that under Article 370 for a subject other than Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communication, Parliament can acquire power to pass laws only after the President has secured the concurrence of the State Government that it may make laws on that matter. Similarly, provisions of the Constitution relating to Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communication can be extended to the State only in consultation with the State Government. And provisions on other subjects can be extended only with the concurrence of the State Government. We have seen the kinds of governments the State has had, Bakshi's regime indicted for corruption by a Commission of Enquiry; Farooq Abdullah's cavalier government; G.M. Shah's Government of defectors. At the least, they have been as venal and corrupt as those in other States. Should such Governments have a veto over what laws passed by Parliament, what parts of our Constitution shall or shall not apply to a State of our country?" (A Secular Agenda, pp 164). In order to have harmonious relations with its federal unit, "the Centre is compelled to always manipulate and manoeuvre so as to ensure that the State is in the hands of a pliant Government". Each time the State agrees to concede the demand from the Centre, the State Government will necessarily take its pound of flesh. The rulers of the State will always be there to blackmail the Centre. Consequently, elections need to be rigged to elect corrupt politicians who will go by the dictation of the Centre. Generally speaking, what is the likely fallout of this obnoxious situation created by this controversial Article: "Distrust, animosity, the Centre and State maligning each other, these are certain results." If the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court over the State of Jammu and Kashmir is withdrawn, local courts shall be free to deal with cases in whatever way they like to do in the absence of "any final check". The process of administering justice to the people of the State will receive a deathblow. Judges may become puppets in the hands of bureaucracy which

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

usually goes by the dictation of political masters. It is in this context that Jagmohan, the former Governor of the State, writes, "Article 370 is nothing but a feeding ground for the parasites at the heart of paradise. It skins the 100 Jihad in Kashmir poor. It deceives them. In essence it creates a land without justice and full of crudities and contradictions" (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 230). Without the jurisdiction of the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India over the State of Jammu and Kashmir, India's Muslim majority State shall always remain in the process of financial mismanagement. The State bureaucracy is notorious for financial profligacy. In the absence of any check from the supreme financial controlling body, it is likely to go financially berserk. "The Centre is said to have spent thousands of crores on subsidies in Kashmir; the entire plan expenditure of the, State comes from the Centre, the revenue the State collects does not meet even its salary bill; the per capita subsidy to J&K is sixteen times that to West Bengal, for instance; but most certainly this most massive scale of assistance has not been reaching the people. It has been siphoned off on the way by Kashmiri leaders, no doubt, that is an important point, for it gives an answer both to secessionists and to chanters for "Greater Autonomy. But by leaders, that is by those whom the rulers in Delhi had to allow to do what they pleased on the presumption that they in turn would manage the people of the Valley" (Arun Shourie in Secular Agenda, pp 178). Those who pay have the right to call the tune. Jurisdiction of the Election Commission over the State of Jammu and Kashmir is yet another subject of controversy. When the State of Jammu and Kashmir was outside the jurisdiction of the Election Commission, we knew how elections were rigged and chaotically mismanaged "to rig elections", for instance. Much is made of the Constitution which the State's Constituent Assembly devised. That Assembly was elected in a typical election, each and everyone of the National Conference's 75 candidates was declared elected unopposed, and that by the simplest devices, the opposing candidates were either jailed or, as in the case of the Praja Parishad candidates in Jammu, their nomination papers were rejected" (Arun Shourie in Secular Agenda). Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed's goons and pliant bureaucrats were notoriously known for rigging elections in the State. In the mid-fifties a low caliber Deputy Commissioner of Anantnag, Khaliq DC. , rejected 75 per cent nomination papers of the opposition candidates in his capacity as the Returning Officer of the district and ensured landslide victory of all the candidates belonging to the ruling National Conference. The rigging of elections did not stop there. Like the waters flowing down the Jhelum, it has been going on intermittently. Even in mid-seventies election of late Pandit Tikka Lal Taploo who had contested from Habba Kadal Constituency of Srinagar was rigged by a ruling National Conference candidate who

latter obtained a cosy berth in the State Cabinet. Had not the elections been rigged in 1986 and the then Muslim United Front - one of whose candidates was Moulvi Mohammed Yousuf alias Chief Commander Salah-ud-Din of Hizbul Mujahideen - allowed to win on its own a few seats in the Assembly, perhaps the situation that we are witnessing at present in the State would not have reached such a sorry pass. Rigging of elections has been one of the causes of ongoing Muslim insurgency in the State. The Election Commission of India sees that 'no rigging whatsoever takes place. It serves as a watchdog and protector of democracy. If the jurisdiction of

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

the Commission over the State is - God forbid! - scrapped, God alone knows what hell will break loose during and after the election time in the State. Those who oppose the jurisdiction of the Election Commission over the State are, in fact, arch enemies of democracy, having no faith in presenting a true picture of democratic India to the Muslims of the State. At the end, a million dollar question arises whether "it is Constitutionally permissible to abrogate Article 370 without the approval of the Constituent Assembly of the State."? According to Article 370, the President of India is empowered to delete the controversial Article from the code book provided the State Constituent Assembly makes recommendation to this effect to the President of India. "In other words, even if the Union Government decides to abrogate the Article, it cannot constitutionally do so by itself as this would involve the position of the State's Constituent Assembly and getting its recommendations." It may be noted that Article 370 was inserted as a temporary and transitional measure. How can it remain a permanent feature of the Constitution which has been amended a number of times in the past in view of the exigencies of the situation from time to time? The State Constituent Assembly no longer exists; it is a dead body. It is not logically correct to assume that the consent of the dead body is a must and binding on us. The Union Parliament can amend the Constitution - thereby abrogating Article 370 under Article 368. The State of Jammu and Kashmir is one of the federal units of the Indian Union. So, the Constitution of India as a whole applies to the State. The most unfortunate part of the Kashmir story is that no pro-Indian politician has come out boldly against Article 370. Now, it is linked with vote-bank politics which, in other words, aims at appeasing a section of minorities. For them it is synonymous with the Muslim cause. A false impression has been created that retention of Article 370 safeguards the interests of Muslims of the State. In fact this is a hoax being played on the Muslims of the State by vested interests. Our experience during the last five decades has clearly revealed beyond any shadow of doubt that Article 370 has served as an instrument of "perpetrating injustice and inequities." It has given rise to a bunch of corrupt politicians and communal bureaucrats." It has fanned anti-India sentiment and fed the forces of separatism and obscurantism which succeeded in pushing the State into cauldron of Muslim insurgency and led to the exodus of over 3 lakh Kashmiri Pandits from the State.

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

### 21.0 FAROOQ'S CORONATION

On September 8, 1982, Dr. Farooq Abdullah took the oath of office as the Chief Minister of the State, after the demise of his father. With his succession, the Untold Story enters the most turbulent phase with comic touches and tragic quirks. It was his father, who had installed Dr. Farooq as the President of ruling National Conference on 21 August, 1981. "Royalty would have envied the show put up in Srinagar on that August day when Farooq Abdullah was made the President of the National Conference and heir-apparent. The city was packed with people, a human tide surging and ebbing and flowing through the streets. Word had gone round that the Sheikh wanted Srinagar to look red: red for the blood of martyrs, red for the colour of the National Conference flag, red to symbolize the emancipation of peasants. In the lovely summer sunlight of the afternoon, Farooq Abdullah, standing in an open jeep led the procession from party headquarters, Mujahid Manzil, to Iqbal Park. It was dusk when the father anointed his son: "This crown that I am placing on your head is made of thorns. You are young enough to face the challenges of life, and I pray that God give you the courage to fulfill your responsibilities to these people whom I nurtured with pride, and to whom I have given the best years of my life." Then the Sheikh broke down and the crowd roared as one, "Amen". Father pinned the presidential badge on the son's chest. The torch had passed." (M. J. Akbar in India: The Siege within, pp 276).

At the time of death, Sheikh Abdullah had unrivalled political influence on the masses. So, Farooq's succession was taken as a right step in right direction. It was on September 11, 1982 that 46 members of the National Conference Legislature Party passed unanimously the motion moved by Sheikh's son-in-law, G.M. Shah, approving the election of Dr. Farooq Abdullah as the new Chief Minister of the State. New Delhi was well aware of the fact that pro-Pak elements were likely to play a crucial role and exploit the confusion in the wake of Sheikh's death. The topmost Jamat-e-Islami leader, Saif-ud-Din Qari was reported to have said that there would be tremendous change after Sheikh's death. "We have the Kashmiri intelligentsia on our side because we are the only party with character and principles. Once the Sheikh goes there will be tremendous change," said Saif-ud-Din Qari to a press reporter (Sunday, September 6, 1981). Farooq had to face-twin challenges: internal and external. As regards internal trouble, he was required to keep his wily, ambitious brother-in-law, G.M. Shah, under thumb. Externally, he had to deal with pro-Pak elements with an iron hand as they had started making inroads into the traditional political parties. During the time of his father, New Delhi had taken strong exception to the Resettlement Bill passed by the State Assembly. "And, of course, there was continuing problem of relations with the Centre, exacerbated at this moment over the Resettlement Bill by which Sheikh Abdullah wanted to give those in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir the right to return to and settle in the parent country. Delhi thought the Bill became a virtual invitation to Pakistani- trained pies and saboteurs, and refused its assent." (India: The Siege within, pp 277). Perhaps withholding the assent to the Resettlement Bill by the Centre is the only bold move exhibited by New Delhi ever since the Kashmir story began. Farooq Abdullah was literally committed to the ideas and ideals of, his father, who. had some

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

attachment with Nehru dynasty. On the other hand, he was not, handicapped by this attachment whatsoever. During his stay in London for a long time he had developed links with Pakistan based Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front leaders. His confrontation with Mrs. Gandhi in the years to come was the logical conclusion of the past events. The handsome golf-buff westernised Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir State had a style of his own. "He quickly indicated the kind of Chief Minister he would be: dramatic, open, and unafraid and in constant communication with the people".

Farooq got out of the ivory tower and behaved melodramatically. He brought a sense of intimacy, even fun, to the exercise of power, without diluting the sense of responsibility, says M. J. Akbar. Soon after coming to power, Farooq showed the door to some of his father's trusted "stalwarts" and reshuffled his Cabinet. He was reluctant to curb the activities of secessionist groups which remained very active in the mid-eighties. "Farooq proved as sly as a fox. Keeping his cards close to his chest, he systematically aided the process of Islamisation as were chalked out by the Islamised bureaucracy having established close links with Jamat-e-Islami and other communal elements with a vast network of Madrassas (Islamic schools) working for regimentation and hate-India campaign. He continued to pay lip-service to secularism and India. He resorted to this cunning only to subvert the entire polity of Kashmir allowing the Canker of Communalism and Sectarianism to take firm roots." (Prof. M. L. Koul in Kashmir: Past and Present, Unravelling the Mystique, Chapter 15). During Farooq's regime National Conference joined hands with Moulvi Farooq, the head of Awami Action Committee which stands for J&K State's integration with Pakistan on religious grounds. It is an irony of history that the same National Conference once considered Moulvi Farooq's outfit, Awami Action Committee (previously known as Muslim Conference) detrimental to the secular polity of the State. It ultimately paved the way for the ongoing Muslim insurgency in the State. "The Double-Farooq bridge up formally destroyed the bona fides of National Conference as a party subscribing to the commitment of Kashmir's accession to India and more than most to secularism and pluralism," writes Prof. Koul. Farooq's confrontation with Mrs. Gandhi began soon after Farooq assumed reins of power in his hands. Elections to the State Assembly were due in July, 1983. Farooq forged links with the regional parties which were against Mrs. Gandhi's Congress Party. He conducted an aggressive election campaign in the Valley, arousing the Muslim sentiments. He expressed his happiness over Congress defeat in Andhra Pradesh in January, 1983. National Conference leaders dubbed Congress as a "Hindu Party". "He began to Project Congress (I) as a Hindu Congress. He was reported to have said in one of his speeches that 'if the Hindu Congress won in Kashmir, the Kashmiri Muslims would meet the same fate of Muslims of Assam.'" This stand endeared him to Kashmiri Muslims who were already being swayed by Islamic fundamentalism and propaganda of Pakistan", (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World, Chapter XVII).

The result of the communalised campaign was obvious: Farooq's party bagged 46 seats out of 75 in the Assembly, whereas the Congress secured 26 seats in all. Addressing the Friday Congregation at the historic Jamia

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Masjid in Srinagar after his landslide victory in the State Assembly elections, Dr. Farooq Abdullah declared in clear-cut terms that his fight with the Congress was not over " : I will fight them in the streets and all corners of the country". He said that he would seek close relationship with the opposition parties. The tussle between the Congress and the National Conference took communal overtone. The Muslims of Kashmir were thus led to shun secular agenda and toe a communal ideology. Taking advantage of the prevailing political situation in the State, caused by the rift between Congress and the National Conference, Pakistan was setting up camps for imparting arms training to future militants Jihadists). The process of infiltration had started gathering momentum. "The top terrorists leading various outfits had already been infiltrating and ex-filtrating for purposes of establishing their network on the soil of Kashmir and for political direction and guidance" (Prof. M. L. Koul). The Youth wing of the National Conference openly pleaded for autonomy of the State, even some of its leaders went to the extent of saying that independence is the only solution to Kashmir issue. Pakistan had devised a well thought out strategy to subvert State administration in a systematic matter. "What was ominous for the future of Kashmir was that the trained terrorists found their way into the police forces and administrative setup and were provided a shield by the Islamised bureaucracy, which essentially abetted the programme of secession and subversion." (Prof. M. L. Koul, in Kashmir: Past and Present, Unravelling the Mystique, chapter fifteen). There was regular contact between the people living on our side of the border and ISI agents in PoK. In this connection I may give my personal experience. In those days I was posted in Karnah which is very close to Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pak-occupied Kashmir. A local Congress leader, Late Qazi Ghulam Hyder (who is a close relation of a top official in Kashmir University) paid a visit to Pakistan to see some of his relatives in Muzaffarabad after seeking visa from the concerned authorities. Just on the day of his arrival in Muzaffarabad his step brother, Qazi Ghulam Yahiya, a schoolteacher, told me about his brother's safe arrival in Muzaffarabad. He said a man from Muzaffarabad had come (sneaked into Indian territory) to inform Qazi Ghulam Yahiya about Hyder's arrival in Muzaffarabad where he was staying with public prosecutor, Manzoor Ahmad. When a small demonstration was held by pro-Bhutto elements in Leepa valley over the execution of Bhutto, scores of people from Tad, Amrohi, Seemari (villages lying within the Indian territory) rushed to Leepa to participate in the demonstration led by one local goon, Master Luqman. A press party, comprising Kamlaish Vakil and S. N. Gurkha and others visited the border. It was a big surprise for them to see how porous the border was in the early eighties in Teetwall sector. The local Thesildar of Karnah Tehsil, Mr. Ganai was a Jamaat-e-Islami activist who had made Friday prayers compulsory for government officials posted in Karnah. In 1988, I paid a visit to Wadipora in connection with the marriage ceremony of a neighbour. There, by the way, I sauntered to Bader-Kali shrine to make my obeisance to the deity. I was taken aback to hear from the policeman guarding the shrine (which is a few meters away from the Line of Control in Kupwara Sector) that the local police had caught a week earlier a big cache of arms which was meant for an influential local politician who might have developed close links with ISI which was preparing to launch Jihad in the Valley. It bears an eloquent

## **Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

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**By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

testimony to the fact that "pro-Pakistan subversives had perceptibly spread out their tentacles." At the behest of Jamat-e-Islami and its allied parties a complete hartal was observed on January 16,1984 just to show to the outside world that the Muslims of the State were observing the national festival as a Black Day, contrary to the jubilation that after marks the occasion throughout the country. Along with the Jamat-e-Islami, People's League (whose present supremo is Sheikh Abdul Aziz), and slain Abdul Ghani Lone's People's Conference and Azim-Inqalabi alias Master Altaf Mohammed's Mahaz-i-Azadi were in the vanguard of the anti-India tirade. Local mosques provided a: political forum for the secessionist leaders to give vent to the anti-India tirade and pro-Pak sentiments. The local intelligence was in a shambles.

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

### 22.0 A BIG DISASTER

Inexperienced as he was in the art of administrating the State, Dr. Farooq's first stint as the Chief Minister of the State proved a big disaster, with anti-India elements penetrating deep into the State administration. Nearly 70 hard-core militants, who were arrested previously, were released from the police lockup, presumably under the instructions from the Chief Minister of the State. Consequently, this imprudent step gave an impetus to the rising tide of terrorism in the State. Pro-Pak elements in the State had become so bold that they staged anti-India demonstration by flying aloft the Pak national flag at the Amar Singh Club ground, where a cricket match between India and the West Indies was being played. I could myself see on this occasion how the Indian players were hooted and abused by the demonstrators who mostly belonged to the Jamaat-e-Tulba, the youth wing of Jamat-e-Islami. Though the police arrested a few demonstrators as eyewash, yet all of them were released within a day or two. It clearly showed that the administration was not prepared to take any drastic action against the demonstrators. Had the government taken tough measures to deal with a situation like this, perhaps things would not have come to such a sorry pass and the story of Kashmir would not have taken such a dangerous turn. Farooq wanted to give an impression to the outside world that he was a strong man who would never yield to the influence of the "stalwarts of the party." Writes M.J. Akbar in "India :The Siege within" page 278: "The very first thing he did after coming to power was to dismiss, to their utter shock and horror, all those ministers who had acquired the reputation of being "stalwarts" under the benign eye of the Sheikh. Farooq Abdullah replaced the entire Cabinet with one he could trust, with the result that an old warhorse like D. D. Thakur found himself without the familiar comfort of a ministerial chair. Those who had acquired a reputation of being were studiously kept out of office." Through his oddity of behaviour like directing traffic policeman, the young Chief Minister had brought "a sense of intimacy, even fun, to the exercise of power, without diluting the sense of responsibility." By reshuffling his cabinet no one could now brand him a wastrel and playboy "who could not be trusted with such an important legacy." He had still excellent relations with Mrs. Gandhi whom he called Mummy and cultivated personal relationship with Rajiv Gandhi. Mrs. Gandhi had supported Dr. Farooq from the day one the struggle for succession had commenced during the protracted illness of Sheikh Abdullah. Had not she supported him, the throne might have been Burped by his wily brother-in-law, G M Shah. In fact, Mrs. Gandhi had "set the stage for Farooq's midnight coronation." The dismissed ministers were publicly ridiculed by the Chief Minister. He was, more or less, suspicious of their evil designs and smacked of some conspiracy against him. At that time Mufti Mohammed Syed, who later rose to be the Union Home Minister, played a crucial role in Kashmir politics. He is alleged to have, caused a wedge between Mrs. Gandhi and Farooq. Mufti was the President of the Pradesh Congress Committee and wanted to promote his party's interests at the cost of the ruling National Conference which was headed by none other than Farooq himself. Farooq and his cohorts were bent upon wiping out the Congress in the State. How could Mrs. Gandhi reconcile with this odd situation! She had a dilemma and a

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

difficult situation to deal with, keeping in view her party's interests. "Mrs. Gandhi's problem was how to find an acceptable equation between his responsibilities as Prime Minister with the nation's integrity and defence her primary duty, her personal relations with the Abdullah's and her partisan interest as President of the party which was now in fact - the Congress (Indira). A Farooq Abdullah Government was, by any criterion, essential to Kashmir's security in 1982, but could this be considered the only option for the State? Could she, should she, give up her inherent right as a political leader to promote her party, and attempt, as was legitimate in any democracy, to win elections there too? Sheikh Abdullah had offered a solution to this quandary, when he said that the National Conference could become an affiliate of the Congress in Jammu and Kashmir" (M. J. Akbar). But Mrs. Gandhi had smacked of sinister designs in this new offer which she rejected outright. It was essential for the Congress to retain its presence on two grounds. First, the Congress would serve as a check on the regional (read Muslim) aspirations of the National Conference. Secondly, the presence of Congress was essential in view of its all-India character and its role in the country's freedom struggle. Farooq was not prepared to give any political leverage to the Congress which was branded as a "Hindu party" by some of the members of the Youth Wing of National Conference. By transferring power to Sheikh Abdullah in 1975, Syed Mir Qasim had already debilitated and enfeebled the State Congress.

In reply to Syed Mir Qasim's letter dated June 18, 1983, Mrs. Gandhi had made it clear: "For me the (1975) accord was, and remains, a method of fruitful co-operation among all secular and patriotic forces in the State. It certainly did not mean that the Congress should fade into oblivion". Confrontation between Mrs. Gandhi and Farooq began on 28 May, 1982 when the latter attended opposition parties' meeting called by charismatic Andhra leader N.T. Rama Rao at Vijayawada. Mrs. Gandhi accused Dr. Farooq of joining hands with her enemies outside J&K State. "Farooq Abdullah had, in fact, done something which even his father had not. No matter what the extent of his problems with them, Sheikh Abdullah had always maintained that the Nehru family should be supported in the rest of the country But Farooq Abdullah wanted more than one basket for his eggs. And so he was among the three Chief Ministers and eleven party leaders who, at Vijayawada, charged the Congress (Indira) with ruining the nation. And he promised to host the third of this series of meetings in Srinagar, in October". (India: The Siege within, pp 284) There is a perceptible difference between the father and the son Sheikh and Farooq. Whereas Sheikh Abdullah was, to quote Dr. Karan Singh in "Heir Apparent," one of the tallest Kashmiris, both literally and figuratively, and that he made a unique contribution to the development of the Kashmiri people over the last half century, his role in opposing communal forces during the turbulent years of Partition will long be remembered. He confined his activities to the State, particularly to the Muslim dominated Valley, despite the fact that he was elected President of All State People's Conference in the early forties. He had no ambition of going after new pastures. He ruled over the hearts of the Muslims of the Valley. But, the case was just the reverse with his son, Dr. Farooq; he wanted to extend his political influence beyond the Pir Panchal. Who knows he has set his eyes on the covetous Presidential chair? But his initial daredevil venture to go with the

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

political opponents of Mrs. Gandhi clearly indicated which way the wind was likely to blow for the charismatic Chief Minister of the State. When Mrs. Gandhi visited Srinagar, she was shown black flags at a public rally in Srinagar's Iqbal Park. I was present to hear Mrs. Gandhi at Iqbal Park. The park was packed to capacity, though political goons and anti-national elements had virtually sealed all the entry points. What a contrast between what we saw during our childhood days and the one we were witnessing at Iqbal park. Gone were the days when Nehru was carried out in "Parandha" (big decorated boat) along with Sheikh - the Lion of Kashmir - in a river procession through the historic Vitasta (Jhelum). Thousands of schoolchildren would be there on the bank of the Jhelum, raising full throated slogans "Jawahar Lai Nehru Zindabad." Now, the workers of the same National Conference were raising slogans: "Indira Gandhi Murdabad." "The National Conference having parted its ways with the secular and democratic agenda appeared ready for confrontation having its baneful impact on the mass mind' (Prof. Koul). It was during this period that a fundamentalist organization Allah-Walley established its net work in Srinagar and Baramulla. The outfit held a big convention in Srinagar which was attended by some top bureaucrats and political leaders. Sheikh Maqbool, Law-Minister in the Farooq Cabinet, was deeply associated with the fundamentalist outfit and gave undue patronage to the UP-based fundamentalist outfit which, overtly or covertly, spread anti-India venom among the misguided masses in the Valley. A seminar on "Identity of Kashmir" was held in a local college in Srinagar in the second week of August, 1983. It was a state-managed affair and attended by some of the Muslim intellectuals from plains, including the Editor of the Muslim India, Mr. Shahab-ud-Din. All the speakers at the seminar stressed the need for retaining the Muslim identity of the State which showed that a deliberate attempt was made to present the culture and history of the State in a different context. In giving a fillip to the revivalist tendencies, Kashmir University was alleged to have played a prominent role. Frequent seminars were held on Iqbal, exaggerating his role as the morning star of the Indian Renaissance with no reference to his somersault from nationalist ideology to one that props up the two-nation theory, leading to the creation of Pakistan.

However, Kashmiris are proud of Iqbal's contribution to Urdu literature as his forefathers were Kashmiri Pandits. An intellectual atmosphere was deliberately created "to chart out the course of secessionism, separatism and disintegration by highlighting and stressing the Muslim identity of Kashmir. When one thinks of the identity of Kashmiris, it does not mean ignoring the history and culture of the Valley prior to the advent of the Muslims in the Valley. Who can deny that Shards is not an acceptable script of Kashmiri language? If Lal Vaakhs are extricated from the Kashmiri literature it may look, more or less, a "theatre of absurd." "The Kashmiri culture and language have indelible mark of Hindu contributions, which even the highly regimented and biased Muslims cannot weed out. See what will happen to Kashmiri language if Lal Ded's, Shiva Yogini is dropped from the language only to preserve the Muslim identity. Can Nund Rishi with his Hindu thought and content orientating and structuring the aeons old Rishi ethos of Kashmir be deleted from the annals of Kashmir heritage and value structure? writes Prof. M. L. Kaul: in Kashmir: Past and Present.

## Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali

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By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Kashmiri ethos or identity is no longer Muslim identity which forms the basis of the separatist movement in Kashmir: It is a myth and a foreign-sponsored idea conceived to deal a death-blow to the pluralistic character of Kashmiri society. Kashmiri identity is the sum total of all those values and traditions which are "to be assessed in the backdrop of the totality" of the hoary history of culture and civilization of all the Kashmiris. To treat it purely as a Muslim identity is just to take a myopic view of Kashmiri culture which has been adored and enriched from time to time by Nund Rush, Lal Ded, Mehjoor, Nadim, Ghani Kashmiri, Krishen Joo Razdan, Master Zinda Koul, Rahman Rahi, Fazil Kashmiri, Sarwanand Koul Premi, Vasudev Reh, Arjun Dev Majboor, .Ghulam Rasool Nazki, Santosh, Mod Lal Sakki, Amin Kamil, Pitamber Nath Dhar Faani etc. Even names of some villages and towns were changed and Pan-Islamic appellation given to them. At the behest of outside forces and also in collaboration with anti- national elements, a deliberate attempt was made to misinterpret and misdirect our cultural stream. It was a direct onslaught on Kashmir's culture before armed uprising in 1990 which has now snowballed into a proxy war fought on the Indian soil. Had corrective measures been taken in time, perhaps the State might have been spared the holocaust which has resulted in the loss of thousands of lives. That is the most unfortunate episode of the Kashmir Story.

### 23.0 POLITICAL INTRIGUES

Mrs. Indira Gandhi was bent upon bringing down Dr. Farooq's Government as she was fully convinced that the Chief Minister of the State was not acting on desired lines. The plan to deprive Dr. Farooq Abdullah of power was set in motion. It was meticulously worked out by the CM's brother-in-law, Ghulam Mohammed Shah. It was a sort of palace intrigue reminiscent of the days of Mughal kings. "Politics was in the blood of Sheikh Abdullah's family. His eldest daughter, Mrs. Khalida Shah, was as politically ambitious as her brother, Dr. Farooq Abdullah. Like lady Macbeth, she too wanted her husband to be king. There was also a background of fractions between the sister and the brother" (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 272). G.M. Shah was never reconciled to his brother-in-law, Dr. Farooq's, becoming the Chief Minister of the State. He had always felt that he "had a better claim to be the Chief Minister of the State. When Dr. Farooq was a student, G.M. Shah was very much in the thick of struggle: he was jailed a number of times and worked as Secretary of the Plebiscite Front. He was the right hand man of Mirza Afzal Beg who was the founder of the Plebiscite Front. Consequently, Shah was very popular among anti-India elements within the ruling National Conference. During the Assembly elections of June 1983, Shah had succeeded in securing tickets for his eleven loyalists through the influence of his mother-in-law, Begum Akbar Jan, the wife of Sheikh Abdullah. Shah's lobby was acting overtime to garner support for Dr. Farooq's brother-in-law. It was no longer a secret that G.M. Shah was all set to topple Dr. Farooq's Ministry with the help of Congress (1). Alarm-bells were set on ringing for Dr. Farooq when Sheikh Abdul Jabbar, an MIA from Lar and Shah loyalist, sent a memorandum to the President of India, levelling corruption charges against Dr. Farooq Abdullah and demanding the immediate dismissal of the Farooq Government. G.M. Shah and his wife, Khalida, openly supported Jabbar. They addressed a public meeting at Kangan to felicitate Jabbar. Khalida complained of assault on her party at Ganderbal while returning from Kangan to Srinagar after addressing the congregation. Thus, the breach in the "Royal Family" was complete. The story turned to be a melodrama, the theme being "lust for power". 'The rupture between Dr. Farooq Abdullah and G.M. Shah was formalised when their groups decided to have separate conventions of the party. G.M. Shah decided to have his convention on May 23, 1987 and Dr. Farooq a few days latter." At the Shah-sponsored convention Dr. Farooq was expelled from the primary membership of the ruling National Conference and in his place his elder sister and wife of G.M. Shah, Mrs. Khalida, was installed as the President of National Conference. Dissidents, including G. N. Kochak, D. D. Thakur and Abdul Rashid Shaheen (at present the National Conference MP in the 14th Lok Sabha) etc attended the convention organised by Shah. Dr. Farooq lost no time in paying the wily Shah in the same coin. The ruling National Conference headed by Dr. Farooq himself held a counter-convention and expelled Shah from the primary membership of the party. The very political atmosphere in the Valley was electrified due to these sudden political developments. There was tension all around, full of ominous signs of political tornado about to lash the State were visible. Pro-Pakistan elements, in collaboration with the Sikh extremists, were nursing their designs to subvert the State administration. On July 2, 1984

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

a big political dramas was staged with three actors playing their part well - Shah, Dr. Farooq and New Delhi. Writes M. J. Akbar, "At around 5.30 in the morning, while Abdullah was still asleep, four cars drove past his house on Gupkar Road, carrying the defectors and a Congress leader, Iftikhar Ansari, to meet the Governor. They submitted a handwritten letter, saying that they were withdrawing support from Abdullah. The Governor telephoned the Chief Minister at 7.30 in the morning. Farooq Abdullah was shocked. He demanded that his majority be tested where the law required it to test, on the floor of the Assembly. Abdullah demanded fresh elections. That, of course, was out of the question. That evening G.M. Shah (who was not even a member of the properly elected Assembly) was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir". (India: The Siege within, pp 287)

All the thirteen men and including Khem, Lata Wakhlu, who had changed loyalties, were made full-fledged Cabinet Ministers. It is an irony of fate that two of them, Jabbar Sheikh of Lar and Hassam-u-Din Bandey of Hazratbal were shot dead by militants in the early nineties in Srinagar. In their memorandum to the Governor, the pro-Shah MLA's had charged Farooq of colluding with anti-national elements. Says the letter dated June 28, 1984 submitted to the State Governor, "Throwing to the winds the directions of Sher-i-Kashmir and the party, he entered into an unholy alliance with antisocial elements and fundamentalists who had been fought by Sher-i-Kashmir for as long a period of 52 years. The party structure was changed beyond recognition and undesirable elements were pampered and the real workers ignored, so much so that Shah who had given his life and blood for the party and who suffered for decades along with Sher-i-Kashmir was expelled from the party..." Dismissing the Abdullah Government and installing G.M. Shah as the new Chief Minister of the State was, constitutionally and legally a sound step as Dr. Farooq had lost majority in the Assembly The State Governor had earlier discussed the explosive situation with the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi who was convinced that the Chief Minister was going astray. Says Governor Jagmohan, "There were, in fact, indications that the misunderstanding between Dr. Farooq and Mrs. Gandhi was to be resolved. She herself told me at the end of June that if Dr. Farooq Abdullah took effective action against disruptionists, she would, in the totality of circumstances, ignore his many other aberrations. His crafty friends, she thought, were taking advantage of his immaturity and egging him on to adopt a dangerous course, which, besides bringing Muslim and Sikh fundamentalists together, would enable Pakistan to play its own game." Once again a high drama was enacted. It was, so to say, another "instance of Tammany Hall politics". New Delhi fumbling to rectify the situation which was apparently slipping out of hand. The internal political game in the State was conducive to the nefarious Pakistani designs. Pakistani Press dubbed it as the murder of democracy. The dismissal of Dr. Farooq's Government became a debating point and the pro-Pak lobby in the Valley exploited the situation thus created to the hilt. Crowds in Srinagar got hysterical. Shops were set on fire, a general hartal was observed and police had to resort to firing here and there. In the Assembly, the motion of confidence in the Ministry of G.M. Shah was carried unanimously. Mr. Mangat Ram Sharma had been earlier elected as the Speaker of the House in place of Mr. Wali Mohammed Yatu through no-confidence against the latter. Thus, Shah occupied the Chief Minister's

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

chair with full blessings of New Delhi. By nature hot-tempered with lust for power, Shah resembled a typical Indian politician who is clever at hatching conspiracies to grab power. He jilted his brother-in-law just to acquire power. Like his predecessors, he tried to appease the Muslims of the State. He recruited a large number of Kashmiri Muslims in the State service, and gave undue promotions to the Muslim employees. He got a mosque constructed within the premises of Jammu Secretariat inspire of massive protests from, the Hindus of Jammu province. Shah will go down in the history of Kashmir as the first Chief Minister of the State during whose stewardship communal riots broke out in Anantnag, resulting in the destruction of scores of temples and hundreds of houses belonging to Kashmiri Pandits. Two important persons – Mufti Mohammed Sayed and Qazi Nissar - are alleged to have played a pivotal role in fanning trouble in Anantnag. Says Prof. M. L. Koul, "Mufti Mohammed Sayed as the provincial Congress Chief felt lured to fish in the troubled waters. He perceived it as a Godsend opportunity to fuel communal trouble leading to the dismissal of Shah Ministry and thus brightens up the chances of taking over as the Chief Minister of the State." Qazi Nissar was the right hand man of Mufti Sayed. He poured venom against Pandits in his Friday speeches in Anantnag district. A furious mob "looted five hundred houses." "More than sixty temples were desecrated and forty were set ablaze in Wanphoh. All hotels and business enterprises belonging to the Hindus and even their fields with standing crops were destroyed and pillaged. Hindu womenfolk were insulted, humiliated and molested" (Prof. Koul).

Hundreds of Kashmiri Pandit refugees rushed to Srinagar for protection from the freebooters who were instigated by corrupt politicians to enude Anantnag district of Kashmiri Pandits. Shah jealously guarded the Muslim character of the State. He was alleged to have raised two battalions of Kashmir police which mostly comprised the Jamat-e-Islami activists. Had not such undesirable elements penetrated into the State police force, perhaps the obnoxious Police Revolt in the mid-nineties when the Muslim insurgency in the Valley was at its climax might not have broken out. G.M. Shah was the first Chief Minister of State who had earlier opposed the Family Welfare Programme in the State. Says Jagmohan in My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir (pp 241) "For instance, G.M. Shah, Chief of the Awami National Conference and former Chief Minister, recently said, The official birth control programme is aimed at reducing the State Muslim majority to a minority. The Muslims constituted 80 per cent population of the State in 1947; they have now been reduced to only 54 per cent. In another ten years time, the Muslims would be reduced to a minority, 48 per cent of total population." Shah dubbed the Family Welfare Programme as un-Islamic and a conspiracy to reduce the Muslims to a minority. Such was the thinking of a responsible leader who was supposed to be the torchbearer of secularism. With the political animosity between G.M. Shah and Dr. Farooq touching an all-time high, pro-Pak elements in the Valley had a field day. The anti-national elements observed the 15th August, 1984 as the "Black Day." A big procession was taken out through the streets of Srinagar. Pakistani flags were hoisted at street corners in the downtown, with State police acting as passive spectators. When the processionists were dispersed by the police at the Palladium (Lal Chowk) crossing they rushed to the Hindu localities in Ganpatyar, Habba Kadal and

## Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali

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By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Bana Mohalla and pelted stones the Pandit houses. A year back a National Conference goon and alleged confidant of the Chief Minister, Hassan Pacha, had killed two Kashmiri Pandits, at Ganpatyar in broad daylight. "Under the political hegemony of Ghulam Mohammed Shah, the Hindus of Kashmir were openly routed and plundered. Their religious places desecrated, ravaged and burnt. He weeded out all the remaining traces of secularism in Kashmir. He had nursed a life ambition of constructing a mosque in Rashtrapati Bhawan. He did not have a quirk of conscience when he connived at the grabbing of a huge piece of land belonging to the Hindu Trust of Dharamrath by Molvi Iftikhar Hussain Ansari, a Congress legislator, for his business venture, Ansari Motors, Srinagar." (Kashmir: Past and Present Unravelling the Mystique By Prof. M.L. Kaul, chapter: XVI). Before closing the chapter, it is worthwhile to note that Shah's regime saw a massive spurt in anti-national activities, with leaders of so-called secular parties either hobnobbing with the pro-Pak political outfits or playing second fiddle aiding them in their nefarious designs which resulted in the Pak-abetted Muslim insurgency in the State in January, 1990. Central intelligence was either completely paralysed or New Delhi deliberately overlooked the growing danger because of "Vote bank politics" as State leaders were vying for power and pelf. While the State was on the edge of an impending political explosion National Conference and Congress were at loggerheads. Under these prevailing conditions, " the inter-party and infra-party squabbles were nothing but undiagnosed death-wish." While the house was ablaze, the political masters - both in Srinagar and Delhi, were "busy quarrelling over the distribution of the spoils of office." G.M. Shah was sticking to chair with all his might and statecraft; Mufti Mohammed Sayed coveted the Chief Ministership; Dr. Farooq was thinking of striking new political deals with Delhi wallas to come to power, while the Cupid's Valley was sliding fast into a bloody holocaust. That was the tragedy worse confounded!

**By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

## **24.0 RAJIV - FAROOQ ACCORD**

In March, 1986 Governor Jagmohan dismissed the Government led by G. M. Shah. Says the then Governor in his diary, "Today I have dismissed G.M. Shah's Ministry. His regime was another sad chapter in the unfortunate history of Kashmir. The task before me is truly awesome. The communal passions are running high. The minorities are fear-stricken. The Government machinery is rudderless. The officers are demoralised. Indiscipline has made deep inroads into the State Secretariat. Fundamentalists and obstructionists are nursing their own designs. Malpractices, corruption and intrigues are rampant. The economy, already in a poor shape, is further sliding downward. The judiciary is wayward. Regional tensions are mounting." Governor's rule was imposed on the State of Jammu and Kashmir. During this brief spell of the Governor's rule the State administration which was lying in a state of hibernation was a little toned tip. But it became exceedingly difficult to weed out pro-Pak and anti-national elements from the State administrative machinery because of their deep roots entrenched all over the State. The vested interests of a few Muslim families "had acquired a stranglehold. On the economic and political framework of the State." These families controlled all the levers of political power in the State. They even "dominated the administration, the High Court, the judiciary, the Bar, the business and the industry." These vested interests were the main obstacle in the complete merger of the State with the Indian Union. G.M. Shah had patronized such elements for his personal agenda. Governor Jagmohan did not receive active co-operation from the Centre to change politico-economic scenario of the State.

Just as fish cannot remain out of water, State politicians felt restless when they remained out of power. This yardstick could be applied to Dr. Farooq Abdullah who had tasted power. He wanted to get back power somehow or the other. It was only possible if he could enter into any compromise with New Delhi. He knew that he could not get back "the lost paradise" if he continued to play hide and seek with the opposition parties. He started "developing a personal equation with Rajiv Gandhi" who had succeeded his mother, Mrs. Indira Gandhi in October, 1984. He entered into an accord which is known as Rajiv-Farooq Accord. Unlike his mother, Rajiv Gandhi was determined to rehabilitate Dr. Farooq whom the Indian politicians once dubbed as a "Security risk." Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi took no cognizance of Farooq's past track record as an incompetent administrator (alleged by Farooq's critics). The Rajiv-Farooq Accord was nothing but a plan to empower him with the Congress party getting a fraction from the tasty cake. In fact the Kashmir story is full of these so-called pacts which have proved detrimental to the national cause. It was the first of such pact after the Indira-Sheikh Accord in which Syed Mir Qasim played a key role. Fresh elections were held in March 1987. Farooq's National Conference entered into an alliance with the State Congress which a year earlier was branded a Hindu party by the cousin of Dr. Farooq, Sheikh Abdul Rashid, in a public speech. One could brand it an opportunistic alliance to share power in the State. Pro-Islamic outfits and parties of the Valley forged a strong alliance. It fought election under the banner of the Muslim United Front (MUF). The alliance of pan-Islamic parties was dominated by Jamat-e-Islami and its aggressive youth wing, Jamat-e-Tulba. All these pan-

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Islamic parties, which had gathered sufficient political clout during the previous six years, had thought out a strategy to capture political power. They were convinced that Muslim intelligentsia in the State had completely aligned itself with the pan-Islamic parties which were determined to throw overboard both Congress and National Conference. Even some elements within the pro-India parties, National Conference and Congress, were overtly and covertly in collaboration with the pan-Islamic parties. The role of Jamat-sponsored Madrassas and Islamic study circles cannot be underestimated when the resurgence and revival of Muslim fundamentalism is taken into consideration. There was a growing tide of communalism and anti-India sentiment' sweeping the Valley, particularly Sopore, Srinagar and Baramulla. Jamaat-e-Islami had struck deep roots in Sopore under the able and inspiring guidance of Syed Ali Shah Geelani and Prof. Ashraf Saraf in Baramulla. "The Muslim United Front (MUF) manifesto pledged to free the Muslims of Kashmir from the Brahmin imperialism and New Delhi's unwarranted interference in the affairs of the State." (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World) Prominent Muslim leaders from the country participated in the vigorous election campaign conducted by the MUE "MUF campaigned on an anti-India fundamentalist platform. It stopped short of challenging Kashmir's accession to India to avoid disqualification under the electoral law" (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World, Chapter XVII). At many places in the downtown Srinagar, Pakistani flags were hoisted to greet MUF leaders who roused the religious sentiments of the Muslims in the Valley. The whole atmosphere in the Valley, particularly in Srinagar, the nerve centre of Valley's political life was electrified with anti-India hatred. I had the occasion of listening to the election speech of a MUF leader – probably Prof. Ashraf Saraf in downtown. In his speech the speaker made it clear that time was not far- off when "Nizam-i-Mustafa would be imposed on the State in principle." Their opponents - Congress and National Conference - struck the same note, though in a lesser degree, in the speeches. All these events were ominously indicative of the political tragedy that was to engulf the State in near future. Contrary to the expectations of the MUF leaders, the Muslim United Front secured only four seats, but - surprisingly – it polled about thirty percent vote in the Valley. Winning of the number of seats was not as important as the percentage of votes polled by the MUE Elections results showed that the pan-Islamic parties were edging forward to win the ultimate political game. MUF leaders levelled charges of rigging elections by the National Conference and Congress leaders. Had elections been rigged, MUF could not have polled thirty per cent vote. However, rigging cannot be ruled out completely. The new coalition Government of Farooq's National Conference and Congress (I) came to power, with Dr. Farooq Abdullah becoming the Chief Minister of the State for the second time in March, 1987. By and large, the Muslims of the Valley, who were mostly swayed by the fundamentalist ideology strongly preached by the Jamat-e-Islami, were not reconciled to the coalition government led by Dr. Farooq Abdullah. From the day one they offered stiff opposition to it. Even the Pak media painted the coalition in black hues. New Delhi was charged with rigging the elections. Dr. Farooq was conscious of its political fallout. "He therefore began to indulge in tightrope walking. He spoke the language of Islamic fundamentalists in Kashmir and posed to be a secularist in Jammu and

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

nationalist in Delhi. When a deputation of Arya Samaj temple in Srinagar which had been destroyed by Pakistani elements met him he advised it not to rebuild the temple because it would be destroyed again. That gave a "inkling of his mind". (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World, Chapter XVII).

The State administration, which was completely dominated by Pro-Pak elements, was not prepared to cooperate with the new Chief Minister in his drive against anti-national forces. Twenty-three hard-core terrorists were immediately released from the police lockup. This imprudent step stoked the fires of Muslim insurgency which was still at the stage of infancy. ISI had chalked out its plan to foment trouble in the Valley. Scores of training camps were set up in Pak occupied territory of Kashmir (PoK) and in major towns of Punjab and N.W.F.P. These training camps were manned by the ISI officers. Muslim youths from the Valley were rushing to these centres for receiving arms training in these ISI-sponsored camps. One could hear bus-conductors crying themselves hoarse at Batmaloo bus stand, inviting people to travel by buses to Azad Kashmir. These are not fairytales, but hard facts which may stun persons who are not fully acquainted with the "Kashmir story." It is my personal observation when I was standing at the Batmaloo bus stand, waiting for a bus to board for Baramulla where I had to attend an important piece of private work. I heard two or three conductors, if I remember well, shouting with their professional overtone, "Bus for Muzaffarabad. Reach Azad Kashmir within twelve hours. Cheap bus-fare" Says Prof. M. L. Kaul, "There was no check imposed on Muslim youth crossing over to the camps set up in PoK. That the Muslim youth going in buses operating from Lal Chowk in Srinagar to Bandipora in district Baramulla and conductors crying hoarse that they were on the way to PoK were not stopped by law-enforcing agencies and thus the owners were neither arrested nor punished" (Kashmir : Past and Present : Unravelling the Mystique, Chapter XVII).

One could attribute this scenario to the complete breakdown of law and order in the State. A funny story was related to me by a Kashmiri Pandit regarding an unemployed Muslim youth whose father knew the Pandit shopkeeper. The father of the Muslim youth had requested him to arrange a private job for his son. One fine morning his son came to the Pandit shopkeeper and told him that he had got the job. Raising the "Pheran" (Kashmiri gown) he was wearing, the Muslim youth showed him the pistol tied with his leather-belt. "I have joined JKLF on a handsome pay," giggled the Muslim youth. In those days, I was teaching in a private college in downtown. I saw scores of students playing truant and usually remaining absent from college for months together. One such boy was a hefty, well-built Muslim youth from Nowhatta in the downtown. One day – in November, 1989 - I asked him why he had remained absent from the college for such a long time as I was a little acquainted with his family. "Sir, I had gone to Calcutta in connection with shawl-business," was the curt reply from Gulal (name changed). In fact, he had gone somewhere for arms training. In 1992, I read about his (Gulal's) arrest in Azadpur (Delhi) in a national daily. As per Press reports, he was the Deputy Commander of Al-burq terrorist outfit while his cousin was the top-leader of Al-Umar, an ISI created militant group. It appeared that the State administration was

## **Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

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**By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

helpless in tackling the volatile situation. Officials of the Union Home Ministry often rushed to Srinagar, but no concrete action was taken.

