

Vitasta



The Publication of Kashmir Sabha, Kolkata  
Vol XXXI (2015-2016) Annual Number





Sharika Bhagwati, artistic version, in Kashmiri Panditani attire, Kashmir Sabha, Kolkata Contribution.

# VITASTA

**2015-16**

*25<sup>+</sup> years post exodus of Kashmiri Pandits: The way forward for Kashmir*

A panel discussion held on 16 January 2016

Kala Mandir, Kolkata

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[April, 2015 to March, 2016]

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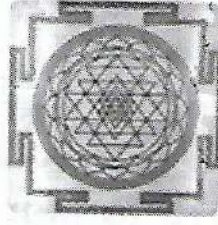
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Calendar regarding Important Kashmiri Pandit functions to be celebrated at Kashmir Bhawan for year  
2016-2017

S.No	Month & Year	Date	Day	Festival	Sponsored by
1	May 2016	04 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	Evening	Swami Lakshman Joo's Jayanti Smt. Bina and Sh. Brijmohan Misri & family
2	June	12 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Evening	Zyeshtha Ashtami Mrs. Asha