### 25.0 DANGER SIGNALS IGNORED

Bomb blasts in the interior of the city became the order of the day. The Chief Minister of the State issued strong verbal warnings to saboteurs asking them to desist from anti-national activities, but the law-enforcing authorities took no concrete action. New Delhi continued to ignore these danger signals. In order to give an impression to the outside world that there was nothing abnormal in the Valley; Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi chose to visit the Valley in the winter of 1987. Both Rajiv and Farooq indulged in "Sheen-Jang" (snow-fight) in a playful mood in the snowy fields adjacent to Dr. Farooq's official residence at Gupkar in the Civil Lines in Srinagar. It was the best illustration of the maxim: "Nero was fiddling when Rome was burning." "Farooq Abdullah had a design but Rajiv Gandhi as the Prime Minister of the country ignored the danger signals leading to the enveloping of Kashmir by terrorism, loot and mayhem, threatening the very integrity of India as a sovereign, secular and democratic republic," comments Prof. M. L. Kozel in Kashmir : Past and Present - Unravelling the Mystique (chapter 17). It was reported widely in the papers that sons and close relatives of some bureaucrats had developed close links with a number of Pak-sponsored militant groups. Even the local police Chief was said to have apprised the Chief Minister of the insidious role of some top functionaries of the ruling party in helping the militants. Pro-Pak sentiment had started taking deep roots in the mind of Kashmiri Muslims. The hoisting of green flags in the interior of Srinagar city on August 14, Pakistan Day, could be attributed to this sentiment. On August 15, India's Independence Day, black flags were put at a number of places in the downtown Srinagar in response to an appeal made by Moulvi Mohammed Farooq, the then Chief of pro-Pak political party, Awami Action Committee. On this day I happened to walk through downtown. To my utter amazement I saw a street dog being driven and beaten mercilessly by a Muslim crowd at Nowhatta which is half a kilometer away from the Mirwaiz Manzil, the headquarters of Moulvi Farooq's pro-Pak Awami Action Committee (previous Avatar of the Muslim Conference). A card board bearing the words "Indian Dog" prominently scripted in black ink was hanging around the dog's neck. The urchins in the crowd, armed with sticks, were jeering and shouting: "Indian dogs go away." A lone bearded policeman at the traffic-post was apparently enjoying the mocking scene to his heart's content. In August 1988, General Zia-ul-Haq, the military ruler of Pakistan, died in an air crash. When the news of his death was heard by the Muslims in the Valley, large crowds gathered in the Jamia Masjid area of Srinagar and shouted anti-India and pro-Pak slogans. It was rumoured that General Zia-ul-Haq was killed as a result of the conspiracy hatched by India in collaboration with Russia. Even some Awami Action Committee leaders came out with vituperative statements, holding India villain of the piece. Unprecedented violence rocked Srinagar and Sopore, the latter being a stronghold of Jamat-e-Islami. By way of showing solidarity with the fundamentalist forces in Pakistan, on August 26 "Fateh was offered for the late General Zia-ul-Haq at Jamia Masjid in Srinagar. After coming out of the Mosque, the mob grew violent, raised anti-India and pro- Pak slogans and stoned a police party. The police had to resort to firing in which three persons were killed. Paradoxically, it was in the year 1979 that large-scale anti-Zia

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

demonstrations had taken place following the hanging of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto by Gen. Zia-ul-Haq. Properties belonging to the Jamat- e-Islami leaders were either looted or burnt to ashes on the suspicion that Gen. Zia was linked with Jamat-e-Islami. Why was this change now? The answer is simple. Jamat had acquired sufficient strength in the intervening years due to political patronage by the so-called secular parties in the State. The former Governor has his own answer to this question: "The answer, in broad terms, to all these questions lies in deep-rooted disposition of local Kashmiri leadership to exploit religion and whip up pro-Pakistan sentiments. Whosoever has been out of power has found it expedient to talk of "opening the Rawalpindi Road," of "all Kashmir rivers flowing towards Pakistan" and of "resettlement of brethren who have gone to the other side." For regaining power, or drawing public; attention, or for capturing newspaper headlines, these are considered to be the best slogans." Kashmiri Muslim youth was exploited from time to time by political and religious parties. This time Jamat-e-Islami stood in the frontline. The indoctrinated Muslim youth became easily willful partners in the political upheaval which was purely rooted in religion and abetted by Pakistan. The Chief Minister of the State attributed it to the frustration caused by massive unemployment. In fact, unemployment could be the secondary cause, but religious motivation was the primary cause. Educated in Madrassas run by the Jamat-e-Islami, the Muslim youth were out to destroy the secular fabric of India. The youth, the element which usually takes part in violence, can be easily exploited by the communal and fundamentalist leaders. In J&K State these leaders generally wore the mask of secular politics. "All regional and local parties rely, not on hard and honest work to win over the Kashmiri masses, but on emotive and medieval issues to prop up their political standing. In this attitude lays the fundamental malady of Kashmir's polity and administration," observes former Governor of Kashmir, Jagmohan. It is no exaggeration to say that the State administration during 1987- 1990 lent support "to the systematic enfoldment of fundamentalist agenda in Kashmir." The youth wing of the National Conference openly agitated for the implementation of the "Resettlement Bill" which had been earlier passed by the State legislature and awaited the President's assent. The Resettlement Bill aimed at conferring proprietorship rights on the Muslims of 'Kashmir who had migrated to Pakistan and adopted Pakistani citizenship. It was a clever ploy to win over anti-national elements by the ruling party leaders. According to then media reports, the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) Supremo, Gilgit-born Amanullah Khan was the "masterminding subversive activity with the help of the Pakistan authorities" in Muzaffarabad, the capital of PoK. The first batch of fifty Kashmiri Muslim youth had already acquired arms training in these military camps. They had sneaked into the Valley and were carrying on subversive activities. Khan's main objective was to bring about a Punjab-like situation in the State. Intelligence agencies had failed to detect the activities of subversives. Militants made a bold attempt on the life of the DIG, Kashmiri Range, Mr. A. M. Watali. Four JKLF activists attacked the residence of a police officer at Ranibag Mandir in Srinagar. The alert guard at the residence of Mr. A. M. Watali repulsed the attack, killing one terrorist on the spot. It was later reported that one of the terrorists happened to be

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

the son of an influential political activist at whose residence a prominent political leader of a pro-Indian party often stayed and made it his unofficial headquarters. Mosques were utilized as political platforms. Under the garb of religion, anti-India tirade had been launched by the clerics. "From religious platforms, the Moulvi's invariably give political advice. They concern themselves less with religion than with politics. Some of the "religious Czars" in their respective areas have built their entire political following by addressing Friday congregations. Even political stalwarts have been making important speeches from Hazratbal and other shrines" (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 120). The vicious propaganda carried through the religious medium had its impact on Kashmiri Pandits who constituted three per cent of Valley's population. It had become a habit with the street urchins to pelt stones on the houses of Kashmiri Pandits in the interior of Srinagar during the night of Shab-i-Barat when the Muslims are supposed to keep vigil in Mosques and pray for their own families' prosperity. Inside the Valley four prominent fundamentalist groups, Jamat-e-Islami, Umat-e-Islam, Islamic Students' League and Ahl-e-Haddis, were creating religious frenzy at the behest of Pakistan. The day on which Maqbool Bhat was hanged in Tihar jail was observed as Maqbool Bhat Day every year. It may be recalled that Maqbool was charged with the murder of a Pandit CID officer, Amar Chand of Bomai village (Sopore), and sentenced to death by the court. "Observance of "Martyr Maqbool Bhat Day" and publication of Satanic Verses provided cover to the subversives to whip up emotions and give a call for "bands" and agitations." (Jagmohan) Both National Conference and State Congress leaders made no comments on the volatile political situation which was leading the State to a big catastrophe. The passivity of the political bigwigs could be interpreted either as sympathy with the "Muslim cause" or "studied indifference" coupled with irresponsibility on their part. Had the administration taken drastic measures, these so-called bandhs and hartals called at the behest of pro-Pak politico-religious outfits would have fizzled out. Politics inside Pakistan had a direct bearing on the situation in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. "Electoral compulsions of coming elections in Pakistan impel its leaders to talk increasingly of the Kashmir issue." Pakistan had already raised the Kashmir issue at the meeting of the Non- Aligned Conference. But the members of the Conference were not favourably disposed towards Pakistan. USA had now no need for Pakistan which she once used as a good warhorse in cold-war politics. The only ray of hope for Pakistan was to grab Kashmir through terrorist activities and proxy war under the medieval concept of Jihad. The plan or the roadmap had already been chalked out. It was named "Operation Topaz." The daughter of East "Benazir Bhutto" was crying from housetops: "Remove the Siachen irritant." She demanded that India withdraw immediately all its troops from the Siachen glacier, forgetting how her slain father had handed over 40,000 sq. km. of Kashmir territory to China for which the latter rewarded Pakistan with "nuclear know-how" for the "Islamic Bomb" Said Mrs. Bhutto, "Our position is based on the UN Resolution, according to which the question of accession of the State of Jammu and Kashmir to Pakistan or to India is to be decided through the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite. The Simla Agreement when we say that we have agreed to have bilateral negotiations with India, it is on the basis of UN Resolutions." Her words set

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

the political tone of the Jihadis. Perhaps, poor Benazir created confusion about Simla Agreement in which there is absolutely no reference to the UN Resolutions and plebiscite. Politicians quote and misquote just for their narrow political gains. That could be said in the case of the Untold Story about Kashmir. Kashmiri Pandit community was feeling a sense of insecurity in the Valley. They often received threats from the goons to vacate the Valley or join hands with the majority community (read Muslims) in their struggle to end "Indian occupation of Kashmir." The fear psychosis in the microscopic minority touched new heights when the Priest of Vicharnag temple, in downtown of Srinagar, Mahant Keshev Nath, was murdered cold-bloodedly on December 9, 1988 within the temple premises by none other than a police constable, Mohammed Yousuf, who was deployed as a guard to protect the temple. Chief Minister Dr. Farooq Abdullah made the following comments on the gory killing: "It was a matter of shame that a policeman performing the duty of protecting somebody should commit the heinous act of murdering the same person." It was alleged that the Mahant was killed because he refused to change his religion. The enraged police guard assaulted him, killing him in cold blood. Constable Yousuf had links with the Al Fateh terrorist outfit. It was alleged that some MLAs had close links with Al Fateh. MLA Abdul Rashid Dar, representing Shangas constituency in South Kashmir, was said to have a nexus with Al Fateh terrorist outfit which was initially patronised by Mirza Afzal Beg who was the right hand man of Sheikh Abdullah. The killing of the Mahant could reveal in clear-cut terms what was in store for the Pandits in the Valley.

## **26.0 STATE POLICE IN HIBERNATION**

As already stated the law and order situation in the Valley was deteriorating fast. The Chief Minister took things very lightly. The Muslim bureaucracy had completely aligned with pro-Pak elements. The State police force appeared to be in a state of hibernation. It was now an open secret that Kashmiri Muslim youths were trained in training camps in Pakistan for an armed uprising. Even in the city of Srinagar these youths got regular training under the facade of the so-called fitness programme at various centres. In 1982, Principal of a junior college (Higher Secondary School at Bagh-i-Dilawar-Khan, Srinagar) lodged a complaint with a local police station, requesting law-enforcing authorities to prevent a group of Muslim youth from using the school playing-ground for conducting the so-called physical fitness programme (read arms-training). These youth would assemble in the school ground daily and receive training from their instructors. Probably, these instructors were none other than Pak regulars deployed by the ISI to impart arms training to Kashmiri Muslim youths. Strangely, the local police did not entertain the complaint of the school principal, late Mohammed Sidiq. Apart from this centre at Dilawar Khan in the downtown, there were scores of such centres operating secretly in Srinagar. One such centre was alleged to be located at "Warris-Khanun-Bag" just at the foot of Hari Parbat hillock. This valuable information was conveyed to me by a police guard, late Sham Lal Watal who was deployed as guard for over a decade at Chakreshwari temple situated atop Hari Parbat hillock. This was later confirmed by a group of Pandits, including a local BJP leader, later. N. Dhar, who would go for Parikarma (perambulation) of the temple early in the morning. During the peak of militancy, the whole area close to Laxmi Narayan Temple which was once converted into a city forest was used to dump arms and ammunition by the militants. These facts were corroborated by the Kerala-born Pujari of the temple, who left Srinagar in mid-July, 1990. Such arms training centres were actively in operation at Idgah, Ganderbal, Natipora, Badgam (Soibug, Berua) which is the birthplace of Peer Mohammed Yousuf alias Syed Salah-ud-Din, and Pak-based Chief Commander of Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist outfit. The State police cared least to decimate these arms training centres located both in and outside Srinagar. In the early years of insurgency, Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) was most active in the Valley. This outfit pleaded openly for an Independent Muslim State having fair relations with Pakistan. Its potency could be ascertained from the fact that it had launched an anti-India propaganda campaign in a big way. It had flooded the city of Srinagar, which was the nerve centre of terrorist activities, with pamphlets and big posters and handbills pasted on walls, calling upon the Muslim youth to join JKLF and receive arms-training to liberate Kashmir from the shackles of "Bharati Samraj" and pave the ground for the Islamic order (Nizam-i-Mustafa). This dreaded outfit was primarily responsible for the killing of scores of Kashmiri Pandits, including Pandit Tikka Lal Tapiloo, Pandit Prem Nath Bhat, advocates, Retired Sessions Judge Pandit Nila Kanth Ganjoo. The Local police was in cahoots with the militant outfits. Jagmohan gives the instance of police-terrorist nexus as under: "A head constable of J&K police, working as a wireless operator at a joint interrogation centre, was working in close co-operation

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

with the top terrorist Abdullah Bangroo and was passing messages and incriminating documents from one subversive group to another. Another police constable of Anantnag was working as an associate of top terrorist such as Mushtaq Waza and Bilal Ahmed Beg. The driver of the Senior Superintendent of police was in league with the subversives. Quite a number of officials acted as guides and informers of the underground organisations." Terrorist Hamid Sheikh was caught in possession of curfew passes which were apparently "supplied by the officials who were concerned with the issue of such passes." During the peak period of militancy (1990-95) some police stations had served as hideouts for militants. In 1992, a huge cache of arms, including pistols and AK-47 guns, was recovered from the police station in Rainawari. A serving policeman, Ghulam Mohammed Kanna (originally hailing from Sopore and deployed in Rainawari Thana) was allowed to occupy the house of a Kashmiri Pundit migrant in Kralyar (Rainawari) and loot the household goods of the unfortunate Pundit, worth lakhs. During the previous successive regimes pro-Pak elements had infiltrated into the State police force with the connivance of the local politicians. It was a foregone conclusion that the Valley was standing at the keg of a volcano which was likely to burst at any time. When Jagmohan returned to Srinagar in January 1990, as the Governor of the State for the second time, he found that the State administration was completely subverted by anti-national elements. Says Jagmohan, "Even the police driver of my pilot car had deep links with the subversives. The wireless set of this jeep had been passed on to them. The driver conveniently reported to his officers that the wireless set had been stolen when he had parked the jeep outside the house at night. No wonder, there was once an explosion in the jeep. State employees functioned as Commanders of militant outfits. A top-ranking engineer and a leading doctor in Soura Medical Institute were working as advisers to militant groups. The State police deliberately remained a passive spectator, though their top-ranking officers often stated that "God in Heaven and all is right with the world." Police apathy can be gauged from the fact that law-enforcing authorities hesitated to arrest the first top-grade militant Mushtaq Latrum alias Mushtaq Ahmed Zargar against whom a warrant of arrest had been issued by a Court long back. Latrum was the blue-eyed boy of the slain Mirwaiz Mohammed Farooq. He had made his hideout in Srinagar's Jamia Masjid which was virtually under the control of pro-Pak Mirwaiz Mohammed Farooq. Mushtaq would often move around Nowhatta, Safa Kadal and other areas of Srinagar. But the State police did not execute the Court orders by arresting the dreaded terrorist who was alleged to have killed the whole family of a Kashmiri Pundit doctor in Ali Kadal (Srinagar). Even the local police Station Officer of Nowhatta would salute Mushtaq who would freely move on his scooter. The local press presented Mushtaq Zargar, Yasin Malik, Harried Sheikh, Shoukat Bakshi etc as heroes and the "Defenders of Milat." "As the shadows of terrorism lengthened over the Valley, the vernacular Press, with negligible exception, became its willing instrument. Under the guise of publishing the Press notes of the terrorist organisations, their declarations, statements and programmes were given wide publicity and banner headlines. The designation of area Commanders, military advisers etc were used as if they were real designations. The threatening postures, intimidatory language,

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

and inflammatory expressions and phrases, couched in Islamic militancy, were reproduced." (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, page 388). A numbers of so-called religio-socio-political organizations were operating in the Muslim community in the Valley. These included Allah-Walle, Samaj Sudhar Society and Dukhtaran-i-Milat All these organizations were patronized by leading Muslim bureaucrats and traders. In fact, all of them were indoctrinating the innocent Kashmiri Muslim youth under the facade of social reform.

Since its inception in the mid-fifties in the Valley, Jamat-e-Islami had been trying to instill "Islamic values" in the mind of children through a network of Madrassas which were governed by the hard-core Jamat activists. The bigoted religious preachers from UP and other parts of the country would make a beeline to the Valley, use Mosques as propaganda centres to whip up religious sentiments and create a vicious atmosphere for other religious minorities in the Valley. Referring to the Allah Walle activists, Prof. M. L. Kozel writes, 'The vicious preachers clad in white connected with the organization enjoyed patronage of men in corridors of power. Their main objective was to prepare the Muslims for the Jihad (holy war) against Hindus and establish a Muslim State based on a parochial thought model. They had virtually captured all Mosques in the Valley and were working at the behest of the forces masterminding the whole plan of insurgency and terrorism in Kashmir. They were responsible for whipping religious frenzy designed to cause a hiatus in the Muslim psyche.' (Kashmir: Past and Present: Unravelling the Mystique, chapter 17). Headed by a leading medical practitioner, Samaj Sudhar Society was a cent per cent Government-sponsored organization which brought different sections of the Kashmir Muslim Community under one umbrella. It indirectly unified them for a cause which apparently was social reform. By lending support to this religious organization, a question mark could be put on the secular credentials of the State Government. Of all these organizations the Dukhtaran-i- Milat (Daughters of the community) was the most dreaded militant outfit which mobilised the Muslim womenfolk for Jihad. It was a front women's wing of Jamat-e-Islami. Apparently it enjoined upon the Muslim womenfolk to observe Purdah (veil) and adhere strictly to Islamic practices. Its cadre would visit educational institutions in Srinagar to assess whether Muslim (girl) students abide by the instructions being issued to the "Dukhtaran" by the Dukhtarani Milat from time to time. A sort of hell was let loose on the students who did not observe the veil (Purdah). The high-handedness of their leaders would often result in skirmishes between the police and students in the very heart of Srinagar. The outfit, headed by a young woman Aisha Andrabi, spread communal venom and preached fundamentalism among school and college-going Muslim girls. It mobilised and motivated Muslim girls to join the ranks of militants. The outfit had the unique achievement of first sending a batch of 800 Muslim girls from the Valley for arms training in the camps set up in PoK, Pakistan and Afghanistan. To convince the Muslim masses that the movement to be launched was to be based on the tenets of Islam, Dukhtaran-i- Milat issued detailed instructions, enjoining upon Muslim women to strictly "observe the Islamic norms of social conduct and behaviour." Some of the State-owned educational institutions had become "Terrorist centres". In this connection it is pertinent to refer to Medical College and Engineering College located

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

in Srinagar. The Jhelum Valley Medical College diverted its allotted funds to the terrorist outfits. Two of its functionaries, Prof. G. M. Sheikh and Mufti-Mehraj-ud-Din were later arrested in Delhi and charged "with diverting funds at the instance of ISI to terrorist outfits." Some of the faculty members of Regional Engineering College, Srinagar, were alleged to have forged close links with some terrorist outfits operating at the behest of India's hostile neighbouring country. The Chief Minister of the State was accused of having some understanding with the Sikh extremists. This inference could be drawn from his meeting with Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale in Amritsar. The law and order situation in the State was deteriorating fast. Local Sikhs of Amira-Kadal (Srinagar) took out a religious procession. It was joined by some goons from the other community. In a fit of religious frenzy, the processionists gate-crashed into nearby Hanuman temple and broke the idol of the deity and threw the pieces into the flowing river Jhelum. The local Arya Samaj Temple and its building at Rajbagh in Civil Lines were set on fire. The Farooq Government committed a grave mistake by releasing 70 hard-core militants, some of whom later on crossed over to PoK for starting a regular arms struggle in the Valley. "Despite the fact that the situation as prevailing in the State was extremely grave and needed deft handling, the administration was trifling with such matters as release of terrorists. When, on the one hand, the police setup was getting rapidly demoralised, when intelligence was fast drying up, when infiltration in the services was becoming deeper and deeper, when terrorism was spreading at phenomenal speed, the State Government decided to release a large number of terrorists" (Jagmohan in My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 380). The release of some hard-core terrorists in exchange for Mufti Mohammed Sayeed's daughter, Rubiya Sayeed, showed which way the wind was blowing. The release of terrorists demoralized the police top brass in the State. The Indian Government, despite these dangerous signals, took no diagnostic measures. It depended upon the State administration which was partly taken over by pro-Pak elements. It relied upon those who shouldn't have been trusted at all. ISI had taken deep roots in Kashmir. It had trained hundreds of Kashmiri Muslim youths for armed uprising under what was termed as "Operation Topac." Approximately 98 militant outfits were working round the clock in the Valley.

### 27.0 OPERATION TOPAC

The stir in the Valley was not a haphazard attempt to create chaotic conditions by Pakistan; it was, on the other hand, conducted according to a well-thought out plan known as the Operation Topac. The plan was well conceived as far back as in 1988 by Gen. Zia-ul-Haq. The operational plan was named after Topac Amin, an Inca Prince, who fought a non-conventional war against Spanish rule in 18th century Uruguay." Gen. Zia had directed the Field Intelligence Unit (FIU) to give a concrete and pragmatic shape to the plan. The basic and primary aim of Zia's plan was to annex Kashmir and integrate it with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Gen. Zia, apart from being a capable General, was a shrewd person who had studied the causes that led to the failure of Pakistan to grab Kashmir through the wars of 1947-48, 1965 and 1971. He had come to the conclusion that no success could be achieved unless the important ingredients religious fundamentalism (Ahab type), military prowess, subterfuge and subversion of the administration-were amalgamated to create conducive conditions in the State, particularly in the Valley. President Zia was bent upon creating a very explosive situation in Kashmir. He stood for Pan-Islamic expansion and wanted to push Pakistan to the centre of the stage in his endeavour to form some kind of Confederation of Islamic Afghanistan and Islamic Pakistan. Writes Benazir Bhutto, "Dictators have to be seen as daredevil great men; they strike a heroic pose. Zia is playing brinkmanship with some finesse. The Russian intervention in Afghanistan has provided him a fine opportunity. He acts the champion of the anti-communist and Islam-loving Afghan freedom-fighters (the Mujahedeen) and, in collusion with the US, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, permits foreigners to give money, supply guns, explosives and now anti-gunship rocket launchers to the Mujahedeen. He does so for gaining American goodwill, support and military aid and has succeeded. This American support is vital for his staying in power." (Pakistan: The Gathering Storm, Page 23) Large stocks of arms and ammunition meant for the Afghan Mujahedeen were diverted to Kashmir where these arms were to be used by the militants in the impending Jihad. According to the information collected by the Indian intelligence agencies, Gen. Zia addressed the top-brass of Pakistan's ISI (Inter Service Intelligence) in Islamabad in April 1988; In his speech the General disclosed his plan to grab Kashmir through subversion. Gen. Zia said, "Gentlemen, I have spoken on this subject at length before. Therefore, I will leave out the details. As you know, due to our preoccupation in Afghanistan in the service of Islam, I have not been able to put these plans before you earlier. Let there be no mistake, however, that our aim remains quite clear and firm, the liberation of -Kashmir Valley, our Muslim Kashmiri brothers cannot be allowed to stay with India for any length of time now. In the past we had opted for -ham-handed military options and, therefore, failed. So, as I have mentioned before, we will now keep our military option for the last moment as a coup de grace, if and when necessary."

Gen. Zia was a shrewd military dictator. His assessment of the general character traits, of Kashmiris (particularly the Muslims) is summed up in his momentous speech as under: "Our Kashmiri brothers in the Valley, though with us in their hearts and minds, are simple-minded folks and do

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

not easily take to the type of warfare to which, say, a Punjabi or an Afghan takes so naturally against foreign domination. The Kashmiris, however, have a few qualities which we can exploit. First, his shrewdness and intelligence; second, his power to preserve under pressure and the third, if I may say so, his master of political intrigue. If we provide Win means through which he can best utilise these qualities, he will deliver goods. Sheer brute force, is in any case, not needed in every type of warfare, especially so in the situation obtaining in the Kashmir Valley today." Gen. Zia painted a very bad picture of Kashmiris (read Muslims) when he branded them as "Masters of political intrigue." His plan was, obviously, to involve them in an intrigue or to deceive them in the name of religion. Perhaps he wanted them to make a scapegoat in the General's design to grab Kashmir through insidious means. When Kashmiris in the Valley demonstrated against the killing of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the General passed curt remarks against the Kashmiri Muslims: "Brahminical Muslims, the offshoots and descendants of Hindus." In fact, Gen. Zia had no love for the Kashmiri Muslims; he had love for the land they inhabit. He knew how to exploit the religious sentiments of the Valley's Muslims. Concluding his speech, Gen. Zia said, "we adopt those methods of combat which the Kashmiri mind can grasp and cope with, in other words, a coordinated use of moral and physical means, other than military operations, which will destroy the will of the enemy, damage his political capacity and expose him to the world as oppressor." In precise terms it means unleashing Goblin propaganda against India, branding it as the oppressor of the Kashmiri Muslims. Attributing the burning of mosques, raping of women, and ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Muslims etc. to the Indian Security Forces - that forms the strategy of "Operation Topac" devised so meticulously by the military ruler of Pakistan, late General Zia. Elaborating the core of the strategy, the General said, "In the first phase, which may, if necessary, last a couple of years, we will assist our Kashmiri brethren in getting hold of the power apparatus of the State by political subversion and intrigue. Power must apparently remain with those whom New Delhi favours. We must, therefore, ensure that certain favoured politicians from the ruling elite be selected who could collaborate with us in subverting all effective organs of the State."

Zia's plan, therefore, is primarily based on subversion and intrigue. It aims at winning over or coaxing Kashmiri politicians to play "Pakistani game" in the broad matrix of J & K State's politics. For Pakistan first priority was to subvert State administration through the active support of Valley's growing all- powerful educated Muslim middle class which was apparently past master in the game of instant change of political loyalty coupled with unthinkable corruption and simmering hatred and aversion for Kashmiri Pundits. This was evident from the forced exodus of over four lakh Kashmiri Pundits from the Valley. Had the educated Muslim middle class exerted pressure in the true spirit of Kashmiriat as enunciated by Sheikh Noor-ud-Din alias Nund-Ruish and Lal Ded, perhaps the forced exodus of Pundits from their land of ancestor's would not have taken place. After all, driving the "Infidels" (Kafirs) from the Valley was earmarked in Zia's roadmap, captioned "Operation Topac." There were three phases or stages of the plan which Gen. Zia code- named, in military parlance, Operation Topac. If Operation Gibraltar, devised in 1965 proved a failure, Operation

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Topac was primarily meant to rouse the religious sentiments of Kashmiri Muslims for the cause of their "Ummat and Deen" (community and religion.) In phase 1, all the components of the, power structure had to be infiltrated and subverted from within. A friendly, permissive or collusive political regime had to be brought into being." (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 406). Elaborating the concept of subversion from within, the General said, "A low-level insurgency against the regime, so that it is under siege, but does not collapse as we would not yet want Central rule imposed by Delhi." Such a low-level insurgency depended upon (a) planting chosen men in all key positions in police force, financial institutions, the communication services, intelligence agencies etc. (b) Whipping up high decibel anti-India feelings and sentiments amongst students, teachers, lawyers (intellectuals) professionals (doctors, engineers) and peasants, focusing attention on fabricated religious issues (c) Organizing bandhs, hartals, riots and anti-India (anti-government) demonstrations under the couch of religious phraseology and terminology(2) attempts to penetrate into the ranks of security forces, (3) organizing and training subversive elements and armed groups "with capabilities initially to deal with paramilitary forces located in the Valley." (4) snapping the lines of communication between Jammu and Kashmir and within Kashmir and Ladakh "by stealth, without recourse to force," (5) creating chaotic conditions and terror in Jammu in collaboration with the Sikh extremists. This step would go a long way in diverting the attention of Indian security "from the Valley at critical juncture and discredit the regime even in the Hindu mind" (6) Establishing virtual control "in those parts of the Kashmir Valley where the Indian Army is not located or deployed." Gen. Zia emphasised that such action should be initiated in "Southern Kashmir Valley" Through "Operation Topac" Pakistan seeks to obtain its control over the State of Jammu and Kashmir, which could ultimately lead to political chaos in India and prepare the ground for the balkanisation of India. Taking note of this factor, known defence expert, Dr. Brahma Chellaney observes, "Pakistan clearly sees its salvation in India's balkanisation. A balkanised India offers Pakistan the only escape from its economic problems stemming from an unsustainably high level of military spending. Since it cannot militarily dismember India, it believes it can bleed its rival to death. India, in contrast, sees Pakistan as a failing state (HT dated July 4, 2001). Before discussing the second phase of the Operation Topac it is pertinent to assess to what extent the first phase achieved its objective as contemplated by the ISI of Pakistan. The first phase of his well thought-out plan was implemented very meticulously. The State administration under the elected Chief Minister of the State was completely subverted by the elements owing their loyalty, overtly or covertly, to Pakistan. Even some trade union organisations, including United Teacher's Front, Electric Employees Union, and State Labour Union etc. came under the control of the terrorist fringes operating in the Valley. Top- ranking officers in the Education Department had forged close links with the pro-Pak leaders who received dictation from the political master sitting across the Line of Control. Some undesirable elements had penetrated into the State police force with the blessings of the top-brass of the force. Some of the policemen, hailing from Kupwara, acted as arms carriers on the border. The bulk of engineers, doctors and university

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

teachers were highly indoctrinated with a high dose of fundamentalism. Students in engineering college and medical college would often go on strike and stage anti-India demonstration on flimsy grounds. Some of the doctors in Soura Medical Institute would openly indulge in anti-India tirade cricket match between India and Pakistan was a sufficient cause for beating Kashmiri Pundit doctors in the very premises of the Medical Institute, which had virtually dwindled into a terrorist hideout. When Yasin Malik was admitted to the institute, some of the prominent doctors helped Yasin disappear from the ward where he was falsely registered as a patient. "The doctor on duty played foul. The local police officials on guard duty played foul Yasin Malik was taken on a stretcher to the hospital lift from where he was made to disappear with a small group of doctors and supporters. Simultaneously, a rumour was floated that the injured man (Yasin Malik) had been waylaid by his supporters and he was most probably dead. This was done to deceive us (Government). It was a perfect escape." Jagmohan in My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 529). Kashmir University had virtually become a hotbed of terrorist activities. How could this phenomenon occur without the collusion of university officers and its teaching staff? There was a clear nexus between the Sikh extremists and Kashmiri militants. The Chief Minister was accused of meeting Bindranwale in Amritsar. The ground was being prepared to push all the Kashmiri Pundits out of the Valley by creating an atmosphere of fear and political uncertainty. However, the first phase of the Operation Topac did not "achieve its target cent per cent" because of the appointment of Mr. Jagmohan as the Governor of the State following the resignation of Gen. K.V. Krishna Rao. Mr. Jagmohan took appropriate measures and succeeded, to some extent, in scuttling Zia's plan.

## **28.0 "HIT OF THE FAITHFUL ON THE INFIDEL"**

The second phase of the "Operation Topac" was interconnected with its first phase. It was to be started after the implementation of the first phase. The most cardinal points in the plan were as under : ( 1) Exert maximum pressure on the Siachen, Kargil and Rajouri-Poonch sectors to force the Indian army to deploy reserve formations outside the main Kashmir Valley. (2) Attack and destroy base depots and HQs located in Srinagar, Pattan, Kupwara, Baramulla, Bandipore and Chowkibal by covert action at a given time. (3) Afghan Mujahedeen settled in Azad Kashmir (PoK) shall infiltrate into the Valley to fuel insurgency. (4) "Finally, a special force under selected retired officers belonging to PoK, with hard-core consisting of Afghans will be ready to attack and destroy airfields, radio stations, blocking Banihal tunnel and the Kargil-Leh Highway." (5) Offensive postures to be launched by the Mujahedeen will put Indian security forces under constant pressure. Lessons from the fiasco of the Operation Gibraltar shall serve as guidelines to achieve success. The first phase of the Operation Topac was put into action by the middle of 1988. Says Prof. Madhok, "It began with anti-India tirade all over the Valley and mushrooming of a number of underground militant organizations like JKLF and Hizb-i-Islami. The MUF members resigned their membership of the State Assembly and began to support underground activities openly. Farooq Abdullah and his Government turned a Nelson's eye to such activities. But he kept Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in good humour and therefore cared little about the criticism in the Indian Press " (Kashmir: The Storm Centre of the World, Chapter XVII). In the second phase of the Operation Topac, emphasis has been laid on Siachin and Kargil sectors. The Siachin glacier has great strategic importance. Its occupation is crucial to the defence of Ladakh and the highway that connects Leh to the Valley. Former Defence Minister of India, George Fernandes said on July 18, 1988, "India needs to hold on to Siachen both for strategic reasons and wider security in the region." It has been Pakistan's persistent endeavour to reoccupy the Siachen post. Right from 1985 to 1986 four rounds of talks were held at the level of Defence Secretaries between India and Pakistan to find a viable solution to the Siachen issue. "At the core of the dispute is a glacial stretch beyond grid reference point NJ-9842. The 1972 Simla Agreement's Loc simply stopped at NJ-9842, leaving a 70-KM-stretch along the Saltoro Ridge undelineated." (Times of India, July 9, 2001). In 1984, the region from NJ-9842 eastwards to Karakoram pass was shown as Pakistan's territory in the official maps published in Islamabad. Alarmed at these unexpected developments, India airlifted troops to occupy the Saltoro Ridge which lies to the west of the Siachen glacier. Pakistani troops made several attempts to dislodge Indian forces from the upper reaches of the ridge, but miserably failed in their endeavour. Gen. Zia wanted to cut off Ladakh from the Valley. So the occupation of Siachen through clandestine means formed the major objective of Operation Topac. Kargil and Rajouri - are two Muslim-dominated areas, next to the main Valley. Fuelling insurgency through religious idiom could become an easy affair for ISI. The Kargil episode enacted in 1998 under the sagacious guidance of Gen. Pervez Musharraf was perhaps the unfinished part of the Operation Topac. Pakistan failed to ignite insurgency in Kargil and Ladakh districts. Kargil

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

district is mostly inhabited by the "Shias" who have remained neutral and apathetic towards the Jihadis. In the Valley itself, Shias do not support the cause of the militants. Maulvi Abbas Ansari, the lesser known Shia cleric, is the only Shia leader who is the executive member of the secessionist conglomerate All Parties Hurriyat Conference. A few months back a prominent Shia leader, Rev. Almousvi Agha Syed Mehdi of Badgam, who was connected with the State Congress politics, was brutally killed in a landmine blast laid by the militants in village Magam Tehsil in Baramulla District. During the Kargil war, the Shias of Kargil offered every possible help to the Indian security forces in freeing the mountainous parts of their district from the Pak occupation.

Ladakh is predominantly a Buddhist area which has no cultural affinity with the Valley. The people of Ladakh, by and large, are demanding Union Territory status for their district which is the largest district as far as the area is concerned. The second phase of Operation Topac devised and executed by the ISI could not take off in the two districts, of the State. As already stated Pakistan was concerned about disrupting the road link between the Valley and landlocked Ladakh. Phase third of the Operation Topac ruins as under : (a) Detailed plans for the liberation of Kashmir Valley and establishment of an independent Islamic state in the third phase will follow. "We do not have much time. Maximum pressure must be exerted before the general elections in India and before Indian army reserves bogged down in Sri Lanka become available. By the Grace of God, we have managed to accumulate large stocks of modern arms and ammunition from US consignments intended for Afghan Mujahedeen. That will help our Kashmiri brethren to achieve their goals. (b) Preparation for this phase must be made by means of a big exercise, the biggest ever held in Pakistan. (c) I need not emphasize any further that a deliberate and objective assessment of the situation must be insured at each stage, otherwise a statement will follow with no good for Pakistan." The above mentioned lines form the concluding part of the speech delivered by Gen. Zia at a meeting of selected military commanders in April 1988. Gen. Zia referred to the military exercise code named "Zarb-e-Momin" which literally means the "Hit of the Faithful on the infidel." The massive military exercise was supervised by Pakistan army Chief, Gen. Aslam Beg. The General had claimed that Pak army was fully prepared to "carry out war into enemy's camp (read Indian territory)." On all counts the Zarb-e-Momen military exercise was a dress-rehearsal of war with India and as such was complementary to the Operation Topac. The ongoing proxy war in the State of Jammu and Kashmir is the offshoot of the Operation Topac. It is wrong to think that the insurrection in the State is an indigenous movement; it is rather Pak-sponsored proxy-war to grab the State of Jammu and Kashmir. "The plans are hatched in Pakistan and executed through Pakistani agents and such Kashmiri young men who have been lured, bribed, trapped or coerced, motivated or misguided into becoming militants. Pakistani Army Rangers and the Pakistan Inter Services Intelligence with its field units have been conducting and directing the programs of subversion. Pakistan has been training and arming the militants, providing funds, affording refuge and safe heavens to the militants as also setting up rapid communication systems. Backing the militants is a well orchestrated multimedia propaganda campaign," writes

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

M. L. Kotru (Kashmir Story, Chapter VI).

Giving assessment of the Operation Topac, Jagmohan comments, "Not much success could be achieved by the Pakistani authorities, so far as the implementation of phases H and III was concerned. No worthwhile pressure could be exerted on the Indian military positions in Siachen, Kargil and other sensitive and vulnerable areas."

The militants could not strike at any army installation in the State as inserted in the second phase of the Operation Topac. As regards civil administration, the story was something different. "Here the Operation Topac succeeded even beyond the imagination of its formulations. The entire Government apparatus was systematically subverted." It was entirely due to the fact that "the permissive and sympathetic elements" had penetrated deep into the administrative structure. "Some of these elements were openly Pro-Pakistan; some were clandestinely so; some were indifferent and some were playing the role similar to that of double agents." A conducive atmosphere for the Jihad had been created by Gen. Zia. The seed of jihad had been sown; the sapling was to sprout with the promise of the hefty tree coining into existence. Political condition in the State was far from satisfactory. The coalition Government, led by Dr. Farooq Abdullah was not one-piece; it was riven with dissension and discord. The squabbles in the National Conference showed the undercurrent of resentment against Dr. Farooq Abdullah. Tourism Minister R.S. Chib resigned alleging unprecedented corruption in the administration.

Terrorists were about to launch their armed struggle. As a first step, on August 8, 1989 the subversive organisations issued Press statements, directing National Conference workers to resign from the party. In order to terrorise the political workers, the militants exploded bombs near the residence of Abdul Salam Deva, the Provincial President of National Conference. On August 21, 1989 militants shot dead Mohammed Yousuf Halwai, Block President of National Conference in Kalashpora in downtown of Srinagar. This was the first killing of any political worker by the militants in the city. This was followed by a bomb explosion in the compound of a house belonging to Dr. Farooq's cousin Sheikh Abdul Rashid. The latter resigned from the National Conference, accusing the Chief Minister of abandoning the basic principles of National Conference. At the behest of terrorist outfits, a 13-day Hartal was observed in the city for the so-called violation of human rights by the law-enforcing agencies. Muslim youths, armed with pistols, could be seen moving in downtown areas, including Nowhatta, Kawdara, Safa-Kadal, Idgah, Narwara and Chattabal localities. Local police did not muster courage to take action against the armed youth. The law-enforcing authorities did not make any enquiry as to where from these arms were procured by the Muslim youth. There was no dearth of intelligence agencies in the State. They could not furnish any information to New Delhi. In fact, if they did, rulers in Delhi observed an ominous silence. The militants were bold enough to target police stations. It was for the first time that the Station Officer of police station, Maisuma, was shot dead by an unidentified militant. The police officer was coming out after offering Friday-prayers in a local Mosque in Maisuma. He was shot dead in broad daylight. It was later reported that the assassin of the police officer belonged to JKLF. There was absolutely no

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

law and order in the Valley. A group of candidates, appearing in a university examination, staged a walkout from the examination centre located in G.M. College, Srinagar. Striking students indulged in acts of rowdyism. In the melee, some terrorists, hiding in a nearby canteen owned by a local Muslim, showered bullets on the college building. It was later reported that the militants were led by a prominent JKLF activist who was previously employed in J&K Water Works Department. I was present on the occasion and witnessed a shower of bullets being fired for fifteen minutes. Staff members of the college had a close brush with death. Police reached the spot after one hour and miserably failed to nab the culprits. One could easily guess that the police was in cahoots with the militants and as such did not want to take any action. In the city, the minority Pundit community felt extremely insecure. It could be gauged from the fact that the Pundits almost stopped moving out of their homes immediately after 7 PM. They hesitated to go for the "Parikarma" (perambulation) of the Hari Parbat shrine early in the morning as was the religious practice bequeathed since time immemorial. Some of them received threatening letters.

**By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

## **29.0 VILLAIN OF THE PEACE**

Violent incidents all over the Valley had become the order of the day. The people were fed up with disinformation through posters, wallpapers and even cassettes which were played in buses, taxis etc. During the month of August, 1989, I had the occasion to travel by a matador from Lal Chowk to Zaina Kadal. I was wonderstruck on hearing a song (recorded in a cassette). The burden of the song, if I remember well, was! "Gangs, Jamuna -Kar-Tu-Salaam; Agey - Badhey ga Islam" (Oh! The Ganges and the Jamuna. ! Salute reverently. Islam will flourish). A uniformed policeman, sitting beside me, relished the song. He got down at the police station bus-stand near the Zaina Kadal crossing. The subversive organisations had changed the mindset of the Muslim masses with motivational literature which comprised pamphlets, stickers and video cassettes. Every hour the city of Srinagar was swept with a rumour. On all counts rumour- mongering proves the sharpest and the most effective weapon in the "armoury of the subversives." Somebody rumoured that a religious scripture was dishonoured in Lal Chukka big procession was taken out in Khanyar. The furious mob started setting local police station on fire. Police fired tear-gas shells to disburse the mob. Although no one died in the police firing, yet Mirwaiz gave immediate call for Hartal in the name of religion. In fact, no sacrilege of the Holy Book had occurred; it was just a rumour. Local newspapers served as the mouth organ of the subversives. The editors of these papers would arrange the interviews of the underground militants and publish them in their papers. In the beginning some of them like Abdul Harmed Sheikh, Yasin Malik, Javid Mir, Mushtaq Zargar, Mohammed Altai alias Azim Inqalabi, Shoukat Bakshi, Hilal Beg etc. were dark horses. But the local papers lionized them by publishing their interviews. I have the instance of a local scribe Majid (name changed) who felt elated and honoured at interviewing the underground militant, Abdul Hamid Sheikh. "Most of the local dailies used to act willingly or unwillingly, on the handouts of the terrorists. They used to give ideas to the terrorists by announcing new programmes of subversion and indulged in exaggerated reporting about the anti-India protests, publish sensational interviews claimed to have been given by underground leaders, and also splash highly sensational photographs of anti- India activities," writes Jagmohan, Of all the papers, three weeklies namely, Sada-I-Kashmir, Sada-i-Hurriyat and Sada-I-Huq played a damaging role and vehemently carried anti-India propaganda. The role of other papers, the Daily Aftab and The Srinagar Times, could not be bracketed with the weeklies mentioned above. Still, these papers too were under siege because of the threat of the gun. At this juncture the role of Srinagar's first English daily, the Samachar Post was commendable. It served as a vehicle of true information. Some of the papers published the statement of the outfits, asking Kashmiri Pundits to join the Jihad or quit the Valley for good. The Sada-I-Hurriyat published the statement of JKLF Area Commander, Hilal Beg "The strongest weapon of the Muslims is their faith Islam. The example of the people of Palestine and Afghanistan are before us. If the hearts of the Kashmiri Muslims were warmed by the light of Islam, I am confident that we would soon be free. Because our confrontation is not with a brave, but a coward nation." (Dated February 9, 1990) The Sada-I-Hurriyat carried the statement of a

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

JKLF leader in which he pleaded for establishing an Islamic State. "Islam is our soul, our faith. We do not believe in any other ideology.

We are dedicated only to the cause of Islamic Republic we want to bring about Nizam-i-Mustafa in toto. "The militant organisation published threats in these papers against owners of cinemas, video libraries, wine shops and beauty parlours etc. They alleged that "all these things were meant to corrupt Kashmiri Muslims and make them deviate them from true religion." They laid down social norms and almost strangulated the cultural life of the Kashmiri Muslims who were fed for centuries on the "Sufi" traditions of tolerance and universal brotherhood as depicted in the teachings of Sheikh Noor-ud-Din alias Nund Reush and Lal Ded. As already stated, Mosques were used as a political platform to indoctrinate the liberal minded Kashmiri Muslims. In fact, they "became channels of misinformation." The religious functions were mostly utilised for pro-Pak propaganda under the shrewd-guidance of Jamat-e-Islami leaders. How venomous the anti-India (read Hindu) propaganda was can be gauged from the statement of Qazi Hussain Ahmed, the Amir, and Jamat-e-Islami of Pakistan. Said the Jamat Supremo, "We are a small power, but a Muslim 'country. We live in an ocean of Muslim brotherhood. The Hindus are not like us. The Brahmins are the "Achoot". They can never form like Ummat-e-Muslamaan. The people in Kashmir have carried ICI

the Pakistani flag. It is our religious duty to support the Muslims of Kashmir "In the Valley, Kashmiri Muslims, educated or uneducated, young or old, would always remain glued to PTV which carried virulent anti-India propoganda. The news items broadcast from PTV would become the subject of discussion in educational institutions, and Government offices. Even the heads of departments in the Secretariat would share seats with their subordinate employees and discuss the statements of Nawaz Shard, Benazir Bhutto and Sahibzada Yaqub Khan. In the month of September, 19871 happened to see Secretary, School Education. As I entered the honourable officer's room, the diminutive, Jinnah-capped big boss whom I knew personally for long, was discussing "Politics" - perhaps Pakistan Prime Minister's statement regarding Kashmir. On seeing me he lost temper, called his peon and chided him for allowing me (a Pundit) to enter his room. Perhaps, the big boss was there because he was a Muslim, wafted by the quirks of communal policy to the highest bureaucratic slot. Pakistan provided full support to the subversives in unleashing anti- India tirade. State bureaucracy was actively involved in giving impetus to militancy in the Valley. Under these circumstances, holding elections to the Lok Sabha was a big joke and also a step pregnant with unpredictable' danger. It would definitely provide a big boost to forces of subversion and terrorism in the State, particularly in the Muslim-dominated areas.

How could people come out to vote when hundreds of bomb blasts, had occurred. It was certain that voters would like to stay indoors rather than endanger their lives by going out to cast vote. The D-day came - on November 22, 1989. Secessionist parties had given a call for Hartal on the polling day. On the polling day, cities and "towns looked deserted and villages somnolent." The militants had declared civil curfew for the day by way of protest against the Indian occupation of Kashmir. They had thought of a novice method: TV sets were placed near polling booths with

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

cardboards placed near them. The words written on the cardboards were, "Any person who desires to vote first can take this nice gift. He will have to wear coffin." There was poor turnout of voters. Even some of the National Conference and Congress leaders did not cast vote because of the terrorist threat. To the utter dismay of the administration. Only five votes were cast in Sopore where even the veteran Congress leader Mr. Ghulam Rasool Kar did not muster courage to cast his vote, Mr. Saif-ud-Din Soz was declared elected from Baramulla constituency. From Srinagar constituency a little-know lawyer, Mohammed Shaffi Bhat, was declared elected unopposed. It may be recalled that he was the same lawyer who had opposed the installation of Mahatma Gandhi's statue in the High Court premises in Srinagar. In this atmosphere of hostility no election meeting was held anywhere in any part of the Valley. In Anantnag and Shopian towns only one per cent voters exercised their franchise. Even in Srinagar city where there was an effective concentration of Kashmiri Pundits, subversive groups threatened the minority community of dire consequences if it participated in the polling process. The media carried the reports of poll boycott to awaken the sensibilities of the policy-makers in Delhi. The comments in the Patriot were quite revealing: "It is the militants who call the shots in Kashmir and their success in enforcing the poll boycott underlines the extent of erosion suffered by the National Conference - Congress combine during the last three years. Their abdication from the field was pathetic. Even in the days of the formidable Sheikh Abdullah and the Plebiscite Front, the poll boycott had never evoked such shining response." It was an imprudent act to hold election in the State, particularly in the Valley when a strong anti-India and Pro-Pak wave was sweeping the Valley. Entire Muslim Bureaucracy was on the side of the subversives. Under these adverse circumstances there was only one escape route for the elected MPs from the Valley: to blame New Delhi for the current political turmoil and present Kashmiri Muslims as the most oppressed lot. Starting his career as a school teacher and playing the backward card of the Muslims, Mr. Saif-ud-Din Soz shrewdly entered the domain of politics after retiring from a top bureaucratic slot. For a short period, he was the General Secretary of Backward Teachers 'Association which was patronised by once all-powerful General Secretary of National Conference, Bakshi Abdul Rashid - cousin of Chief Minister, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed. On entering the Lok Sabha, "both Mohammed Shaffi Bhat and Mr. Saif-ud-Din Soz made statements which were prejudicial to national interests. Bhat said, 'The Centre and the Congress 0) are responsible for the prevailing turmoil in Kashmir. The situation is the outcome of the misdeeds of the Centre which is treating Jammu and Kashmir as its colony. The people are treated as second class citizens. The Centre has not fulfilled the promise which was made to the people of Kashmir in 1947" (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir page 332). Such were the periodic outbursts of the Valley's pro-India politicians. Perhaps by issuing such statements they wanted to curry the favour of pro-Pak elements whose writ ran everywhere in the State. Had the politicians of the Valley remained true to their conscience and not played the "Deceptive Game," perhaps J&K might have been spared from the ongoing bloodbath.

### **30.0 MUSLIM FUNDAMENTALISM VIZ-A-VIS KASHMIRIAT**

While describing the Kashmir Story, it is pertinent to make an elaborate reference to the Muslim Fundamentalism which forms the "core" of the ongoing mayhem and bloodbath in the State, particularly in the Muslim-dominated districts of the State. In its broader perspective, it is the political interface of an ideology which is being vigorously propagated by the Jamat-e-Islami. The concepts of "Milat", "Kufr" and 'Jihad" is basic to this fundamentalist cult whereas Islam itself stands for peace, tolerance and universal brotherhood. The pernicious "two-nation theory" is the direct outcome of the "fundamentalist overtone" which is more an expansionist ideology than a spiritual tradition. "The genesis of Pakistan's interference in Jammu and Kashmir lies in its claim that India was partitioned on the basis of religion (Two-Nation Theory) and therefore the Muslim majority State of Jammu and Kashmir should be part of Pakistan. The pernicious "two-nation theory" based on religious bigotry was thrown into the dustbin of history several decades ago" (M. L. Kotru in The Kashmir Story, Chapter VI). Kashmir Muslims, by and large, were tolerant in their outlook before the Jamat-e-Islami took deep roots in the Valley. Their ancestors were converted from Hinduism to Islam during the reign of Muslim rulers. It was during the time of Sikander that thousands of Kashmiri Pundits were forced to abandon their religion. Describing the miserable plight of the Kashmiri Pundits Jonraj, a contemporary historian, writes, "Crowds of Hindus ran away (due to atrocities perpetrated on them by the Muslim ruler Sikander, in different directions and through bypasses; their social life was totally disrupted; their life became miserable with hunger and fatigue, many died in the scorching heat, many got emaciated due to the undernourishment; many lived on alms in villages enroute to the provinces in India; some disguised as Muslims roamed about the country searching their distressed families; their means of livelihood were snatched from them to prevent their education and break their morale; the Hindus lolled out their tongues like dogs searching dog's morsel at every door" (quoted by Prof. M. L. Kalil). The worst fury of genocide of the Kashmiri Pundits "launched upon by Sultan Sikandar, his army Chief Malik Saif-ud-Din and Sultan Ali Shah knew no moderation," forcing Pundits to get themselves converted. Whatever may be the point of view, no foreign Muslims came to Kashmir (barring a score of Syeeds i.e. religious preachers). Kashmiri Muslims have their cultural roots in the culture of Kashmiri Pundits. History cannot be falsified or distorted. The indigenous Rishi traditions form the life-breath of the composite culture of which Kashmiri Pundits and Kashmiri Muslims are rightful claimants. In Kashmir, Islam "acquired its own distinct colour and hue." It came like a fresh breeze of air that rejuvenates and refreshes the whole system. Sir Aural Stein, the author of Rajtarangni, was, more or less right, when he said, Islam made its way in Kashmir not by forcible conquest but by gradual conversion." It goes to the credit of the preachers of this religion that old customs and beliefs were not modified or changed. The basic ingredients of the Kashmiriat remained intact. At the basis of Kashmiriat stood Kashmiri ethos which was largely influenced by the Reshot (react Sufi) order. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries a plethora of saints and religious preachers came from Persia and Central Asia to the Valley. They stressed the importance of leading righteous lives,

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

giving tip greed, cultivating the principle of universal brotherhood seeking inner purification and making subjective approach to God. Such thinking closely resembled the tenets of the Advaita philosophy. Sayeed Ali Hamdani was perhaps the earliest Sufi saint who came to the Valley in 1372 A.D. It is said that he was accompanied by 700 disciples who fanned all over the Valley in due course of time. If Sayeed Ali Hamdani (His Khankah is located at Kalashpora in downtown) was the card holder of the Sufi order two natives of Kashmir, Lal Ded and Sheikh Noor-ud-Din alias Nund Rishi, are credited to have propounded the Rishi Order. Since times immemorial Kashmir has been called "Rishi-Vaer" (Garden of Rishis). Lal Ded was born sometime between 1317 and 1320. She was senior in age to Sheikh Noor-ud-Din by over 30 years. "She was born about the middle of the fourteenth century of Christian era in the time of Sultan Ala-ud-Din, the third Mohammedan king of Kashmir. Her parents lived at Pandrethan (the ancient Puranadhishtana, the old capital) four miles to the southeast of Srinagar," writes celebrated historian Pundit Anand Koul Bamzai in "The Kashmiri Pundits" page 12. Lal Ded led a revolt against stereotyped religious practices that had become a part of social life. For her, there was ostensibly no difference between Pundit and Musalman. Says Prof. Jai Lal Koul, "And so Lal Ded lived on as a wandering ascetic absorbed in God consciousness seeking and seeing God everywhere. She seems to have been unmindful of Hindu caste taboos regarding food and drink; she disregarded the ceremonial pities and outward observance of religion, and laid stress on the inner quest and sincere pursuit of spiritual perfection." Sheikh Noor-ud-Din alias Alam-lard-Kashmir represented the crux of the Rishi cult. He believed that theoretical knowledge alone would not help us to make our lives perfect. The Rishis exerted purposeful influence on "the social and cultural life of Kashmir." All these saints were basically against any form of violence. They were, for all practical purposes, against narrow religious loyalties. They believed in withdrawing from the world, practising celibacy, undergoing penances in caves and jungles, refraining from killing birds and animals for food or eating freshly picked vegetables and fruits. They lived on vegetables and endeavored to follow the Yogic practices of the Hindus" (P. N. K. Bamzai in the Vitasta Annual Number, Kolkata). It was due to the impact of the Rishi cult that Kashmiris had become a nonviolent people who cultivated humanistic values in their day-to-day life. People had great respect for these saints, no matter which religion they belonged to. Before the outbreak of insurgency, Pundits and Muslims would throng round saints in hundreds. If Pundits would make a bee line to the Muslim recluse, Sona-Bab, hundreds of Muslims would rush to Manigam to seek the blessings of Pundit Kashkak or Grata-Mattis. I have seen scores of Muslims along with Kashmiri Pundits sharing "Cheelum" in the company of Late Swami Ramanand, a saint living in Ashram at the foot of Hari Parbat. Scholar Abdul Fazal was much impressed by the role of the Rishis. He observed, "The most respectable class of people in Kashmir is Rishis. Although they have not abandoned the traditional and customary forms of worship, they are true worshippers." Kashmiri Rishis were the harbingers of a new social order which was based on the egalitarian principles and universal brotherhood. As stated earlier, they abhorred bloodshed or physical violence. Kashmiri Muslims had a great regard for these Sufi-saints and rishis at whose graves annual "Urs" is held in which the Hindus

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

from the neighbouring areas participate. The Rishi order of the Valley received a severe setback with the rise of the Muslim fundamentalism. The votary of this new force was the Jamat-e-Islami. The party had acquired strong foothold in the Valley. Its ideology "tilted Kashmiri social and political ethos towards fundamentalism and fanaticism." It propagated openly "two-nation theory" on the basis of which Pakistan came into being. Founded in 1938 by a cleric, Sayeed Abdul Ala Maudoodi in Gurdaspur, the Jamat-e-Islami developed the concept of Nizam-i-Mustafa. Maudoodi envisaged a theocratic State. Initially, he opposed the creation of Pakistan, but later he tried hard for the conversion of Pakistan into an Islamic State. In 1953, Maudoodi was in the forefront of anti-Ahmedia agitation in west Punjab. In Kashmir-Jamat-e-Islami was established in 1942 at Shopian by Maulvi Ghulam Ahmed Dar. It was during the stewardship of Syed Ali Shah Geelani that the Jamat-e-Islami made rapid progress as a religio-political party. The views of the Jamat on the very concept of secularism are clear from the writings of Syed Ali Shah Geelani. Says the Jamat Supremo in his widely-circulated book 'Yeh-Bhee-Ek-Rukh-Tha-Tasveer-e-Kashmir Ka.' "The politics of socialism and secularism is totally unsound. I do not like any Muslim to adopt socialism and secularism as his political ideal." In a booklet captioned Mukadama-e-Ilhaq, he gives vent to anti-India sentiment in the words: You, the nation of Kashmiri Muslims, how long will you continue to remain easy-going slaves? How long will you allow yourself to be manipulated by the selfish power-game of others? How long will you remain victims of atheism and godless philosophies? You are facing a ruthless imperialist power whose Brahminical psyche is bringing new troubles for you every day." (Quoted by Jagmohan in My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir). The day-to-day speeches being delivered by Syed Ali Shah Geelani in the Valley these days speak of his mind and the political goal of his party. Jamaat's one-point programme is to seek the State's accession to Pakistan and also Islamisation of the entire J&K State. It believes in Islamic revolution through Jihad. In pursuance of this objective, it indoctrinated the young children in "the fundamentalist ideology" through the network of Madrassas and Darasghas. It was said that substantial funds were provided by Saudi Arabia for these Jamat run schools. At the trade union level, the Jamat worked assiduously and filled trade unions with its own hard-core cadre. It motivated the Kashmiri Muslim youth to take up the gun. Its student wing, Jamat-i-Tulba, started a special campaign under the leadership of Tajamul Islam to the Muslim youth in the Islamic Study Circles. Tajamul Islam has now fled to Islamabad where he is heading the Pak-created "Kashmir Media Service" News Agency. Corrupt bureaucrats came under the sway of Jamat-e-Islami. It accelerated the rise of Muslim fundamentalism in the State which was once known for secular traditions. The State bureaucracy could degenerate to any level. In the pursuit of political power, every political party in the Valley cut deep at the roots of secularism and sowed the seeds of Muslim fundamentalism. Ultimately, it resulted in the great political upheaval of 1990 which can aptly be termed as the Muslim Insurgency against secular tolerant order represented by India's Constitution and polity. As already stated Jamat-e-Islami is mainly responsible for instigating the innocent Kashmiri Muslim youth to take up the gun. Gone are the days when Kashmiri Musalman abhorred any kind of violence. Simple folks are fed on strong doses of

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

fundamentalism. I remember an interesting incident that occurred, if I remember well, in 1967. While coming from Lal Chowk (in Civil lines), I saw a huge crowd of Muslims near Barbarshah bridge, just half a mile from the Civil Lines. A cyclist had run over a hen which was lying half-dead on the road side. An old Muslim woman was seen forcing a drop of water from a glass into the beak of the bruised hen. Instantly, the hen died. The cyclist was given a good thrashing for killing the hen. Times have changed. Now these very Muslim youths take sadist pleasure in shooting clown traffic policeman or slitting the throat of their neighbour on the false and fabricated charge of his being a police informer 'Mukhbir'. The very abode of Sheikh Noor-ud-Din alias Nund Rush at Chara-i-Sharief was torched in the process of Jihad. The Vaakhs of Lal Ded and the Shrukhs of Sheikh Noor-ud-Din alias Nund Reush are presumably buried deep under the impact of fundamentalism, the torchbearer of which is Jamat-e-Islami. The forced exodus of over four lakh Kashmiri Pundits from the Valley served as the last nail in the coffin. Perhaps an average Kashmiri Muslim awaits the day when Lal Ded's Vaakhs and Sheikh Noor-ud-Din's Shrukhs would again echo in the Valley's skies. According to Government sources, 28,000 Kashmiris have been killed so far. But pro-Pak news agencies put the number at 75,000. Of these, 9,800 were killed not by the security forces, but by the militants. "Between 1990 and June 2001, militants were responsible for a total of 56,000 violent incidents of all kinds in Jammu and Kashmir. Of these, 19,000 were attacks on the security forces. But 12,000 were attacks on Kashmiri civilians," says Prem Shanker Jha (Hindustan Times: July 27, 2001). Who killed these innocent Kashmiri Muslims? Who brought the gun-culture to the peaceful Valley which is the abode of Lal Ded, Sheikh Noor-ud-Din etc.? The answer is simple: The Jamat-e-Islami. Its pan-Islamic Ideology subverted the teachings of Kashmiri Suffix and Rishis.

### **31.0 RUBAIYA'S KIDNAPPING**

Pakistan started its proxy war in Kashmir towards the close of 1989. There was also a change of Government at New Delhi towards the end of November, 1989. The kidnapping of Rubiya Syed, the daughter of the then Union Home Minister Mufti Mohammed Sayeed gave a new turn to the situation. The release of the five top terrorists in exchange for Mufti's daughter worsened the situation. There was general resentment against the State Government. Prime Minister V. P. Singh was forced to send Mr. Jagmohan as the State Governor in place of Gen. K. V. Krishna Rao. The kidnapping of Mufti's daughter by the militants was the first of its kind. She was kidnapped in broad-daylight from a mini bus at Nowgam. The bus was hijacked by 4 militants, Mushtaq Lone, Iqbal Gandroo, Mustafa and Salim alias Nanaji, residents of Srinagar city. Dr. Rubiya was taken out of the bus and made to sit in a car which was driven by Ali Mohammed Mir, Technical officer in SIDCO. She was taken to Sopore where she was lodged in the house of one Javed Iqbal, a Junior Engineer in the Public Works Department. "While Dr. Rubiya Sayeed spent five agonising days of confinement, sobbing and suffering in silence and occasionally wondering whether she was living in a condemned prisoner's cell or being used for publicity. Two of her tormentors, Yasin Malik and Ashfaq Majid Wani, remained in Srinagar negotiating with the representatives of the State Government through intermediaries. Yasin Malik used his friendly contacts with Ajaz Kar, son of Congress (1) Minister Ghulam Rasool Kar, to have access to the house of a top businessman from where some of the telephonic talks were carried out. The Government, broken and spineless, ultimately conceded the demand of the captors to release five top terrorists to secure freedom for Dr. Rubiya." (Jagmohan). The release of Rubiya showed the involvement of Muslim bureaucrats in fuelling insurgency in the Valley. The involvement of the son of a prominent Muslim Congress leader hailing from Sopore, in the whole drama also came as a surprise. It also confirmed that the middle-level Muslim industrialists provided financial support to the militants. The SIDCO official misused the state-owned vehicle to kidnap Rubiya. The militants got a shot in the arms when they succeeded in getting their five colleagues released. In the parleys conducted by the terrorists, a judge of Allahabad High Court, who happened to be close to Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, played a prominent role. It is said that the release of five hard-core militants, including Harried Sheikh, was opposed by the then Chief Secretary of the State, Mossa Raza. "The negotiated settlement was nothing but an act of meek and disgraceful capitulation at the cost of broader national interests, which were at stake in Kashmir," writes Prof. M. L. Koul. When these hard-core terrorists were released from police lockup, a big victory procession was taken out through the streets of Srinagar. Militants openly displayed their weapons. The Muslim women of Maisuma locality crowded at the main chowk doing "Rout" to greet their heroes. The release of militants sent wrong signals to Pakistan which had already unleashed a proxy war in the State. It is wrong to say that average Kashmiri Musalman had no sympathy for the terrorists. In fact, they (Muslims) provided them (militants) refuge and money to run down the Indian Government. In reality, terrorism found its seminary in Muslim homes. If any person could ever visit the homes of Kashmiri

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Muslims in rural or urban areas, he could find portraits of Zia-ul-Haq, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Mohammed Ali Jinnah decorating the walls. At the behest of the officers of School Education Department recitation of National Anthem was discarded at the morning prayer meetings. Even school and office building walls were painted green to show Kashmiri Muslim's solidarity with Pakistan. There used to be a thin attendance in Government offices on Fridays. Mosques were fitted with electronic gadgets and mikes through which the Maulvis would yell out war cries against India. In the city, the religious preachers would move from door to door, collecting "chanda" for a sacred cause which was hidden under wraps. The cause was obviously, Jihad, Kashmiri Pundits were so much terror-stricken that no Kashmiri Pundit woman would move about with a "Tikka (Hindi)" on her forehead. A Kashmiri Pundit woman was posted in Badgam. She removed her "Bind" before boarding her bus for Badger at Batmaloo bus stand. The holy war waged through cassettes "exhorted every Muslim man, woman and child to take to streets to shatter the bonds of so-called servitude for a new social and political order." It was January 19, 1990. Time 1 A.M. A sudden shrill voice yelled from a local mosque through a newly installed, "loud Speaker." All the Pundits in our locality (in downtown) were fast asleep. They woke up. "Jihad has commenced. The days of Kafirs are over. Kashmir has become a part of Pakistan. Kashmir Ban-Gaya-Pakistan-Panditun-Key-Bagar-Pandtantyu-Key-Sath (Kashmir has become Pakistan with Pundit women, but without Pundit males" - thundered someone through the mike. The Hindus of the locality got panicky: "We are now waiting for death" commented my younger brother, who passed away in 1999 as a refugee in Chandigarh. One can well imagine the mental torture of Pundits. Dealing with the same episode, Prof. M. L. Koul writes, "The shrill yelling issuing out from the Mosques simultaneously through the length and breadth of Kashmir was so sudden that the Hindus got panicked and threatened, waiting to get massacred at the hands of the Muslim hordes who got collected in thousands in the streets braving the chill-cold of the winter night." (Kashmir Past and Present-Unravelling the Mystique – Chapter Eighteen). Kashmiri Muslims were given the impression that the Islamic Republic of J & K State would come into being on January 26, 1990 and that the Islamic Flag would be unfurled at Idgah in Srinagar, The dress rehearsal for the march-past on this occasion as performed at Idgah. It was also rumoured that the Prime Minister of Islamic Republic of Pakistan would fly to Srinagar where a gala tea party would be arranged in Srinagar's Shalimar Garden. The die was cast and intense was the emotional outburst of an average Kashmiri Musalman. Everybody (read Kashmiri Muslim) was awaiting a new order and complete liquidation of "Indian rule over Kashmir" as put by a diehard Muslim teacher. The very psyche of Kashmiri Musalman had undergone a sea change. Frenzied Muslim mobs would pelt stones at the Pundits' houses in Ganpatyar, Habba Kadal, breaking doors, window panes etc.

During day time Muslim youths would take out processions, raising anti-India slogans. These frenzied youth would enter Pundits' houses and ask Pundit youths to participate in the processions. The barbaric killings of Kashmiri Pundits on the false charge of their being "Mukabir" (police informers) added to the discontent of the Pundit community. "The Hindus, unarmed and nonviolent, stood shaken in their roots, failing to comprehend

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

the reason for their imminent decimation at the hands of fascist hordes led by armed fundamentalists. They were at crossroads unable to determine whether to cling to their ancestral homes and hearths, to their roots and moorings and to the scenic splendour of their land of genesis or quit under the terrorist armed onslaught" (Kashmir: Past and Present Unravelling the Mystique). Centuries old concept of peaceful coexistence of Kashmiri Pundits with Kashmiri Muslims was destroyed in no time. The community awaited the final doom. A handbill published and distributed by a terrorist outfit, Allah Tigers, called upon the Kafirs (read Kashmiri Pundits) to run away." "Kafiro Bhago. Jihad as Raha Hai" (infidels run away, Jihad is coming). "Kashmiri Hindus were surprisingly termed as illiterate and vulgar in some of the slogans shouted from the mike in some areas in the countryside. From the religious standpoint of terrorists, the Hindus were infidels with no right to live in Kashmir as Hindus. They were otherwise also reduced politically to the position of the underdogs," says Pyare Lal Kaul in "Kashmir Trail and Travail" (page 57). It is strange that the Indian media took no cognizance of the hard realities. Some shops belonging to Kashmiri Pundits were looted in broad daylight by hoodlums. A bomb blast was triggered off in a private college on the outskirts of Srinagar as no Mosque was attached to it for the Muslim girls to offer prayers (Namaaz). A DAV institution in the vicinity of the college was set on fire allegedly by a dreaded terrorist, Sher Khan alias Yousuf Malik. Militants sent instructions to their hard-core cadre to stop tolling of bells in temples and putting of the tilak mark on the forehead by Kashmiri Pundit women. Shopkeepers were directed to paint their hoardings green. Important crossings in the city of Srinagar were given pan-Islamic names. At the crossings, wooden boards were installed, calling upon the Muslims to offer prayers five times a day. Maulvis and Masjid Imams ordered the Muslims to sport the beard. Dakhtran-i-Milat led by Assiya Andrabi and Fareeda Behanji gave strict direction to the Muslim women to observe Purdah (Veil). They were asked to give up wearing Western dress. In case of defiance severe punishment was to be given by the Sharia courts which were presided by diehard Jamat activists. Wristwatches were to be worn on the right hand and the time in the watches was to be set according to Pakistan Standard Time. All feuds were to be decided by the Sharia court which held its sitting in the local Mosque. All liquor shops, beauty parlours etc. were closed. Some of these belonging to the Kashmiri Pundits were looted by hoodlums. This whole process was the beginning of the Talibanisation of the Kashmir Valley. Under these adverse conditions how could Kashmiri Pundits live in the Valley? Kashmiri Pundits were harassed in the Valley. I may quote the instance of a shopkeeper at Kralyar at downtown Srinagar. The shopkeeper, Pundit Srikanth was staying in his shop. Two armed Muslim youths appeared before his shop at 1 pm (perhaps in June (1990)). They directed him to come down. As he came down from his shop, he was blindfolded by the armed youth and dragged to a three-wheeler which was waiting for him a hundred meters away from Shrikanth's shop. Some Muslim shop keepers requested the youths not to drag the old shopkeeper who was known for his gentle behaviour and helpful attitude all over the locality. The Muslim youths forcibly made him sit in the three-wheeler and led him to a place which later the Pundit shopkeeper identified as a house near Hari Parbat. He was presented before the Sharia court. The Hon'ble judge asked him

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

about the whereabouts of a Pundit youth who had already fled from Rainawari locality. After great harassment and physical torture he was let off. The poor shopkeeper left his home for Jammu that very night. "Three options were left with Kashmiri Hindus in the Valley, A - to get physically liquidated at the hands of Muslim terrorists. In this process, their daughters were to become victims of abduction and gang-rapes, forcible marriages or killings, B - to surrender and be subjugated; C - to escape molestation of women folk, brutal onslaughts on the honour of the community so fleeing the Kashmir Valley" says Pyare Lai Kaul in Kashmir Trail and Travail (page 58). Kashmiri Pundits chose the third option. Had there been adequate security arrangements for them in the Valley they might have stayed there. But some, vested interests wanted Kashmiri Pundits to migrate from the Valley. To force them leave the Valley was a big conspiracy. Its aim was to deal a death blow to secularism, in Kashmir, for Kashmiri Pundits are a bridge between secular India and the Valley.

### 32.0 PUNDIT MAGNANIMITY

The Kashmiri Pundit community has played a significant role in the cultural history of the State. One cannot conceive of the secular traditions of Kashmir without referring to the part played by Kashmiri Pundits, The edifice of the secularism rested on the shoulders of Kashmiri Pundits, though they themselves suffered most in this process. When a foreign invader in the 19th century was seriously thinking of reconverting the Muslims of the Valley to their old faith, it was a Kashmiri Pundit, Birbal Dhar who dissuaded the ruler to take this harsh step and even prevented him from blasting a religious shrine of the Muslims in Srinagar. Kashmiri Pundits enriched the Persian language which was adopted and patronised by the Muslim rulers of Kashmir as the court language. They shared the legitimate political aspirations of the Muslim community and protected their interests to the best of their capacity.

Since 1947, deliberate attempts have been made by the vested interests to ignore or underestimate the role of Kashmiri Pundits in strengthening the secular fabric in the State. How many history textbooks published by the State government contained reference to the glorious part played by Pt. Hargopal Koul alias Khasta and Pundit Saligram Koul alias Saliq in the freedom struggle? They were the first freedom-fighters who raised the standard of revolt against the Dogra rulers. We are given to understand through the textbooks that Sheikh Abdullah was the first revolutionary leader of Kashmir who challenged the Dogra rule by launching the Quit Kashmir Movement in 1946. Pundit Hargopal Koul suffered a long spell of imprisonment. So callous was the State administration in those days that the great revolutionary, cast in the mould of Sardar Bhaghat Singh was put in an iron cage. His younger brother Pundit Saligram Koul followed into the footsteps of his elder brother and was consequently imprisoned in Bahu Fort on the outskirts of Jammu city. He managed to give a slip to the prison wardens through a tunnel dug out by him and reappeared, surprisingly, in Delhi. Both the brothers were exiled twice from Kashmir. Whenever a true history of freedom movement in Kashmir will be written, the names of Pundit Hargopal Koul and Pundit Saligram Koul will be written in letters of gold. They had no hesitation in challenging the authority of a Hindu ruler who had denied democratic rights to the people of the Valley, including Kashmiri Muslims. Kashmiri Pundits lent full support to their Muslim brethren in the freedom struggle. Had not Kashmiri Pundits supported the movement it might have fizzled out? The first Kashmiri Pundit to plead for the restoration of democratic rights was none other than a talented Kashmiri Pundit youth, Pundit Shankar Lai Koul. He publicly raised this issue at All India Subjects Conference held in Kanpur in 1923. The name of Pundit Shankar Lai Koul will go down in the annals of our history as the defender of the rights of the oppressed Kashmiris and the Titan of English journalism in Jammu and Kashmir State. Kashmiri Pundits organised a movement "in protest against the rapidly increasing recruitment of people from outside the State" quoted by Pyare Lai Koul in (Kashmir-Trail and Travail). No historian has taken note of these developments which prove beyond any shadow of doubt that the Kashmiri Pundit community was very much interested and involved in the socio-economic development of Kashmiri Muslim community. If Sheikh Abdullah's

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

National Conference got recognition at the national level it was because of Pundits' joining his party in large numbers. Prominent Kashmiri Pundits included Pundit Shyam Lal Saraf, Pundit Kashyap Bandhu, Justice Jia Lal Kilam, Dr. S.N. Peshin, Shyam Lal Koul Watt, Mr. D. P. Dhar, Mr. J. N. Zutshi, Mr. R. C. Raina, Prof. Jia Lal Tamiri, Pundit Shyam Lal Shastri, Pundit Raghu Nath Vaishnavi, Pundit Shambu Nath Koul Vakil, Pundit Prem Nath Bazaz etc. joined Sheikh Abdullah's newly-formed National Conference. It was due to the presence of these Kashmiri Pundits within the National Conference that the very political goal of the party received the sugar-coating of progressive ideas in the form of Naya Kashmir. The first signatory to the Naya Kashmir Document was Prof. N. N. Raina, the country's topmost revolutionary leader and the founder of the Communist Party in J&K State. Had not Kashmiri Pundits joined the National Conference, it would have been no different from its parent body, Muslim Conference, which was the upholder of Jinnah's two-nation theory. The very cream of Muslim leadership in the National Conference was apprehensive of the Pundits and branded them "fifth columnists" and agents of Hindu India. In 1946, the National Conference under the leadership of Abdullah launched the Quit Kashmir Movement. The motive of launching the agitation was clear: for an average Kashmiri Musalman the agitation was meant to topple the role of a Hindu Dogra ruler. It was mainly on account of this reason that the Quit Kashmir Movement launched by Sheikh Abdullah was widely supported by the Kashmiri Muslims as a whole. Says Pyare Lal Koul: "The National Conference leadership did not bother to enlighten them (Muslims) that the movements it launched were against the political exploitation and system of governance, but not against the Hindu Maharaja and the Hindus. It did speak about nationalism and secularism overground, superficially, but underground a different current was running" (Kashmir-Trail and Travail, Page 20). In the struggle to overthrow the Dogra rule many Kashmiri Pundits joined their hands with Sheikh Abdullah. In the Quit Kashmir Movement Late Pundit Shyam Lal Saraf who later became a Minister in the Sheikh Cabinet, was treated as prime accused. He was sentenced to imprisonment by the trial court. There is a deliberate attempt to ignore the part played by Kashmiri freedom-fighters. Some of them have died "unwept, unlamented and uncared for." Pundit Har Bhagwan Koul (resident of Rainawari) and Major Badri Nath Jalali were arrested and lodged in Srinagar Central Jail for delivering anti-Maharaja speeches at a public meeting in Hazratbal in Srinagar. Last year, Har Bhagwan Koul died in Jammu in stark poverty in a migrants' camp. Prof. Jia Lal Tamiri was jailed in Quit Kashmir Movement. He was a practicing socialist who distributed his ancestral agricultural land among Muslim tenants (Kashkars) and himself led the life of a saint-politician. Absolutely there is no mention of his sacrifice and political role in the contemporary history of freedom struggle in Kashmir. Kashmiri Pundits, by and large, were in the vanguard of the political renaissance in the Valley. Sheikh's political struggle would have fizzled out at an early stage had not Kashmiri Pundits come forth. It is an irony of fate that this highly talented and patriotic community was booted out of the Valley. This has been their homeland since times immemorial. History has pronounced the harsh verdict on the community. They have become victims of a communal policy the authors of which were none other than those persons with whom they

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

fought shoulder to shoulder for the emancipation of their land from the yoke of Dogra rulers. The community gave best administrators to the State. The Kashmiri Muslim community can hardly ignore the contribution made by the Kashmiri Pundit administrators including Pundit Hari Krishan Koul, Pundit Maharaj Krishan Koul, Pundit Parmanand, Pundit R. K. Koul, Pundit Jia Lai Koul Jalali, Pundit Tara Chanel Wazir etc. The credit of modernising the State administration goes to Kashmiri Pundit administrators who rose above narrow loyalties and religious prejudices.

In 1947, widespread communal riots broke out in the wake of partition of the subcontinent, Sheikh Abdullah deputed two of his comrades, Mr. Somnath Beera of Rainawari and Mr. Poshker Nath Zadoo of Habba Kadal to Jammu and Teetwal respectively. Both of them died in riots, carrying aloft the flag of secularism and communal harmony. The two martyrs were in their early twenties, and undoubtedly gifted with the qualities of head and heart. Had late S. N. Beera lived for some years more he would have risen to the status of a prominent national leader. Kashmiri Pundit community has served the people of the State, particularly Kashmiri Muslims, in varied fields with utmost devotion and honesty of purpose. It was in the health sector that they served their Muslim brethren so modestly. Can the people of Kashmir ever forget the services rendered by Dr. Gwash Lal Koul, Dr. Gobind Jee Vaishnavi, Dr. S. L. Fotedar, Dr. Deva Koul, and Dr. G. N. Wafi Bhat etc? Most of them treated poor patients free of charges. Kashmiri Pundit compounders and vaccinators went from village to village to discharge their duties like true karamyogis. They would apply ointment to the poor backward villagers for treating a highly infectious skin disease called in Kashmiri dialect "KHER". It was in the field of education that they (Pundits) rendered highly appreciable service to the Kashmiri Muslims. Kashmiri Pundit school teachers taught them with utmost affection and devotion. An ordinary and insignificant Kashmiri Pundit teacher Pundit Arzan Nath founded first Islamia Public School in Srinagar under the patronage of Moulvi Rasool Shah and Mirwaiz Moulvi Yusuf Shah the great grandfather of Hurriyat leader Omar Farooq. A host of eminent Kashmiri Muslim doctors, engineers and administrators are mostly the product of the school which was once headed by Mr. Mohammed Hussain the father of Jinnah's Private Secretary Mr. Khursheed. The first Principal of Islamia College, Sopore, was a Kashmiri Pundit Late Prof. S. N. Thusoo. Prior to the migration of the community from the Valley, Kashmiri Pundit teachers were much sought after because of their devotion and professional efficiency. It is surprising that some rich Kashmiri Muslims still send their wards to Jammu for private coaching from Kashmiri Pundit teachers who are staying there as refugees. Even Kashmiri Muslim patients make a beeline before the clinics of Kashmiri Pundit medical practitioners in Jammu. Five years ago a Kashmiri Pundit doctor was kidnapped in broad daylight in Shopian town. He was released from the captivity after one month. In fact, the doctor was kidnapped not with the idea of killing him, but treating the militants who were injured in a clash with the security forces. In January 1990, all the leading Kashmiri Pundit teachers were served with notices to leave the Valley within the 24 hours. In case of defiance they were to be killed. After all, the Islamic Republic of Kashmir was to be inaugurated on the 26th, of January 1990!

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

That was the general impression of Kashmiri Muslims all over the Valley. In this religious frenzy Kashmiri Muslims forgot the services rendered by the microscopic Pundit community to the Muslims. How could the Pundits, adjust themselves with an order the adage of which was 'Jisko Kashmir me rehna bai Allah-o-Akbar kehna hai' (Whoever has to live in Kashmir he has to profess Islam). Kashmiri Pundits never thought on sectarian or communal lines. I may quote the instance of an Assembly election. In Sopore, Syed Ali Geelani was a candidate of his party Jamat-e-Islami. He was pitched against a formidable candidate from the ruling party. Muslims of Sopore were reluctant to vote for Geelani. Kashmiri Pundit voters in Sopore whole -heartedly backed him. It was through their support that Geelani won by 19 votes. There are so many instances when Pundits voted for Muslim candidates. What reward have they received in return?

### 33.0 BIASED LAND REFORMS

The ongoing turmoil in the Valley has its roots in the communal policy toed by the State Government since the installation of "Awami Sarkar" (Government) under the stewardship of Sheikh Abdullah in 1947. This policy was responsible for creating a hiatus between Kashmiri Pundits and Kashmiri Muslims. The Sheikh himself was a committed secularist and votary of Hindu-Muslim unity, but some of his partymen and close colleagues bore rancour against the Kashmiri Pundit community. "The National Conference leaders rooted in their age-old hatred and antipathy to the Kashmiri Hindus concertedly devised and pursued a policy of fire and brimstone only to blast their citadel into an unrecognisable pile of ruins. They were virtually put on the hit list of the Government; each dart issuing from its armoury - targeting, injuring and maiming them. Justice for them had a back-seat," writes Prof. M. L. Koul (Kashmir Past and Present Unravelling the Mystique, Chapter IX).

Buoyed up with a sense of victory after putting an end to the Dogra rule, National Conference leaders wanted Kashmiri Muslims to assert politically over the other two regions of the State - Jammu and Ladakh concerted attempt to drive out Kashmiri Pundits from the State was made. It was possible if they could be choked economically. Their main source of subsistence, which was Government service, started drying up slowly and gradually. If they dominated this sector, it was absolutely not as a favour. Whereas 95 per cent literacy was in the Pundit community, Kashmiri Muslims were educationally very backward, in spite of the Maharaja's efforts to give them free, compulsory education. Caught up in old grooves, Muslim masses in the Valley were under the influence of Maulvis and Mullahs who prevented Kashmiri Muslims from receiving Western education. In spite of the efforts of some Christian missionaries to advance the cause of education in the Valley, Kashmiri Musalman adhered to old ways and irrational social customs. Kashmiri Pundits, on the other hand, welcomed western education and embraced Western thought, without losing their identity. It was but natural that they were employed in State services by virtue of their educational qualifications and mental caliber. In order to promote primary education among Kashmiri Muslims, Maharaja Hari Singh had appointed late Ghulam Mohammed Ashai, a confidant of Sheikh Abdullah, "Special Muslim Inspector of Schools." A number of Kashmiri Muslim officers, including Khawaja Ghulam Rasool, Lai Khan, Maulvi Ahmed Shah etc. were appointed Attendance officers, to make the attendance of Muslim children in newly-established schools, a popular step in the interests of Kashmiri Muslim community. But the attitude of Muslim clerics proved a stumbling block. Traditional Muslim leadership was against Kashmiri Pundits\* since 1931. So it was but natural that things might get worse for Pundits after 1947 when the Sheikh assumed the reins of power. His government was determined to relieve the peasants of the debt-burden. No right-thinking person could object to this radical socialist measure, but the axe was made to fall on Kashmiri Pundits. The State Government constituted "Debt Conciliation Boards "for this purpose.

It was widely publicised by the State Government that Kashmiri Pundits formed the bulk of moneylenders and as such they were the oppressors of

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Kashmiri Muslims. This canard was spread under a well thought-out plan fathered by Mirza Aftal Beg, number two in the Sheikh's Cabinet. Beg as the campaign manager of the treacherous game, set the tone and tenor for the storm that had to gather for the Kashmiri Hindus obliging them to go in trickles across the Banihal tunnel in search of a mere pittance;' says Prof. M. L. Koul (Kashmir : Past and Present Chapter 9). Muslim moneylenders were more in number than Pundit moneylenders. The newly-constituted Boards were asked to settle the loan cases. Most of the Boards acted prejudicial to the interests of Pundit moneylenders. Their decisions smacked of crass communalism and injustice to the Pundit moneylenders." In spite of the confessions of the debtors of having incurred debts, the Boards decreed the repayment of debt in low installments which could liquidate the debt amount within a span of 50 years. By that time the banker might have died. It was a ploy to grab the principal amount by the debtor. The Muslim bankers, called Bakals or Wad-dars, continued to lend money to their clients (co-religionist) at exorbitant rates of interest. Hundreds of Pundit moneylenders were made to sit on the mat, losing their original sum of money loaned to Muslim debtors. I have the instance of two such Pundit moneylenders who died in chill penury, because their life-savings were grabbed as a result of the anti-Pundit policy exhibited by the Debt Conciliation Board. It was in the so-called land reform sphere that the State Government showed its naked bias towards Kashmiri Pundits. In its political manifesto called New-Kashmir, National Conference had made it clear that land reforms would get top-priority after the party assumed the reins of power. In fact, land reforms formed the crux of the party's economic agenda. A section of National Conference had come under the influence of a bunch of communists who had infiltrated into the party. A powerful Pro-Muslim lobby had always retained the upper hand. The blueprint of Naya Kashmir was drafted by the communists and got it approved by the party, though some feudal elements were against the implementation of radical economic measures, including the abolition of landlordism. In the Kashmir province, Muslim landlords outnumbered Hindu landlords. The former oppressed the Muslim peasantry to the hilt and would take Shylock's pound of flesh from the Muslim tenants (Kashkars). National Conference leadership wanted to win over the Muslim peasantry and to create its support base among them. It was but natural for it to resort to such practices as would create bad blood between Kashmiri Pundits and Muslim peasantry. "Designed to create a support base in the Muslim peasantry in Kashmir, the National Conference leadership presented the Hindus as the only section possessing enormous landed property which was many leagues away from the truth" (Prof. M. L. Kaul). The Muslim leadership aroused the ire of Muslim masses against Kashmiri Pundits. The campaign was headed by Mirza Afzal Beg, the founder President of the Plebiscite Front and the then Revenue Minister in the Sheikh Cabinet. At the behest of Beg, a Land Reforms Committee was constituted in April; 1948. The Committee submitted the report to the State Government which immediately gave it a legal shape by promulgating abolition of Landlordism Act. Says P. L. Kaul (Kashmir: Trail and Travail pp40). "In the first popular Government of Kashmir headed by Sheikh Abdullah, some important Acts came to be passed. Landlordism was abolished under Big Landed Estates Abolition Act 2007 B O 950 A.D.). The land was taken from land owners

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

without compensation and distributed among the tenants free of cost. The State of Jammu and Kashmir is the only State in the whole of Indian Union, where for the agricultural land taken away by the Government under the above Act; no compensation at all has been paid to the owners "The Act was meant to benefit a particular class of Muslims. Agrarian Act of 1975 and subsequent amendments in it benefited this section enormously. The land holding ceiling was fixed at 182 Kanals per head. The Muslim landlords adopted a good technique of circumventing the Act. They distributed -it among their family members escaping the tentacles of the law. The Muslim landlords having come to learn that they had to surrender their landed estates exceeding 182 kanals fixed as the standard ceiling entered into quick negotiations with their hierarchy Muslim tenants for sharing the surplus land. In this process religious ties and sentiments were exploited and the revenue abetted the subversion of the entire scheme of land reforms conceived as a radical measure to boost the lot of the Muslim peasantry in Kashmir" (Prof. M. L. Kaul). -

The most glaring defect in the Act was the ceiling fixed in relation to an individual.' A Muslim landlord could retain the land by distributing it among his family members. It could mean that the family in question could own a big landed estate. One important point is to be kept in view: the law was not applied to the owners of orchards. Orchards were kept beyond the ambit of this Act. Kashmiri Muslims mostly owned orchards in Sopore, Baramulla and Shopian. At present, some of the orchard-owners of Sopore and Baramulla form the crux of the Hurriyat leadership. This Act was, obviously, against Kashmiri Pundits. These so-called land reforms impoverished them. I have the instance of a middle class Kashmiri Pundit family whose head had sold his wife's gold ornaments and purchased agricultural land in the Village Palhallan in Baramulla district. It was a sort of investment for him. After four years of his land-deal, the Act was passed. The poor fellow was deprived of his only source of income. He died in penury after he migrated from the Valley to the plains."One of the deep-rooted attachments of Kashmiri Pundits with the Valley was their proprietorship over the chunks and patches of agricultural land. They were divested of the land by the rulers and the authorities under the garb of progressive and revolutionary Legislations. It, in fact, benefited the Muslim community in the Valley at the cost of Hindus/Sikhs in general," says P L. Kaul (Kashmir: Trail and Travail, pp 41)

The land reforms were basically enacted against Kashmiri Pundits who had no choice, but to leave the Valley in search of a new source of subsistence. Thousands of Kashmiri Pundits migrated from the Valley to the plains. This constituted the first phase of the Pundit's exodus from the Valley. The Central Government watched the situation helplessly. Had it possessed the political will, it could have stemmed the rot and prevented the State government from implementing the so-called land reforms. If the agricultural land owned by Kashmiri Pundits came under the purview of the land reform law, why were the orchards and saffron fields owned by Kashmiri Muslims kept outside its ambience? "The State Government acted hastily, only to transfer land from one set of people to the other ensuring economic precedence of the Muslims over other ethnic groups which led to the ominous developments destabilising the entire State." (Prof. M. L.

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Kaul).The National Conference Government always safeguarded the economic interests of the Muslim community in the Valley. Under the facade of socio-economic reforms, the State government choked and strangulated the economic interests of the Kashmiri Pundit community which formed three per cent of the total population of the State. With the implementation of anti-Pundit land reforms, a new middle class emerged in the Muslim community. In it included apple-Sheikhs, big landlords and bureaucrats. Although the members of this class were economically well off and politically all powerful, yet their thinking was rooted in medieval thought-process. The State Government was out to patronise this class which dominated the ruling party The condition of Kashmiri Pundit community was pitiable. An illiterate apple-Sheikh could employ an educated and talented Kashmiri Pundit as "Munshi" on a paltry salary of fifteen rupees per month to maintain accounts of the income from the orchard which stretched over scores of miles.

### **34.0 POLITICAL LIGHTWEIGHT: SCATTERING OF PANDIT VOTES**

Since the establishment of popular rule (Awami Hukumat) in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, rulers of the State have treated Kashmiri Pundit community as political lightweight, with no effective representation in the State Assembly and the State Cabinet. The division of Assembly constituencies was worked out in such a manner as to prevent Kashmiri Pundits to elect their own representative (through the majority of their vote). In the Valley there were 43 Assembly constituencies. The total population of the Sunni Muslims in the Valley was 22 lakh. As per practice, the ruling party "used to allot generally 38 Assembly seats to 22 lakh Kashmiri Muslims and one to Kashmiri Shias. Besides this, three seats to non-Kashmiri Muslims (because of their sizable population in the hilly and border areas) and one seat to over four lakh Hindus and Sikhs, living in the Valley," says Pyare Lal Kaul in Kashmir: Trail and Travail, pp 44). Kashmiri Pundits formed the second largest population group after Kashmiri Muslims. If their number was to be taken into consideration, it meant allotment of at least six seats to them. But the biased rulers allotted only one seat to Kashmiri Pundits. If the ruling party was, advertently or inadvertently, in favour of allotting seats on the basis of population, it is not understood as to why Kashmiri Pundit community was discriminated against? Why was the claim of this community bypassed and ignored? Dominated by anti-Pundit elements. The ruling party, the National Conference or the State Congress, managed to demarcate and delimit the Assembly constituencies in such a manner as not to let the Kashmiri Pundit's have majority in any of the 43 constituencies. All the constituencies were (are) Sunni-dominated constituencies, leaving even the Shia community in the lurch or with inadequate representation. In this connection I may refer to the Habba Kadal constituency. Demographically speaking, it is predominantly inhabited by Kashmiri Pundits. It includes densely Pundit-populated localities like Ganpatyar, Chinkral Mohalla, Zaindar Mohalla, Tankipora, Feteah Kadal etc. Mirza Afzal Beg, the alter-ego of Sheikh Abdullah and State Revenue Minister, was very keen to change the complexion of the constituency. He was alleged to be a rank-communalist who hated Kashmiri Pundit community from the very core of his heart. He in collaboration with the Muslim bureaucracy, succeeded in changing the demographic character of this constituency. It no longer remained a Hindu majority constituency. All the representative bodies of Kashmiri Pundits, including All State Kashmiri Pundit Conference (Yavak Sabha), Sudhar Samiti (Shivalaya) etc. made strong representations to the State Government and the Election Commission of India to delimit Habba Kadal Constituency and restore its historical demographic feature. No heed was paid to their representation and the Habba Kadal constituency continued to be a Muslim- dominated constituency. State rulers were adamant that no Kashmiri Pundit candidate from this constituency was elected to the Assembly."The rulers confidentially opposed the continuation or creation of any Assembly constituency with majority of Hindu votes in the Valley of Kashmir," says Pyare Lal Kaul. It was a policy matter to scatter Pundit voters so that they could not form a solid vote-bank in one constituency, proving detrimental to the Muslim interests which were jealously guarded by the ruling parties in the State from time to time. Let

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

us take the case of Hazratbal constituency. It should have incorporated the Hindu majority segment of Rainawari. But the case was quite reverse. Baghat Barazulla was incorporated in Hazratbal constituency. It is about 20 kms. away from Hazratbal while Rainawari is three km away from Hazratbal. This strategy devised and implemented by the State Government was an assault on the democratic rights of Kashmiri Pundits who could not send the representative of their choice to the State Assembly. The ruling parties gave mandate to some of their quislings who betrayed the community for a cosy berth in the State Cabinet. Sometimes no mandate was given to any Pundit by the ruling party. At present, there is no Kashmiri Pundit MLA from the ruling party in the State Assembly. Of course, there is a solitary dark horse in the Legislative Council. He is a dumb doll. After the demise of P. L. Handoo, there is no Kashmiri Pundit Minister though the State Cabinet was recently expanded with the inclusion of four Muslims from Muslim-majority areas of Jammu province, writes Pyare Lal Kaul in "Kashmir: Trail and Travail," It was a matter of policy with the Government to keep the Hindus in Kashmir under its thumb and almost without representation. As such all efforts were made by the authorities in all spheres to keep them subdued and at low ebb. Kashmiri Pundits bore the political discrimination patiently." They never raised any voice against the anti-Pundit policies of the State Government. The situation was changing fast. A substantial section of the Indian Public opinion had turned against Sheikh Abdullah. It may be noted that the State Government had introduced permit system for purpose of entering the State. It meant to keep the State away from the national mainstream. These separatist moves of the State Government, headed by Sheikh Abdullah provoked the ire of the people of Jammu. The Praja Parishad launched an agitation in Jammu. The main slogan of the agitation was "Ek Nishan, Ek Vidhan, Ek Pradan (one Flag, one Constitution and one President). Thousands courted arrest in Jammu and scores of people were shot dead. One of the top leaders of this movement was a talented, spirited and highly patriotic Kashmiri Pundit young man, late Makhan Lai Aima (Harkar). When the history of J&K State's integration with India comes to be written any day late Makhan Lai Aima's name will top the list of patriots who sacrificed their lives for this national cause. The Kashmiri Pundit community is proud of the achievements of the noblest son of Maej-Kasheer. Shame Prasad Mukherjee violated the Permit System, entered the State and was arrested. Dr. Mukherjee along with Vaidya Guru Dutt, a medical practitioner of Jammu, was taken to Srinagar and detained there. A young Kashmiri Pundit, Mr. Devki Nath Nakhasi, filed a petition in a Srinagar Court, challenging the detention of the Lion of Bengal, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee. But Dr. Mukherjee died in detention on June 23, 1953 under mysterious circumstances. There was general public resentment against Sheikh Abdullah. Kashmiri Pundit community remained committed to secular ideals and stood for the State's complete accession to India. It never faltered or floundered in its commitment. Perhaps, this was the cause of policy of discrimination perpetrated as a retaliatory measure by the State Government. They did not subscribe to a wayward thesis of independence or plebiscite. In the backdrop of political development, the Kashmiri Pundits, by and large, were dubbed as agents of India. "Threats subduing the Hindus were openly doled out. Even surveillance was mounted on them.

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

A close watch was mounted on the Hindu officers in the Department of Police" (Prof. M. L. Kaul). The State bureaucracy framed anti-Pundit policy. A systematic attempt was made to bar their entry into government service. A Minister encouraged Muslim bureaucrats to devise ways and means of choking all possible economic avenues for Kashmiri Pundits. It is alleged that a Chief Secretary serving during the tenure of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed would often hold meetings of subordinate officers, including the Secretaries in charge of key departments, in his office chamber and instruct them how to debar Kashmiri Pundit students seeking admission to technical institutions in lieu of merit and also prevent Pundits from getting government jobs. "From Sheikh Abdullah, Mirza Afzal Beg, G. M. Sadiq and Mir Qasim all down the line, everyone in the governmental apparatus and political frame worked with single-minded devotion to weed out the Kashmiri Hindus, who were projected as the spies of India operating on the soil of Kashmir. What had angered Sheikh Abdullah most was that the Kashmiri Hindus did not stand by him when he was deposed in 1953 for having fallen into the dragnet of a conspiracy of outside origin? Instead, the Hindus had the cheek to oppose his somersault in politics and also kept away from the politics of Plebiscite Front operating with his blessings," says Prof. M. L. Kaul (Kashmir: Past and Present Chapter IX). Prominent Kashmiri Pundit leaders like Kashyap Bandhu, Pundit Shyam. Lai Saraf, Dr. S.N. Peshin etc. did not share the political ideals of the Sheikh and disapproved of his political somersault. They severed their ties with him, thereby upholding the cause of secularism and State's permanent accession to India. From this time onwards, the State Government adopted a vitriolic anti Kashmiri Pundit policy. The economic devastation of the microscopic Kashmiri Pundit community led to the slow migration of Kashmiri Pundits from the Valley. Kashmiri Muslims were recruited in key posts, ignoring service entry rules and educational qualifications. For instance, a matriculate Kashmiri Musalman was appointed head of the State police force, four Deputy Commissioners were mere matriculates (even one was a non- matriculate), a diploma -holder became the Chief Engineer, two matriculate Kashmiri Muslims were appointed Secretaries in-charge of key departments, a third class MA was appointed University lecturer, etc. State rulers were not concerned with the quality of administration; they were interested in espousing, promoting and safeguarding Muslim interests by hook or by crook. It may be recalled that they did not hesitate to engage even a few brazen faced, egocentric officers to frame the service rules and financial code which would solely benefit Kashmiri Muslims. One such officer was a discredited Kashmiri Pundit Finance Secretary. May his soul rest in peace! For the rulers of J & K State, Jammu province was a colony of the Valley. Right from the Police Station Officer to the Commissioner, all officers in Jammu province were Kashmiri Muslims. The Hindus of Jammu, were also, more or less, ignored in the sphere of recruitment. It is a well known fact that the development funds meant for Jammu were diverted to the Valley. It resulted in the economic prosperity of Kashmiri Muslims. Says Prof. M. L. Kaul, "The step-motherly treatment of Jammu is communally motivated as the Islamised bureaucracy has been manipulating the diversion of the development funds to the Muslim Kashmir resulting in an unprecedented boom in the economy of Kashmir benefiting the Muslims alone." Even the Buddhist majority area was deprived of its share of funds,

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

with the result that it remains the most backward part of the State. State rulers were all out to lift Kashmiri Muslims economically and educationally. Consequently, a neo-rich middle class in the Muslim community came into being, leading to severe repercussions on the political scenario of the Valley. The people of Jammu region were deprived of a fair share from the development funds which were mostly utilized for the economic well being of Kashmiri Muslims. The gross injustice meted out to the people of Jammu was highlighted by the Gajendragadkar and Sikri Commissions which were appointed by the State Government to go into the question of economic disparity between Jammu and Kashmir. The ruling party paid no heed to the economic progress of Ladakh. Both Ladakh and Jammu were the twin colonies of Kashmir. To add to the political discontent of the Ladakhi Buddhists, a new Muslim-majority district of Kargil was carved out of the Ladakh region. This step caused a communal divide between the Ladakhi Buddhists and Muslims. Of all the ethnic groups, Kashmiri Pundits fell prey to the dragon of Muslim communalism in a most heartless manner. For purposes of promotion in government service, there were two seniority lists: Muslim seniority list and Hindu seniority list. The Hindu seniority list was subdivided into Jammu Dogra Hindus, Pahari Hindu list etc. Kashmiri Pundits were placed at the bottom. Entire Muslim community was placed in the backward list, whereas Kashmiri Pundit community was regarded as "Forward Community." These measures created psychological barriers between Kashmiri Pundits and Muslims. A different mindset among Kashmiri Muslims was created, the result of which was that they were hesitant to join the national mainstream.

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

### 35.0 BONANZA FOR MUSLIMS

After the deposition and arrest of Sheikh Abdullah, on August 9, 1953, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed held the reins of the State Government. He ruled over the State for eleven years. Bakshi's period proved a "Golden Age for Kashmiri Muslims," because of their phenomenal progress in the economic field. For them, it was the story of "From rags to riches," from poverty to luxury." Kashmiri Pundits, as a whole, suffered economic deprivation and exploitation of the worst form. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed had to face a severe challenge from anti-national elements within the ruling party itself. In fact, pro-Abdullah elements spearheaded the movement for separatism and secessionism. It was openly led by Sheikh Abdullah's right-hand man, Mirza Afzal Beg who founded the formidable Plebiscite Front. The Front rallied all the secessionist and pro-Pak forces. Bakshi did not give them any meaningful political fight, but tried to win them over through corrupt means. Thus, he is credited to have sowed the seeds of political corruption and moral turpitude and indirectly damaged the cause of secularism in Kashmir. His politically all-powerful cousin, Bakshi Abdul Rashid, became the General Secretary of the ruling National Conference. Top-ranking bureaucrats, including Secretaries and heads of Departments, danced their attendance on 'Rasheed Sahib,' as he was called by them, on every Sunday at his old residence in Nawa kadal, Khankhai - Sokhta in downtown. He was, for all practical purposes, the "uncrowned king of Kashmir." It is said that on the eve of Eid an MLA from the ruling party motored down to his residence to pay-rather deceptively, "Eid greetings" to Rashid Sahib. After chatting for a few seconds in measured tone, the Sahib left his "Dewankhana" to attend Eid prayers at the Idgah. Ironically, the visiting MLA rushed to the door and laced the shoes of the "Big Boss" who stepped into the waiting Garage (state) car to join the congregation at Bonanza. for Muslims Idgah. Bakshi's style of working was feudal, approach autocratic with a clear-cut aim to seek the economic upliftment of the Muslims of the Valley. He vigorously toed the "policy of espousing the Muslim cause." While bantering with some of his partymen, he once said: '-Ager-ne-az-kariv-tark (-y-telli- karev-nab-zah" (If you, Muslims don't make progress now, you can never do it in the future). For the all-round economic progress of Kashmiri Muslims he was given the sobriquet of Badshah Saneer (Modern Badshah of Kashmir). He raised the illiterate and backward Muslim community from the dust to the skies. He searched for educated and semi-educated Kashmiri Muslims and installed them in key posts. He overlooked and ignored educational qualifications of Kashmiri Pundits. It was during the time of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed that the process of suppression in services touched its zenith. Hapless Kashmiri Pundit employees bore the brunt of suppression. I may quote the instance of an old veteran Kashmiri Pundit graduate teacher, Pundit Jia Lal (name changed), who taught a Muslim student in a Government school in class X. The Muslim boy somehow acquired a bachelor's degree in arts in the lowest division, got a seat in the B.Ed class immediately on government expenses and was appointed teacher before the results of B.Ed examination were declared. He remained teacher for two years. Mr. Ghulam Din (name changed), the upstart, was promoted to the gazetted cadre and posted as the headmaster of the school where his old, veteran Kashmiri Pundit

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

teacher was working in a subordinate position. Says Prof. M. L. Kaul, "Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed with the least academic achievements, had scant regard for merit, academic brilliance and talent. He had no qualms when he got the fairly senior Hindu teachers headed by the Muslims, just the beginners and with no worth the name achievements." Corruption had touched the all-time high during Bakshi's regime. "Rule or no rule! Appoint the Muslim," was the message to the appointing authorities. Rarely this rule was applied to stray Pundit candidates. Bakshi's private cook, Mohammed

Waza recommended the case of a third class MA in History candidate to the then Chairman of Public Service Commission, Durrani, whose daughter was married in Bakshi's family, for appointment as a lecturer in History. Graciously the dummy Chairman appointed him, ignoring the claims of highly qualified and meritorious candidates. Bakshi was a shrewd administrator. He knew how to extract work from the officers most of whom functioned as his domestic servants. One may not believe that the Chief Engineer carried his "Chappal", Secretary, General Department, lugged his portfolio and President, Municipal Committee raised slogans 'Khalid-i-Kashmir-Zindabad' at a meeting of Safai Karamcharis (Watalis) at Lal Chowk. A special police Inspector from Jammu Province was deployed to shave the Chief Minister daily before leaving for office. He started the era of sycophancy which was a precursor of corruption to be followed by communalism. When a Kashmiri Pundit approached him for redressal of any grievance, he would tactfully avoid him by cracking a joke just to strike the plaintiff's humorous chord. He had an excellent knack for avoiding the person. In 1954, Bakshi led the campaign of the widening of roads in the city. The royal entourage, comprising Bakshi, his Chief Engineer, President, Municipal Committee and Private Secretary to the Chief Minister passed through the lanes of Srinagar city. At the tail end of the entourage was a turbaned Kashmiri Pundit cashier, lugging a big tin-box under his arm. The box was stuffed with currency notes meant for distribution among the persons whose houses were to be dismantled for widening the roads. I personally had the view of this drama staged in a feudal style in my locality. Bakshi Sahib first enquired about the ownership of the house. He wanted to know whether it belonged to a Pundit or to a Muslim. If it belonged to a Muslim, he asked the turbaned cashier to pay more; if it belonged to a Pundit the compensation was reduced. Two houses, one belonging to a poor Kashmiri Pundit and the other to a Muslim Peer (cleric), were to be dismantled under the programme. Bakshi asked the cashier to dish out more money to the Peer, than to the poor Pundit who was employed as a labourer in Ordinance Department at Badamibag. What sort of treatment was it? It smacked of rabid communalism which flowered into Muslim insurgency four decades later. As already stated, Bakshi functioned as a feudal lord or Mughal King. On Fridays, he would hold "Durbar" at "Durbar-i-Aam" (Lai Bungalow which previously was the residence of the British Assistant Resident in Srinagar's Kothi Bagh locality). Like the fables in the Arabian Nights, many funny and laughter-evoking stories are galore about the feudal-type generosity, eccentric and whimsical behaviour of the Khalil-i-Kashmir - the name with which he was popularly called by his acolytes and sycophants on whom he showered all types of favours, showing utter disregard for established norms and rules. One such

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

grotesque story was narrated to me by a person who had gone to Bakshi's "Dewan-i-Aam" in Kothi Bagh opposite the Maharaja's famed polo-ground in connection with a transfer case. Says the person, "It was a pleasant but crisp autumn morning. Two hundred people, most of them carrying applications and files in their hands, had assembled that Sunday morning in the spacious, flower-bedecked garden in front of Lal Bungalow. High officials and pliable bureaucrats were comfortably seated in chairs arranged symmetrically in two rows, waiting for a gracious chat with the Khalid-i-Kashmir, the uncrowned Chief Minister of J&K State. Within half an hour stepped out long, hefty, physically well-built Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, wearing a faint smile on his face. Cast an inquisitive glance over the audience, yelled in low, but authoritarian tone, "All, fall in line." The assembled mob ran helter-skelter, forming a long queue. Bakshi signaled to Bargotra, President, Municipal Committee, asking him to head the queue. There was, obviously, great excitement, bureaucrats going tizzy over Bakshi's "Farman (order)." What followed next forms the finale and the concluding part of the comic opera. "Double march," ordered the Khalid-i-Kashmir. Within two minutes the sprawling flowery premises was denuded of the bunch of sycophants and some of the aggrieved persons who had come all the way to "represent to the popular Chief Minister of J&K State." The whole episode was enacted in the true style and tradition of any Mughal monarch. Such whimsical attitude of State rulers has added to the simmering discontent in the mint! the alienated Kashmiris. Bakshi's policy and programme was largely to Islamise the State administration by adopting ingenious ways. He succeeded in his mission to a great extent. He instantly changed the ancient Sanskrit names of certain places. For instance, Vichar-nag was named Nowashar or Lal Bazar. Gure in South Kashmir was called Noorabad. The historic Hari Parbat was officially given the name of Kohi-Maran. Chhar-Pather in Shopian Tehsil was changed into Sher Pathar in the revenue records. This was in tune with the pan-Islamic agenda- which stood for the complete obliteration of all the traces of previous culture. It goes to the "credit" of Bakshi that he appointed enmasse Kashmiri Muslims in the State administration for the first time. Thousands of educated, semi-educated and even illiterate Muslims from rural areas were favoured with government jobs on the recommendations of local MLA. Some of them were directly appointed Secretaries in the Secretariat, Directors of local bodies etc. Militants, fighting Jihad for ushering in the Nizam-i-Mustafa, are the progeny (second generation) of these Muslim bureaucrats who were appointed by Bakshi, ignoring merit and requisite educational qualification. Bakshi had given a long rope to his partymen to do whatever they liked. They boldly interfered in the day-to-day administration showing no regard for the law of the land and moral values. Even the law-enforcing authorities had to go by their whims. They could physically assault anybody on any pretext or rob the honour of women. A telephone call from the Headquarters of the ruling party in the Mujahid Manzil to any Tom, Dick and Harry. In the administration would work miracles. A street beggar would become A-class contractor, a non-matriculate Muslim would be. Promoted to the rank of Deputy Superintendent of police, a corrupt engineer involved in a multi-crore corruption case was to be absolved and promoted to a higher post. I well remember a gory incident that occurred in 1957 when late P. L. Handoo,

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

the then Democratic National Conference leader, was given a severe beating by a notorious National Conference goon, Qadir Chhan. Late Handoo, who later on became a Minister in the Farooq ministry, was ambling through historic Lal Chowk one autumn evening. Qadir Chhan assaulted the Pundit lawyer of Anantnag near Chaurasia. Pan Shop (Lal Chowk) and struck blows, causing severe injuries to Handoo. However, due to the timely intervention of Sardar Harbans Singh Azad, the first speaker of J&K State Assembly, who was by chance passing that way, poor Handoo was providentially saved; otherwise the assault would have proved fatal. If Khaliq Prang, MLA from Sonawari was the "Super boss" or Padshah in north Kashmir (Sonawari, Ajjas, Bandipore, Safapora etc.) Qadir Chhan, Qadir Natta', Mirkul, Shaban Gadda, Amma Qathlu etc. were virtual kings of Srinagar city. Even some of the high police officers, including IGP Mehra, paid obeisance to them and carried out their fiats literally. They could even get a Halqa President of National Conference (Khanyar) appointed a Sessions Judge, and the son-in-law of a goon a Deputy Secretary in the Assembly Secretariat. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed had openly gained the sympathies of pro-Pak elements who were on his payroll. He had allotted them residential plots and appointed their relatives and kinsmen as top officials in the Islamised state administration.

Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed will always be remembered by Kashmiri Muslims as the first Chief Minister of the State who opened hundreds of educational institutions, including engineering and medical colleges, in the Valley and imparted free education to them. He granted scholarships liberally to Muslim students, encouraged women's education, but, rather disgracefully, restricted the entry of meritorious Kashmiri Pundit students in technical institutions. He gave them negligible representation, sowing the seeds of discord. To fulfill the Muslim agenda and to give boost to the Muslim fundamentalism, he got new Mosques built, old ones renovated on State expenses. In the official capacity, he collected funds from Muslim bureaucrats for the Muslim cause - building Mosques, carrying repair to old ones etc. There is another story about his quixotic ways. One day a Maulvi entered his residential house. He had come from UP to collect donation for a mosque and Yateem Khana (orphanage). Bakshi was having an appointment with Mr. G.A. Mukhtar, the then Director of School Education and later promoted as the first Vice-Chancellor of Kashmir University. The said bureaucrat was notorious for corruption. Turning to the officer, the Chief Minister said, "Mukhtar! You have earned a lot. Pay something to the Maulvi Sahib as donation." Bakshi rejuvenated Muslim Awkaf Trust by allowing it illegally to retain ownership over State-owned lands which the Awkaf utilised for commercial purposes. It became a rival financial body to the State Government. It is still a moot point whether Awkaf provided funds to anti-national elements for igniting insurgency in the Valley in its early years. If any credence is to be given to the rumours galore in the Valley, Kashmiri Muslims get interest free-loans from the Muslim Awkaf to purchase the abandoned property of Kashmiri Pundit migrants on a throwaway price.

### 36.0 LEGAL FIGHT

Bakshi's eleven years uninterrupted rule right from 1953 to 1964 was both a comic interlude and tragic episode rolled together in the Untold Story. It was a -comic interlude because of the personalised approach, with utter disregard for the law of the land whereas the tragic episode lies in the emergence of the negative forces which, slowly and gradually eroded the secular values, making room for Muslim fundamentalism. Communal virus had penetrated deep into the administration, thrusting merit into the background. Bakshi resigned under the Kamraaj Plan because of the massive corruption in the State administration. An anti-Bakshi lobby had emerged in the Valley. It was headed by Khawaja Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq who had earlier split the National Conference into two factions. Sadiq, Qasim and D P Dhar had openly challenged Bakshi's personalised rule. Some Communists, here and there, had lent support to Sadiq's rump Democratic National Conference. Bakshi was a shrewd strategist, master of political tricks and trade: he clandestinely sought the support of pro-Pak elements. He was instrumental in installing twenty-year old Moulvi Mohammed Farooq as the Mirwaiz of Kashmir after the exile of Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah, the pro-Maharaja Muslim leader to Pakistan. This step indirectly encouraged pro-Pak forces, for the newly installed Mirwaiz, (head preacher) belonged to the political party, Muslim Conference. It was named Awami Action Committee which stood for the State's accession to Pakistan. It was alleged that Mirwaiz's chief adviser and confidant, Rahim Waza was on the pay-roll of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed. Democratic National Conference did not cut much ice in the State politics, but its leaders caused hiatus between Bakshi and Nehru. Ultimately, New Delhi decided the political fate of the regional strap. Bakshi passed on the reins of Chief Ministership into the hands of his crony petition writer-turned politician Shamus -ud-Din of Anantnag. He, like the fable Bache Saka, proved a nine-day wonder: his regime lasted only for three months. Soft-spoken outwardly, sophisticated-looking AMU-educated, scion of Kashmiri Muslim Khawaja family of Batmaloo, sixty-year-old Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq succeeded Shamus-ud-Din as the Chief Minister of the State. Outwardly Sadiq posed as a Marxist who had wide contact with a broad spectrum of progressive elements, Sardar Harkishan Singh Surjeet being his trusted friend and adviser. He was, for all practical purposes, an ideologue of National Conference, but with a difference. He was a drawing-room politician lacking in Bakshi's dynamism and mobility but was honest to the core. He had ancestral property worth crores in the Valley. Like any State politician enjoying absolute power as Chief Minister of India's most sensitive State, Sadiq had framed a coterie of his choicest men, also women! Says Prof. M. L. Kaul, "although proverbially honest, yet-he failed to give the State an administration which was free from corruption." Two prominent women, Sadiq's divorced sister Zenab Begum and Miss Mahmooda Ali Shah, the all powerful and temperamentally authoritative Principal of a local Women's College-interfered in the State administration, with Chief Minister caring the least to bridle the honourable ladies. Miss Mehmooda was a law unto herself. Top bureaucrats shivered in her presence. Sadiq's regime saw the spiral rise in Muslim communalism although he posed as a progressive Muslim, yet his policies nurtured

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

communalism of the worst type. Under the facade of uplifting the so-called economically downtrodden Kashmiri Muslims, he pursued the policy of religious discrimination and relegated Kashmiri Pundits to the position of second-class citizens. The progressive Chief Minister formalised the blatant discrimination of Kashmiri Hindus by issuance of an order reserving thirty per cent of job slots, promotions and admissions to training and technical institution for the Hindus and seventy per cent for Kashmiri Muslims." Had this order been implemented in principle, still it would have been better for the Kashmiri Pundits. As per new fiat, they were entitled to get thirty per cent of the jobs but this order remained on paper, Islamised the bureaucracy headed by the Chief Secretary, a fanatic and anti-Pundit Kashmiri Muslim, refused to implement this order. Government hardly gave even one per cent of the jobs to Kashmiri Pundits. Employment doors were slammed for Pundits; verbal instructions were issued to the heads of the Central offices operating in the Valley to employ Kashmiri Muslims alone, no matter what their educational qualifications were. State Public Set vice Commission was a part of Chief Minister's private office, with members of the Commission acting as Jaipur Puppets and the Chairman, a Big Dumb Doll. Deprived of any future source of income, hapless Pundits were compelled to leave the State for sultry plains in search of employment. This was the second minor exodus of Kashmiri Pundits from the Valley. Some of the bold Kashmiri Pundit employees did not take the Sadiq's order lying down, and opposed it as a gross violation of their fundamental rights. The epic struggle of Kashmiri Pundit teachers against the communal policy of the State education department in the matter of promotion to the gazetted cadre constitutes a brilliant chapter in the recent history of Kashmiri Pundits. A case was filed by the aggrieved teachers in the name of Triloki Nath Tickoo. In spite of the Court judgment in favour of Pundit teachers, the Sadiq Government was reluctant to implement it because a strong pro-Muslim lobby headed by the then Minister of State for Education, Noor Mohammed, was working inimically against the interests of the Kashmiri Pundit community. It may be recalled that Noor Mohammed was an opportunistic politician who had started his political career as a diehard Marxist along with Peer Gaius-ud-Din but strayed into communal politics which pivoted round anti-Pundit fulcrum. Noor Mohammed tried his best to sabotage the teachers' legal battle, banking upon Jamat-i-Islami supported Kashmiri Muslim Backward Teachers Association whose General Secretary was Mr. Saifuddin Soz, former Union Minister. It had the full support of pro-Muslim lobby in the education department. The lobby mainly consisted of a highly cunning as well as manipulative joint Director Rasool Dar, physically dwarfish senior officer Mohiudin Kak and Director School Education, late Ghulam Rasool Azad, uncle of senior Congress leader and Union Minister Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad. The latter bragged himself as the "Freedom Fighter," but, as the proverb goes action speaks louder than words. The writ petition filed in the Supreme Court sent shock waves throughout the Valley The State Government, as it was manned by anti-Pundit lobby, justified the promotion of Muslim teachers on the basis of backwardness. The backwardness criterion was related to religion as all the Kashmiri Muslims were declared backward. Kashmiri Pundit community as a whole was declared a forward community." Social and economic backwardness could not encompass all the Muslims for all times to the

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

exclusion of all the Kashmiri Hindus wherever and whenever there was a promotion. (Prof. Kaul) The Supreme Court referred the case to the State High Court to determine the criterion of backwardness. In spite of the sound arguments put forth by Ramamurthy, the lawyer representing the aggrieved Kashmiri Pundit teachers, the State High Court presided by Justice Bahau Din Farooqi, sidelined the essential issue. The Supreme Court did not see eye to eye with the verdict passed by the State High Court and flayed it for making a deliberate attempt to benefit Muslim teachers. It quashed all the previous orders of promotion which smacked of crass communal overtones. It upheld seniority as the primary criterion for purposes of promotion. The State Government thought of a novel way of circumventing the orders of the honourable Court. Kashmiri Pundit teachers were again forced to knock at the doors of the Court. Thus another suit, S. N. Chaloo, Vs The State of J&K Government, was filed in the Supreme Court. It lasted about five years. By this time G. M. Sadiq had taken over the reins of the Government. Both he and his Deputy Noor Mohammed thought of subverting the earlier Court Judgment. The State Government resorted to the method of interviews designed to pull down the merit and academic credentials of Pundit teachers" (Prof. Kaul). It was an adroit move by the Islamised bureaucracy to deprive the Kashmiri Pundit teachers of their legitimate rights enshrined in the Constitution of the land. Director, Public Instruction (School Education), moved from district to district mobilizing Muslim teachers against the Court verdict. Addressing a meeting of education officers in Baramulla the then Director, School Education, Mr. Ghulam Rasool Azad said candidly "Inka Pehla Number Udher Hi Rahega, Hamara Nau Saun Uper Ayega" (Number 1 In the seniority list of Kashmiri Pundits shall remain bogged there while our (Muslim) bearing Number 900 in this general seniority list take precedence over Pundits). Holding interview was simply a trap for Pundit teachers. A special squad of Muslim officers was formed by the State Minister for Education Noor Mohammed to cajole Kashmiri Pundit teachers to participate in the interview process. The gallant brigade of officers included Rasool Dar, Mohiudin Kak, Sajda Begun, Mahmooda Ji, Prof. O. N. Kaul and all the District Education Officers, including the senior teachers in the College of Education. Seeing through this sly game of the Minister the Pundit teachers, barring a few quislings here and there, boycotted the sham interview whole hog. Subsequently, another writ petition in the name of Makhan Lal Waza vs. the State of Jammu and Kashmir was filed. The Supreme Court was irked by the strings of writ petitions against the Government which was in no mood to implement its earlier Judgments. Well-known legal luminaries M. C. Setalwad and Ashok Sen pleaded the case of the aggrieved Pundit teachers. Expectedly, the Court struck down all promotions as unconstitutional. It was a glorious moment for the harassed Kashmiri Pundit teachers as over 700 supersessions were undone. The verdict was a jolt to the Islamised State bureaucracy and a death blow to the communal policy of the Sadiq Government. The names of three teachers Mr. Triloki Nath Tickoo, late S. N. Chaloo and Mr. Makhan Lal Waza will go down in the annals of the contemporary history of Kashmiri Pundits as the community conscience who had the will to fight a marathon legal battle against the Goliath, the Islamised Bureaucracy. Minister Noor Mohammed played the devil's role by mobilising Muslim teachers on communal lines. A protest rally of Muslim

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

teachers under the aegis of Backward Teachers 'Association was held in M P School, Bhag-i-Dilawar Khan in downtown Srinagar. Anti India and anti Supreme Court speeches were made by speakers including Saif-ud-Din Soz, Mohi-ud-Din Kak, Sardar Niranjan Singh etc. etc. Commenting upon the role of Backward Teachers Association, Prof. M L Kaul writes, "The rulers provided the organisation with money and patronage for pursuing a relentless campaign against the Kashmiri Hindu teachers. The organisation had all the Jamat-i-Islami teachers in its front ranks with other ranks of teachers owing allegiance to Left parties, Congress and National Conference following their direction and lead. Saif-ud-Din Soz was stated to be associated with Jamat-i-Islami known for its rabid Muslim communalism and hate campaign against the Hindu minorities. He is on record to have threatened to snap the thread of accession to India if the Supreme Court judgment was implemented leading to the reversion of the Muslims " (Kashmiri: Past & Present Unravelling the Mystique, Chapter XI). The Backward Teachers Association held a convention at Tagore Hall in Srinagar. The expenditure incurred was borne by the Education Department. It was attended by the top education officers, including the State Minister of Education. Jamaat-i-Islami teachers spat venom against the Supreme Court judgment in their speeches. All these happenings portended a political turmoil in the Valley. The State Government had sowed the seeds of discord. Jamaat-i-Islami schools (Madrassas and Darasghas) were given government grants and other financial aid. Even Muslim teachers in government schools were allowed to discharge their part-time duty in the Jamat controlled schools. All such schools were proving seminaries of Muslim fundamentalism. The Education Department was completely communalised with the top official slots filled in with diehard Jamat activists. With no pseudo-secular political party raising its voice against it. Our Rip-Van-Winkles in Delhi were fast asleep, ignorant of the ground situation.

As already stated, GM Sadiq was a political ideologue in the National Conference. He commanded a great influence in his party. He never shared some of the political apprehensions of Sheikh Abdullah. The Sheikh was an arch political opponent of Jinnah. He opposed the very concept of Pakistan. But, he was convinced that after the demise of Nehru, communal forces would gain momentum in India. The Sheikh apprehended that any Hindu party was likely to replace the Congress at the Centre. Even with regard to the Delhi Agreement, Sheikh had changed his stance. He felt that he had been caught on the wrong foot. In his heart of hearts, he felt that he had wronged his community by acceding to India. That is why he often laid stress. on the Special Status for Kashmir within the Constitution of India. On June 28, 1953 Nehru wrote a cautionary note to his friend, the Sheikh saying: "To me it has been a major surprise that the settlement arrived at between us should be bypassed or repudiated. That strikes at the root of all confidence. My honour is bound with my word." But the Sheikh was not moved at all; he nourished the idea of independence for J&K with equitable relationship both with India and Pakistan. He -broached this idea with the members of his party's Working Committee. GM Sadiq had the guts to oppose the Sheikh. He told him in very clear terms that such an idea was fraught with dangerous consequences. He was convinced that an independent Kashmir would turn into an imperialist colony, endangering

## **Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

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**By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

peace in South-East Asia. It could prove a strong foothold for Western imperialism. Perhaps, the idea of independence was planted in the mind of Sheikh by the American Ambassador Adlai Stevenson who visited Srinagar on May 23, 1953-SheikhAbduflah never forgave Sadiq for holding his radical views on the Kashmir issue. Had Sadiq lived for sometime more he might have probably given a good political fight to the Sheikh? Sadiq's policy had certain contradictions. Externally, he strengthened the Constitutional bonds of the State with India by allowing laws passed by the Indian Parliament to apply to the State as a whole. But, internally, the policies pursued by him smacked of crass communalism. He choked job opportunities for Kashmiri Pundits and put down Kashmiri Pundits' agitation (1967) with an iron hand. He had a soft corner for pro-Pak forces which were secretly working for Islamic revolution.

### **37.0 STIR OVER KIDNAPPING OF A PUNDIT GIRL**

Although GM Sadiq as the Chief Minister of the State posed as a progressive having close contacts with progressive leadership outside the State yet, his actions betrayed his progressive credentials. The agitation led by Kashmiri Pundits over the abduction of a minor Kashmiri Pundit girl by a Kashmiri Muslim in 1967 exposed the real nature of the State administration. The abduction of the minor Kashmiri Pundit girl indicated the fragility of the Pundit community ranged against a hostile environment which was deliberately created by an Islamised bureaucracy, including the State police force. Parmeshori Handoo was a 15-year old vivacious girl whose father had died when the girl was hardly five. She was the only issue of her widowed mother who, willy-nilly, gave her education up to matric. The poor widow had absolutely no source of income and was mostly dependent upon her relatives for maintenance. Through the influence of a close relative, she was able to get her daughter employed as a sales girl in a Srinagar Co-operative store. Being young and sprightly, poor Parmeshori became a plaything in the hands of Muslim employees working with her. A Muslim boy, Ghulam Rasool Kanth, was serving as an accountant in the same Store. Being a blue-eyed boy of his Muslim boss, Rasool Kanth started teasing and making immoral advances towards the unfortunate girl. He started blackmailing the girl with connivance of the boss. The cunning Muslim accountant would stop her salary on one pretext or the other, changed her duty hours to suit his devilish game and to rob her modesty. Surprisingly, the Muslim boy misappropriated huge sums of money, but was exonerated because he was a "Muslim employee." With such encouragement from his Muslim colleagues and officers, the Muslim accountant was so emboldened that one day he kidnapped the minor Hindu girl. Parmeshori's mother anxiously waited for her for two days. After a long, long wait, the mother realised that there was something fishy. She rushed to the Rainawari police station and reported the matter to the police. By this time, the rumour had spread far and wide that a Kashmiri Musalman had abducted a minor Kashmiri Pundit girl. The police possibly might not have registered the complaint had not the rumour received wide publicity. It was reported to Parmeshori's mother by the police that her daughter was "not abducted, but had adopted Islam and married the Muslim accountant under Shariat law," The Muslim abductor and the abducted Pundit girl were lodged in a house in the Muslim dominated-locality of Wazpora, the political stronghold of Maulana Mohammed Farooq, the Mirwaiz of Kashmir. The abduction caused consternation and trepidation to Kashmiri Pundits. In Rainawari young Kashmiri Pundits started holding protest meetings. A small procession was taken out, but it was dispersed by lathi-wielding policemen. The dye was cast; the State police was out to communalise the situation. It conducted an investigation at Maharaj Gunj Police station whereas the actual FIR was filed at the Rainawari police station. The reason was that the Rainawari Police Station Officer was a Hindu. The Maharaj Ganj police station was wholly manned by Kashmiri Muslims. The poor, destitute kidnapped Pundit girl was shifted from the Maharaj Gunj police station area to the Khanyar police station area which is Muslim dominated. At the behest of the Khanyar Police Station Officer and local National Conference leader, a big mob of Muslims

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

assembled in front of the police station and raised anti-Pundit and pro-Pak slogans. It was a ploy to politicise the kidnapping case and helping the law-enforcing agencies to present the girl on a platter to the Muslim abductor. Finally, the girl made confessional statement under duress. The Islamised Kashmir police did not allow Parmishori's mother to meet her minor daughter, the apple of her eyes and the only ray of hope after the sad demise of her husband who was electrocuted while discharging his duties as a linesman in State Electric Department. It may be recalled that no Hindu Officer was formally associated with the police investigation team. It is alleged that the local police officers got direct directions from the Chief Minister's office. There were strict (oral) orders from the high-ups to, hand over the girl to the Muslim abductor and to crush Kashmiri Pundits who were thinking of starting an agitation over the issue. Under coercion, innocent teenaged Parmeshori was converted by a local Mufti and renamed "Parveen Akhter." What a slur on the fair name of secularism and religious freedom guaranteed in our Constitution! "The Kashmiri Pundit agitation exposed to the hilt the fake secular credentials of the Muslims in general and G. M. Sadiq's in particular," says Prof. M. L. Kaul. Kashmiri Pundits all over the Valley launched a massive nonviolent agitation, demanding the restoration of the kidnapped girl to her mother. But the communalised State administration was determined to foil any such

effort. the Pundits organized a big procession which was to converge at Sheetal Nath, the Headquarters of the Kashmiri Pundit's apex-body. In the meeting of All State Kashmiri Pundit Conference (Yuvak Sabha), the speakers condemned the pro-Muslim policies of the State Government. Prominent Kashmiri Pundit leaders, including leading lawyers, doctors, engineers, retired as well serving and Kashmiri Pundit bureaucrats, courted arrest daily for about three weeks in Srinagar. Exasperated over the novel method of launching a nonviolent, but highly effective agitation by the Kashmiri Pundits, the Sadiq Government resorted to "mass-arrests of Kashmiri Pundits." Generally the Police would press into action during night and arrest innocent Kashmiri Pundits from their homes. "The midnight knocks" became a euphemism and byword for these indiscriminate arrests of Kashmiri Pundits. It is said that G. M. Sadiq's octogenarian teacher, Mr. D. N. Misri, was dragged semi-naked from his bed room in Barzulla, thrust into the waiting police van and taken to the Srinagar Central Jail where he was lodged as a prisoner. His old teacher wrote a most pathetic letter from the prison cell to his former student, Sadiq, the Chief, "thanking him for the reward of his work as a teacher." Spacious rooms of the Srinagar Jail were packed to capacity with the arrested Kashmiri Pundits. Even the foreign Press took cognizance of this agitation. Radio Beijing, in its characteristic ideological overtone and connotation, called it. "Red Revolution spearheaded by working class intellectuals." During the course of the agitation, Pundit women took out a protest march in Srinagar's Civil Lines. As the processionists reached the Regal Chowk, some goons, belonging to the ruling party, threw acid on the Pundit women from the hotel. Luckily, the acid fell into the drain, and a big tragedy was averted. According to the reports, the campaign against Kashmiri Pundits was being led by Noor Mohammed, State Minister of Education. He was assisted by another Muslim Minister who also wore the so-called progressive mask. When the acid was thrown over the Pundit woman processionists, Noor

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Mohammed was sitting in his official residence which was in close vicinity of Regal Chowk, directing and instructing his "Brigade" how to sabotage the agitation and cause physical harm to the processionists. How could he take independent action without the concurrence of his boss, Chief Minister Sadiq, who was a typical?"drawing room politician? Next day after these gory and shameful incidents, Noor Mohammed organized a counter-protest march of the ruling party goons. "Two Ministers of the Sadiq Cabinet and a close relative of the Chief Minister, distributed money and liquor among the rabids only to organise a massive demonstration against the Kashmiri Hindus, who had been wronged and denied the right to live with honour and dignity. The procession comprising all hues of rabids raised Islamic war cries to coerce the Hindus into submission. The crowds looted and plundered the properties of the Kashmiri Hindus and finally set them ablaze" (Prof. M. L. Kaul in Kashmir: Past and Present, Chapter XII). At least nine Kashmiri Pundits were killed in the riots that broke out over the kidnapping of the girl. When the dead bodies of two Kashmiri Pundits killed in the riots (Maharaj Krishen Razdan and Lasa Koul Badgam) were being carried for cremation at the Karan Nagar crematorium, frenzied mobs attacked the funeral procession. Even policemen in civilian clothes stoned the funeral procession. Police resorted to brutalities of the worst order: cigarette butts were struck on the naked body; lathis were hurled with full force, etc., etc. The report of the Kohli Commission, constituted by the State Government to enquire into the police brutalities, is quite revealing. But the State Government did not make the findings of the Commission public lest anti-Pundit policies of the State Government be exposed. To give inkling into the police brutality, I may quote the instance of Pundit Hriday Nath Mattoo who was killed when the Pundit agitation was at its climax. A big protest meeting was to be held at Sheetal Nath, the headquarters of the Sabha. Pundit Mattoo, a resident of Rainawari, went to attend the meeting at Sheetal Nath. He, along with a group of Pundit youths, had hardly reached Khanyar when a frenzied mob saw the Pundits (at Kani Mazar), stones were thrown on them. All the Pundits with the exception of Pundit Mattoo ran as fast as they could. The mob overtook and caught Mattoo and pounded him with stones killing him on the spot, Watched passively by a police party deployed on the other side of the road - just ten feet away. I also participated. in the public meeting which was to be addressed by Prof. Bal Raj Madhok, the most prominent Jan Sangh leader and member of the Lok Sabha. It was 3pm; around 20,000 Pundits had assembled to hear the leaders, including Pt. Shiv Narayan Fotedar, Pt. Prem Nath Ghassi etc. Sheetal Nath premises were cordoned off by the police. Within ten minutes, tear-gas shells were fired into the premises injuring scores. Blood splattered on all sides. A party of bearded policemen entered the ground and made a bloody lathi-charge on the assembled Pundits. Absolutely there was no provocation from the audience. Among the injured was Pundit Tikka Lal Taploo, who was the first Kashmiri Pundit to be killed by the militants in 1989. The police operation was being led by Mr. Ghulam Rasool Danposh, a non-matriculate Muslim Deputy Superintendent of Police. Police brutalities on this occasion were reminiscent of the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre. Scores of the injured Pundits were rushed to a nearby private hospital, Rattan Rani Hospital. Local police officers had received direction from Sadiq's kitchen cabinet to

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

crush Kashmiri Pundit agitation with full force. Kashmiri Pundit leaders submitted a memorandum to the then Home Minister Y. B. Chavan. He visited Kashmir and met some of the leaders in the Valley. A shrewd politician, Chavan succeeded in sabotaging the epic agitation of Kashmiri Pundits through political pimps and paid-agents. The agitation came to a disastrous end, and proved fatal to the interests of Kashmiri Pundits in the long run. Had not some selfish Kashmiri Pundit leaders sided with the Sadiq Government, the political situation had so developed that the Sadiq Government would have seen its dismissal. Sadiq never pardoned the community for this and bore grudge against it till he breathed his last in 1971. He even disliked their presence before him. The agitation left a trail of bitterness and acrimony, resulting in the widening of the gulf between the Pundits and Muslims. It also exposed the fake secularism of the State Congress which boasted of upholding the cause of democracy and social justice in the State. Some of the Congress leaders completely identified themselves with Muslim fundamentalism. Sadiq's Cabinet colleague, Syed Mir Qasim, had already mended fences with the Jamat-e-Islami which was able to bag some seats in the State Assembly as a result of the secret pact between the State Congress and Jamat-e-Islami. The process of pro-Pak elements infiltrating into the State administration, particularly in the police force, had gained momentum. Kashmiri Pundits were regarded as second class citizens and job opportunities for them were further squeezed after the ignominious end of the agitation which had a lot of social impact on the Pundit community. The kidnapping of the girl encouraged many Muslims to follow into the footsteps of the Muslim abductor. At least seven girls - mostly teenaged - were lured and converted, with no punitive action from the law-enforcing authorities in the Valley. Some of these converted Hindu girls were promoted as gazetted officers in the State Education Department. Secondly, Kashmiri Pundits became the butt of ridicule in the eyes of the Muslims who were economically more prosperous and politically more assertive. The Muslims spread the canard that the agitation launched by the Pundits was not for "Beti, but for Roti." An attempt was made between the Pundit community and the Dogra Hindus. The State Congress played its nefarious game in creating the hiatus. "The Congress pandering to the Muslim frenzy that automatically touches immeasurable heights on an issue like the conversion and marriage of a Hindu girl to a Muslim resorted to the mean strategy of coercing the Hindu minority into subjugation and surrender by mobilising the frenzied Muslim hordes on the staple diet of Jihad against the infidels." (Prof. M. L. Karl) The sad end of the agitation shook the socioeconomic base of the Pundit community, compelling them to migrate from the Valley. It was during Sadiq's regime that a good number of Kashmiri Pundits migrated from Valley to the plains in search of employment. After the 1967 agitation, a very hostile environment for Kashmiri Pundits had set in the Valley.

### **38.0 COMMUNALISM AND CORRUPTION DURING QASIM'S RULE**

G. M. Sadiq passed away in December 1971 after a brief illness. He was succeeded as Chief Minister by Syed Mir Qasim at the instance of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. It may be recalled that Qasim had turned into a political foe and rival of Sadiq and wanted to grab power by co-operating with the communal elements in the Valley. Sadiq, a shrewd and revengeful politician that he was, wanted to dislodge Qasim from power and as such dropped him on a different pretext, from his cabinet. However, Mrs. Gandhi had succeeded in preventing Sadiq from showing the door to Qasim who continued to head the State Congress. The State Congress was a hotchpotch of disgruntled, opportunistic elements who were prepared to stage any political drama to hoodwink New Delhi. The political career of the new Chief Minister, Mir Qasim, was a zigzag odyssey from one extreme to another. He received education in the Aligarh Muslim University where he was allegedly associated with the Muslim League. He was the Secretary of League's student wing. After completing his studies, he was appointed Personal Assistant of Mirza Afzal Beg, the right-hand man of Sheikh Abdullah and also the State's all-powerful Revenue Minister. Both Beg and Qasim belonged to the same district and shared common views on the political issues. Beg led Qasim into the grooves of murky State politics. With his mentor's blessings, he was soon reckoned as an important leader of the National Conference. Thus the mantle of leadership was thrust on the 25 year old Arabic teacher's son hailing from Dooru, which is also the birth place of Kashmir's acknowledged romantic poet, Rasool Mir. Mir Qasim posed as a progressive politician with leftist leanings. But, with the passage of time he bade farewell to the leftist ideology and went in search of new pastures. As the Chief Minister of the State, he adopted a policy which went against the interests of the Pundit community. Kashmiri Pundits were deprived of large chunks of land without any compensation during his tenure as President of the State Congress Committee. The State Assembly passed The Land Act Bill under his guidance. The Bill deprived the bandits of the land and favoured the members of the majority community. "Agrarian Reforms Acts of 1975 and other amendments were made to benefit the Muslims. All these legislations further hit hard the Kashmiri Pundit community and shook their foundations.

Ultimately, therefore, even small agricultural holdings were taken away from the Hindus in general and transferred to their Muslim tenants." (Pyare Lal Kaul). Such reforms exposed the communal overtones and policies' of the State Government. The controversial Land Act passed in the State Assembly was sectarian in character. It could be gauged from the fact that "in case the Government acquired a portion of land in public interest, the compensation was to be paid not to the owner of the land, but to the tenant, who was a Muslim." (Prof. M. L. Kaul) Since Mir Qasim hailed from a rural area, he wanted to benefit Muslim tenants in whatever way he could. During his tenure as the Chief Minister the recruitment of Kashmiri Pundits in the State service touched an all-time low. He radically changed the recruitment policy of his predecessor, G. M. Sadiq, who had set apart thirty per cent of the jobs for the Hindus in general. Qasim reduced it to ten per cent, out of which Kashmiri Pundits got less than half per cent of the quota. The Chief Minister came under the influence of the bureaucracy

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

which included rank communalists, having links - overtly or covertly - with the fledging Jamat-e- Islami. The policy of reservation (discrimination) was applied in admissions to professional colleges. Highly talented and bright Kashmiri Pundit students were ignored. The lowest third divisioner Muslim candidate was preferred to a Pundit student who secured 80 to 90 per cent marks in the qualifying examination. I have the instance of a poor Kashmiri Pundit student who secured the third position in the Higher Secondary Part II (inter) examination. He could not get a seat in the Medical College, Srinagar whereas the ward of a highly influential Muslim medical practitioner, who had secured fewer marks, was admitted. Then the Pundit student did engineering on own expenses, securing the top position. At present, the talented boy is the Director, Asia Pacific of a Multinational energy giant (company), having network of energy projects in Southeast Asia, including Australia. Had the Pundit boy been admitted to the Medical College, he very likely would have flowered into State's most eminent physician. The State Government's communal policy proved detrimental to its own long-term interests. Even the State Public Service Commission was manned by rank communalists who jealously guarded the Muslim interests. There was a close nexus between "the members of the Public Service Commission and the experts appointed by the Commission to conduct interviews of the candidates, seeking appointment to the gazetted cadre. The so-called experts had to toe the policy laid by the Government. They were obliged to uphold the Muslim interests by rejecting Kashmiri Pundit candidates. This practice still continues in the University of Kashmir. External examiners are mostly appointed from amongst the Muslim academicians of Aligarh Muslim University. The Vice-Chancellor of Kashmir University should invariably be a Muslim. After, the gruesome assassination of Prof. Mashir-ul-Haq, in 1990, Kashmiri Muslims now occupies the Vice-Chancellor's seat from time to time. Syed Mir Qasim's name has become synonymous with corruption. He got a palatial house built in Barazulla in the outskirts of Srinagar city. It was reported in the media that the entire supply of eggs from the State Poultry Department to the city was diverted to the site where Qasim was building his house. These eggs were meant for polishing the walls. He appointed his relatives in key positions in the State. Mir Qasim's brother Syed Hussain was appointed Chairman of the State Legislative Council. At present some of his sons are working outside India. Mir Qasim promoted corruption and nepotism of the worst order. He gave a new lease of life to communal forces in the State. He was instrumental in uprooting the Congress from the State. When he was the leader of the Democratic National Conference he sidelined some of his Pundit colleagues and did not trust them. It was during the time of Mir Qasim that the scourge of mass-copying in examinations became the order of the day. I have the instance of the then Deputy Director of School Education who would make rounds of the examination centres, coercing the supervisory staff to "remain lenient" towards particular candidates (some of whom were the wards of Muslim bureaucrats and Ministers). In other words, they were "ordered" to allow these candidates to do cheating in the examination. The functioning of the State Board of School Education, which conducted Matric and intermediate examinations, was in a hopeless condition. A Muslim teacher, holding MA in Persian, was allowed to set Mathematics paper for the matriculation

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

examination, while an MA in Arabic teacher would set the question paper in English for inter (Higher Secondary Part II ).The Education Department had become a den of communalism and nepotism. Two decades later, the same Department became the seminary of Muslim fundamentalism and a breeding ground of militants. Had the Department been governed by secular norms, perhaps things would not have come to such a pass. Mir Qasim is said to have played a dirty role in the Kashmiri Pundit agitation of 1967 over the kidnapping of a minor Kashmiri Pundit girl. As the head of the State Congress, he provoked a section of Muslim activists of his party against agitating Kashmiri Pundits. The Congress lumpens in collusion with anti-national elements "threw acid on the Kashmiri Hindu women, protesting against the police brutalities." Mir Qasim as the Congress Supremo in the State, observed ominous silence. "In fact, he had already switched over his loyalties to the communalists who had started making inroads into the State setup" (Prof. M. L. Kaul). Qasim made a provocative and anti - Pundit speech in the Assembly over the question of the kidnapping of Pundit girl. He is reported to have thundered, "If the Indian Constitution does not allow the change of religion to a Pundit girl, it must be burnt down to ashes." The President of the Pradesh Congress did not refer to a Muslim girl from Bhandarwah who had eloped willingly with a Hindu boy. The State police was pressed into immediate action and the Muslim girl was restored to her parents. But Parmeshori Handoo was lost to them forever. He did not let the findings of Kohli Commission become public as it would have exposed the communal overtone of the State Congress. Mir Qasim and D.P. Dhar were close associates. The latter played a key role in Kashmir politics. He was the person who rehabilitated G. M. Sadiq and Mir Qasim from political wilderness. He was the founder of the Democratic National Conference which, to the chagrin of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, kept secularism and democracy to the centre of state politics. During the Pundit agitation, D.P. Dhar remained in constant touch with the leaders of Pundit community. He even visited the Srinagar jail and met detained leaders. It was resented by Mir Qasim. According to media reports, Mir Qasim branded Dhar a communalist, who wanted to discredit the Sadiq Government in the eyes of New Delhi. These were the wages of a dedicated Kashmiri Pundit nationalist from the head of a secular party. Consequently, the Home Department was snatched from Dhar. Communal elements in the State politics created a furore against him. Ultimately, Dhar had to quit State politics. At the Centre, the middle-aged Kashmiri Pundit politician and ardent nationalist, blazed forth as the brightest star in the firmament of Indian politics. Through his diplomatic acumen and intelligence, he was instrumental in carving out a sovereign state of Bangladesh by enacting the partition of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. D.P Dhar's name will go down in the annals of India's contemporary history as India's topmost statesman and diplomat. But in Kashmir, he was "denounced as an I B agent of a foreign power." Dhar lived and died for the cause of India. This is a great tribute to the Kashmiri Pundit community. Mir Qasim presented the State of Jammu & Kashmir "to Sheikh Abdullah on a platter" It showed that he had already some sort of understanding with the Sheikh. He was said to have misled and misinformed Mrs. Gandhi about the political designs of Sheikh. Qasim had told Mrs. Gandhi that political interests of India would be served better if the Sheikh was made the Chief Minister of

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

the State. Under the facade of Indira-Sheikh Accord, Mir Qasim resigned as the Chief Minister of the State and Sheikh Abdullah was inducted in his place after remaining in political wilderness for over two decades. In the words of Jagmohan, "the Kashmir Accord did not change the constitutional relationship between the Union and the State. It was primarily a device to bring Sheikh Abdullah back to power and also give an impression that certain aspects relating to autonomy could be reviewed." But the Accord did not achieve the desired ends. It did not bring about a change of hearts. The whole superstructure on which the Accord was built collapsed by 1977. In his autobiography, *Dastan-e-Hayat*, Mir Qasim squarely blames Mrs. Gandhi for the utter failure of the Accord reached between the Sheikh and Mrs. Gandhi. Whenever Kashmiri leaders failed to fulfill their personal agenda, they held the Centre villain of the piece. For that matter, Mir Qasim was no exception. With his overt blessings, communal forces in the Valley got a new lease of life. Influenced by Afzal Beg's political ideology, Mir Qasim bore a strong grudge against the Pundit community and relegated the members of the community to second class citizens. He shut the doors of employment on them.

### **39.0 TARKI-MAVALAT SOCIAL BOYCOTT OF PRO-INDIAN ELEMENTS**

Explaining the logic behind bringing Sheikh Abdullah back to power on February 24, 1975, Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi made a statement on the floor of Lok Sabha. She said, "Nobody had denied Sheikh Abdullah the previous role. In between, he seemed to have changed his mind and there was disagreement and estrangement. Now that he is again expressing his willingness to work for unity, for secularism, we welcome him." It may be recalled that after three years of protracted parleys between the Union Government's representative, G. Parthasarthi (son of former Prime Minister of J&K State, Mr. N. Gopalswami Ayyengar) and Sheikh Abdullah's close associate Mirza Afzal Beg (assisted by a shrewd lawyer of Pulwama, Ghulam Mohi-ul-Din Malik) an agreement known as the Kashmir Accord was signed just to hand over power to the doughty Kashmiri leader. Within four months of assuming the reins of Government, the very chemistry of the ruling party, the National Conference, was altogether changed with the merger of Afzal Beg's Plebiscite Front into the former. His second step was to enfeeble the State Congress by causing defection in the ranks of the Congress. Ten Congress members, including the then Hurriyat leader, Abdul Gani Lone, joined Sheikh's National Conference. It is an irony of history that All India Congress Party which the Sheikh regarded as the sister organization of National Conference was in the process of being uprooted from the State with the connivance, overtly or covertly, of so called secular leaders. Communal elements infiltrated into the National Conference and exploited the party leadership to fulfill their hidden political agenda. In fact, these political developments were a victory for the pro-Pak forces in the Valley. These forces were nurtured over the years by Afzal Beg with the founding of Plebiscite Front in the wake of Sheikh's political somersault and his subsequent arrest on August 9, 1953-The Front workers were appointed in key posts in the State administration. All cases were withdrawn against those who were involved in Al-Fateh terrorist activities. Al-Fateh was the first terrorist organization which had come into being with the blessings of the then President of the Plebiscite Front, Afzal Beg. Present, some of the former Al-Fateh terrorists are holding very high posts in the State bureaucracy. They are Directors, Secretaries and even Superintendents of State police force. The seeds of Muslim insurgency in the State were sown, wittingly or unwittingly, from the day Sheikh assumed power a second time in 1975, though he himself remained a secularist. Arrogant and conceited as he was, the Sheikh crossed swords with the Congress leadership. In the ensuing high political drama, Mufti Syed, the then State Congress Chief, played a significant - rather damaging- role. At the behest of Mufti Syed, Congress withdrew support to the Sheikh, who had dubbed "Congressmen as insects in street gutters." Perhaps the wily Bijbehara lawyer, who had been inducted into politics by late D.P Dhar, was dreaming of becoming the Chief Minister of the State. The Sheikh torpedoed Mufti's plan: he dissolved the State Assembly, paving the way for elections. From this time onwards, the ruling National Congress played the Muslim card. The result was clear and stunning! The Sheikh won elections with a thumping majority. Mufti's Congress was almost wiped out in the Valley. However, in Jammu province Congress bagged ten seats, because of "infighting between the Janata Party and its

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

rebel candidates." Janata Party leaders spoke in different tones. Muslim leaders aligned with the Janata conglomerate: talked of strengthening Article 370 and striving for seeking autonomy for the State. Their speeches were changing the mindset of Kashmiri Muslims who had already been infected by a virulent anti-India propaganda launched by Pakistan. Kashmiri Muslims had started adoring Z A Bhutto. He had become a hero of Kashmiri Muslims. Bhutto Memorial Committee was formed in the Valley with its headquarters at Badshah Chowk in Srinagar. It was headed by a prominent National Conference leader who later crossed over to Pakistan. A concerted effort was made through the State Cultural Academy to change the very pluralistic culture of the Valley and Islamise it by changing the very names of the villages, towns and mountains. Slowly and gradually encroachment on the land attached to Hindu shrines and temples was made by anti-national elements. With the connivance of the officers of the Revenue Department, revenue records were tapered. To give an example, the entire land, attached to the Hari Parbat shrine in Srinagar was allowed to be encroached upon by local Muslims. The hillock was named Kohi Maran and a signboard bearing this name was installed by the authorities at the entrance of Devi Angan just to destroy the sanctity of the Chakreshwari temple atop the historic hillock. A huge water-tank was built close to the shrine on the top of the hillock. "The entire path for the Parikarma was vengefully dug out and destroyed and the earth carried to fill the land owned by Muslim Auqaf Trust which was headed by the Chief Minister himself." (Prof. Kozel) There was a dispute over the land attached to Bhairav Nath Temple at Chattabal in the outskirts of Srinagar city. During the regime of Mir Qasim local Pundits were not allowed to hold "Havan" puja for their deity as had been the practice over the past centuries. Local Muslims started using it as a local "Ghat" for the purpose of operating ration-ticket and getting rations from the Food Control Department. A case was filed in a local court by the Pundits. The court gave its judgment in favour of the Pundits. But the administration refused to implement the court verdict. The temple as well as the land in question was never restored to the Hindus. The adjoining Dharamshala continued to remain under police custody with the main gate sealed and closed for ever to its legal claimants. As already stated, the very names of places were changed into Muslim nomenclatures. For instance, Brariangan (literally meaning courtyard of the Devi) in Anantnag district was officially called Sheikhpora, Shankracharya as Takht-e-Suleiman, Anantnag as Islamabad etc. Motivated by a regressive outlook, State rulers made a systematic attempt to wipe out all traces of Hindu history and culture by giving pan-Islamic names to the places which were associated, directly or indirectly, with the ancient history of Kashmiri Pundits. "Instead of researching the basic roots of the nomenclatures and establishing their historic import, what the doyen of secularism did was to stamp out the names reminiscent of Hindu history and culture" (Prof. M. L. Kaul). The so-called cultural transformation had a deep impact on the mindset of the Muslims who were slowly and gradually coming under the influence of Jamat-e-Islami. When Sheikh Abdullah assumed the reins of Government for a second time, he made a secret compromise with the Jamat-e-Islami. During his first stint as the Chief Minister of J&K State, he had adopted a stern policy against the Jamat. He even denied promotion to non-gazetted junior Muslim teachers owing

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

allegiance to the Jamat. He was convinced that the Jamat was opposed to his political ideology. But this time the Lion of Kashmir appeared a changed person.

He had apparently come under the influence of the Islamised bureaucracy. He took a very liberal view of the activities of Al-Fateh. His government withdrew all the court cases filed against the members of the group unilaterally. The Sheikh, slowly and gradually, succeeded in developing anti-Congress sentiment in the mind of Kashmiri Muslims. He advised the Muslims to resort to the social boycott of Congressmen in the Valley. Termed as Tarki Movalat in Arabic, social boycott was an obsolete practice practiced by the Muslims against the infidels in the medieval times. Muslims were asked not to let the Congressmen bury their dead in the graveyards or go for any matrimonial alliance with the Muslims owing their allegiance to the Congress which was dubbed as a Hindu Party. Congress workers were nicknamed as "Goga".

'Even the ruling party leaders painted the Janata party in black in spite of the fact that Lok Nayak Jai Prakash. Narayan had stood by the Sheikh through thick and thin. Muslim bureaucrats had mooted the idea of linking the entire Muslim majority Doda district with the Valley by constructing high-cost Mughal Road. The main aim was to pave the way for Greater Kashmir which could, in due course of time secede from India and carve out an independent political identity. Both the Sheikh and the Government of India later scuttled the idea. The Sheikh was not interested in extending his wings beyond the Pirpanchal as he was apparently dyed deep in what is called "Kashmiri Nationalism." The Government of India did not provide the requisite funds, taking shelter under the excuse that the Mughal Road project was not feasible from the defence point of view. The idea of Greater Kashmir was not dead; it continued to remain "a coffee-house gimmick" for the Muslim elite and intellectuals. The Sheikh was apparently interested in changing the "demographic lay-out" of Jammu province. To benefit Kashmiri Muslims, he established a ring of Muslim colonies around Jammu. "The colonies were patterned more or less on communal lines. If any cognizance of police records is to be taken, these colonies have now proved hideouts of Kashmiri militants. The Government justified the establishment of colonies to rehabilitate the weaker sections of society, particularly the Gujjars. Of course, the Gujjars are backward. But what about other sections, particularly the scheduled caste Hindus? Why were not separate housing colonies established for them? The brain behind this programme of Islamisation was Afzal Beg who was a dyed-in-wool communalist. The Sheikh Abdullah was still a better choice for Kashmiri Pundits who were saved from physical liquidation by the Sheikh himself in the wake of the Tribal invasion of Kashmir in 1947. To browbeat India, J&K Assembly passed Resettlement Bill which purported restoration of landed and structural properties to the Muslims living in Pak-occupied Kashmir. The Bill was, obviously, designed to seek destabilisation of the State. But Governor B. K. Nehru refused to give formal assent to this Bill. It is alleged that the Sheikh was not inclined to get this Bill passed. But he was pressed hard by his advisors to adopt a tough attitude against New Delhi. Most probably his bunch of advisors included his son-in-law, Ghulam Mohammed Shah and Mirza Afzal Beg. The Sheikh was alleged to have

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

inducted hard-core Jamat-e-Islami activists in the administration. He had raised a battalion of the police force, comprising mainly Gujjars from Karnak, Doda, Uri etc. It was reported that the then Inspector General of Police had objected to the recruitment of dubious elements in the State police force. But the Union Home Ministry and State Government completely ignored the objection raised by the State Police Chief. After two and a half decades, the same force raised a revolt against the Government. Regarding the appointment of Kashmiri Pundits, Mr. Pyare Lal Kaul narrates bone-chilling revelation of certain facts. "After he (Sheikh Abdullah) assumed power again in 1975, he advised his lone Hindu Minister from Jammu, D. D. Thakur, not to recruit and appoint any Kashmiri Pundit in the Secretariat." "You may appoint and post any Dogra in the Secretariat service," the Sheikh told him confidentially adding "But not a Kashmiri Pundit." The Sheikh cautioned him, as if it was the top Government policy of the Sheikh Ministry" (page 47). It was said that the Chief Minister visited Calcutta in 1980. Addressing local Kashmiri Pundits there, he told the Pundits that he could not accommodate Pundits and employ them in the State. He advised them that they could visit the Valley in summer for holidays. In evolving this anti-Pundit policy, Kashmiri Muslim elites and bureaucrats had a big role to play. Sheikh Abdullah alone could not be held responsible for he had to please the elite section of Kashmiri Muslims who were the opinion-makers. The domineering and powerful Muslim middle class considered Kashmiri Pundits as rivals and a hindrance in job opportunities without State patronage. It could not dislodge the Pundits who were far more talented, educated and professionally qualified than any other ethnic or religious group in the State. So its guns were trained against them. A systematic tirade against the Kashmiri Pundits was launched. As a part of vilification campaign against the Pundits, State Information Department brought out hostile literature, in the form of booklets and pamphlets, at the cost of the State exchequer. A responsible National Conference leader, who was later on promoted as a Cabinet Minister, wrote a booklet against Kashmiri Pundits. Through this spate of anti-Pundit literature, the ground was being prepared for the migration of Kashmiri Pundits. The Sheikh failed to curb these elements both in his party and in the Government. He was ageing fast, becoming senile and losing his grit and stamina to cope with the challenge posed by anti-India forces. During his lifetime he had become a legend, a political phoenix. The Sheikh wanted to maintain his secular credentials at any cost. There are many anecdotes related to his secular outlook in his daily routine. His ire against demonstrating students was one such anecdote. When someone informed him that students of the Engineering College, Srinagar, were proceeding in a big procession from their campus at Hazratbal to Lal Chowk protesting against the Biwani communal riots and raising anti-India and anti-Pundit slogans, the Sheikh left his residence immediately, asked the police force not to interfere. He accosted the processionists at Ashai Bag and in the true spirit of a foot soldier of the Hindu-Muslim brotherhood, chased them away with a hockey-stick which he carried in his hand.

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

### 40.0 PLAYING COMMUNAL CARD

After the demise of Sheikh Abdullah, his eldest son Dr. Farooq Abdullah was chosen the Chief Minister of the State. With Sheikh's death, a momentous era in Kashmir politics came to an abrupt close. Farooq was partly unacceptable to some elements within the ruling National Conference. All these elements rallied round Sheikh's wily son-in-law, GM Shah who was very ambitious and wished to dislodge Farooq. Lacking both in political maturity as well as flair for palace conspiracy, Farooq was no match for Shah. To win over their political opponents, both Shah and Farooq played the communal card, little knowing that such political games would have a disastrous effect on the future of the State. "Farooq proved as sly as a fox. Keeping his cards close to chest, he systematically aided the process of Islamisation as were chalked out by the Islamised bureaucracy (Prof. M. L. Koul) Jamat-e-Islami had forged close links with the State bureaucracy. With its blessing, the outfit had established a vast network of Madrassas in the Valley. In Kashmir as in other parts of the country, politics and administration were closely integrated. Both of them "breathed the same air, practiced the same values and grew in the same ethos." The very political culture in the State since 1947 was based on widespread sycophancy and corruption as well as "one-sided communalism. Dyed-in-wool communalists like Mirza Afzal Beg, Shams-ud-Din and Noor Mohammed could hardly give a type of administration that was based on genuine social justice. "If this culture is unhealthy, the administrative system is bound to be deformed. An infected administrative setup, in turn, renders the political culture still more unhealthy. One adds to the infirmities of the other" (Jagmohan in My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp: 184) .After the Kashmir Accord of 1975 political masters of the State were mainly guided by narrow political loyalties. As such administration remained, more or less, insular and defective. In this atmosphere of suspicions and political intrigues, Kashmiri Pundits suffered most. The Islamised bureaucracy acquired sufficient clout for maltreating the community. Referring to the nasty role of bureaucracy Jagmohan writes, "Soon, at the higher echelons, a group of senior Kashmir officers came to acquire disproportionately large influence upon the Chief Minister. On the one hand, this group, along with a few auxiliary groups at the middle and lower levels, began to serve personal and party interests of the top politicians of the regime: on the other, it started feathering its own nests and securing a hold on the power structure" Most of these officers wanted to keep the State away from national mainstream.

Even the Chief Secretary could dictate terms to the Ministers. It may be recalled that a Chief Secretary, hailing from a rural area of the Valley, was a blue-eyed boy of the Chief Ministers. He was almost a fanatic on the pro-autonomy issue. "On the question of preserving special status guaranteed under Article 370, the adroit bureaucrat was more loyal than the king, "He was alleged to have stifled pro-India forces and even made difficult "for the Central agencies to function effectively in the State." According to the Governor of the State, in 1984 "one post of Director General of police, three posts of Inspectors-General, six posts of Additional Inspectors General and forty-seven posts of Superintendents of Police were kept out of the all-India police cadre." The State Government had virtually stopped

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

the intake of IAS and IPS cadre. A sort of two parallel groups had emerged: local cadre and IAS or IPS cadre. This was the time when militancy had started acquiring a foothold in the State, particularly in the Valley. The local police officers were reluctant to take cognizance of the presence of anti-national elements. The most unfortunate part of the Untold Story is the nefarious part played by the bureaucracy in its failure to nip the evil in the bud. Officers who were undoubtedly, brilliant and secular-minded preferred to remain in the background. Of course, some of them used their talent and time in the services of manipulative politics, soiling their hands in corruption. The rot in the bureaucracy deepened during the time of Farooq Abdullah, because of his "weak and wayward leadership."

"Under the weak and wayward leadership of Dr. Farooq Abdullah, the rot in the public service deepened. Sheikh Abdullah knew how to utilise competent officers from amongst those who constituted the coterie around him. Moreover, he had a hold on cliques and groups. Dr. Farooq Abdullah lost even that. Gaps between words and deeds widened. Dr. Farooq was also obliging in distributing administrative patronage. Bureaucracy proliferated." The then Governor of the State Jagmohan, sums up the administrative scenario under Dr. Farooq Abdullah (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 186)

Since the ruling National Conference was a house divided, the State administration couldn't have remained immune to the effects of "factional politics." A strong, but dedicated leadership could have salvaged the situation. The very politics in the State was in a melting pot. A slanging power game was being fought between Farooq Abdullah and GM Shah. It was the tale of two brothers-in-law, with New Delhi playing the pivotal role. "But neither Dr. Farooq Abdullah nor G M Shah could rise above the old and entrenched reflexes. The Central leadership, which came on the scene after Mrs. Gandhi, showed little understanding of the ground level realities and tended to place its eggs in the bottomless baskets of a few individuals." The State administration was least interested in administering social justice to the people or curbing anti-national forces, which had dug deep roots into the Valley as well as the Muslim-majority areas of Jammu province. State employees were in a defiant mood, corruption was widespread and communal virus had entrenched in the body politics. As regards the recruitment of the personnel to the State police force, the Director General of police, who was the supreme appointing authority, did not figure anywhere. The police Chief had to appoint only those candidates whose names were given in the list approved by the Chief Minister. Thus, the State administration was completely politicised. Employees participated in Government-sponsored demonstrations. Says Jagmohan, "Thus ironically, the Central Government helped, with its funds, in the creation in Kashmir of instruments which were used against it with impunity." By 1990 all the Unions of State Employees were virtually taken over by the Jamaat-e-Islami activists. Dr. Abdullah gave a new turn to State politics when he joined hands with Moulvi Mohammed Farooq who fed pro-Pak forces in the Valley. During his father's time Plebiscite Front was merged with National Conference.

Obviously, this unwise step strengthened pro-Pak forces in the State at the

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

cost of secular values. During Dr. Farooq's time, pro-Pak elements, led by Moulvi Farooq, were given an affectionate hug! All this was done to strengthen the Muslim fraternity. The National Conference fell into the quagmire of sectarian and communal politics which was earlier an anathema to the Sheikh. If the Sheikh could be said to have diluted a little his secular politics, his mercurial doctor-son forged a close nexus with the communal elements just to beat New Delhi in the power game. The close political liaison between Soura-born trained doctor and Nowhatta born rabble-rouser Moulvi was an ominous political development. Under the facade of the "Double Farooq" phenomenon, anti-India forces were gaining momentum. The process of indoctrinating the Muslim youth with high doses of fundamentalism was being carried according to a well thought-out strategy. Camps designed to impart training had already been set up. Commenting upon the nature of these training camps, M. L. Kotru writes, "The training covers subjects like subversion and sabotage, use of explosives, techniques of destroying vital installations like railway lines, bridges, oil tankers, powerhouses etc. To tighten the militants and give them battle inoculation, some trainees are sent to the Pak -Afghanistan border under the banner of Harkat-e- Mujahideen where they are made to fight in simulated battle conditions. Some of the selected militants are primed for longer period and are intended to attain greater competence in the methods of guerrilla warfare, laying of landmines, handling of remote-control devices with special emphasis on the exclusive use of improvised explosive device and wireless communication."

Dr. Abdullah had completely lost control over the administration. It would be unfair to hold Dr. Farooq alone responsible for this mess; previous Governments were responsible for encouraging pro- Pak elements in the Valley. His political opponents were out to dislodge him from power. The Central Government had formed no worthwhile Kashmiri policy to safeguard national interests. In spite of the fact that intelligence agencies furnished reports about the prevailing situation in the Valley to the Union Home Ministry from time to time, no action was taken and the dirt was left to be accumulated under the carpet. Pakistan was determined to foment trouble in the Valley. A number of Muslim organisations were operating in the Valley under the garb of religion. All of them had direct contact with Pakistan's ISI. They received funds from across the border. It would have been a Herculean task for them to operate without patronage from Islamised bureaucracy. Of these organisations, Jamaat- e-Islami, Islamia Study Circle, Ahal-i-Hadis and Jamat-i-Tulba were the most prominent ones. All these organisations were changing the mindset of Kashmiri Muslims. They were spreading venom against Kashmiri Pundits. The secessionist agenda received a big boost in the 1984 elections when all the so-called secular parties, including the ruling National Conference party, raised the bogey of autonomy and the erosion of Article 370. The Youth National Conference leaders exhorted the electorate to continue the so-called Freedom struggle and elect NC candidates to attain their political goal. Some of them even asked young men to cross the border for arms-training. "It was all hate-India campaign preparing Kashmiri Muslims for the impending battle" (Prof. Koul). Kashmiri Pundits became the first target of virulent Muslim fundamentalism. They were out to subvert centuries-old Sufi traditions in the Valley. The Pundits felt a sense of insecurity; they

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

could hardly adjust themselves with the changing political scenario. They became suspect in the eyes of bureaucracy. In the search for the roots of militancy in Kashmir, one cannot ignore the sociological aspect. Kashmiri Muslim society had been undergoing a process of change for over a period of five decades. It started with the awakening call given by the Sheikh in 1931 when he openly challenged the authority of the Dogra ruler. Some Aligarh-educated youths also played their role in reforming and reshaping the political thinking of average Kashmiri Muslim youth. In rural areas, - the vile practice of selling girls - "Kori Ha?"- to the aged and physically handicapped was stopped. Widow remarriage, which was partly stopped under the impact of the Hindus traditions, was revived; girl's education was no longer a social taboo. Kashmiri Muslims started sending their girls to "Makhtabs" in rural areas. A systematic campaign against the dowry system was launched by religious parties, including Ahl-e-Hadis, Mirza Qadiyan etc. There was a perceptible change in the prevailing social order of Kashmiri Muslims. This change was accentuated as a result of their economic prosperity which was ensured meticulously by the Government of the day. Their sartorial habits changed: womenfolk consuming a lot of cosmetics, men folks, taking fancy to Jeans, pop-music and English language. It was largely through the laudable efforts of Maulvi Rasool Sahib, the scion of Mirwaiz Mohammed Umer Farooq - the Hurriyat leader - that Kashmiri Muslims took to Western education. It is on account of this reason that late Moulvi Rasool Sahib is called the Sir Syed of modern Kashmir. The emergence of neo-rich middle class in the Muslim community in the Valley played a key role in developing the pan-Islamic sentiment in the mind of average Kashmiri Muslim who was hitherto under the benign influence of the Sufi order. The Sufi cult was shattered by the virulent pan-Islamic philosophy advocate by Jamat-e-Islami. Kashmiri Pundits heavily paid to this sudden metamorphosis.

## **41.0 DRESS REHEARSAL OF PRO-PAK DEMONSTRATIONS**

Consequent upon the conspiracy hatched by Dr. Farooq Abdullah's wily brother-in-law Ghulam Mohammed Shah in collusion with certain disgruntled political elements within the ruling party, Dr. Farooq lost power to G. M. Shah. Temperamentally both Shah and Farooq were on different wavelengths. Shah was an introvert, adept in playing political tricks very dexterously while his brother-in-law, Farooq was an extrovert, possessing flair for publicity and taking things at face-value. Shah was incarcerated for a number of years after the dismissal of Sheikh Abdullah in 1953. He was very close to Afzal Beg, the founder-President of the Plebiscite Front. Shah, like a highly pampered child, was often given to temper-tantrums. He would often lose temper on his subordinates. Shah's elder brother, Khawaja Ali Mohammed Shah, was associated with National Conference, but was later appointed Director, Civil Supplies (Shali-Store). It was but natural for his younger brother, G. M. Shah, to come in contact with the Sheikh who got his elder daughter, Khalida, married to Shah. He remained a minister in the Sheikh Cabinet till he was shunted out as he (the Sheikh) wanted to get his son, Farooq, in the limelight. As minister in the Sheikh Cabinet, Shah's behaviour towards public and State employees was a subject of great controversy. I may quote one such instance of his uncouth behaviour. In 1977, Shah, along with Deputy Commissioner, Abdul Hamid Banhali, was on an official tour of the border areas in Karnah Tehsil. By chance, he dropped in a local High School in Teetwal. By the way, he put a question to a Muslim Gujjar teacher who was taking a class. The teacher hesitated to answer the Minister's quixotic, funny question. At this, Shah lost his temper and slapped the teacher in the presence of students and officials accompanying him. Somebody had complained to the minister that the poor school teacher was related to the then Congress MIA, Mohammed Yunus who was a political opponent of the National Conference. It is said that because of his ill-temperament and arrogance, the Islamised bureaucracy had no liking for Shah. He tried his level best to win over the bureaucracy on his side, but failed to gain their loyalty. He tried to stem the rising tide of corruption, but failed miserably to check the corrupt officials and ministers in their tracks. The hydra-headed monster of corruption and communalism was there to preside over the State's political destiny. He took some administrative measures against the bureaucracy, earning absolute unpopularity among Kashmir Muslims. A shrewd politician as he was, Shah took the same political, line of his predecessors. He choose the Muslim agenda which he tried to incorporate with the policy of the Government. In order to please the Muslim employees, he thought of constructing a Mosque within the premises of the Secretariat in Jammu. As already stated in the earlier chapter, the people of Jammu took out protest rallies against the Chief Minister's move to get a Mosque constructed within the premises of Jammu Secretariat. Effigies of Shah were burnt in the streets of Jammu by the protesters. At last, the Chief Minister was forced to drop the idea. But the Kashmiri-Muslim dominated bureaucracy never made any compromise rather it toughened its harsh attitude towards Kashmiri Pundits in the Valley. Shah's main aim was to gain the sympathies of the Muslims and to exploit the situation to meet his political ends. "G. M. Shah was known to be a clever and unscrupulous manipulator.

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

He had developed close links with pro-Pak elements in Kashmir when the Sheikh was in wilderness. He tried to bolster Jamat-e-Islami in Kashmir and Shiv Sena. in Jammu to further communalise the politics of the State. The communal violence of 1986 in Southern Kashmir in which scores of temples were destroyed and thousands of Hindus of Anantnag district were rendered homeless cooked his goose. It was alleged that Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, the President of Congress, who coveted the Chief Ministership and was as unscrupulous as G. M. Shah, had a hand in organizing the communal carnage. It gave Hindus of Kashmir a foretaste of what was in store for them.' (Prof. Madhok in Kashmir: The storm Centre of the World, Chapter XVII). Kashmiri Muslims staged demonstrations against the-unlocking of the Ram Janambhoomi Temple at Ayodhya in major towns of the Valley. Fortuitously these massive demonstrations took place on the same day Shah reached Srinagar from Jammu. Perhaps the exact date was 20th February, 1986. One could infer that the public demonstrations were organised at the behest of the Chief Minister who wanted to play "The Muslim Card" to browbeat New Delhi and give the Centre the impression that Shah was a big political force in the State: Anti-national elements had floated all types of rumours to provoke Kashmiri Muslims against Kashmiri Pundits. It was rumoured that all Mosques in Jammu province had been vandalised. Hundreds of Muslims had been killed in the Jammu city and bus-loads of bodies of the massacred Muslims were on the way to Srinagar for burial in the graveyards. A big procession was taken out from Rajouri Kadal to Lal Chowk with processionists yelling "War cries against India," and raising pan-Islamic slogans. Houses belonging to Pundits were stoned. "The worst role (of spreading these false rumours) was played by the Islamised bureaucracy with police personnel directing the whole campaign. The rumours were carried to the remotest of the villages and hamlets"(Prof. Koul). Perhaps the processions taken out in protest against the imaginary grievances and unfounded rumours constituted the dress-rehearsal of the massive pro-Pak demonstrations organised by the militant outfits in mid-January 1990. The cumulative effect of these rumours proved very devastating and disastrous for Kashmiri Pundits. In Anantnag district, Qazi Nisar, the Mirwaiz of South Kashmir and a protégé of Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, mobilised the Muslims against Kashmiri Pundits whom he branded as "Kafirs and enemies of Islam" in public speeches delivered in Mosques. He founded the Ummat-e-Islami on March 4, 1986. He did "everything to fan the fire of fanaticism and in the process to build leadership for himself amongst the ignorant Muslim masses on narrow religious lines" (Jagmohan). When the National Conference leaders criticised Dr. Qazi Nisar, the Chief of Ummat-e-Islami, for exploiting religion for political purposes in March, 1987 elections, the bearded leader quizzed, "who taught us to do so? What had Sheikh Abdullah been doing in his life time? Did he not make his speeches from Hazratbal shrine? Have the National Conference workers forgotten 1977 and 1983 elections when they made religious appeal to seek votes?" Qazi Nisar, like any other political leader, exploited Kashmiri Muslims for personal benefits. The overall effect of the speeches delivered by Qazi Nisar proved disastrous for the safety of Kashmiri Pundits residing in Anantnag district. Widespread communal riots broke out in the district. Houses belonging to Kashmiri Pundits were looted. "The looters were led by leaders of all complexions. Political affiliations did not divide their ranks"

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

(Prof. M. L. Koul). Kashmiri Pundits all over the district were terrorised and harassed. Nearly 500 houses were looted. Scores of temples were razed to ground. Of all the villages Gautam Nag, Salar, Wanpoh, Luk Bhavan, Aobur and Fatepur were hit hard, with all the houses either burnt or looted by the frenzied mobs. The law enforcing authorities, including the Deputy Commissioner of the district, were, overtly or covertly, on the side of the rioters. They took no action whatsoever against the looters. From these acts one could get an inkling into the psyche of the same so-called secular leaders who were, apparently, in cahoots with the anti-Pundit forces, operating in the Valley to stage a bigger drama which ultimately culminated in the mass migration of Kashmiri Pundits from the Valley in 1990. Just to show the world, State Government led by Shah clamped curfew in the disturbed areas. It was enforced more in breach than in practice. Perhaps, this was the second instance of a major communal riot in the Valley. The first riot broke out in July, 1931 when mobs looted Pundit's houses in Maharaj Gunj, Fateh Kadal, Ali Kadal area in downtown Srinagar. The police resorted to firing, killing 13 rioters on the spot. Since 1947 the day's observed as the Martyrs Day in remembrance of the rioter's: killed by the Maharajas police. Had Shah's police force taken action and killed any of the rioter, the State Government would have enlisted as the "second Martyrs' Day" to be observed in the sweet memory of the martyrs. Who can give credit to Shah as a secularist? Who can absolve him of his role in Anantnag riots? Writes Prof. M. L. Koul, "He was no secularist and behaved essentially as a bigoted person. He felicitated the induction of notorious pro-Pak elements into the police force. He was reported to have raised two battalions in Kashmir police force, comprising mostly the Jamat-e-Islami followers. His regime was completely identified with communalism and sectarianism." (Kashmir Past and Present: Unravelling the Mystique, Chapter XVII). Kashmiri Pundits brought the grave injustice to the notice of the Central Government. The Union Home Ministry failed to take note of the new developments which adumbrated bad times for the State. Rabid communalists were masquerading as nationalists, the bureaucracy was in collusion with pro-Pak political outfits and a virulent anti-Kashmiri Pundit policy was the principal plank of the Shah Government. It was the time when bombs and grenades were started being hurled to disturb public peace and paving the way for the ensuing political turmoil. During the short tenure of Shah as the Chief Minister of the State, a number of idols were either broken or stolen from temples. To give one instance, the idol of Goddess from Laxmi Narayan (Ram Koul) temple at Hariparbat on the outskirts of Srinagar city was stolen. Even lands attached to temples and Hindu shrines were encroached upon by anti-national elements. In this connection, Pyare Lal Koul quotes the instance of the land encroached upon by the members of the majority community at Mattan. Pyare Lal Koul writes, "In the late seventies, during the Sheikh regime, a chunk of land attached with and subservient to the Hindu shrine at Mattan, the gate way to world famous Amarnath shrine, was encroached upon and snatched by the members. of the Muslim community. This land was used for centuries past, as an important centre for night halt and rest of the pilgrims of Charri"(Kashmir Trail and Travail,pp : 50).The so-called disputed land was granted to the Muslims. The Auqaf flag was allowed to be hoisted there which meant that the land belonged to the Auqaf Trust. Local pundits

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

raised a hue and cry, but. the Government acted in favour of the Muslim Auqaf Trust. The State Government accused Kashmiri Pundits of "building up militancy." "Since the Mattan incident, the militancy of Kashmiri Pundits has become patent enough to warrant any scope for misunderstanding, but for the swift action of the State administration that time, a virtual holocaust was imminent" (A. Q Khan in Hindu-Muslim ties in Kashmir -Myth and Reality, pp 10). The booklet, which was published in 1981, was part of a propaganda blitz meant to paint secular Kashmiri Pundits in black hues. It was the same old analogy: give the dog a bad name and hang it. Chief Minister Shah, acted according to a well thought out strategy. In 1990, when the Muslim insurgency broke out in the Valley, Shah's followers first swelled the ranks of militants in Kashmir Jagmohan has aptly summed up the roller-coaster politics of Shah. "When G M Shah was the Chief Minister, he was all out for India, for him, accession was irrevocable and buried. When he went out of power, he started saying, "Every Kashmiri Muslim is a Pakistani. I am also a Pakistani; a great mistake was made by acceding to India, "He could be compared to his brother-in-law, Dr. Farooq who enjoyed the warm comradeship with Amanullah Khan till 1974 but after assuming power he spoke a different language. Hurriyat leader, Late Abdul Ghani Lone was once a "Pucca - not kacha, Congressman" believing in India's secular democracy and State's permanent accession with India. But the moment he was out of power, he sang a different song. Shah can't be faulted on this score. Main actors of the Untold Story created deliberately different illusions, but their policy towards Kashmiri Pundits remained steadfast. The Central Government nourished and entertained "another type of illusion" - sometimes putting all apples in a bottomless basket."There in lay the tragedy of Kashmir."The wholesale un-resisted displacement of four lakh Kashmiri Pundits from the Valley adds pathetic dimensions to the tragic story. During the Shah's regime Kashmiri Pundits had lost faith in the secular credentials of the State Government. Although Shah's Government tried its level best to appease Kashmir Muslims by adopting cent per cent pro- Muslim policy yet Kashmiri Muslims in general had no soft corner for the Chief Minister. His installation as the Chief Minister by deposing his ebullient brother-in-law was viewed as a conspiracy. The pro-Pak elements exploited the situation just to swell the anti-India hysteria which scaled new heights in the Valley, endangering the safety of Hindu minority. The anti-Shah wave turned into an anti-India wave. Charges and counter-charges were traded from either ride. In this bizarre drama (say tragedy) New Delhi acted as a mute spectator, watching helplessly with the situation nose-diving into a catastrophe. And the catastrophe ultimately engulfed the microscopic Kashmiri Pundit community.

## **42.0 BRUTAL KILLINGS OF PROMINENT PUNDITS**

The plight of Kashmiri Pundits did not improve even after the dismissal of Shah as the Chief Minister of the State. It rather took the worst turn with the escalation of militancy in the State. Dr. Farooq Abdullah became the Chief Minister of the State for second time in November 1987. He had succeeded in developing "a personal equation with Rajiv Gandhi" who extended his full support to the Chief Minister. Since undesirable elements, owing their loyalties to Pakistan, had already infiltrated the State administration, it was an uphill task for Farooq to rein in the bureaucracy. He had virtually, lost control over the State apparatus. The State Government released twenty-three hard-core terrorists. This unwise step added a new dimension to militancy. Kashmiri Pundits became the first target of militancy in the State. It, in fact, started with the killing of prominent Kashmiri Pundits. "The Valley of Kashmir has been brought to the current pass since the year 1989. When Kashmiris witnessed a head-on collision with the avowedly fundamentalist, separatist and the intolerant faces," says Pyare Lal Kaul (Kashmir-Trail and Travail). The month of October 1989 was a troublesome period for the Valley, especially for Kashmiri Pundits. "In October 1989, the Valley was in the grip of raiders, not outside but inside raiders. It appeared that all the sacrifice made by the brave soldiers of India since October 1947 had been brought to naught. The extent of political and administrative mismanagement was, indeed, unpardonable," says Jagmohan (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 325). On November 4, 1989 Pundit Nila Kanth Ganjoo, a retired District and Sessions Judge, was shoot dead in broad daylight in Hari Singh High Street in Srinagar's Civil Lines. He was the same Judge who had tried the JKLF leader, Maqbool Bhat - a Kashmir Muslim hailing from Trehgam in North Kashmir - under the Enemy Agents Act and awarded death sentence to him, the father-figure of militancy. The objective of this murder was to dramatise the ascendancy of subversive and to create a fearful atmosphere for Kashmiri Pundits. Moreover, the killing of the eminent Kashmiri Pundit Judge sent signals to the judiciary to desist from passing death punishment to the Mujahedeen. The very scene of shooting down Pundit Nila Kanth Ganjoo was very pathetic. He dropped dead on the road side, with his body smeared in blood. For ten minutes no shopkeeper came forward to retrieve or cover the body. His death was taken lightly by New Delhi. Even no Central Minister came to Srinagar to pay homage to the departed legal luminary who was the second Kashmiri Pundit martyr after Pundit Tikka Lal Tapiloo. On September 14, Advocate Tikka Lal Tapiloo was gunned down as he was coming out of his house in Chinkral Mohalla in Srinagar to attend the court. A practicing lawyer, he was, the founder Vice President of the Bhartiya Janata Party unit in the Valley. He was a prominent RSS Pracharak in his student days and was also closely associated with the then RSS leader, Pundit Makhan Lal Aima (Harkar). During Kashmiri Pundit's Agitation of 1967, Pundit Tapiloo was arrested by Kashmir Police and tortured. He was a highly dedicated, selfless social worker who even commanded great respect from the Muslims. It was 11 A.M. Pundit Tikka Lal Tapiloo left for court as was his daily routine. Two young men, clad in jeans and wearing helmets, crossed his way in the lane leading to the main road. They were carrying helmets presumably to hide their faces. As one of

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

them greeted him, his other companion fired five bullets from a close range into his chest and abdomen. It was his usual practice to exchange pleasantries with the persons whom he met in the way. Perhaps the person who shot at him might be acquainted with him. That is why he raised no alarm when the killer came too close to him to shoot at close range. The poor Kashmiri Pundit lawyer fell down motionless in a pool of blood. The inhuman behaviour of the Mujahideen can be gauged from the fact that half a dozen bullets were fired at him. His body got embedded in the nearby wall. It lay in the lane which was a reminder of his dedicated service to the cause of community. That very day JKLF issued a press statement, "We will kill all those who say that Jammu and Kashmir's accession to India is irrevocable; we shall continue our armed struggle." Pundit Tapiloo's gruesome murder was a signal to Kashmiri Pundits: "Leave the Valley, otherwise you will be killed." The community was at the mercy of the Mujahideen. "They could kill any member of the community any time. If a Pundit was not safe in the heart of Srinagar city and that, too, in a locality inhabited by a large number of Pundits, how could any one of them be safe in the isolated pockets of the far-flung and scattered villages. Fear began to haunt them." (Jagmohan in My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 322). Hundreds of Kashmiri Pundits were killed most brutally by the Mujahideen. To give inkling into these brutalities I am referring to a few of such cases. Pundit Prem Nath Bhat was a prominent advocate, journalist and social activist of Anantnag district. He would often contribute to local dailies on the issues related to terrorism in Kashmir. During his student days, he was associated with the RSS. He had led Kashmiri Pundit temple agitation on the issue of the encroachment of temple land by local Muslims in Mattan. In spite of his pro-Pundit stance, he was a first rate lawyer who was very popular even among Muslims. He was shot dead in broad daylight in Anantnag Chowk. His death came as a rude shock to the Pundits of Anantnag district. The killing of the talented Kashmiri Pundit, Mr. Lassa Koul, Director, Doordarshan Kendra, Srinagar, at the very door of his house in Bemina colony was an eye-opener for the community. He was killed by the terrorists who were in collusion with the employees of Doordarshan Kendra, Srinagar. It was the 13th of February, 1990, and time was 7 PM Mr. Lassa Koul left his office for home in Bemina colony. Someone in his office was apparently in contact with the assassins. He informed them that the Director had left for home. The assassins were waiting for him near the gate of his house in Bemina colony. As he reached the gate of his house, the militants pumped bullets in him. The Pundit dropped dead at the gate of his newly-constructed house. "Koul had incurred the wrath of terrorists by showing on television a programme which they termed as un-Islamic and formed part of what was labelled as cultural aggression by India, says Jagmohan. It may be recalled that a number of anti-national elements had infiltrated into Doordarshan Kendra, Srinagar. The then Deputy Minister of Information and Broadcasting was allegedly responsible for recruiting pro-Pak employees in the Kendra. The employees were in cahoots with the militants operating in the Valley. Pundit Lassa Koul's ailing aged parents could not bear the death of their only son ; they died of the shock within six months of the death of their son. The gruesome death of Lassa Koul, Prem Nath Bhat and Judge N. K. Ganjoo was a sufficient proof that the terrorists, operating in the Valley at

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

the behest of Pakistan's ISI, were bent upon ethnic cleansing of the Valley. They wrote threatening letters to local Pundit scribes. Late Pundit Poshker Nath Koul Vakil, eminent journalist received one such letter, asking him to leave the State otherwise he would be killed. The terrorist did not spare even Kashmiri Pundit scholars, including poets and writers. Sarwanand Koul Premi was a retired headmaster, hailing from Anantnag district. Besides being a veteran teacher, he was an eminent Kashmiri poet who had translated the Bhagvat Gita into Kashmir language. He commanded the highest respect from all sections, including the Muslims of his native village Shali. Premi was asked by some friends and relatives to leave the village in view of the spurt in communal tension. They had apprehensions about the safety of the members of his family. But the poet didn't pay heed to their advice ; he would rather over rule them by saying that nobody could cause any harm to him. Alas ! His hopes were belied. It was the evening of April 30,1990. The sun had just gone behind the western hillocks that guarded the nondescript remote village in Anantnag district. A pall of silence had wrapped the village under its fold. Routine chores of the villagers had come to a halt; stray lights in the hamlet were visible. Intermittent cawings and bleating from across the village cut through the death-like-silence. The retired Pundit headmaster was sitting at his home, having a chat with his family members. Someone called him from outside his house. He looked through the window, found three men standing outside his home. They asked him to come down as they wanted to ask him an important question. He and his 27 year old son, Virender Koul, came downstairs to meet their guests and greet them in the true spirit of Kashmiriat. Some Muslim neighbours of the Pundit appeared on the scene and implored the three armed youths not to drag Premi and his son. But their mild protests were ignored by the youths. They assured the victims that no harm would be done to them and that they would be let off after a preliminary enquiry. His son Virender told them that they could ask him any question in a separate room in the house, but the "merchants of death" were determined to kill both of them. "But the fact that the world of his poetic beliefs and sensibilities had ceased to exist and old loyalties and friendship had become powerless in the face of the fierce assault mounted by forces of fundamentalism and fanaticism" (Jagmohan). Both Pundit Sarwanand Koul Premi and his son, Virender Koul, were taken to a nearby paddy field. They were subjected to severe torture. Says Prof. M. L.Koul, "A nail was driven at the spot where he (Premi) put a tilak mark. His eyes were gorged out and body-limbs broken and was hanged from a tree for everybody to witness the grisly murder. His hair was torn and skin burnt and fleeced. His son was meted out the same atrocious treatment." (Kashmir ! Past and Present: Unravelling the Mystique, chapter XIX) The mutilated bodies of son and father were found the next day hanging from a willow tree in the field which stood as a mute witness to the secular character and poetic genius of 67- year-old Kashmiri who had taught hundreds of Muslim students during his service as primary, middle and high school teacher. Secular outlook of the noted Kashmiri Pundit poet can be gauged from the fact that "he had a good library" consisting of the Vedas, the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, as well as the holy Quran. As regards his knowledge of Islam and other religions, he could well match a profound Islamic scholar. He believed in religious tolerance which is the

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

characteristic feature of the Kashmiriat. Muslim fundamentalists killed another reputed teacher, Pundit Dina Nath Mujoo at Rawalpora on the outskirts of Srinagar. Professor D. N. Mujoo had a brilliant academic career. He had taught in the College of Education in Srinagar over a long period of time. He was a high-profiled scholar and an ardent theosophist. For some time he was associated with Women's Welfare Trust which was running a number of schools for girls. In this respect Prof. D. N. Mujoo was a pioneer in women's education in the State. Apart from being a profound scholar of Kashmiri Shavism, Prof. D. N. Mujoo was well-versed with the philosophy of J. Krishnamurthy. I was the student of Prof. Mujoo and had the privilege of hearing him speak on the philosophy of J. Krishnamurthy at the Teacher's Training College, Srinagar. His knowledge was marvellous, delivery superb and language simple. He was a paragon of simple living and high thinking. The terrorists did not spare his precious life; they killed him brutally. The Merchants of Death entered his Rawalpora residence by scaling the high walls, cutting a big hole into the ceiling. They dropped into his room where the nonagenarian Pundit scholar was confined to bed, stricken with illness. He was too feeble to move out of his room. First, the terrorist stabbed him in the belly, then cut his throat with a sharp blade. Within seconds, he died, his family members unaware of his torturous death. It was the replay of the horrendous blood-bath enacted by Changez Khan or Hilaku long, long ago in India. Like Premi, Prof. Mujoo had lit the lamp of knowledge and served the cause of humanity and civilization in Cupid's choicest abode, Kashmir Valley.

Yet another teacher, Pundit Ved Lal Gunjoo, fell prey to the ire of the fundamentalists. The fundamentalists had unleashed propaganda against Kashmiri Pundits in the city. They were branded as "Agents of India." On January 20, 1990 all the Mosques in Srinagar blared with anti-Pundit slogans. They were asked to leave the Valley within twenty-four hours. Some of the Pundit youths were dragged out of their homes, given harsh beatings and asked to join anti-India demonstrations. A hush-hush campaign was launched to convert them in remote villages in villages, where there was negligible population of Kashmiri Pundits. The harassed and beleaguered Pundits became "like the imprisoned Jews in Hitler's concentration camps," waiting for ultimate destiny. The ground was being prepared for their banishment from the Valley.

### **43.0 "APPLE SHEIKHS"- THE HIGH PRIESTS OF MILITANCY**

The fundamentalists were out to terrorise the Kashmiri Pundits. They acted all along according to a well thought-out plan. First, they wanted to eliminate Kashmiri Pundit intellectuals. That is why Kashmiri Pundit teachers became their first target. Pundit Ved Lal Ganjoo was a resident of Sopore town. He was posted as the Principal of the Higher Secondary School, Sopore. The Pundit teacher, being a local man, knew the family history of each of his students. He had taught hundreds of Muslim students of Sopore town during his service. Some of them had risen to high positions in the State bureaucracy. When insurgency broke out in 1990, Pundits of Sopore town made a mass exodus to Jammu. Pundit Ved Lal was one of them and had temporarily settled in Jammu along with the members of his family. However, he received a number of letters from his former students, asking him to return to Sopore as "the academic condition of the school he headed had deteriorated with his departure." True to his conscience, Pundit Ved Lal made up his mind to go back to Sopore, though his friends and family members beseeched him to change his decision as Sopore town had become a strong hold of the militants who had declared Sopore a "Liberated Zone." On a fine morning he boarded the Sopore-bound bus from Jammu bus stand. The next day he attended the institution to resume his duties after remaining away for four months. Some of the teachers working in the school were his students who outwardly welcomed the "arrival of their teacher." But, in fact, they had close links with the militant outfit Hizb-ul-Mujahideen. They had hatched a conspiracy to kill the Pundit Principal, who had once taught them with utmost care and love. The gruesome plan was to be meticulously executed on Friday when the staff and students had to go to the nearby Mosque for Friday Namaaz. Came the fateful day, all teachers, including peons, dashed to the Jamia Masjid. "We will return within half an hour. Be comfortable in your office. No worry," assured Farooq, Physics teacher, to Pundit Ved Lal Principal of the school. Just within ten minutes, two masked men entered the Principal's office. The Principal was busy with his office work, quite unconscious that his teachers had hatched a conspiracy to kill him. The masked youths fired a volley of bullets from their AK-47 rifles. Poor, helpless, 57 year old Kashmiri Pundit Principal, who was to retire within a month or two, dropped dead with blood splattered all over the walls. The main conspirator, Farooq, was keeping a close tab on the situation, while giving directions to the masked youths in which direction to escape after committing the crime. These were the wages of the Kashmiri Pundit for his dedicated service to the people of Sopore. It may be recalled that a teachers in Sopore town had close links with the Jamat-e-Islami mid were patronised by highly motivated education officers. They were seen always in the vanguard of anti-India activities. The local police took no notice of the murder. The case was hushed up as no action was taken by the law-enforcing agencies. Since the early seventies Sopore town had become a strong hold of the Jamat-e-Islami. All the prominent leaders of the party, including Syed Ali Shah Geelani, hail from the town which is known for its; apple-orchards. A majority of the people living in the town are engaged in fruit business. Consequently, a wave of economic prosperity has been sweeping the town, giving rise to all powerful neo-rich middle class in the

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Muslim community. The State Government went out of its way to encourage the fruit business, providing fertilizers at subsidised rates to the fruit-growers. All these "Apple-Sheikhs" aligned themselves with the Jamat-e-Islami whose cadre penetrated deep into local administration. A few hundred Kashmiri Pundits, living in and around Sopore became abysmally an eyesore for the fundamentalists. That could be the reason why Kashmiri Pundits were made targets. Prof. K. L. Ganjoo was made the first target in Sopore. Four persons, one armed with a Kalashnikov and others with pistols concealed in pockets - appeared at the door of his newly-constructed house. One of them shouted at Ganjoo to come out and accompany them. Down came the hapless Pundit Professor. He was aghast - rather at wit's end. His wife and cousin, sensing the gravity of the situation, also came down from the second storey of the house. All the three were being led to the scaffold by the four Messengers of Death. "Even the sheep, when taken to the slaughter house, moan and make attempts to escape. But these, the three hapless individuals, pale, aghast and with their blood curdling in their veins, must walk to their chamber of death in death" (Jagmohan). Some of the neighbours recognised the armed intruders: they were none other than "Prof. K. L. Ganjoo's friends "who regarded their Pundit friend as brother. Now the friendship had melted in the heat of religious sentiment. These armed intruders were associated with a local terrorist outfit called "Lashker Ayub." Nobody dared to say anything to the militants. Prof. Ganjoo and his cousin, were taken to a nearby ghat of river Jhelum six bullets were fired from point blank range. Ganjoo dropped dead, his body smeared with roadside dust and blood. A faint cry Wai-Mauji" (Oh! Mother) escaped from his lips - perhaps he was not calling for his "birth-mother," but the Maui Kashmir (Mother Kashmir) who was obviously weeping and wailing for the brutal killings of the sons of the soil."The militants fired a bullet at Pista. But luckily, it hit him on the tip of his heels, injuring him slightly in the legs. He jumped into the river, somehow managed to swim successfully to the other side of the river. He hid himself in a nearby village. After a couple of days, he managed to reach Jammu. As regards Prof. Ganjoo's wife Prana, she was first gang-raped by the assassins, then her breasts were chopped off. Her mutilated body was not handed over to her relatives but some believe that she was not killed, but converted to Islam. "For some unaccountable reason, Ganjoo's corpse was kept in a Mosque for the night and then thrown into the river. Mrs. Ganjoo, too, was ruthlessly killed and her corpse was tied with a stone and thrown into the river (Jagmohan). It was the same Sopore town where Kashmiri Pundits had overwhelmingly voted for the Jamat candidate, Syed Ali Geelani and made it possible for him to become an MIA from Sopore. The Jamat leader chose to remain mum on the killings of Pundits in Sopore. Kupwara town is close to Sopore - just a distance of 25 kilometers between the two. Militancy first raised its head in Kupwara, it being in close proximity to LoC Jaikeshori (name changed) was serving as a teacher in a local Girls school. On the second of every month the teachers had to attend office of the Tehsil Education Officer, Kupwara (Girl's Section) for getting their salary. Right from Tehsil Education Officer to the Zonal Education officer all the officers of School Education Department in Kupwara and Sopore tehsils were Kashmiri Muslims who had links, overtly or covertly, with Jamat. One such officer Kaloo had been there over ten

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

years. They watched the political interests of the Jamat. Jaikeshori was the only Kashmiri Pundit teacher in the school, the rest being Muslims (some of whom were non-matric or middle class pass). Jaikeshori was persuaded by her Muslim colleagues to collect her pay dues from the office of Tehsil Education Officer, Kupwara. She agreed and accompanied her Muslim friend. When the innocent Pundit women teacher reached Kupwara bus-stand, she was pounced upon by some armed youths. They dragged her to their hideout where she was gang-raped. Ultimately, she was carried to a nearby sawmill poor, hapless Pundit women was tied with ropes to immobilise her physically. Her body was sawed into two. No Kashmiri Pundit teacher with a Tikka on her forehead would dare to see any Muslim Officer. The very sight of tilak mark would excite the wrath of the officer against Batta. Girja Kumari was working as a teacher in a government school in Bandipora. She had gone to collect her salary from the school office-After receiving her dues, she called on her Muslim colleagues in the same locality. She was under watch by the militants. They kidnapped her from the residence of her Muslim friend and colleague, taken to another village where she was first gang-raped and then killed.

As already stated Kupwara and Baramulla districts were badly caught under the grip of terrorists. Brij Mohan Qazi, a 30 year old Kashmiri Pundit was the resident of Qazi Hamarn locality of Baramulla. He was tricked by some of his Muslim friends to have a cup of tea in a tea-shop located in the same locality. As he was taking tea, his friends-turned-militants assaulted him and kept him in captivity for one week in a village hut. He was killed and his mutilated body was thrown on the roadside. The genocide of the Kashmiri Pundits at the behest of India's hostile neighbouring country by the militants was reminiscent of the bloody carnage of the Pundits in the 14th century . The same type of killings was executed in other districts of the Valley. Terrorism unleashed by the Mujahedeen in Kashmir was or is in no way different from the one unleashed by the Taliban. Its first aim was to terrorise non-Muslims and to compel them to migrate from their native land. There is absolutely no place for non-Muslims in the medieval and theocratic order which is the political goal of the Jihadists. They have no faith in secularism and democracy which are alien concepts to them. For them kafir is a kafir - as the leopard cannot change its spots, so it was illogical to think that the Mujahedeen could tolerate the presence of Kashmiri Pundits in the Valley. Their presence denoted the secular character of the Indian State. That is why they left no stone unturned in victimising four lakh Kashmiri Pundits , whose sufferings area story too deep for tears.

#### **44.0 UNABATED KILLINGS**

In Srinagar city, fundamentalists did not spare even Kashmiri Pundit nurses. Sarla Bhat was one such victim. She was working with the Soura Medical Institute. The head of the Institute Dr. Ali Mohammed Guru allegedly had direct links with the militants. The Institute had become a virtual militant hideout. Governor Jagmohan has some revealing facts about the Institute. "I wanted to proceed against a senior doctor of Sher-i-Kashmir Medical Institute. Mufti Sayeed (the then Union Home Minister) agreed with my view. But George Fernandes (the then Minister in charge Kashmir affairs), without bothering to counter the hard evidence in our possession and the recommendations of the intelligence agencies asked me not to do so. The vague cliché of 'political process' was the only justification. In the highly complex situation in which I found myself, I did not want to make an issue of it. I regretted it later. Had the intended action been taken, much of the subsequent kidnappings and killings of some innocent nurses and liftmen, would have been prevented.' (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir pp 467). One morning in mid-September, 1990, Shrimati Sarla Bhat was on duty in her assigned ward in the Institute on the outskirts of Srinagar. By chance she heard the conversation between Dr Guru and the dreaded terrorist Hamid Sheikh, a native of Batmaloo, Srinagar, in the side room. Hamid who was also the Deputy Commander of JKLF, was admitted in the Institute as a fake patient to escape from the clutches of security forces. The Pundit nurse was suspected to be a police-informer by Dr. Guru. She was asked by her boss to proceed on long leave, but Sarla refused to oblige the wily doctor. Dr. Guru hatched a conspiracy to eliminate her. He sought the services of a hawker, Ashraf Chakoo, from his native district, Baramulla. The Muslim hawker was a confidant of Dr. Guru. Ashraf Chakoo kidnapped Sarla Bhat. She was taken to the Lal Bazar area on the outskirts of Srinagar. After being raped by Chakoo, the Pundit nurse was brutally murdered. Her body was thrown on the roadside. No punishment was meted out to Ashraf Chakoo. Many years after the gory incident, the militant turned-doctor, was killed by a rival militant outfit. Numberless Kashmiri Pundit women met the same fate at the hands of fundamentalists. "The tortures inflicted on them are unheard of even in the darkest period of medieval history. They were molested, raped and massacred." (Prof. M. L. Koul). In Pulwama Tehsil, 20 year-old, vivacious but modest Pundit girl Babli and her 40 year old, mother, Roopawati were kidnapped by the locals in broad daylight. They were dragged to a nearby paddy field where they were first gang raped and then strangulated. Their corpses were cast on the village road. Both of them met the same fate as Sona Bhat met at the hands of the militants. The brutal murder of Satish Tikoo in the downtown triggered mass migration of Kashmiri Pundits from the Hindu dominated area of Habba Kadal in Srinagar. He was killed on February 2, 1990 near his house. The 25 year-old Satish was very popular "among the Hindus and Muslims of the locality. Some of the Muslim boys were his close friends. On February 2, two Muslim youths whom he knew well, called at his house early in the morning. The youths did not enter the house, but chose to hover Satish's house in the adjacent lanes. Within half an hour the Pundit youth turned tip. His sister told him that two youths had come to meet him. Satish reprimanded his sister for not making them

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

sit in the room and offering them tea as is the custom of Kashmiri Pundits. He went out of his home to find out his friends. Within a minute two pistol-fire shots were heard. Satish's parents and sister went out to find out what the matter was. To their utter amazement Satish Tikoo's body was lying in a pool of red blood. Describing the plight of the aggrieved parents Jagmohan writes "The house of Tikoo, was like a shattered nest. Everything lay scattered. I sat on the ground with the family members. An old lamp had been lightened. It pierced the darkness only around me, Satish's father narrated the tragedy in a slow, halting voice. I thought it was unnecessary. The grim atmosphere around told the tale more vividly." Satish's family lived with their Muslim neighbours for the past many years. But, now, the fundamentalism had overtaken the psyche of the Muslim neighbours. The result was obvious: Before Satish's murder a good number of Pundit families had fled from Habba Kadal area. Describing the scene these empty houses, Jagmohan writes, "Looking at the compact and enmeshed houses and by-lanes which acted like fine threads of fabric, I wondered how these families who had all their gods and goddesses here and deep roots in the soil, could have and settle in distant and unfamiliar lands. Sometimes life is unaccountably cruel. And we human beings have, perhaps, no option but to suffer - suffer in silence." (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir pp 358). Satish's parents never thought that their son would be killed by his friends in whose company he would spend a great part of the day every day. His death gave a rude shock to the Pundits living in his locality. Next day they rolled their bag and baggage and left for Jammu. The atrocities of the militants on the Kashmiri Pundits did not stop there. These continued to be perpetrated on them. Mr. D. N. Chowdhary, a resident of Rainawari, was working as a Manager of a Cement Mill at Wuyan in South Kashmir. He was kidnapped from his office in the presence of his subordinates who were in collusion with the local militants. He was killed brutally: his hands were tied, the tongue was chopped off and eyes were gorged out with a red hot iron-bar. His dead body was thrown on the bank of the Jhelum near Lethpore on the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway. Pundit Bal Krishan Tutoo was the resident of Sheshyar, Habba kadal. On coming from his office he was fired upon by the militants near his house. Somehow his friends carried him to the SMHS Hospital for immediate treatment. No doctor attended on him which had become a den as well as a hideout of terrorists. The poor, unfortunate Kashmiri Pundit died for want of medical aid in a hospital where four decades earlier eminent Kashmiri Pundit doctors like Dr. Gwash Lal Koul, Dr. Govind Joo Vaishnavi, Dr. S. L. Fotedar, Dr. G. L. Koul, Dr. S. N. Peshin, Dr. M. L. Qazi etc. had served. They served the people of the Valley irrespective of any religious consideration. There were scores of Kashmiri Pundit patients who died like Pundit Bal Krishan Tutoo for want of medical care in Srinagar's leading government hospitals. Militants did not spare even their Pundit teachers. The gruesome killings of Prof. Nil Kanth Lala testify to this fact. Prof. Lala, MA History), MA (Political Science), MA (Economics), B.Ed, was a veteran teacher who had retired from Government service in 1980. After his retirement he was persuaded by his close Muslim friends to join Islamic School, Dalgate (Srinagar). He resided in the Muslim-dominated locality of Khankhai Sokhta in the heart of downtown Srinagar. He would give free coaching to Muslim students who had advised him not to migrate to Jammu

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

in any case. Almost all the Pundits of his locality had migrated to Jammu. Prof. Lala was adamant not to leave his students in lurch." At last he had to yield to the wishes of the members of his family. One day in the early hours of the morning, he packed his household goods. As he was loading the truck waiting near his home, a group of terrorists appeared before Nil Kanth Lala and started firing. The Prof. was killed in the twinkling of an eye. The killers were none other than his Muslim students whom he had taught free of charges. "In his capacity as a veteran teacher much in demand he entered hundreds of Muslim homes to teach and humanise their sons and daughters and that was how he was recompensated. Not a single Muslim shed a tear on his death (Prof. M. L. Kaul). Thirty five year-old Kashmiri Pundit youth Ashok Kumar Qazi was a resident of Tankipore which is at a stone's throw from the Old Secretariat building in Srinagar. He was dragged out of his house and given severe beating by a man hailing from his locality. His legs were broken. While crying out of severe pain, the militants shot him dead. Next day his body was found rotting in a gutter. Pundit Radha Krishan Razdan was the resident of Chattabal on the outskirts of Srinagar. He was kidnapped from his residence by the militants who kept him in captivity for a week in a Muslim locality of Kawdara. During captivity he was "subjected to torture by cigarette burns.' As a result of beating, he fell unconscious. His tormentors thought him dead and threw him into the Jhelum. Luckily, he was rescued by a party of security personnel who happened to pass that way. Kashmiri Pundits working in the intelligence wing of State administration were on the militants' hit-list. One such officer was T. K. Razdan. He was in his early forties. His gruesome death has been described by Jagmohan who quotes Sudesh Kumar, a law student of Kashmir University." T. K. Razdan, an Intelligence Officer, was killed right in front of my eyes. We were travelling in the same Matador when some militants stopped it, pulled out their guns and fired at him from close range. They then dragged the body out and took it to the nearby Mosque. They searched his pockets, took out his identity-card and nailed it to his body. Then they dropped his body on the road. It was only later that the police came and carried it away. The body was cremated by the CRPF. The relatives were so terror stricken that they were afraid to even come out for the cremation. His murder really shook me." (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp: 489). There is the tragic story of another Intelligence Officer who was shot dead in his house. Seventy eight year-old Pundit Badri Nath Wattal was the resident of Kralyar locality in Rainawari. Two decades earlier he had retired from the Accounts wing of CBI. After his retirement the noble Kashmiri Pundit was employed in a private firm and was least concerned with the office from which he had retired. One evening, a group of Muslim youths appeared before his house. They asked Mr. Badri Nath Wattal about the whereabouts of a particular Kashmiri Pundit who had long since migrated from Rainawari. Mr. Wattal's two Pundit neighbours were also sitting and chatting with him at that time. Almost all Kashmiri Pundits had migrated from this locality. Only Pundit Badri Nath Wattal and two of his neighbours - one a PWD employee at the verge of retirement and the other retired long since from J&K Bank - were living in the deserted Mohalla. Pundit B. N. Wattal made the Muslim youths sit in his "Nato" (room), entertained them with "tea and cigarettes "After spending half an hour they left his residence assuring full safety to his

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

family; consisting of his schizophrenic son and his ailing, senile wife. Next day, all the -three youths stepped into the courtyard of -his house. Pundit Wattal was sitting in his room. One youth flaunted a- pistol and immediately fired shots at the hapless Pundit. He dropped dead, in a pool of blood. The other two youths attacked Watal's wife, smashing her teeth. They beat even his mentally-deranged son. Nobody came forward to console the poor Kashmiri lady. She wailed and cried alone, sitting beside the dead body of her husband- the whole night. The next day the police carried the dead body for cremation. Later, Mushtaq Latram's outfit Al-Umar owned the responsibility of killing the aged Kashmiri Pundit. It may be regarded that Latram was alleged to have killed maximum Kashmiri Pundits during 1990-1992. It is the same Latram who was freed from police lockup in exchange for the hijacked plane passengers at Kandhhar. A school drop -out, Mushtaq Latram was once an ardent and zealous follower of Mirwaiz Maulana Mohammed Farooq, the father of the Hurriyat leader, Moulvi Umer Farooq.

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

### 45.0 JIHAD IS OUR STRATEGY, MARTYRDOM OUR ASPIRATION

The city of Srinagar has always been the nerve-centre of State politics. Founded by Jaluka, king Ashoka's son, the city of Srinagar (Shri-Nagar) was the capital during the reigns of both Hindu and Muslim, rulers. Regarding the origin of the city, the noted archaeologist and former Prime Minister of J&K State, Pundit R. C. Kak writes in his celebrated book "Ancient Monuments of Kashmiri" pp: 18), "Pravrasena II named it (city of Srinagar) Pravarapura, a name which is still current among the learned, but the younger city soon assumed the name, as it had already usurped the dignity, of the old capital of Asoka, which has surly been called Purana Dishtana, modern Pandrethan, 3 miles above Srinagar. The new city can be proved to have occupied its present site, and seems to have enjoyed an uncommon degree of prosperity during the reign of its founder, as can be gathered from the poetic description of Kalhana, who states that "the city was once famous as containing 36 lakh houses. It was provided with regularly arranged markets and was at first only on the sky, ascending which one sees the earth, glistening in rain at the close of summer and covered with flowers in the month of Chaitr-X'pp18). The city lost its lustre; and magnificence during the time of Sikandar Buta -Shikan (1390 A.D - 1414 A. D) when the rapacious zealot pulled down and vandalised scores of temples in and around the city, harassed Kashmiri Pundits by forcing them to change their faith. During Mughal period the city received special attention, though the hub of activities had shifted to the eastern part called Nawa-Shar (Vicharnag) close to the Hari Parbat fort. The Dogra rulers made it their capital city, erecting Victorian-style buildings in and around the city. The city of Srinagar has remained in the limelight since 1930 when the first political party, Kashmiri Muslim Conference was founded by late Moulvi Yousuf Shah. Later on, under the benign influence of the Indian National Congress it was converted into the National Conference whose supreme leader Sheikh-al-illah remained the head of the party and its supreme ideologue till his death in 1982. Politically, the city of Srinagar remained under two watertight zones. The first zone extending from Amirakadal (christened it Lal Chowk in the wake of the Tribal invasion of Kashmir in 1947) to Fateh Kadal area, remained under the influence of Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah. The second zone, known as Bakra-Ilaqa, extended from Fateh Kadal locality to Vicharnag locality. It was the Bastion of Moulvi Yousuf Shah, the President (radar) of the Muslim Conference as well as the Mirwaiz of Kashmir. The former zone tinder the political hegemony of National Conference Supremo, Sheikh Abdullah was known in Kashmiri - parlance as the "Sher-Ilaqa."The dividing line between the warring groups was Fateh Kadal bridge, the fourth bridge that spans over the Vitasta (Jhelum). From 1938 to 1950, many a ding-dong battle was fought between the two warring factions in State politics. In 1948, when late Jawahar Lal Nehru, was taken in a river procession over the calm waters of the Jhelum, Bakras, owing allegiance to Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah's party, Muslim Conference, hurled stones at the processionists just to give an impression to the Independent India's Prime Minister that Sheikh Abdullah was not the sole representative of Kashmiri Muslims. Right from 1947 the followers of Mirwaiz, who was banished by the Sheikh to Pakistan in 1947, owed their allegiance to Pakistan. Mirwaiz's influence by way of

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

the Head Preacher, extended beyond Srinagar city. It may be noted that the bulk of Mirwaiz's followers joined the first constituted terrorist group, UI-Umar. They committed heinous killings on Kashmiri Pundits. Although its rival group, Jammu and Kashmir liberation Front which mainly consisted of the discarded youth cadre of National Conference stood for independent Islamic State. UI-Umar, along with its sister outfit stood for Kashmir's full integration with Pakistan. The UI- Umar outfit killed scores of Kashmiri Pundits in the city, particularly in the Rainawari area of the downtown. After killing a number of Kashmiri Pundits from this densely- populated Pundit area of the city and driving away one and all (Pundits) from it, the militants declared the Rainawari-area as the Liberated Zone along with Batmaloo locality which lies on the outskirts of the city. From the few instances of the killings of Kashmiri Pundits in the Rainawari area, quoted above, one can have an idea of the brutal nature of the militants. Pundit R K Handoo was serving as "compounder" in the Badami-Bagh cantonment. The 65 year-old Kashmiri Pundit was residing at Bagh Jogi Lankar in Rainawari. Gentle by nature, Handoo would not cause harm to even a fly, not to speak of refusing to cure his Muslim neighbours. After returning from his office to his home, he was asked by his middle-aged wife to fetch milk from a local milk shop. Within five minutes, someone rushed to his house, informing his wife of her husband's murder. The noble Pundit was shot dead allegedly by the associates of the dreaded terrorist Sher-Khan alias Yousuf son of a petty cloth-merchant, Ghulam Malik in Jogi Lankar. Two months earlier, Sher-Khan's brother had allegedly made an unsuccessful attempt on the life of a resident of the same area, who was Deputy Superintendent of police. Militants killed block President of the National Conference Abdul Rahman Billa and Secretary, Ghulam Mohammed Piploo of Jogi Lankar (Rainawari). Militants had set up an Interrogation Centre on the fringe of Rainawari close to the bank of Gagribal lake in the vicinity of a local crematorium. In addition to this centre, another centre functioned at Malpora (opposite to the shrine of Hazrat Mesha-Sahib) in a palatial house belonging to a Kashmiri Pundit migrant. The local Chief of the militant organization - probably Sher-Khan alias Yousuf Malik or Kalwal used this place as his headquarters where from Fatwas were issued from time to time. Kalwal's father was a well-placed retired head-assistant from the Electricity Department. When the militancy was at its peak, even arms were dumped in Rainawari police station by the militants. Apparently, there was a close nexus between the police and the militants. After some time, those arms were recovered by the security 7 forces as reported in the Press. The militants set on fire the part of a building, housing the BEd. department of a local college. They completely burnt down a DAV Institute, State Bank of India building, local Post office and the newly-constructed building of the Handicraft centre. Houses belonging to nine Kashmiri Pundit migrants were torched in broad daylight. I may quote the instance of a migrant Pundit's house which was occupied by a Muslim constable, Ghulam Mohammed Kanna (formerly resident of Sopore) who besides being a cop in the Rainawari police station was acting as the Imam of a local Mosque. The cop looted the household goods, of the Pundit worth thousands of rupees in collusion with a next-door neighbour who was once an ardent supporter of the ruling party, and was having fair relations with the local MLA. The killing spree of Pundits (lid not stop there. Sahab Jee Kotru alias Virender

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

son of Pundit Radha Krishan Kotru was the youngest son of his parents. He had gone to Jammu for interview on his return to Srinagar after a week. In his locality, there lived a dreaded terrorist, the son of a midwife. He suspected the 20 year-old Sahab Jee Kotru to be a police informer and wanted to eliminate him at any cost. The midwife's son posed as a secularist. He had, close links with the ruling party and sometimes acted as party's election agent too. One morning Sahab Jee Kotru went outside his house just to fetch something from the market. His mother was busy inside the house with her domestic chores, while his sick father was confined to bed. Two Muslim youths, coming from the opposite side, crossed their way just in front of him. One of them took out a pistol and shot at him. The Pundit youth fell into the gutter. Blood was gushing out of the wounds. He faintly cried for his mother. The aged Pundit lady responded to his call, rushed out of her house. What she saw, her youngest son lying motionless in the lane. The afflicted lady cried for help. Nobody came forth to her rescue or to lift the dead body of her son. The Mohalla was almost denuded of Pundits. All the Pundits of the locality had already migrated to the plains to escape the brutalities of the militants. Even her Muslim neighbours (did not muster courage to rush to the spot and help the lady in lifting the dead body. For full four hours she cried, wailed and sobbed. At last, some BSF personnel passing that way took the body for cremation. His parents could not bear the loss of their son, they too died within three months in Jammu. The Jihad was at its climax the Pundits were on the militant's hit-list and the Government was in a shambles. The gruesome murder of another Pundit Youth, Rattan Lal Bhat, son of Master Lassa Koul Bhat of Kralpora (Rainawari) could move the heart of even a callous person. The handsome youth, endowed with affable nature, was probably, in his early forties. Employed in the Assistant Commissioner's office as a Senior Accountant, Rattan was very helpful to his neighbours, especially to the Muslims. There were only two or three Pundit families in his Muslim-dominated Mohalla. He had full confidence in his Muslim neighbours who had told him umpteen times not to leave his house and took full responsibility of protecting his life and property. One day, before leaving his home for office, two neighbours came to his house and asked him to accompany them as they had an urgent piece of work which could not be accomplished without his help. They took the Pundit to Kralyar locality, just on the roadside opposite Menegan-Mohalla, he was shot dead. His dead body was dropped in a nearby street drain. Muslim shopkeepers witnessed the shooting down of the Pundit youth helplessly, they did not dare to carry his dead body to his house. These events were narrated to me by a local Muslim vendor whose shop was close to the spot where Rattan Lal was shot dead. Police registered a case, but to no avail. Later Al-Umar owned the responsibility of killing him. The murder of another youth, Ramesh son of Niranjana Nath Rains (Kandni) resident of Kralyar by his Muslim friends, aligned with a militant group, speaks volumes of the brutal nature of the Mujahedeen whose choice Kashmiri Pundits as their first targets "Their prosecution reminded us of the atrocities committed on them by Sultan Sikandar alias Sikandar Butshikan. During his time persecution and "forcible conversion knew no bounds." Farishta, the famous historian, writes, "Many Brahmins, rather than abandon their religion or their country poisoned themselves; some emigrated from their

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

native homes, while a few escaped the evil of banishment by becoming Mohammedans" (quoted by Jagmohan in My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 498). Over long years Ramesh enjoyed the warm friendship of his Muslim friends. He would spend days together at their homes. As usual, one evening his friends called him from his home. It was pitch dark outside. He was taken to a neighbouring house for dinner. No sooner did he step into his friend's house then his friends pounced upon him. They tied him with ropes wrapped his face with a piece of cloth. First, the poor Pundit was given severe beating. Then a tin of boiling tar was poured over his naked body. He wretched with severe pain for ten minutes with eyes wide open and body completely blistered with severe burns. The next day his dead body was thrown at Malkah in the downtown. The hapless Plaudit left behind his young widow and two children. His parents died later in a refugee camp in Jammu. These spate of killings were meant to terrorise Kashmiri Pundits. Without any protection from the law-enforcing agencies, it was impossible for them to live in this once Pundit-dominated locality. At last they bade-adieu to their place and migrated enmasse to the plains. Their houses have been either forcibly occupied or sold at a throwaway price. Before concluding this chapter, I would like to refer to the speech of a secessionist leader. The speech is meaningful and related to the migration of Pundits. Said he "The sun of Islamic revolution is rising. The children of faith now should unite and come to the forefront to secure freedom from Bharat. Allah's will is our guide. Jihad is our strategy, and martyrdom is our aspiration." The militants were striving for Islamic order. How Pundit could's live within this theocratic order? For full three years, right from 1989 to 1992, militants continued the killings of Kashmiri Pundits, in the Valley. They even terrorised the Punjabi Hindus who had been living in the State for more than a century, since the time of the Sikh invasion of the Valley. They had acquired citizenship rights under the "State Subject Regulation." Most of them were business men settled in civil lines of Srinagar (Raj Bagh, Gogji Bagh, Natipora, Barazulla, Ram Munshi Bagh localities). Nineteen year-old Rohit Khanna was the son of a businessman settled for decades in Amira kadal locality. After passing Higher Secondary examination from the Gandhi Memorial College in the first division, he got admission in the Jhelum Valley Medical College, Srinagar for doing MBBS. Close to his house, Rohit was shot at and injured in August, 1990 by his classmates who had some affiliation with the Hizb-ul- Mujahideen, the first dreaded terrorist outfit. Rohit was seriously injured and taken to Government Hospital (SMHS Hospital), Srinagar. Doctors in the hospital had been instructed by the militants not to attend to the person wounded by the militants. The hapless Punjabi Hindu medical student died miserably in the Government Hospital for want of medical aid. The Hospital, for all practical purposes, had dwindled into a Slaughterhouse. "Rohit was killed dastardly as the State Hospital had turned into a slaughter house under the instructions of terrorists. This extreme callousness is unheard of. Where from Florence Nightingale could be searched and brought, who nursed the wounded even on the war front. Our victims were allowed to die in the Government hospitals, under an inhuman policy and threat of terrorists" (Pyare Lal Kaul in Kashmir: Trail and Travail, pp 62). Another Punjabi Hindu, Mr. Joginder Malhotra, was tortured and killed mercilessly by the militants in Srinagar, His testicles

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

were cut and skin burnt with cigarette butts. His mutilated body was dumped in a bag on the roadside.

A local Kashmiri Pundit Medical Practitioner was very popular in Ali kadal locality of the downtown Srinagar. One evening two militants entered his house when the inmates were having dinner. All of them were shot. It was alleged that the militants, owing their allegiance to Mushtaq Zargar's Al-Umar, had accomplished this gruesome act. The slain Kashmiri Pundit Medical Practitioner was so popular that the Muslims of the locality took out a protest march. Militants wiped the whole family of it Kashmiri Pundit family in Bana mohalla just at 9 PM tile), broke open the front door of the courtyard of their house, gate-crashed into the room where all the family members had assembled, watching TV Stepping into the room they sprayed bullets on all sides from the Kalashnikov rifles. All the seven members of the family died in the twinkling of an eye. Describing the brutal killings of Mr. Virendra Bhat, a Junior Engineer by profession, resident of Nagam (Chadura-tehsil, Budgam district), Prof M. L. Kaul writes, " Mr. Virender Bhat taught a duel with a terrorist who took out a pistol to shoot at him. But other accomplices fired at him from point blank range only to leave him bleeding profusely. The Muslim shopkeepers and neighbours watched the ugly murder." (Kashmir Past and Present: Unravelling the Mystique, chapter 19). In Srinagar a former joint Director of Sericulture Department Pundit G. N. Raina, was abducted from his house and killed brutally by the militants. In the same district two retired policemen, Pundit Prithvi Nath Koul and Vishnath were kidnapped on November 3, 1990. They were taken to an undisclosed place; their fate is not known to this clay. A local Sikh Army Officer, Lt. Col. G. S. Bali and his cousin, had gone to see their family members in Baramulla. They had flown directly from Delhi. On reaching Baramulla both of them were shot dead. A bank employee, K. Natarajan; who hailed from Tamil Nadu, was gunned down in Srinagar on December 1, 1990. The killings enacted 1)), the militants in the Valley were selective and according to a well-thought out plan. Their principal aim was, to reduce the number of Kashmiri Pundits (including Punjabi Hindus settled in the Valley over the past decades) and thus to bring about it demographic change. in the population of the Valley of terrorists did not strike only in Srinagar city but also in far-off areas of the Valley. The brutal killings of Brij Nath and his 30 year old sister in Shopian add yet another story to the series of brutal tales of massacring Kashmiri Pundits in the valley. Shopian is a famous town in the Valley, known for juicy Kashmiri Ambroo special variety of apple). The town, situated en route to the Mughal Road, is hemmed oil all sides with the perennial snow-topped mountains that form the western part of the Pir Panjal range. The idyllic town is very close to the world-reputed Aherbal waterfall that attracted thousands of visitors before the outbreak of Pak-abetted Muslim insurgency in the State. It was in the vicinity of this town that the Kashmiri Muslim King (belonging to the alien Chak dynasty), Yaqub Shah, was defeated by the imperialist Mughal army in 1586 A.D. While his father Yousuf Shah who romanticized with a village belle, Zoon alias Habba Khatoon was taken prisoner and lodged in the Patna jail where Yousuf died a miserable death. Yousuf Chak, the defeated Kashmiri Sultan, got a reprieve after writing the most pathetic letter to the Mughal king, Akbar. ("His (Yaqub Shah's) prayer now was that His Majesty would send him his slipper so that he might place

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

-it on the crown of his head and prostrate himself at the Emperor's threshold}, wrote Yaqub Chak. Zoom - Pampore-born poor farmer's daughter-sang melodiously, refusing her romance with her lover, the deposed ruler Yousuf Chak.

"The distant meadows are in bloom:

with flowers in various colours spread far and wide.

Come, let us go to the mountain meads."

Who has taken hold off on !

Why you develop hatred for me?

Tears roll clown my almond-shaped eyes.

I am waiting for thee."

Before the outbreak of the ongoing turmoil, Habba Khatoon's lovelorn lyrics were so popular that any cultural show without playing the cassettes of Habba Khatoon's songs sting melodiously by highly-talented Kashmiri Pundit singers (artists) like Kailash Mehra, Rita Koul and Vijay Malla etc. was incomplete and proved a monotonous affair.

Shopian town had a mixed population: Kashmiri Pundits were mainly concentrated in the interior of the town. In 1942, Moulvi Ghulam Ahmed Ahar established the first branch of Jamat-e-Islami at Shopian. He did this "in collaboration with Syed Shahab-ud-Din and other like-minded persons." With the establishment of this fundamentalist outfit, seeds of communalism and hatred were sown in Shopian and its surrounding villages. Right from Kulgam to Shopian (forming the part of Anantnag district) the whole area came under the influence of Jamaat-e-Islami. After Sopore, Shopian became the second stronghold of the Jamat. It was but natural that the communal tensions worsened in 1990. It marked the watershed in the history of this peaceful district. Scores of Kashmiri Pundits were callously killed in Anantnag district, particularly in Pulwama and Shopian tehsils. "Some of the more gory acts of savage violence and dastardly killings in Kashmir, are unique instances of human debasement and brutality, which the new world is unaware of," (writes Pyare Lal Kaul in Kashmir-Trail and Travail. pp 63). Village Harman is tell kill away from Shopian town. Before the outbreak of insurgency nearly twenty Pundit families lived in this nondescript village. Pundit Brij Nath Koul lived in village Harman. He supported his sister and aged parents. The poor Pundit villager was least concerned with local or national politics. In May 1990, Pundit Brij Nath Koul, his wife and sister were kidnapped by inilitants. The two young Kashmiri Pundit ladies, says Pyare Lal Kaul were stripped off naked and molested in public. Shamefully, both the ladies were gang-raped 1)), their kidnapers. They were dragged to a nearby village, Imam Sahib. It was at about 2 PM when the militants brought a jeep. All the kidnapped persons were tied with the jeep. The jeep was driven, dragging Pundit Brij Nath Koul, his wife and sister along the road. The hapless victims cried so loudly due to excruciating pain that villagers rushed to watch the bizarre spectacle. Perhaps such an act was a precursor of those ones committed by the Taliban in Afghanistan decade later. If an), credence is to be given to the tales from the medieval history of India, the gory killings of Pundit Brij

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Nath and the two ladies remind us of the fate of daughter of Raja Dhair, the ruler of Sindh, who was caught by Mohammed-bin-qasim's soldiers, sent to Baghdad where she was tied with the wheels of a horse-driven chariot and driven along the road, killing the innocent King Dhair's daughter mercilessly in an alien land. Describing the pathetic scene of their agonizing death, Mr. Kaul writes, "Their bodies bled profusely. It fell again to the lot of Hindus to hallow this holy land of Kashmir once again with their blood. The more and more their agony in of pain was increasing, the more and more their cries dimmed and they met with the tragic end. This extreme callousness and inhumanity perpetrated upon Kashmiri Hindus, does not perhaps bother the humanity in the world." (pp 63)

The inhuman killing of Pundit Brij Nath's family sent a bone-chilling message to the Pundits to leave the town immediately. Almost all the Pundits, except a local medical practitioner stayed there. The latter was compelled by the militants just to provide them medical aid. As already stated, Kulgam tehsil was badly infected with the communal virus. Fifty-year-old Bushan Lal lived in village Aanisun in Lalgam tehsil. He was a school teacher by profession. While on his way to collect his salary from the Education Officer's office, hapless Kashmiri Pundit was kidnapped. He was taken to an undisclosed place by the terrorists. They cut out his body organs and gouged out his eyes. He was killed in a miserable manner. In the same tehsil another young Kashmiri Pundit youth, Avtar Krishen, was kidnapped by the militants in May, 1. 990.-He was dragged from his native village, Aweal to Chowalgam. There he was tortured and beaten with iron-bars. After wounding him, he was thrown on the road almost dead. It is said that lie wept piteously and requested the passers-by, to carry him to hospital. But nobody gave him a lift and lie died helplessly with cries which others enjoyed, remarks Pyare Lal Kaul. The death of Pundit Daya Ram, a shopkeeper by profession, is an eye-opener for those who misinform the public outside J&K that Kashmiri Pundits migrated from the Valley of their free will. The Pundit shopkeeper of Chatragani (tehsil Shopian) was advising his "Biradari" not to migrate from the tehsil when scores of Kashmiri Pundit's had already been killed by the militants. His stand was not approved of by the militants who abducted him from his home. Pundit Daya Ram was taken to a nearby village, Thajwara. His hands and legs were tied with rope. They broke his legs and hands with iron-bars, resulting in a harrowing death within a few hours. The militants did not spare even some Kashmiri Muslims who were branded "Mukhbirs" and killed in the most brutal manner. In 1997, one Mohi-ud-Din of tehsil Sopore was kidnapped from his home. He was dragged to a nearby field and cut into pieces beyond recognition. His body was thrown in the field (Pyare Lal Kaul). Palahalan is a beautiful village in the vicinity of Patan, a small town 20 kilometers from Srinagar city. A native of village Palhallan, Habib ullah Lone, was killed. His body, which was later recovered from another village, was ridden with bullets. A photo-journalist, Mushtaq Ali, was blasted by the militants in Srinagar's Civil Lines in 1995. Three Probationary LIC Officers, V. S Tewari, P S. Shaikhar and Tapoo, were transferred to Srinagar. All of them were kidnapped from Shalimar Garden by the militants. All the three young officers were burnt alive. There was death and destruction on all sides. Militants' writ ran everywhere.

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

### 46.0 SANGRAMA AND WANDHAMA CARNAGES

Badiyar was once a-predominantly Kashmiri Pundit locality situated on the bank of the Jhelum. Within the first six months of insurgency, almost all the Kashmiri Pundits migrated from this locality. There stayed only 55 year old Kashmiri Pundit, Sohan Lal in this locality. Despite the advice given to him by his kith and kin to migrate from the locality just to save the honour of his daughter and wife, the Pundit driver turned down all these suggestions. He never believed that his Muslim neighbours would cause any harm whatsoever to his family which consisted of his young wife, teenage daughter and son. Alas! The expectations of the gentle Pundit were belied. One day a number of militants (obviously with the connivance of some locals) entered Pundit Sohan Lal's house. They raped both Sohan Lal's wife and daughter. Thus the very honour of the family was robbed-the same family which was considered "Amanat" (sacred trust) by the Muslim elders of the locality. The poor Pundit was told that his teen aged daughter would be converted to Islam and a militant had agreed to marry her under the Shariat code. A big controversy arose over the issue between two rival factions of the militants. One of each group wanted to marry Sohan - Lal's daughter. Consequently, they became jealous and extremely revengeful. It was the evening time when a group of militants barged into Kashmiri Pundit's house. Both the mother and the daughter were first gang-raped in their very house. After raping them, they stabbed them to death. They could not spare even Sohan Lal. Had not Sohan Lal's son been outside his home at that time, he would have been killed. On returning to his home, he was dumbfounded to see the dead bodies of his parents and sister lying in a pool of blood. The next day a few local Muslims took out a protest march against the militants, but their feeble protest was a cry- in the wilderness.

The dastardly killing of a Kashmiri Pundit Trade Union leader, Pundit Hriday Nath Wanchoo, showed the hatred of the militants against Kashmiri Pundits, no matter whether lie (Pundit) voiced their feelings and upheld their cause on the false pretext of the violation of human rights. Pundit Hriday Nath Wanchoo was an acknowledged Trade Union leader, who headed Kashmir Safai-Karamcharies Union (Municipal Worker's Union) for a pretty long time. Today, on a particular day one could find him demonstrating against Treasury Officer in Kothibag area, the other day he could be seen leading a group of "Watalas" (Safai Karamcharis) demonstrating against the injustice of the President Municipal Committee in front of his office. A maverick firebrand Trade Union leader as he was, Pundit Hriday Nath Wanchoo "justified the ongoing turmoil" as people's right (referring to his TV interviews before he was assassinated). He was living in Jawahar Nagar locality, a posh colony in the centre of Srinagar. He would often issue baseless statements with a lot of rhetoric here and there, blaming the then Governor of the State, Mr. Jagmohan for the gross violation of human rights in the Valley. The lone Pundit Trade Union leader had totally "identified himself with the interests of Muslim terrorists." In order to remain in the good books of the terrorists, Pundit Wanchoo had filed a number of writ-petitions in J&K High Court in Srinagar, challenging the detentions of the terrorists by the security forces. His well-wishers had so man), times asked him to migrate from the Valley in view of the danger to his life at the hands of terrorists. But the audacious Pundit was adamant

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

not to leave the Valle) as his co-religionists had left it a year back. The terrorists had virtually decided to physically liquidate him. On December 5, 1992 three persons called at his residence in Jawahar nagar. They told him that they had to seek his opinion on an important matter. Outside his residence, they, along with Pundit Hriday Nath Wanchoo boarded an auto-rickshaw. The poor, forlorn Pundit was taken to Karan Nagar, three kilometers away from his residence. He was straightway taken to a deserted house, belonging to a Kashmiri Pundit migrant. There the kidnappers fired shots from their pistol. People living around the house, heard the pistol shots, but none dared to come to the rescue of the Pundit. He breathed his last on the spot. Thus ended the storm), career of a Kashmiri Pundit Trade Union leader who failed to endear himself to the militants. There was no consideration of age for the Militants. If they could kill 90 year old Prof. Dina Nath Mujoo, they had no hesitation whatsoever to kill another centenarian Pundit Pitambar Nath Pundit. The old man, lived in a nondescript, dusty Vampura village in district Pulwama. Being in the twilight years of his life, he could hardly move out of his rickety house. Senile, mostly bedridden the hundred-year-old village Titan, Pundit Pitambar Nath was one day basking in the sun in the courtyard of his house. It was 6th June, 1993. Time was 4 PM. Five militants, belonging to nearby villages, rushed to the place where the centenarian Pundit was sitting all alone. He was shot dead. The members of his family little knew that their head had been brutally murdered by the terrorists. What crime had the slain Pundit committed to invoke the wrath of his enemies? Perhaps, the militants wanted to create an atmosphere of horror and terror and to compel Hindu villagers to migrate forthwith from their respective villages. They succeeded in their design. "Chabbi Lal Kapur of village Chak Charath Ram, was the next victim shortly after killing the centenarian Pundit. Another group of terrorists in the other side of the Valley went to track down and slaughter another "Kafir," they came there on a "purging operation" and gunned down this helpless Kashmiri Hindu on ,June 13, 1993" (Pyare Lal Kaul in Kashmiri Trail and Travail pp: 68).The killing of Kashmiri Pundits by the militants did not show any respite. Within four years, gruesome mass-killings of Kashmiri Pundits took place in two villages. One was enacted at Sangrampora and the other at Wandhama. Sangrampora is a village in Budgam tehsil. The district is the most backward part of the Valley. It is a predominately Shia locality with the hereditary Shia cleric, revered Agha Sved Al Mausave, ruling the roost who mostly decides petty disputes among his tenants. One member of the family Agha Syed Mohammed Hassan, owes allegiance to the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, while the other was a Minister in the State Cabinet led by Dr. Farooq Abdullah. Known for administering social justice, Agha Sahib of Budgam, as he is popularly known in the Valley, enjoyed the goodwill of local Pundits who respected him as a venerable religious leader of the Shia-Muslims. Some pockets close to the LoC had virtually come under the impact of Jamat-e-Islami. Beru township, where a few Sikh families lived in peace, had remained under the occupation of the Pak infiltrators for over one week in 1965. At Sangrampora, 25 Kashmiri Pundit families lived in all, the rest were Sunni Muslims. A gruesome tragedy overtook the village in 1996. Five bearded men all looking like Afghans went from door to door, calling Kashmiri Pundit villagers to come in the

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

open. A local Muslim Mujahideen, acting as their guide, accompanied them. The Mujahideen gave a call only for male Kashmiri Pundits. They were herded together-25 Pundits in all in the age group of 10 to 80. "Stand and form a queue; hold hands tip," commanded the leader of the militants to the harassed Pundits. "Fire, Gul-Bhai," ordered the guest-militant in a gruff voice. Oh, Uuh-Ahey-Ah- these feeble, faint cries escaped the lips of the 25 trapped Kashmiri Pundit villagers of Sangrampora. Blood, blood, blood on all sides; Laughter of the Mujahideen thundering at the gory spectacle. For them it was a "Big Achievement" to be written in the letters of gold in the book of "Jihad." Within half an hour the villagers came to know that all the male Kashmiri Pundits in village Sangrampora had been brutally killed. The widows hugged the dead bodies of their husbands; they insisted upon their being cremated alive on the pyres of their near and dear ones. No secessionist leader did ever pay any visit to the village to console the poor widows. In Ganderbal tehsil, militants were determined to push the Kashmiri Pundits out of the Valley. Some dreaded outfits even wanted to wipe them out completely. The bulk of Kashmiri Pundits, except from Wandhama village, had migrated to the plains to escape the brutalities at the hands of the militants. Wandhama is a beautiful village, situated ten kilometers from the famous health resort, Safapora. It is on the bank of famous Manasbal lake which attracted thousands of visitors before the insurgency broke out in the Valley. Village Wandhama stands sandwiched between the river Sindh (a tributary of the river Jhelum) and the glacier-formed Manasbal lake. In the village lived nearly twenty Kashmiri Pundit families. All the Pundit villagers would serve their Muslim neighbours whenever the latter needed their assistance. The local village Medical Practitioner, Pundit Motilal, would not hesitate to dress the wounds of the local militants who would rush to him at odd hours for receiving medical-aid. Pundit Lassa Ram (name changed) would be willing to provide loans to his Muslim neighbours at a very low rate of interest. Kashmiri Pundits shared joys and sorrows with their Muslim neighbours. The village head, Nambardar, who had some affiliation with a political party, had given full assurance to the Pundits on behalf of all the Muslim villagers that the lives of Kashmiri Pundits, living in Wandhama for the last so many centuries, would be protected at any cost. It was the Shab-i-Barat festival. All the Muslims of Wandhama village had congregated in the village Mosque for the night prayers. They were busy in the Dawood-Khani" and the recitation from the Holy Book. It was 9 PM. The whole village, except the illuminated Mosque, was enveloped with the pitch darkness of the night. Six armed men, all mercenaries guided by a local militant, barged into the houses of Kashmiri Pundits. They collected all the male Pundit villagers into an open space close to the Mosque "They made them stand in a queue and shot dead 30 of them. A few armed militants went round the village, sprinkled kerosene and set ablaze all the houses of Kashmiri Pundits. Within half an hour their houses were razed to the ground. There was only one Pundit survivor in Wandhama village-he was 11 year-old Ramesh Kumar. It may be recalled that earlier 95 year old veteran National Conference leader and freedom fighter, Maulana Mohammed Syed Masudi was shot dead by armed militants in his sick-bed in Ganderbal, which is five kilometers from Wandhama. Tehsil Ganderbal had also become a strong hold of Jamat-e-Islami. Former National Conference MIA from

## Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali

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By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Genderbal, Master Noor-ud-Din Soli, was the first ruling party MIA to join Jamat-e-Islami. It was under the impact of the political philosophy of the Jamat-e-Islami that communal virus had spread in the tehsil which was otherwise a peaceful area. In 1991 six Israeli tourists were made hostages by the militants in Srinagar. "The unarmed youths bravely fought their armed captors killing two of them on the spot" (Pyare Lal Kaul). The terrorists freed the captors because of the diplomatic pressure exerted by the Israeli Government. In Amery Kadal Civil Lines an ex MLA from Bihar, Mr. Pankaj Kumar Singh, was kidnapped in June 1993. He was released in exchange for some detained militants. In March 1991 K. Dorai Swamy, Executive Director of the Oil Corporation of India was kidnapped. Being a close kin of the then President of India Venkataraman, he too was released in exchange for several detained hard-core militants. A Kashmiri Pundit Insurance Officer, Dr. S. L. Khosa, was kidnapped by militants. He was held as a hostage for 95 days.

**By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

## **47.0 LOOTING SPREE WITH CONCURRENCE OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION**

Magam is a very small village located in district Budgam, 14 km from the city of Srinagar. It is mostly Shia-dominated locality. Before the mass exodus of Kashmiri Pundits from the Valley, there lived only ten Kashmiri Pundit families here. All the Pundits were petty agriculturalists and eked out their livelihood by the sweat of the brow. On December 20, 1993 three brothers, Dileep Kumar, Ashok Kumar and Vijay Kumar were kidnapped by the militants from Magam. They were taken to a hide-out which was located in village Kuthal in tehsil Chadora. It was reported that a good number of mercenaries had infiltrated into the Valley from across Yusmarg, (Waterhale forests). These mercenaries had already killed a number of Kashmiri Pundits in village Nagam, Yachgam, Kanikoote, etc. Kanikoote has a history of communal flare-ups. To recall early history of communal riots, the first communal riot broke out in 1930 in Kanikoote. Over ten Kashmiri Pundits were axed to death. The killers were later tried and hanged to death in the Srinagar Central Jail. All the three brothers (Dileep, Ashok and Vijay) were tortured severely. Ultimately they were thrown on the roadside, taking them dead. However, by chance, security forces rescued them. In Srinagar city, militants did not spare even four Purohit families living at Deviangan. During night some unidentified persons would pelt stones at their houses to scare them. Main main occupation was the performance of the daily "Puja" at the shrine of the Sharika-temple (Chakreshori) atop the hillock. Twenty-five-year old Ramesh was the son of one Kashmiri Pundit Brahmin, Dina Nath residing in Deviangan. He would spend most of his time in the Ashram of Swami Ramanand which was situated at the foot of the historic Hari Parbat hillock. Though addicted to "chellum," Ramesh had fair relations with the Muslims who also shared "chellum" with him at Ramanand's Ashram. Since religious frenzy knows no friendly ties, Ramesh too was brutally murdered by his friends. The Terrorists did not spare even the Sikhs. Six Sikhs were brutally killed at Rawalpore when they were returning from a local Gurudwara. In Chattisingpora village, 25 Sikhs were massacred by the militants. In December, 2001 three innocent Sikhs and two Kashmiri Pundit ladies were shot dead by the militants at Poshnarions in Bijbehara tehsil of Anantnag District in south Kashmir. From 1990 to 1997, the militants virtually ruled over the State with authority as the civil administration had collapsed totally. "The fiats of terrorists and the "Fatwas" of Maulvis were carried out voluntarily. Commenting upon this nasty state of affairs, Pyare Lal Kaul writes, "The terrorists have already overtaken the local administration and captured the jobs snatched from the members of the displaced Hindu community. They have infiltrated their own men into the administration. For all those wrongly recruited and absorbed in government service the salary bills are regularly prepared, signed and lot awarded to the concerned treasuries and departments for withdrawal of the amount which is released unhesitatingly and distributed among such so-called government employees, without any objection and hindrance from Accountant General and other concerned departments." (Kashmiri Trail and Travails pp 781). During the period cited above, the militants had established the "Shariat Courts" as provided under Nizam-i-Mustaffa. These

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Courts were presided over by the Imam of a local Mosque. But the poor Imam had to go by the dictation of the Salar (Ghazi) who was the local Commander of the armed brigade. In consultation with the Masjid- Imam, he could hold " anybody guilty and punish him or her in accordance with the Sharia law. "The guilty could be hanged on the road side a-la Taliban. If any Pundit had to go in for any piece of private work to Jammu, lie was required to seek the verbal permission of a local (Mohalla) Commander. Women were subjected to heavy physical torture. In this connection I may quote the instance of a young Muslim girl who was the daughter of a petty shopkeeper in Rainawari. Her father was extremely gentle, having cordial relations with his neighbors' Muslim boy who had some connection with a militant outfit, wanted to marry her, but her father had turned down his marriage proposal. One evening the innocent girl was kidnapped by the militants and allegedly produced in the Sharia Court set up by the militants at Mughal Mohalla. The girl was falsely charged with the adultery case, as per the Fatwa of the Moulvi, she was hanged and her body was thrown at Nawpora (SureTeng). Next day the bereaved father brought the dead body of his daughter on his shoulder to give it burial according to the Muslim rites. The fundamentalists torched a number of educational institutions belonging to the minority community. In posh Amira kadal locality they burnt down Arya Girls School (Hazooribagh), and DAV School. In the downtown they torched Gandhi Memorial College (Fateh Kadal), Kanaya Maha Vidyalayaa (Barbarshah), Sharda Peeth School (Rugh Nath Mandir), Vishwa Bharti College, B.Ed. section (Rainawari) DAV School, (Rainawari) and other schools outside Srinagar city. Over two hundred temples in the Valley were vandalised and desecrated by the fundamentalists Almost all the temples in Anantnag district were completely destroyed. In 1997, the famous temple of Devibal in Baramulla town was set on fire. Thousands of houses belonging to Kashmiri Pundits were burnt down by the militants in the Valley. "The Hindus of Kashmir throughout their chequered history have been subjected to frequent bouts of loot and plunder. The savage tribes of Bombas and Khokkas, as per the historical records, were hired by the bigots to loot and plunder and in case of resistance; they were ordained to be burnt alive in their houses. The same instinct of ferocity, aggression and savagery re-emerged and resurfaced in the length and breadth of Kashmir in the wake of the forcible exodus of the Kashmiri Hindus from the bosom of their native land." (Prof. M. L Kaul in Kashmir Past and Present, Unravelling the Mystique, chapter XIX). Over four lakh Kashmiri Pundits left the Valley, leaving their moveable and immoveable property worth millions of crores in the Valley. In their absence, their houses were plundered by the militants. True to the traditions of the marauders and looters like the Bombas and the Khokkas in medieval times, the plunderers of the 20th century broke the doors, windows and gates of the houses. They even removed electric wires and tiles and made away with the booty. It is alleged that the looted goods "were collected and stuffed in the Mosques and later distributed among the looters as booty. "There was hardly any Hindu house which was not plundered. On several occasions, these houses were looted many times over. Some militants allege that the house of Kashmiri Pundits were first looted by the BSF personnel during "crackdowns" and long spells of curfew. Such complaints, were highlighted in the local Press. Only a high-level

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

enquiry by any impartial agency can bring out the truth. The looted goods were sold away for a pittance There is instance of the looted gas cylinders sold at the rate of fifty rupees per cylinder. In a locality in Rainawari (downtown), the main agent of these stolen cylinders was a Muslim tailor whose son was allegedly involved in militancy. Describing the looting spree, Prof. M. L. Kaul writes, "The looters and plunderers removed beddings, kitchen-ware, gas Looting spree with concurrence of local administration 245 cylinders, gas stoves, ordinary stoves, mats, rugs, furnishings, curtains, carpets, sofas, sewn suits, shawls, blankets, footwear, watches, TVs, Radio-sets, tape-recorders, copper and brassware, tea-sets, machines, jewellery and gold ornaments from the homes of Kashmiri Hindus." Water pipes laid underground were dug out and taken by the looters. In 2001, an elderly Kashmiri Pundit Mr. S. N. Tikoo, paid a brief visit to Srinagar. He told me just close to Nala-Mar in Fateh Kadal a shopping complex has been raised. The material used was the stolen doors windows and other wooden articles looted from migrant's houses. In his native locality in Rainawari in the downtown, my next door Muslim neighbour who was dubiously connected with the ruling party and also close to the local MLA in whose election lie served as an election agent, brought a hand-driven cart in full public view. He broke open the locks of five abandoned Kashmiri Pundit migrants' houses and looted the household goods and left for an unknown destination. The looter did not spare even the photographs of gods and goddesses adoring the mud-plastered walls. He tore them and threw the pieces onto the front lane, thus satisfying his ego and giving vent to his pent-up communal feelings. These anecdotes were related to me by a Muslim neighbour who met me in Chandigarh in 1999. Some mischievous elements dismantled the migrants' house or turned them into terrorist hideouts. Prof. M. L. Kaul narrates heart-rendering details, "Me houses already looted and denuded of all household goods by one drove leaving nothing for the other drives to loot were vengefully and sadistically damaged by scratching the walls, breaking of windows and door fixtures, mirrors fixed in the walls and photographs of dead parents and gods and goddesses hung against the walls. The prowlers reducing a civilised society to the lowest ebb openly looted and plundered the Hindu houses not at night but in broad daylight, fearing none as all shared the booty (chapter XIX). I had a good number of collection of books on varied subjects after migration, the house was unauthorisedly occupied by a serving policeman, Ghulam Mohammed Kanna, a native of Sopore and posted at the Rainawari police station. Besides being a government servant in the Police Department, he served as the Imam of a local Mosque. He was allegedly the man who looted our house- hold goods worth lakhs. In 1999, I learnt that Kanna had sold all my books - a prized collection of over four decades, to a "wastepaper hawker (raddi-kagaz-walla) at twelve rupees per Kg." If the world famous Bamiyan Buddha's statues had no value for the Taliban's poor constable Kanna can't be faulted if he sold Kashmiri Pundit migrant's "best collection" and "choicest-books" to the raddi-walla, who may wrap the "tobacco" with the pages torn from "Will Durant's Introduction to philosophy" or Nehru's Discovery of India, Marx's Das Capital or Salman Rushdie's Mid-Night's Children or- surprisingly - "Complete Works of Shakespeare (in two volumes). In Zaina- Kadal and Kawdara areas, the loot was alleged to be organized by "women squads, owing allegiance to

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

the Dukhtarani-Milat. It was the month of January, 1998. A Kashmiri shawl merchant was hawking shawls in our locality where we had shifted after migrating from the Valley. My wife called him and showed interest in the shawls. The Kashmiri hawker untied the bundle and showed a black-coloured Pashmina shawl to the lady who found it used. "This may be the shawl of any Kashmiri Pundit lady. She might have left it at her home. Now, some- one has stolen it," said she with tears in eyes. "Yes, Yes. We have had a number of such shawls," remarked the Muslim shawl hawker showing no remorse. She withdrew and without saying a word he went his way. Before 1947, joint-family system was common among Kashmiri Pundits. The head-lady of the family, called "Bad-Mauj" would cook rice in a big brass cauldron called "Deecha" in Kashmiri. After the break-up of system, the use of "Deecha" for cooking rice has been discarded. They are used on rare occasions now in marriages, Havans etc. Each Kashmiri Pundit family possesses Thalees (plates) and one or two Deechas. A normal-sized "Deecha" weighs thirty to fifty Kg of "Sartal" (brass). In 1996, some utensil-dealers in Jammu, Pathankot and Jalandhar sold these cauldrons which were looted by the militants from the houses of migrated Kashmiri Pundits and sold to the big utensil dealers in Srinagar. From Srinagar, they were dispatched to some of the cities in north India. There was a novel way of looting the houses. "At the very inception of insurgency, the Hindu houses under the nose of their owners were marked red for distribution as booty among the faithful and as of now, they are under Muslim occupation revealing the Muslim mind harbouring designs to decimate the Hindus" (Prof. M. L. Kaul). Before the migration of Pundits, some antisocial elements had an eye on the property of Kashmiri Pundits. They wanted to grab their property. The upheaval of 1989 was a golden opportunity for them. First, they occupied the abandoned houses of Pundits. It is strange that the local police did not prevent them from occupying these houses; they rather encouraged them. Wouldn't we be justified to come to the conclusion that the local administration was a party to the chaos engulfing the Valley.

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

### 48.0 REFUGEES IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY

Apart from looting their property in towns and cities, the fundamentalist's occupied the orchards and agricultural land belonging to Kashmiri Pundits in rural areas. They could not have succeeded in their nefarious designs if the local administration had not given full support to these lawbreakers. Revenue records were tampered with. There is the alleged instance of Tehsildars attesting faked revenue documents, transferring mutation rights from a Pundit landowner to the Muslim tenant. In some cases, fruit trees in the orchards were felled, just to decrease their market value. These Pundit orchard-owners are, at present, "languishing in tattered tents, cramped camps, and rented hutments" in Jammu, Delhi and other cities. The shops owned by Kashmiri Pundits were looted and then grabbed by the anti-national elements. Writes Prof. M. L. Kaul, "The orchards and tracts of cultivable land owned by the Hindus have been grabbed by the Muslim neighbours, selling the produce and thus cornering huge sums, leaving a part of it for the apex body organising the loot and plunder of the Hindu properties." This state of affairs continued from 1990 to 1996. Now, the illegal retainers have completely grabbed the property, leaving little scope for the administration to step in to rectify the monumental wrong. During the last two years, Kashmiri Pundit migrants have sold the property - whatever was left after their being either burnt down or looted by the militants at a throwaway price. The State Government was least interested in debarring them from selling the property ; otherwise it could have enacted any legislative measure to this effect. It did not care to prepare the inventory of the properties left behind by the Kashmiri Pundit migrants. In 1993, a delegation of Kashmiri Pundits met the State Governor in Jammu and submitted a memorandum asking for such inventory. "Inventories of properties left behind and a separate department set up for its custody and for meeting claim in case of damages, encroachment, arson and loot. This demand requires immediate and satisfactory action at the hands of the Government" (quoted by Pyare Lal Kaul). But the Government all along evaded the real issue, though "paper work" in State Relief Commissioner's office was done for years, bearing no fruit whatsoever. In downtown localities of Srinagar, anti-national elements constructed houses on the land of the migrated Pundits in connivance with the revenue officials. According to a random survey, Kashmiri Pundits left property worth hundreds of crores in the Valley. There was a time when the Pundits led a happy life in the Valley. They were attuned to the melody of rushing brooks, the song of the lark and "Kasture," and wedded to nature's eternal beauty in the shape of snowcapped mountains and flowery meadows. Alas! they had to rush to the sultry plains, leaving their Gods in oblivion and to face all-round devastation caused by the hydra-headed terrorism. Once the aborigines of the Valley, they have become refugees in their own country. Their life in the camps is agonising and heart-rending. Such a life has affected their family structure and the social life. "There are families that have divided, husband at one place earning his living and wife elsewhere doing her job and their children, desperate and frustrated, roaming from pillar to post in quest of jobs and admissions." (Prof. M. L. Kaul). The agonizing conditions of migrant's camp have been described by an English daily thus : A visit to one of the camps at the end of May 1993 where

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

migrants are lodged in Jammu was so shattering an experience that it is difficult to believe that any Government, even an incompetent one, could be a part), to such an arrangement. When the temperature soars, above 40 degrees Celsius, it is cruel to expect that anyone can live under the tents and that too year after year - genuine and meaningful efforts should be made to help the migrants who are living in unlivable conditions" (the Hindustan Times, March, 1993). Since 1993, no substantial improvement has been made in the living conditions of the migrants in the camps. These untold sufferings have badly affected their health, the horrendous events causing their migration from their happy Valley have "shaken them to roots." They are in a state of morbidity, and psychic-shock. In free-India, no community has suffered or is suffering as much as the rootless Kashmiri Pundit community. In these isolated tents, the vagaries of weather are playing the worst part making their lives an easy morsel to the Angel of Death. If the summer's scorching heat invites the dreaded sunstroke for these abandoned children of lesser Gods, winters chilly, icy winds have in store for them fatal respiratory diseases. In the rainy season, their rickety tents are often washed away. There is none to console them, none to apply balm to their wounded psyche. That is virtually a tragedy of modern India. Driven out of their native homes, over four lakh Kashmiri Pundits are not acclimatized to horrid and repulsive hot weather conditions in alien lands which have taken a heavy toll of their lives. Hundreds have died of sun-strokes and snake bites. Tension and worries are gripping their mind because of their forced exodus from the Valley. Hundreds of Pundits in all age groups have been stricken with heart ailments, resulting in death at an early age. Frustration is writ large on the faces of the youth; which once beamed with a happy smile. A bleak future awaits them; even employment sources for them in their native State have completely dried up for them. According to a recent survey the State Government provided over one lakh jobs to the unemployed youth in the State. Out of such a hefty number, only three hundred jobs went to the Pundit's quota. "All employment avenues have been sealed for them and even opportunities for education, valued as a real asset by them, have been cruelly snatched," laments Prof. Koul. With a view to appeasing the Muslims, the Central Government hesitates to absorb the unemployed Kashmir Pundit youth in Central offices as has been the purport of the Centre's special drive to employ the Kashmiri Muslim youth. "The Central Government is equally proving the worst in appeasing and tyrannizing them (Kashmir Pundit youth). With a view to appeasing the Muslims, all set norms and regulations are waived and relaxed to recruit them to serve sectarian ends deemed as the only panacea to lift Kashmir from the mire of worst brand of bigotry and chauvinism. "Had this appeasement policy borne any fruit, the ongoing insurgency and blood-bath in the State might have ended long since. It has rather proved counterproductive. The more violence they indulge in, the more job opportunities are created and provided, no matter that such an imprudent measure proves harmful to the State's dwindling resources. Insurgency cannot be fought with half-hearted economic measures. Appeasement has been at the centre of vote-bank politics since the country became free from foreign domination. A majority of militants belong to rich Muslim Khoja families. Some of them are the kin of the bureaucrats. It is religious indoctrination that led the youth to take up the gun. Neither the

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

State Government nor the Central Government took effective measures to ameliorate the lot of the migrants. Commenting upon the role of the State Government, Pyare Lal Kaul writes, "Girish Chander Saxena came as a new Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. He did not bother for running civil administration effectively. His main concern was to appease the people of Kashmir and to deal with terrorism. He cared little for the displaced Hindus. He focused his attention more on the Muslim migrants from the Valley than the dislodged Hindus staying in Jammu. The Muslim Migrants constituted two groups ; those who were in power directly or were connected with corridors of power indirectly, fearing reprisals in Kashmir, preferred to station at Jammu; others were struggling political activists unconnected with power and were likely targets of terrorism" (Kashmir "Trail and Travail, Page 94) As luck would have it, the Governor made "discrimination between Hindu/Sikh dispossessed people on the one hand and Muslims displaced from Kashmir on the other, indifferent spheres of life." Secret instructions were given to the bureaucrats to render more help to the Muslim migrants settled temporarily in Jammu. To substantiate this allegation, I may refer to the letter issued by the Deputy Commissioner Jammu, dated December 25, 1991, addressed to the Relief Commissioner, Jammu, in which the concerned authorities were ordered to "release six months advance cash relief' to the Muslim migrants. The State Government went all the way to provide free accommodation in Jammu to the Muslim migrants who included some leaders of different mainstream parties, (Kashmir :Trail and Travail) A Kashmir Muslim leader, belonging to the CPM, was favoured with a hefty relief to the tune of Rs. 17,000 per month as well as free accommodation both in Jammu and Srinagar, whereas on an average a Kashmiri Pundit in the migrants' camp was paid Rs. 1,500 and that too after great haggling from the local don or dada, who deducted his usual commission from the paltry cash relief. The local administration has bungled the process of giving cash relief to the migrants. It is alleged that a good number of non-migrants from the Valley come to Jammu once or twice a year to collect the cash relief which has been fraudulently sanctioned in their favour, because of their proximity to the corridors of power. The Hindu migrants face difficulties in collecting their cash relief and rations. Says Prof. M. L. Kaul "The callous administration has been repeating the processes for them which have already been gone through with the intent of causing pain and frustration. The Hindu migrants are required to paste a photograph on their ration-cards or registration forms and in case a mischievous clerk removes it or it comes off on its own, he is made to starve for months. The corrupt, unjust and biased administration has proved a scourge for them and or pittance of relief, every refugee has to wage a humiliating battle at every step." In the distribution of cash relief, a gross discrimination is made between Kashmir Pundit freedom fighters and Kashmiri Muslim freedom fighters. Cash relief is denied to the displaced Kashmiri Pundit freedom fighters on the ground that "they draw freedom-fighter pension."Only the difference between pension and the relief is payable" (Kaul) Quite surprisingly, this restriction is not applicable to Muslim freedom fighters. It was Pundit Kashi Nath Dullu, member of the Yuvak Sabha and freedom fighter, who waged a legal battle in the court. The court ultimately directed the State authorities to pay him the cash relief. Everyone cannot move court as Dullu did; there are still scores of

## Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali

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By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Kashmiri Pundit freedom fighters who do not get any relief whatsoever. A great freedom fighter, Pundit Shyam Lal Yaccha, once a close associate of Pundit Prem Nath Bazaz and Khawaja Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Kara, was not granted either any cash relief or freedom fighter's pension. He was a man of intellectual integrity and scholastic attainments. His intellectual faculties were not utilised, because of the communal propensities of the then State Government. He died in penury in Jammu which speaks for other freedom fighters as well. We come across the same story about a number of Kashmiri freedom fighters: Rishi Dev, Soomeshwar, late Prof. Jia Lai Tameree, late Shyam la I Shastri, late Poshker Nath Koul Vakil etc. In Jammu, the State Government is least concerned about the welfare of Kashmiri Pundit migrants. On March 15, 1995, three migrant students, Dileep Koul, Vikas Koul and Rakesh Bhat lost their lives in a road accident in Jammu. Some Migrants 'Associations approached the Government for ex-gratis relief to the families of the victims. But the State Government turned down their request. Driven out by militants, Kashmiri Pundit migrants get even, raw deal at the hands of the Central Government.

## **49.0 DISCRIMINATION**

Discrimination is meted out to Kashmiri Pundit migrants at every step. Initially vested interests tried their best to create bad blood between the local population and Kashmiri Pundit migrants in Jammu. But, they miserably failed in their nefarious designs. Mr. Pyare Lal Kaul, in his best compiled book on this subject, has furnished a number of instances which clearly reveal the partisan attitude of the State Government. Quoting the instance of the assassinated police officer, Gilani, Kaul says that the slain Police Officer's son was granted admission to class X in Nagrota Sainik School Jammu, contrary to the established norms and rules. Such a relaxation was allowed to take place for the first time in the history of the Sainik School since its inception. A Kashmiri Pundit migrant lady, whose husband was killed by the militants in the Valley, approached the authorities for her son's admission. But her request was turned down. Ten-year-old Kashmiri Pundit boy, Lokesh, saved his father by playing a trick on the militants who had come to kill him. He diverted their attention, thus avoiding a big catastrophe for the family. In 1992, Lokesh was given Children's Bravery Award in Delhi. But the brave boy was denied admission in the Sainik School, Nagrota. As regards the payment of ex-gratis relief to the Pundits, the State Government created hurdles. The case of Pundit Bushan Lal is an eye-opener in this regard. Bushan Lal was the resident 'of a village in Kupwara district. He was working as a work-charge labourer in Army camp at Trehgam under No : 41', UA. In March 1990, he migrated to Reasi and stayed there at the Migrant camp Talwara. After five months, he went back to Trehgam to serve in the army as he could not make both ends meet at Reasi. One day one of his Muslim neighbour came to him and expressed his desire to purchase his agricultural land in his native village. He paid him half of the price on the spot, while promising to pay the balance the next day. He called him to his residence next day to receive the balance payment. On 27 October, 1990, the gullible Pundit left the Army camp to meet his Muslim neighbour to receive the balance payment. At the behest of his neighbour Bhushan Lal was killed by militants. His body was thrown in a Mohalla where a majority of Kashmiri Pundits lived before their mass exodus to the plains. The militants also burnt all the houses abandoned by the Kashmiri Pundit migrants in the village called Duggar. The mother of the assassinated Kashmiri Pundit, Bhushan Lal, approached the State authorities for ex-gratia relief. But the Station Officer of the police station Trehgam, cared the least and didn't register the case. Says Pyare Lal Kaul, "This has been a method to deprive the family of the victim of ex-gratia relief as many other Kashmiri displaced families have been. "Whereas Kashmiri Pundits staying in camps in Jammu badly feel the dearth of drinking water and faulty electric supply for which they make regular payment to the Government under rules, in Kashmir Valley, says the veteran journalist and author Pyare Lal Kaul," no one pays tax and electric charges as reported, since 1989. The traders avoid payment of Income Tax and Sales Tax also." The State Government feels helpless and justifies this breach of law as "the offshoot of alienation, unemployment and poverty." The Chamber of Commerce and Industry Jammu, flayed State Government many times in the past for this partisan attitude and demanded the abolition of Sales Tax in the entire State. The

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Central Government was never keen to improve the economic plight of Kashmiri Pundit migrants. However, in 1992 the Union Government formed a Sub-Committee for the displaced persons. It was headed by the then Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Mr. M. M. Jacob. The Committee held "the first and last meeting on October 9, 1992". Then it died a natural death. It made a number of recommendations including bank loans for the migrants and also medical facilities for the displaced persons. As the State Government and Central Government were unwilling to mitigate the sufferings of the displaced community, the recommendations of the Jacob Committee did not cut any ice. Delhi based All India Kashmiri Samaj dubbed the non-implementation of the Jacob Committee report as an "indication of double standards and gross discrimination on religious grounds for electoral politics." Both the State Government and Central Government "never bothered about the properties left behind by the exiled community." In order to dupe the exiled community, the State Government devised a proforma "in which migrants were asked to provide details of their immovable properties." Copies of the proforma were provided to the State Relief authorities. Even the Relief Commissioner established a special cell in his office to speed up the process of collecting and collating the relevant data. Like any other step, this measure died a miserable death in the hands of apathetic bureaucracy and biased politicians. In fact, the elite section amongst Kashmiri Muslims created all sorts of hurdles. As regards the distribution of cash relief, displaced persons have to undergo a lot of trouble and humiliation. Says Pyare Lal Kaul, "The institution of Relief Commission has turned out to be an institution of oppression, exploitation and corruption. It also proved to be a boon for the local goons where the relief is disbursed. Appointment of the Relief Commissioner and setting up of the Relief Organisation was a welfare measure for the displaced persons. The officers appointed in the relief organisation in collusion with the local "Dadas" of the respective areas, converted it primarily into a beneficial institution for themselves. It, therefore, became a den of corruption, malpractices and intrigues". There are reports that many non-migrant Muslims from the Valley do receive cash relief in Jammu. As regards the payment of cash relief to the displaced persons from the Valley, there is absolutely no system. Whereas in Delhi it is at par with those getting in Jammu, in Punjab, UP, MP, Maharashtra etc. the cash relief varies from Rs 400 to Rs 700 per month. Even the erstwhile Rajnath Singh Government has stopped the payment of cash relief to the displaced persons staying in Noida (UP) despite various representations made to the concerned quarters from time to time. It is an irony of history that Kashmiri Pundits have become refugees in their own-land. But the Central Government is not prepared to give them the status of refugees. The word 'Refugee' has acquired legal acceptance for the purpose of certain monetary benefits under the UN Charter. Says Pyare Lal Kaul, "The word Refugee has acquired a legal recognition and its international acceptance through the World body, UNO enjoins certain concessions and facilities for the Refugees, which are, in other words, the rights of the Refugees they are entitled to".

\*-Since Kashmiri Pundits are displaced persons from the Valley, they fully deserve the concessions under the international law. There is a strong anti-Pundit lobby at the Centre to undermine any move to declare Kashmiri Pundit migrants as either "Refugees" or "Displaced persons". Kashmiri

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Pundit migrants have no strong leadership to force the State or the Central Government to declare them as refugees. The United Nations Organisation has deployed a Special Officer, High Commissioner for Refugees in India. He takes care of the refugees in India. Before the termination of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, hundreds of Afghan citizens were residing in and around Delhi as refugees. All of them were "given cash-relief according to their Indian schedule." Their children were given free medical aid and free-schooling in government institutions. When the hapless Kashmiri Pundits were kicked out of the Valley by the militants, the State Government showed magnanimity by admitting their wards in institutions called "camp schools and camp colleges" in Jammu. The State Government did not allow the migrant students to seek admission in the existing schools and colleges in Jammu. Such a step created a wedge between the local inhabitants and Kashmiri Pundit migrants. It smacked of racial discrimination and parochialism. A Delhi based English Daily, the Samachar Post, (September 7, 1994) editorially highlighted the dismal picture as-under: "Since the mass exodus of Kashmiri Pundits from the flowery Valley, hapless Pundit migrant students are being discriminated at every step both by the Central Government and the J&K Government. Education career of thousands of Kashmiri Pundit students has been marred as a result of callous attitude of the State Government and communal policy being pursued by Kashmir University which is a haven for diehard fundamentalists. "A few of educational institutions run under the management of some Kashmiri Pundit societies and registered bodies were closed in the Valley because of the mass exodus of the Pundits to Jammu and other parts of the country. Some of these were reopened in Jammu. But the State Government stopped their grants. The then Education Commissioner is said to have caused great impediments in sanctioning grants to Kashmiri Pundit institutions which were operating in Jammu city after the migration of the Pundits from the Valley. As already stated, the State Government had made concerted efforts to change the educational structure, framing policies that were purported to benefit one denominational group (community) in the Valley. If Kashmir University had become a stronghold of Muslim fundamentalism, other institutions had the honour of becoming seminaries of rabid communalism. The displaced students in migrant (Camp) institutions were denied all the facilities which were provided in the already existing regular institutions meant for local students. After the migration, the institutions came under the control and within the territorial jurisdiction of Jammu University. But for the purposes of holding examination and declaring results, they were placed within the jurisdiction of Kashmir University. Kashmir University opened a sub-office under an Assistant Registrar in Jammu for displaced students. But Kashmir University failed to hold examinations on time and the results were also declared very late. In this process much of their time was wasted, impairing their careers. As regards the Higher Secondary Board examination, the displaced students were subjected to ignominious discrimination. Their answer-books were separately evaluated. However, in 1999, the State Government merged the camp colleges with the regular colleges in Jammu. As already stated, the Kashmir University had turned into a Pan-Islamic centre. Commenting upon the general functioning of the University, Pyare Lal Kaul writes, "The University has been given an

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Islamic touch and it is now being given an Islamic face. It works with prejudice. Friday for instance, is made off day during the period of examinations and Sundays as working days. The gazetted Hindu holidays, during the course of examinations, are not observed as holidays, but examination days."The pro-Islamic character of the University can be gauged from the fact that within the campus of the University a Mosque has been allowed to be built after the mass exodus of Kashmiri Pundits. According to a rough estimate, Kashmiri Pundit students formed five per cent of the total roll in the University before the migration of Kashmiri Pundits. It is but natural that Kashmiri. Pundit migrant students were bound to receive discriminatory treatment from Kashmir University. Making a scathing attack on the functioning of the university, a prominent English daily of Jammu, the Excelsior dated June 10, 1993 remarked," Nothing is well with the affairs of Kashmir University. It has ceased to be an effective instrument of qualitative education. An institution, of higher learning that treats the student community with bias and squint eyes needs to be disciplined to restore the sanctity in education." In spite of these adverse circumstances created for them by the prejudiced State administration and apathetic Central Government, Kashmiri Pundit students showed their worth and mettle by grabbing first ten top positions in Board and University examinations. A Kashmiri Pundit can sacrifice anything but not the education of his children. Although materially turned pauper, Kashmiri Pundit is the "Lord of meritocracy."The world has to acknowledge this hard fact about Kashmiri Pundit community owes much to the Shiv Sena Supremo, Bala Sahib Thackeray, who was instrumental in getting a number of seats reserved for Kashmiri Pundit migrant students in some technical institutions in the State of Maharashtra. Now this concession has been extended to other Southern States. Even Kashmiri Muslim students from the Valley have been admitted on this reservation quota. The Kashmiri Pundit community has always been in the vanguard of India's Renaissance and modernization. Some of Kashmiri Pundits have shown their worth and mettle outside India. It may not be out of context here to refer to a poor Kashmiri Pundit village school Master's son working as the topmost scientific advisor in NASA at Houston. He is none other than Dr. Krishen Kumar Bhat, resident of village Harwan. World's well-known physicians are Kashmiri Pundits. History bears testimony to the fact that the Kashmiri Pundit community, though dissipated and disgruntled, will continue to play a historical role in the process of modernization of the country. But it becomes incumbent on current Indian leadership to retrieve the minuscule community from the slough of economic depression caused by their mass exodus from Cupid's land. Kashmiri Pundits have paid and are still paying so dearly for the cause of secularism. No community has been uprooted from the land of its birth and suffered as much as Kashmiri Pundits. But their sacrifice remains underestimated in the eyes of the Indian leadership. That too is the most unfortunate part of the "Kashmir Story".

### 50.0 CERTAIN FALLACIES AND MYTHS

Terrorism, ravaging the State of Jammu and Kashmir for the last fifteen years, has been juxtaposed with certain fallacies and myths which have been concocted by vested political interests since its inception. In the first instance it is called an indigenous struggle of Kashmiri people for complete political independence. Secondly, it is also termed as a secular movement to achieve desired political goal which looks so hazy and blurred from a practical point of view. Thirdly, it is said to solve the unfinished Agenda of the Partition which gave birth to two dominions, India and Pakistan.

Fourthly, the ongoing mayhem and bloodbath in J&K State is designed to redeem the political commitment of India made by Nehru to the people of Jammu and Kashmir State. Fifthly, terrorism in the State is the interface of alienation of the youth because of massive unemployment. The pogrom is justified to seek the economic amelioration of the masses. The sponsors of the movement want to open new vistas of economic prosperity by waging Jihad. But all these are myths designed to divert people's attention from the hidden agenda. In its naked form it is a sectarian violent movement to wean Kashmir away from India and throw it into the lap of Pakistan.

"Violence, loot, murder and rape were resorted to scare away the Indian presence from Kashmir to pave the way for secession," says Prof. A L. Kaul (Kashmir: Past and Present). It is wrong to think that the terrorism in J&K is an indigenous freedom movement. Pakistan is fully at the back of terrorists. Nobody can challenge this fact on the basis of clear evidence we get every day. Even the rulers of Pakistan admit that they lend moral, diplomatic and political support to this movement. Hundreds of training camps to train militants are located in Pakistan as well as in PoK (Pak-occupied-Kashmir). Arms are supplied to the militants. Foreign mercenaries are being pushed into the State to carry on subversive activities. Adequate funds are provided to the militant outfits. If Pakistan does not abet terrorism, then where from the arms and ammunition come to the militants? Who supplies arms and funds to them? There is no denying the fact that Pakistan is fully involved in this mayhem. It is rather the offshoots of the pan-Islamic movement "So long as Pakistan exists as an Islamic State, it will continue to keep the Kashmir problem alive. As such the Kashmir problem is a part of the Pakistan problem. The two cannot be separated. The concepts of "Milat and Kufr, Dar-ul-Islam "and Dar-ul-Haraf and jihad lie at the root of separatism," says Prof. Madhok.

Terrorism is linked with Kashmir problem. It is a ploy to separate Kashmir and turn it into an Islamic State. Unfortunately, the problem has snowballed into a major crisis for India because of the inept handling by the unimaginative Indian leadership." Kashmir problem is basically an internal problem of India. It was created by Pak aggression, against the Jammu and Kashmir State which became an aggression against India when the State acceded to India in October, 1947. India was in a position to tackle it effectively on its own strength. But it's unrealistic leadership gave an external dimension to it when it took the matter of Pak aggression to the UNO. This enabled Pakistan to internationalise issue with the overt and covert support of the USA. The issue then got so much bogged down in power politics of the two superpowers with their conflicting global interests that internal aspect of the problem got overshadowed and sidelined by its

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

external aspect. From 1972 to 1989 Kashmir issue lay dormant, because of the defeat and debacle suffered by Pakistan in the Indo-Pak War of 1971. With the flare up of terrorism and Muslim insurgency in December 1989, the Kashmir issue again rattled the international community with the USA showing extraordinary interest to solve the issue, rather hypocritically, through dialogue. Terrorism added a new dimension and urgency to the issue purely in the interests of India's hostile neighbouring country, Pakistan. The terrorists acquired different names from time to time. In 1947 they were named "Raiders" who caused widespread destruction right from Muzaffarabad to Shalteng on the outskirts of Srinagar. In 1965, they were called "infiltrators" who failed to annex Valley through Operation Gibraltar devised by Pakistan's ISI. In 1989, they got the honorific Mujahedeen engaged in Jihad which is a medieval concept of Islamic warfare. The idea of Jihad was reshaped and propagated by the Jamat-e-Islami by way of instigating the Muslims of Kashmir to rebel against India. In a booklet titled M-Likadama-e-lihaq (Trial of Accession), the Jamat-e-Islami spoke in a bitter tone in these words ; "Your enemies are bent upon destroying your identity and faith. They are pressing in full strength with their army and/weapons. If you ignore this warning, be sure that the history of Moradabad will be repeated here. Like the lands of Bhiwandi, Aligrah, Hyderabad, Jabalpur and Assam, your lands would also be dyed with blood. You are facing a ruthless imperialist power whose Brahminical psyche is bringing new troubles for you every day. If you do not understand even now, you will not find any place in the pages of history." This speech served as the motif of the struggle of the indigenous Mujahedeen to wipe out the so-called Indian occupation of Kashmir One can judge from these statement-, the veracity of the myth, as fallaciously propagated so often by secessionist outfits, that the ongoing movement (terrorism) is a secular movement in which all the religio-ethnic groups of the State are actively involved. From the very start the so called Jihad in the Valley adopted the posture of and- Hindu movement to achieve the political objectives through unprecedented bloodshed. In its formative years it was supervised and commanded by local Kashmir Muslim youth. They were connected with the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front whose headquarters was located in Muzaffarabad. Some of these stalwarts were Yasin Malik, Hameed Sheikh, Shakeel Bakshi, Javed Ahmed Mir alias Nalka, Azim Inqilabi alias Altaf Khan, Shabir Shah, Shaukat Bakshi, Mushtaq Zargar, Ashfaq Ahmad etc. Most of them are alleged to be involved in the killing of security forces and a number of Kashmiri Pundits. They stood, more or less, for an independent Muslim State having fair relations both with India and Pakistan. But, under the new strategy devised by the ISI, these indigenous elements were eclipsed and a new leadership was created with the Jamat-e-Islami in the foreground. Foreign mercenaries were inducted into the Valley. The level of violence scaled new heights. It was a tandav of death and destruction. Just to create horror within the ranks of the local militants, the Pak-floated terrorist outfit brutally assassinated Moulvi Mohammed Farooq, the Mirwaiz and father of Omar Farooq, the Hurriyat leader, at his residence in Nagin on the outskirts of the Dal-Lake. So the Indigenous chapter was over, and now started the proxy war unleashed by Pakistan to grab Kashmir. A genocide of the Pundits started at the hands of foreign mercenaries. The twin myth

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

of indigenous movement and Azadi-ki-Jang (Freedom struggle) stood exposed and deflated when an objective assessment of the ground situation is made. Many leftist authors and political commentators wrongly plead the case of the militants by calling their bloody struggle as freedom struggle comparable to any war of independence: "The unjustified cause of these so-called freedom fighters for a wild political future undermining the broad interests of other ethnic groups have been projected by the Indian intellectuals, who have fabricated outlandish theories in justification of the secessionist movement. Tarkundars, Tapan Boses, Kuldeep Nayyars etc. all have relentlessly and fearlessly spoken for the Muslims and launched a crusade against the so-called State terrorism ignoring the genocide of the Hindus and wholesale destruction of their properties," says Prof. M. L. Kaul (Kashmir: Past and Present). These so-called intellectuals support the cause of the militants under the pretext of freedom of the press and platform as guaranteed by the Indian Constitution. The very concept of Azadi as being propounded by the militants is something different. It is anti democratic and anti-secular. The Azadi slogan says: "Azadi-ka-Matlab-Kya ! La-illah-i-illaha" Pakistan Sey-Kya-Rishta- La-illaha-i-illaha" (Azadi means Islam. Islam is the only relationship with Pakistan)"Jis ko Kashmir may rehna hay. Allah-ho-Akbar-Kahna hay" (Whoever (Pundit) wants to live in Kashmir, has to profess Islam)."Hamein Kya Chahe, Nizame-e-Mustaffa Kashmir mein Keiya Chalaiga, Nizam-e- Mustafa" (We want Islamic rule; we want Islamic law in Kashmir) Hindustani-Kutte- Bahir Jao (Indian dogs, Go away). No sane person can call the ongoing mayhem as a struggle for freedom. A wrong impression is created that Pak-sponsored terrorism is a freedom struggle in which over 70,000 Kashmiris lost their lives. In spreading this canard, Muslim intellectuals are playing a partisan role. "The so-called Muslim intellectuals have shattered all umbrellas of peace, amity and harmony and burnt all bridges joining the two communities," says M. L. Kaul. I have the instance of a University professor (now retired) who was known for his secular views. Up to this time I have never heard a word or read a single line written by him in the national Press, condemning the role of militants and appealing to the Mujahideen to allow the unfortunate Kashmiri Pundit community to return back to their deserted homes. The exodus of Kashmiri Pundits from the Valley is a black spot on the Kashmiriat which was once so cherished by the Kashmiri Musalman. Rulers of Pakistan justify the ongoing Jihad in Kashmir on the basis of the right of self-determination. Refuting this argument Dr. Rafiq Zakaria says, "Kashmir is an offshoot of the same divisive two-nation theory. It has nothing to do with the right of self-determination of people. If it is tampered with, it will not only destabilise our secular republic of which it is the cornerstone, but may provoke a bloody backlash against 140 million Muslims who are more than the Muslims in Pakistan America and the rest of the Muslim world should take serious note of it" the Hindustan Times dated January 13, 2002). Former President of Pakistan, Ishaq Khan, often tout-toured that the Kashmir issue is the unfinished agenda of partition. To wrest Kashmir through force, used covertly by ISI, terrorism, which is the concomitant of a proxy war, became State policy of Pakistan under military dictator's right from Gen. Zia-ul-Haq to Commando-turned military ruler, Gen. Pervez Musharraf. Partition was the saddest tragedy in the contemporary history of the subcontinent. In his thought-provoking book

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

"The Guilty men of Partition", the Socialist leader, Ram Manohar Lohia squarely blames Congress leaders who were hungry for power and "gave in much against the advice of Gandhi ji. In the partition riots, one million Hindus and Muslims were killed and 15 million were uprooted from their hearths and homes. If any credence is to be given to what President Ishaq Khan said the ongoing Muslim terrorism in J&K State is the extension and enlargement of the tragedy caused by partition? Seventy thousand Kashmiris lost their lives; seven lakh Kashmiri Pundits have been rendered homeless so far. The Kashmir question is the offshoot of the two-nation-theory. The latter has caused immense harm both to India and Pakistan. Says Dr. Rafiq Zakaria," In his latest book "The Man who divided India; 'I have diagnosed the permanent damage done to South Asia by Jinnah's pernicious two-nation theory, on which Pakistan is based. I had said that unless Pakistan gets rid of it, there will be no peace in South Asia. It has not only proved a serious threat to India's security but has also done the greatest harm to the Muslims of the subcontinent. Under the garb of two-nation theory, Pakistan is exporting terrorism through mercenaries in J&K. Muslims who migrated to Pakistan are feeling the punch of Partition." Pakistan was a double disaster for the Muslims in India: first, they lost their sense of coherence and political strength in the Indian Union along with their leadership and middle classes which migrated to Pakistan by the thousands; secondly, they were forever damned in India for having voted for Pakistan and broken the unity of India; " says a Pakistani scholar Prof. Ahmad It is wrong to link the Kashmir issue with Partition and justify terrorism (Jihad) to achieve a political goal through religious idiom. "Jinnah, the father of two-nation theory and Pakistan," exploited religion to whip up communal frenzy among the Muslims and made them believe that only a separate homeland, carved out of a united India, would free them from Hindu domination. The result has been exactly the opposite:' If Kashmir issue is to be linked with the creation of Pakistan, its weakness is obvious. Says the noted political commentator, Amulya Ganguli, "Pakistan claims to derive its legitimacy from a theory which was negated a mere quarter of a century later by the formation of Bangladesh" (The Hindustan Times dated January 21,2002).

## **51.0 WHY SUDDEN ALIENATION**

In the previous chapter, I made an attempt to explode some myths that have remained entertained with the Kashmir issue which is now synonymous with Muslim cause. Pakistan, since its inception in 1947, has been treating it a Muslim issue to be settled by Muslims alone who form a majority in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. As already stated, India has a bigger Muslim population than Jinnah's Pakistan but the difference is in the approach. Dr. Rafiq Zakaria's views are already on the record. Writing recently in the Dawn, noted Pakistani columnist, Iffat Malik, criticised the Pak-establishment for linking Islam with the Kashmir issue. "The traditionally docile and peace-loving Kashmiri Muslims, "he pointed out, "targeted only Indian security forces in their campaign. Pundits in the Valley were not persecuted, civilian casualties were avoided as far as possible, tolerant liberal Islam was practiced." In contrast, Malik said, the foreign Jihadis overrode the civilians, imposed a harsh and intrusive form of Islam and employed suicide bombings and hijackings as their-favoured strategies. All this "tarnished the Kashmiri struggle for freedom" (Quoted by Vidya Subramanian in Times of India dated January 23,2002). Pakistan will continue to harp on the Kashmir issue by appealing to the religious sentiments of Kashmiri Muslims. In their public speeches, some of the Hurriyat leaders often say that Kashmir should accede to Pakistan because the later is the bastion of Islam. While paying homage to a slain terrorist in Tral, prominent Hurriyat leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, as televised by PTV, said "Islam, not secularism, can unite the Muslims of Kashmir. So J&K State's integration, in the words of Mr. Geelani with Pakistan is the only viable solution of Kashmir issue." Pakistan shall always continue to work for separation of Kashmir from India by escalating violence. The noted columnist Mohit Sen writes," We should nourish no illusions about the aim which Pakistan has set itself ever since it came into being, the detachment of Kashmir from India. It may be compelled to bid its time, even to retreat but long as it exists, it will never give up this aim. The only way the situation can fundamentally change is if Pakistan changes its character from a theocratic dictatorship to some kind of a liberal democracy where religion ceases to be the guiding factor of society and the state, even though Islam would remain a significant influence on both.11is is not likely to happen for quite some time." (The Hindustan Times dated January 22,2002).The big myth is (created by the feudal rulers of Pakistan) that Pakistan has been on a winning spree since the break-out of the proxy war. It is admitted by every right-thinking person that this proxy war which is taking unnecessarily a heavy toll of life on either side, must stop. "The proxy war which Pakistan has been waging against us, needs a riposte, especially after its recent audacious escalation. It has long been stated that the proxy war should be made so expensive for Pakistan that it will cease to wage it. But the raising of the level of a covert war to the level of an overt one is not necessarily the best way to end the former. This is particularly true in the present circumstances."The international community, by and large, is not interested to put an end to terrorism in the State. Successive US administrations wanted to hurt and weaken us, says Mr. Mohit Sen. This was, of course, the compulsions of the Cold War in which India played a neutral role. Since India emerged as the global

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

power in the wake of Pokhran nuclear experiment, US changed its stance and tilted towards Pakistan. Musharraf still continues to remain in the good books of the USA. So terrorism in Kashmir is not likely to show any respite. Indian perception of the General is obviously that of a puppet on a string pulled by the United States. There is no denying this. But the General is not the only puppet (lancing to the American tunes. Today US pressure, is a reality that looms over the entire subcontinent" says Vidya Subrahmaniam (Times of India, dated January 23, 2002). The identity of Pakistan as a Muslim State which is created for the welfare of Muslims of the subcontinent depends on the Kashmir issue. Fundamentalism and Kashmir issue are obviously two factors that keep the facade of Pakistan's identity as a State. alive, though strictly it has proved a failed State. On the very surface, no distinct feature of its being a modern State is discernible. It is out and out a theocratic State which has a State religion, whereas the votaries of other religions are treated as second class citizens. For Pakistan, the Kashmir issue is its life-breath. Pak media treats Jammu and Kashmir as part and parcel of Pakistan. Pak rulers have succeeded in creating what may be called some sort of Kashmir hysteria. The offshoot of this hysteria is the ongoing terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. There is absolutely no truth that the prevailing terrorism has roots in the State. Anchored by the ISI, financed profusely by some oil-rich Arab countries, sidelined by the United State at the early stages of the conflagration, Kashmiri terrorism cannot be termed as a freedom struggle in any way. It is a pan-Islamic movement to convert "Dar-ul-Harb" into Dar-ul-Islam". Describing its Islamic overtone, in propaganda literature, Jagmohan writes, "A notable feature of the motivational literature of the subversive is the extensive use of the symbols and metaphors of Islam. Allusions are frequently made to the heroic deeds of the seventh and eighth -century Islamic history. For example, Badr which is the name of the spectacular victory over the Arab pagans in Mecca, is extensively referred to. The attempt is to manipulate the minds of Kashmiri Muslims, particularly of the unlettered, and to subject it to a heavy dose of religious emotionalism." The Jihadis fighting in Kashmir are creating religious frenzy. To convince the Kashmiri Muslims, the people are told that their aim is "to establish the rule of pure Islam." Secularism as a viable political philosophy is completely rejected. In the order being preached by the Jihadis at the behest of Pakistan; there is no place for non-Muslims. If at all they choose to remain within this theocratic order, they have to live as a third class citizens. If the supporters of the so-called "Freedom Movement" believe in equal rights for minority and harmonious coexistence of varied religious ethnic groups, there was obviously no reason as to why over four lakh Kashmiri Pundits were forcibly evacuated from the Valley by the militants. Their mass exodus from the Valley bears close resemblance to the mass migration of the Jews from Germany. The ongoing movement in J&K is purely a communal upsurge to wipe out all traces and shibboleths of plurality of culture and humanism. It is a deliberate attempt to push back the State into medieval times when religious warfare (Jihad) took a heavy toll of human life in the name of God and religion. India's hostile neighbouring country, Pakistan has direct involvement in the carnage and blood-bath. In the case of Kashmir, rulers of Pakistan are misusing religion. It is foolishness to attribute it to a Muslim cause. In broader perspective,

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

it is the extension of pre-pardon Muslim League politics. Says Dr. Zakaria," Jinnah, who had no love for Islam, exploited religion to whip up communal frenzy among the Muslims and made them believe that only a separate homeland, carved out of United India, would free them from Hindu domination. The result has been exactly the opposite. In undivided India they were in power in five out of the eleven provinces; being one-third of the population they were a decisive factor at the Centre. After partition, they have been divided into three parts : Pakistani Muslims, Indian Muslims and Bangladeshi Muslims, with little contact with one another. Far from being freed of Hindu domination," two-thirds of them have been put under, to use Jinnah's terminology, "Permanent Hindu domination. And in Pakistan, they have neither democracy nor basic human rights. The Indian immigrants, who are called Mohajirs, who went to Pakistan in the hope of finding a heaven there, are living in hell. Poor Biharis, who opted for Pakistan, are still rotting in Dhaka. Their undisputed leader, Altaf Hussain, has publicly declared, "Partition was the biggest disaster in human history" (Hindustan Times, January 13,2002). In 1947, Sheikh Abdullah had the vision of what was likely to happen to the Indian Muslims who migrated to Pakistan. So he chose the right course for Kashmiri Muslims: he opted for Kashmir's accession to India. Time has shown that it was a correct decision for Kashmiri Muslims who have been saved from becoming permanent "Mohajir-Kashmiris" in Pakistan. It is often said that the current spell of terrorism is because of the alienation of the Muslims in the Valley. It is no alienation, but systematic indoctrination in the rudiments of Muslim fundamentalism. There is absolutely no cause for alienation of Kashmiri Muslim you& He enjoys the benefit of free education, extra-avenues of employment through legalised, rather discriminatory quota system and all the rights and privileges that are enshrined in the Constitution of India. He is "free to carry on anti-India propaganda in Mosques and shrines; he is free to join any secessionist party and raise pro-Pak slogans." He is free to propagate his religion and move in any part of India. He can elect his own representatives to the State legislature. He retains internal autonomy under Article 370 which, through a transitory measure, has become permanently embedded in the Constitution of India. He can own property in any part of India, but any outsider is barred from acquiring property in the State. He is free to spit venom against India from any platform. It is the magnanimity of the Indian State that a Hurriyat leader, Mirwaiz Omar Farooq, son of the slain Mirwaiz Maulana Mohammed Farooq, calls himself not Indian citizen as "Kashmir is not a part of India." India spends billions of rupees by way of subsidies on the Valley. During the last five decades "the Central Government has pumped Rs 1,20,000 crore into Jammu and Kashmir State. "As compared to the people of other States, Kashmiri Musalman is better fed, better dressed and better cared in all the spheres of economic life. If alienation is the cause, then why the wards of Muslim bureaucrats swelled the ranks of Mujahedeen? Why was there no alienation before 1989? Why was there sudden alienation? Of course, there is unemployment in the State. But it is not as much widespread as in UP or MP Why have not the youth of these two States raised the banner of revolt and talked in terms of seceding the two States from India? Economically, Kashmiris, especially the Muslims, are more prosperous as compared with the people living in other parts of the country. The accession of J&K with

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

India is constitutionally valid and morally sound According to the Indian Independence Act, rulers of princely states were given option to accede either to India or Pakistan. Maharaja Hari Singh was the Constitutional ruler of the State. So he chose to accede to India. In his letter dated October 26, 1947 to Lord Mountbatten, Maharaja Hari Singh wrote, " With the condition obtaining at present in my State and the great emergency of the situation as it exists, I have no option but to ask for help from the Indian Dominion, Naturally, they cannot send the help asked by me without my State acceding to the Dominion of India. I have accordingly decided to do so and I attach the Instrument of Accession for acceptance by your Government." However, there is no mention of holding referendum. "The offer of plebiscite was uncalled for, irrelevant to the situation and illegal. It was outside the ambit of the Act of Indian Independence of the British Parliament. It was never accepted by the Maharaja who had absolute choice in this matter" (Madhok). If the "question of the State's accession to be settled by a reference to the people" is to be taken in view, it may be recalled that the State Constituent Assembly ratified J&K's accession to India. To conclude, the ongoing terrorism in J&K is Pak-sponsored to separate Kashmir from India and get it merged with Pakistan. "Terrorism ravaging the Paradise was launched to rip open the political and historical reality of Kashmir as an integral part of India. Violence, loot, murder and rape were resorted to scare away the Indian presence from Kashmir to pave the way for secession," remarks Prof. M. L. Kaul. The militant violence in J&K is basically communal in character and secessionist in objective. The attempts being made by some so-called mainstream political parties and left flanks of the murky Indian politics to support the so-called freedom fighters are leading the country to great catastrophe. Pakistan is waging a proxy war on the Indian soil by indoctrinating a section of misguided Kashmiri Muslims with a high dose of religious fanaticism. This futile and wayward blood-bath is straining the resources of both countries. But, it has invited doom for the people of the Valley, causing unbelievable suffering and hardship to Kashmiri Pundits who have been uprooted from the land of their ancestors That is the tragedy implicit in the Untold Story about Kashmir.

### 52.0 RETURN OF THE NATIVE

The future of displaced Kashmiri Pundits forms an important chapter in the Untold Story. "The forced exodus of about four hundred thousand Hindus from Kashmir is the most distressing fallout of recent developments in Kashmir. All secessionist organizations and elements of Kashmiris have been working together to drive out or eliminate Hindu minority from there," remarks Prof. Madhok (Kashmir :The Storm Centre of the World," chapter XVIII). Of all the ethnic groups, the Kashmiri Pundit community has remained the most persecuted community down the ages. From a majority they were reduced to a microscopic minority as a result of oppression and suppression by some foreign invaders. Let me quote one instance. A blood thirsty Turkish Tartar Zul Qadir Khan invaded Kashmir with the help of 60,000 soldiers. He looted, plundered and even killed thousands of natives. It is said that the brooks and rivers turned red with the blood of massacred natives. Jonaraj, a contemporary historian, wrote, "Piles of corpses with ravenous crows prying on them could be seen lying about and even wild grass providing sustenance to the blighted people was burnt and reduced to ashes" (quoted by Prof. Kaul). Ranchin, the fugitive from Ladakh, became the first Muslim ruler of Kashmir who adopted a very harsh policy towards the natives and compelled them to change their faith. During the time of Shah Mir, all sorts of atrocities were heaped on Kashmiri Pundits. Of all the medieval rulers, Sultan Sikander is mainly responsible for wiping out the native culture in the Valley. He destroyed hundreds of temples, including Martand, Vijayesan, Chakrabrat, Tripuresvar Varaha temples. Describing the pitiable conditions of the natives, Joneraj- a contemporary historian - writes, "Crowds of Hindus ran-away in different directions, their life was disrupted, many died of heat and hunger." (Already quoted in the earlier chapters). Each ruler, barring Sultan Zain-ul-Abudin, added to the discontent of the Pundits in the Valley. The condition of Kashmiri Pundits during the time of Iftikhar Khan (1671-1675), Aurangzeb's Governor of Kashmir, was so horrible that Pundits were compelled to seek help from the ninth Sikh Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur. They complained to the Saviour of the community," We suffer great atrocities, sacred threads (Janeus) are forcibly taken off our persons. Cows are killed. Janeus, a maund and a quarter in weight, are snapped in a single day." The Afghan rulers too were very harsh towards the Pundits. "With the establishment of Afghan rule, the miseries of the people redoubled. Kashmiris had the misfortune of being ruled by two upstarts, Lal Khan Khattak and Faqir Ullah. The former was given to fits of insane rage and sometimes got an entire family killed on mere suspicion. He was particularly hard on the Hindus. Faqir Ullah was equally inhuman. He got hundreds of Kashmiri Pundits killed." (Jagmohan in My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir). The history of Kashmir bristles with such innumerable atrocious and appalling tales and anecdotes of the persecution of Kashmiri Pundits. However, they "got relief when Maharaja Ranjit Singh conquered and annexed Kashmir to his kingdom in 1819AD and made it a separate province of his expanding kingdom of Lahore." It goes to the credit of Dogra rulers that the Pundits were given a chance to demonstrate their talent and ability in the onerous task of the reconstruction of the State. In Kashmir, the majority community owes gratitude to the Pundits for their unique and unprecedented contribution

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

towards the economic prosperity and modernization of the State. "They (Pundits) occupied a place of pride in Kashmir during the hundred years of Dogra rule. They made the best use of the facilities for higher education and improved communication with the rest of India," remarks Prof. Madhok. In fact, the Pundits by virtue of being members of highly cultured and intelligent community, served as a bridge between the Valley and the rest of India. Alas! The bridge came under a severe attack and ultimately led to its collapse with their forced exodus from the State. With the accession of J&K State to India and installation of popular ministry in the State, a new chapter was added to their chequered history. Since 1947, they have been subjected to the worst form of discrimination. Their exodus from the Valley is an agonizing tale and their return to the Valley in immediate future is a wishful dream. It is a man made tale, enacted by wily politicians, and fanatic zealots with Pakistan pulling the strings. In the previous chapter, the causes that led to Pundits mass exodus have been discussed threadbare. Had the rulers of the State been wise enough, perhaps they could have adopted corrective measures to thwart attempts at Pundit's mass migration. It was a deliberate attempt to wipe out all pro-India elements and make things easy for pro- Pak elements in the Valley. If the exodus of the Pundits had become necessary from the safety point of view, they could have been lodged in safe areas within Srinagar and its outskirts. Their safety could have been entrusted to the security forces. Even they could have been lodged in camps and government buildings duly protected by the army. Why were they given a safe passage to migrate to Jammu where they were lodged in camps? The whole process smacks of a conspiracy which impinges the secular character of Jammu and Kashmir. To drive them out of the Valley was obviously aimed at weakening the links between India and Kashmir. This does not mean that conditions prevailing in the State were congenial for the stay of Kashmiri Pundits in the Valley, says Pyare Lal Kaul, "The total collapse of civil administration coupled with the failure of Governor was additional factor for their exodus. Because of Government's failure to rise to the occasion and to devise planning and strategies commensurate with the challenge of terrorism, the exodus of Hindus had to take place". (Kashmir: Trail and Travail, pp : 220). No attempt was made either by the State or Central government to seek the safety of fleeing Kashmiri Pundits. There was no such assurance from any quarter. "The Union Home Minister, Mufti Mohammed Sayeed was, however, reportedly inclined to prefer exodus of Hindus from the Valley. It was a dangerous role that he played," says Kaul (Kashmir: Trail and Travail, pp 220). We may agree with Kaul when he says that the non-Kashmiri power bidders had no knowledge of ground realities and political strategies (fallout). It was wrong to depend upon "Kashmiri Home Minister" for guidance. If the Kashmir issue has been mishandled and mismanaged in the past, the onus of responsibility goes to the "Kashmiri- caucus" in New Delhi. Delhi rulers were given wrong advice on Kashmir affairs from time to time. In the case of the mass exodus of Pundits, they cannot be exonerated. Elaborating this view, Pyare Lal Kaul writes, " Mufti's willingness for exodus of Hindus from Kashmir was to appease Kashmiri Muslims. Nobody wants to give up his abode and that too enmasse, unless he or she is compelled and forced to leave. The achievement of the planned exit of Kashmiri Pundits from the Valley, has been a great victory of

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Kashmiri fundamentalist Muslims and a great setback to the Indian diplomacy. Kashmir is thus in the making of another Islamic State in the subcontinent, though within the Union of India" (pp: 221). An impartial probe by any Judicial admission into the whole gamut of Pundits' mass exodus from the Valley can reveal the nature of truth. But no Central Government has initiated this measure so far, perhaps because of the strong pressure from the Kashmir caucus or political mafia. Before the migration, one could find even single Kashmiri Pundit family living peacefully in villages inhabited by five hundred Muslim families. The Muslims in the village regarded the Pundit family as "Amanat" '(sacred trust). When the Pundit family migrated from the Valley, the walls of trust tumbled down. How can these walls be rebuilt? Neither the Muslims of the village nor the Pundits, constituting the family, can be held responsible for shattering the bonds of confidence; it is the vested interests who are responsible for this great crime and the fatal wound caused to the Kashmiriat." "The future of Hindus in Kashmir will, therefore, depend upon the policy of India, which is more vacillating than firm." (P L. Kaul) Making a little digression, it is worthwhile to note that there might have been an international conspiracy at some stage to denude the Valley of Hindu population to strengthen the claims of Pakistan over Kashmir. The ongoing Kashmir problem is itself the result of the British conspiracy. In his recent book "War and Diplomacy in Kashmir, 1947-48, retired diplomat, C. Dasgupta has refused copiously to this conspiracy. Says he, "The British did not want the whole of Kashmir to go to India. There was a widespread feeling in London that if India was in control of areas contiguous to Pakistan, the latter would not survive. If the Indian army was within close striking distance of Pakistan's military centre, Rawalpindi, then Pakistan would face a major security problem. India's objective was to free the entire State of J&K from raiders. But by 1948, Nehru had come around the conclusion that this was not an immediately feasible proposition. The C-in-C, General Bucher, advised him that militarily it was not possible to establish control over the entire territory of J&K. In December 1947, Nehru had decided to send the army to strike at the bases of raiders, located in Punjab. In fact, Nehru wanted to chase them out of Muzaffarabad, but the British did not support the move. Mountbatten opposed Nehru. The C-in-C was receiving instructions from the British High Commissioner. In fact, Noel Baker, Minister for Commonwealth, was reprimanded by Prime Minister Attlee for following a totally pro-Pakistan policy." (The Times of India, February 12, 2002). The mass exodus of Kashmiri Pundits from the Valley has serious political repercussions. Such a nasty development cannot be treated in isolation. The rise of Muslim fundamentalism, and exodus of Pundits are directly related to the Kashmir issue. The final solution (of the intricate Kashmir 272 Jihad in Kashmir issue) is related to the return of Kashmiri Pundit migrants to the Valley. The exodus of Kashmiri Pundits from the Valley is an achievement for the fundamentalist forces and a severe setback to Indian interests. India cannot afford to keep the Pundit refugees outside the State for ever. New Delhi will have to undertake appropriate measures for the "Return of the Natives."

First of all radical improvement needs to be made in the law and order situation. Kashmiri Pundits can go back to the Valley when peace and tranquility returns to the Valley. Secondly, some confidence-building

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

measures need to be taken by the State government so that the wall of distrust between the government and the migrants is dismantled. Thirdly, the State Government is required to launch a massive scheme to rehabilitate the displaced Kashmiri Pundits in the Valley. Such a scheme requires huge funds which the Central Government is not prepared to earmark for the best reasons known to the ruling mandarins who have made a mess of the, so-called Kashmir problem during all these years. If the displaced Pundits return to their "Native - Land," they can't continue to live there as second class citizens as was the case before their mass exodus from the Valley. They need specified constitutional guarantee which is very essential for their economic rehabilitation. Peace cannot return to the Valley till Pakistan stops sending armed militants to the State just to make Kashmir secede from India. The return of Kashmiri Pundits back to the Valley after a period of their fifteen-year exile as refugees in free India is a big question which needs to be answered by India's wily politicians who have apparently made a mess of the situation. In this regard Prof Madhok remarks, " Can Kashmiri Pundits go back to the Valley or will they have to wander around India and the world like the Jews who were driven out of Israel many centuries ago. Their plight in their own country is the greatest challenge to the capacity and credibility of Indian leadership. It is my considered view that not only the future of Kashmiri Pundits is tied up with the future of Kashmir Valley, but the future of India in relation to Kashmir is also tied up with them. If Kashmir is to remain a part of India, Kashmiri Pundits will have to go back to the Valley not only for their own sake but also for the sake of wider interests of India as a whole. Their return and rehabilitation in Kashmir Valley must be part of any solution of the Kashmir problem." (Kashmir "The Storm Centre of the World, Chapter XVIII). There is a growing demand from a section of displaced Kashmiri Pundits for a separate home land within the Valley itself. They urge for a constitutional amendment to give a legal shape to their demand. Perhaps, this is a reaction to the demand of the separatists to wean the Valley from India. Such a demand has both plus and minus points. To deal with such a topic is beyond the scope of the "Untold Story."- As warranted by historical facts, J&K has become an integral part of India, despite the cacophony of the orchestrated secessionist propaganda. Kashmiri Pundits, as such, are the citizens of free India and their economic and emotional rehabilitation in the Valley is the primary task of Indian rulers, irrespective of their political label. This is a hard and harsh fact in the Kashmir Story.

### 53.0 WAITING FOR PEACE

The foregoing study of the ongoing terrorism in the State of Jammu and Kashmir makes it imperative for us to answer whether the mayhem is going to end either in near or remote future. Are we destined to see the light at the dead-end of the dark, dismal tunnel? Will this blood-bath lead to any meaningful conclusion? Will the turmoil die a natural death? These questions cannot be answered in isolation, for, they are the outcome of a situation which impinges international geopolitical scenario. The roots of the problem lie deep in the very psyche of the people who are indoctrinated in a particular set of ideology. During the cold war era the world was divided into two water tight blocks: pro Communist and anti-Communist blocks. The Kashmir problem initially was a simple problem pivoting round Pakistan's aggression in J&K which acceded to India on October 26, 1947. But this simple question snowballed into a very complex issue under the impact of Cold War politics. Russia offered full support to India on the issue and even exercised its Veto Power on the floor of the UNO to buttress India's stand. Initially, Nehru had high expectations from the UNO, but later he was very much disgusted because of the anti-India role of some world powers. The issue, for all practical purposes, remained bogged down in Cold War politics. "The history of the Kashmir imbroglio tells an entirely different story, however, Bilateralism comes to be cited as a credo by India only after 1972. Before that, for the first 17 years following independence (1948-65) Kashmir was dealt with almost exclusively by the UN, barring the occasional direct discussions between India and Pakistan. The long chain of these non-bilateral efforts remained entirely barren, but for the delineation of what was to subsequently become LoC, the effective boundary between the two countries which Pakistan continually chafes at, and occasionally assaults," says columnist Anand K. Sahay (Hindustan Times, dated March 6, 2002). After the disintegration of erstwhile Soviet Russia, international politics has altogether changed. United States becoming a self appointed Super Cop America has vested interests in Pakistan which has, thanks to George W Bush's hat-trick diplomacy, turned into America's front-line state in so called American thrust against global terrorism. When we take cognizance of the ongoing terrorism in J&K, we will have to bear in mind that the United States will take no such action as may prove harmful to Pak interests in Kashmir. Diplomacy may have different languages, but preservation of interests is its running theme. The United States has an eye over Central Asian oilfields which still remain unexplored. For America, Pakistan may serve as a halting station on the way to Central Asian States which once made up the Soviet Union. It has to ensure political stability of Pakistan to counter balance India which is likely to emerge as the second powerful Asian country after China. In other words, the United States will continue to support Pakistan on Kashmir in accordance with her past practice.

The only way to neutralise American pressure is to adopt a "pro-active and vigorous foreign policy." An effective foreign policy depends upon coherent internal policy with regard to Kashmir. If we dither or twitter in handling any internal component of the Kashmir situation, it won't be possible for us to evolve any effective broad-based Kashmir policy. Pakistan, just to dip

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

into the past was emboldened to attack India in 1965 because India's debacle in India-China war of 1962. The noted political commentator and journalist, Christina Lamb writes, "Negotiations over Kashmir began between India and Pakistan in December 1962, but Pakistan emboldened by India's defeat in the war with China, was not interested in talking. Believing India weakened by Nehru's death in 1964, Pakistan ended the delicate peace the following year with a further war. It was no more successful than the first. President Ayub Khan and Foreign Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, repeating Jinnah's failed tactics of sending in tribesmen followed by Pakistan army were again unable to change the status quo" (Waiting for Allah", pp : 264). India's much talked-about Kashmir policy proved abysmally bankrupt in 1972 when India suffered an unimaginable diplomatic defeat at the hands of Pakistan, though India registered military victory over Pakistan with aplomb. We failed to seek any guarantee in writing from Pakistan regarding the conversion of LoC into internationally-accepted boundary between India and Pakistan. Success of diplomacy means to what extent a country has succeeded in winning foes, lessening tension and safeguarding its interests. New Delhi's Kashmir policy has all along remained a diplomatic faux pas. It is time that we make an assessment of our Kashmir policy and orient it in the context of the changing international political scenario. Unfortunately, we have, wittingly or unwittingly, internationalized the Kashmir issue, with Pakistan adding new dimensions to it by unleashing its proxy war in J&K. Pakistan embassies in foreign countries work overtime to propagate canard about the ongoing turmoil in these countries. In order to make all the levers of propaganda effective, Pakistan has pressed into service many lobbies which are spreading blatant lies about Kashmir. Indian security forces are presented as barbaric hordes, bent upon annihilating Kashmiri Muslims. There is no worthwhile Indian agency to counter this false, malevolent and malicious Pak propaganda which is primarily meant to mislead the international community. Even a negligible section of the educated Americans know little what is actually happening in Kashmir. Pakistan has deployed scores of Kashmiri Muslims in the United States and European countries to carry on an anti-India propaganda. They all are paid agents of Pakistan's ISI. For instance, Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai, a native of Baramulla, Dr. Ayub Thakhtir, Prof. Nazir Ahmed Shawl, Prof. Ashraf Saraf, Mr. G.A. Qadri, Mr. Tajamal Islam etc. are very much heading Pak-sponsored media organizations to carry on anti-India propaganda at the behest of Pakistan's ISI. Terrorism unleashed by Pakistan can come to a grinding halt if the United States sincerely exerts its influence on Pak military establishment. At the base of terrorism in J&K is Pakistan's ubiquitous hydra-headed military establishment. It flourishes on narcotic trade which is the lifeline of Islamic terrorism. We have observed in the past that when the army was strong in Pakistan, terrorism scaled new heights in J&K. Inside Pakistan, there is none to control the army which is in cahoots with the Muslim fundamentalist parties like Jamaat-e-Islami, Al Hadis, Jamaat-ulemai-Pakistan.

Even top-ranking army officers, including General Aziz Khan, are alleged to have close liaison with the Jamat-e-Islami. During Zia-ul-Haq's regime Jamaat-e-Islami activists infiltrated into Pak army in large numbers. The army has by now come under the grip of Muslim fundamentalist parties.

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

Pak army serves as a unifying factor otherwise the theocratic state is likely to wither away. The drug mafia is very strong. Describing the very character of Pakistan as a modern State, Christina Lamb says, "Created as a Promised Land for the Muslim religion by the British-trained lawyer, Pakistan seems insufficient to hold together a disparate people speaking 23 languages, and rather than uniting, produces only division. Sindh is in a state of armed insurrection, Baluchistan rejects what it sees as the Federal Government's interference, North West Frontier Province is a haven for drugs and arms' dealers .The Pak army is well entrenched in power-structure. (Waiting for Allah, pp 22).To cut roots of terrorism, it is imperative to weaken the Pakistan army and make sincere efforts to restore democracy in Pakistan. That should be the cardinal element in India's foreign policy. Containing terrorism in J&K State is stopping the entry of foreign mercenaries into the State. It is a tough job which needs our political will. Commenting upon the role of foreign mercenaries in escalating trouble, Malaise Rutliven says, "Though Islamist movements have usually been inspired by local conditions, the international factors should not be ignored. Veterans of the Afghan war against the Soviet occupation formed the core of armed and trained Islamist groups in Algeria, Yemen and Egypt. At the height of Afghan war there are said to have been between 10,000 and 12,000 Mujahideen from Arab countries financed from Mosques and private contributions in Saudi Arabia and Gulf states. Saudi influence also operates at the religious or ideological level. Many of the Islamists spent time in Saudi Arabia as teachers or exiles where they became converted to rigid, puritanical version of Islam practiced in that country" (Islam :A very short Introduction, pp 138). So far as the involvement of local Muslim youth in J&K Muslim insurgency is concerned, it is showing signs of wear and tear. Their ratio is decreasing fast, while the ratio of foreign mercenaries is increasing. Jihad in Kashmir is no longer a local affair; it is the escalation of Jihad on a large scale.

The Kashmir Issue is a national issue. It must always remain above petty politics and narrow regional loyalties. Any policy to be pursued about Kashmir must invariably be based on national consensus. A few years back the Indian Parliament passed a unanimous resolution, affirming India's resolve that Kashmir is an integral part of India. The main contour of the Kashmir policy to be chalked at the national level should be based on following principles

- (1) J&K State is an integral part of India
- (2) There is no scope for a third-party mediation
- (3) No talks on changing the present status quo
  - (4) The ongoing insurgency should be ruthlessly suppressed and the army should be given a free hand to deal with the situation for some period in terrorist-prone areas
- (5) The Border should be well-protected and fenced all along
- (6)An Advisory Kashmir Committee comprising leaders of recognized political parties, prominent media personalities, jurists, retired or serving diplomats, defence experts and intellectuals should be formed to guide the Central Government

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

(7) An economic package for the strife-torn State should be formulated and announced without losing any time

(8) A Committee of Constitutional Experts is formed to assess whether it is feasible to scrap Article 370 and to provide Constitutional status for the displaced Kashmiri Pundits within the Valley itself as demanded by a section of Kashmiri Pundits.

Basically the Kashmir problem is a military problem born out of a certain negative political situation. Indian Government's Kashmir policy should be guided overall by security factors which have become intricate due to close military ties between Islamabad and Beijing. Negative political doctrine comes out of the two-nation theory. "Pakistan is founded on two nation theory which insists that religion cannot be separated from politics. So despite their common history and shared cultural heritage, relations between the two neighbours have never been normalised," says Christina Lamb in "Waiting for Allah." The difference between the two countries though these area hangover of history have been further complicated by world's super powers because of their vested interests. On India's part, there should be a political will to solve the Kashmir issue. Our secular political leadership in India generally ignores this vital fact about Kashmir. The mainstream political parties fear to take a tough stand on Kashmir because they do not want to incur the wrath -of a vocal section of the minorities. The media has been playing a wrong role and does not present the Kashmir issue and its allied problems in the right perspective.

"Careless and ignorant reporting in the Press has been a cause of misinformation about Kashmir. Leave alone biased critics, quite a few Correspondents who do not know basic facts and yet write with an air of authority," says Jagmohan (My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir, pp 610) Just to glamorize the situation, Correspondents interview terrorist-leaders who spit venom against India through their abusive language on the small screen. Most of the commentaries written by political analysts are based on "incorrect facts, careless reporting, interviews of interested parties; and even totally concocted stories. Such one-sided reports with "truth chopped off by sharp weapons of disinformation and distortion" can damage the national cause; how often our media highlighted the sufferings of over four lakh Kashmiri Pundits who were exiled from the State? Was it not a fit subject for Star TV's highly popular programme: "The Big Fight" on small screen Ultimately, violence in J&K can come to a full stop if the nation as a whole realises its duty towards the country.

"The current tornado in Kashmir has been caused more by the negative forces in the Indian political, social and moral order, than by the individuals who were the products, and in same way also the creators, of these forces. It was the inner malignancy of the system that brought into being the petty politics of disruption, even in the gravest of the emergency, caused the whirlpools of confusion and contradictions, set in motion the deluge of disinformation and distortion, bleed the country white of its resources and prolonged the collective agony of the people" (Jagmohan, pp, 642) The future of India depends upon who are at the steering wheel of history. If such persons are men and women of grass, devoid of any imagination, buried neck-deep in their self-interests, waxing eloquently about caste, creed and colour, then national problems, including the J&K

## **Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

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**By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

jigsaw puzzle cannot be solved in the larger interests of the country. The famous Iranian philosopher Khalil Gibran would often say : "Oh God ! Save the country from a ruler who acts as a fox." In modern India, there are as many foxes as are the political parties. One crucial question dogs the nation: "Whether the country would be able to throw up some men and women of destiny who could set in urges in the nation and import new life, new inspiration, to its policy and administration."

Ongoing terrorism in J&K is a Jihad unleashed by the enemies of India who are interested in dismantling country's secular super structure and harming communal harmony which has been the basis of India's hoary culture.

### 54.0 EPILOGUE

#### No Jihad, but terrorism

Jihad is very important Quranic concept meant for the progress of religion (Islam) and the improvement of the individual behaviour. It is dedication to an ideal which has, more or less, spiritual base M. J. Akbar says "The spirit of Jihad entered Islam at Badr. It is a spirit that inspires among believers a heroism; equally, it inspires dread among those outside the fold of Allah. Its root lies in the Arabic word Jihad, meaning exertion or striving. Its resonance comes from the nature of the strife; Jihad is the holy war of righteousness, the struggle against tyranny" (The Shade of Swords, page 2) Muslim theologians have given two types of Jihad: Jihad-al-Akbar and Jihad-al-Asghar. The Jihad-al-Akbar is the battle or war against the enemy within. It is directed against personal ambitions, malicious designs, greed, lust etc. The second type of Jihad, Jihad-al-Asghar, is a lesser Jihad which is to be displayed in the battlefield. In this type of Jihad, the Jihad (fighter) wins in either way. In the long run, he may win the war, and in the short, "death will bring martyrdom and paradise (Jennat). At the same time the strife "would also cleanse one's soul, for no martyrdom is permissible without the inner purity."

Islam is a religion of peace. There is no room for unreasonable violence. But it does not "permit meek surrender" either. According to M.J. Akbar, there are circumstances in which all Muslims are commanded to defend their faith. When such occasion arises, war becomes inevitable and also duty for the believer and those who fail to discharge or shirk this sacred duty are condemned by the Quran (M. J. Akbar, page: 2) The spirit of Jihad displayed by the Muslim in the battlefield is nothing short of a marvel. Within two years of the Prophet's death (PBH). Muslim armies challenged and defeated the well disciplined and well-equipped armies of two significant regional powers of those days, the Persians and the Byzantines. Chanting Jihad, the Muslim armies marched from Medina to Jerusalem and conquered all these lands, converting Dar-ul-Harb into Dar-ul-Islam. They even made foray into Central Asia, Afghanistan and Sindh. Commenting upon these glorious achievements of the early Muslims, M. J. Akbar says "The sheer excitement of this achievement, however, has tended to eclipse a basic impulse of the Muslim mindset. Jihad is not a sanction to empire-building, though empires did emerge in this wake. The most powerful manifestation of Jihad is not when all is won, but when all seems lost; that the spirit of Badr" (page 3). Thus the original conception of Jihad was lost in the maze of material wealth and pelf accumulated by the Muslim conquerors through Jihad. Early Muslim rulers were directly involved in conflicts with the Jews and the Christians. For the Muslims it was Jihad and for the Christians it was crusade. In a time Jihad "Martyrdom was Muslim's duty, victory was Allah's responsibility. Those who died would be welcomed by Allah to paradise. "God comes to the rescue of the Jihadis."At a critical moment in the battle of Badr a dust storm blew into the faces of the Meccans; Gabriel's horse was galloping in. By the midday the battle was over. The Meccans fled. Among the dead lay Abu Jahl". (M. J. Akbar, page 9) A Jihadi is a highly motivated person who feels it great honour to lay down his or her life for Allah's truth and reality. The Holy Book says,

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

"Know that paradise is under the shade of swords" (Al-Jannat-a-Tahata-Silal-es-Sayoof). The Prophet said a single spell of fighting in Allah's cause was better than all world, and a place in paradise as small as a bow was better than all the world, and whatever was in it (The Shade of Sword, page 11). The Jihad is a fight for a right cause-the cause that preserves human values. It does not mean that the Jihad is to be used as a weapon to convert people and force Islamic order on unwilling people. Islam's principles are clear in this respect. The Holy Quran says, a-Iqra-fi-ad-din" (There is no compulsion in religion). It further says "Lakum-Dinkurn-Wa-Laycddin (Your religion is for you, my religion is for me)." To start Jihad for any other purpose is no jihad. Today jihad has become synonymous with terrorism. In medieval times a Jihadi had to observe certain norms while fighting in the battlefield. It was unlawful to attack an armed enemy, kill children and women, carry assault during night. All these norms were worked out when the Muslims fought Jihad with the Christians. Jihad was not a random fighting for an unethical cause but a fight to preserve moral values in the name of humanity and civilization. Some governments deceive the Muslim Umma by telling them that they are fighting Jihad to defend faith (Islam). They are quickly exposed by Islamic fundamentalists as puppets of foreign powers, or as profligate wastrels further removed from the principles of Islam than many infidel." (The Shade of Sword XVII). Our neighbouring country, Pakistan, considers itself the protector of Islam. "It has quickly politicised Jihad and turned it into a mechanism for the protection of elites who have usurped power. The intervention of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan got seal of legitimacy on the Jihad unleashed by the Muslim fundamentalist forces led by Pakistan in the eyes of the Western Powers. As already stated, Jihad is fought for a noble cause. There is no scope for senseless violence and terrorism in Jihad Muslim are ordained "to fight in the cause of Allah but do not transgress limits, for Allah loved not transgressors." The higher Jihad is cleansing oneself, and a purge within became a recurrent reason for the call to Jihad against rulers who were perceived to have betrayed the principles of Islam or the interests. of Muslims (M. J. Akbar). It was through Jihad (the wars of Ridha) that the first Caliph, Hazrat Abu Bakr, brought the whole of the Arabian peninsula under Muslim rule. During the rule of Hazrat Umar, Muslims conquered Palestinian Egypt, northern parts of Azerbaijan, and Armenia. Subsequently Muslim rulers came in conflict with the Christian rulers. Sultan Saladin's name will always be remembered as a person who implemented the principles of Jihad in right perspective. He unified the Muslims under the banner of the true Jihad. In March 1187 the gallant Kurd gave a clarion call for Jihad after the Haj pilgrims were attacked and killed by the Christians. His call for Jihad received support from all quarters. General Saladin worked out a brilliant military strategy. He personally led the troops and inflicted a crushing defeat on his enemy. Jerusalem was captured by the Muslim King Saladin who gave general amnesty to the Christians. It goes to the credit of Saladin that "not a single Christian was killed." "He released the widows of the dead soldiers and wives of prisoners, and sent them away with gifts." He did not allow his soldiers to desecrate the Churches, That was the true spirit of Jihad exhibited by General Saladin even allowed Syrian and Armenian Christians to reside in their native city, Jerusalem. He invited the Jews, who had fled, back to the city. He allowed

By Girdhari Lal Jalali

them to build a Synagogue in the city. After the death of Saladin in 1181, the Muslims were confronted with a serious challenge from England and France. But they were able to score victory over the heathens. M. J. Akbar writes, "It is true that the Prophet insisted that a great Jihad was the struggle to cleanse impurity within, but that does not take away from the fact that the lesser Jihad inspired the spirit that once made Muslim armies all conquering, enabled Muslims to protect their holy places, and ensured that most of the community lived within the protection of Muslim power despite formidable challenge from Christian alliances. So often did Muslim armies, whether in the West or the East, triumph against odds that it conjured up a sense of a self-replicating miracle. Faith in Allah's bargain was reinforced by each victory, particularly against Christian armies who mobilized repeatedly not only to destroy Muslim empires, but also Islam which they called a heresy against Christ," (The Shade of Sword XVI). "Modern Jihad" is becoming an integral part of terrorism. It is associated by and large, with the radical movements in Islam. Such movement originated in countries where democracy has not seen the light of the day. These countries are generally ruled by monarchs and military dictators. In such countries "traditional Islamic polity has disappeared." How such movements gathered momentum is a very interesting story. Modern Jihad has turned into proxy war which is fought by elliptical stratagem. Islam enjoys upon its followers to shun violence and "fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you (Muslims)," but do not transgress limits, for Allah loveth not transgressors. "Hazrat Abu Bakr, the first Caliph, gave clear instructions "on how to behave in war". He says that Jihadi must not betray trust, misappropriate booty, be treacherous or mutilate a body. It is forbidden to "kill a child a woman or an old man, uproot trees or burn palms, "During crusades Muslim Generals showed exemplary behaviour towards the vanquished. Saladin and Mehmet II showed extraordinary generosity. To go back to the history of crusades it is worth recalling that the crusades began officially on November 25, 1095 when Pope, while addressing the congregation of Knights and priests, asked Christians to wage war against the Muslims. During the subsequent crusades, much blood was shed in the name of God on either side. A harsh struggle for survival ensured for scores of years. But the rules of game were occasionally flouted. In this respect the example of Saladin is worth quoting. Both Saladin and his foe, the British King, Richard-the Lion Hearted were in the battle field, "At the highest of the battle Richard was unhorsed and vulnerable. Saladin turned to his brother Al Malik Al Adil and told him to take two Arabian horses as a gift to Richard, for a king as great as him should not fight on foot." (The Shade of Sword, page 81) In spite of being such a great fighter, Saladin, had no wealth of his own." When he died on March, 1191, his soldiers and followers "borrowed money to pay for his funeral," The history of Jihad (crusade) in the subsequent centuries forms the most interesting part of the world history. It was marked by economic interests presented in the garb of religion. Imperialist countries were in search of markets. They exploited the natural resources of their colonies. In order to achieve this objective they installed puppet regimes in their colonial countries. There was outburst of fundamentalism fully supported and abetted by the imperialist powers. At the basis of this euphoria were economic interests. New social forces emerged ensuring

## **Untold Story-Jihad in Kashmir By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

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**By Girdhari Lal Jalali**

what is called the clash of civilizations. Jihad in Kashmir has brought about all round destruction in "Cupid's Abode." There is no end to the bloodbath in the State. It is a Pak-sponsored proxy war to disintegrate India. Maryanne Weaver comments in "Pakistan: in the shadow of Jihad and Afghanistan "For what had begun as an indigenous secular movement for Kashmiri independence in 1989 had by the mid-1990s increasingly become an Islamist crusade to bring all of Kashmir under Pakistan control. By the spring of 2001, 40 per cent of the militants fighting Indian troops in Kashmir were not Kashmiris; they were Pakistanis and Afghans (page 258)

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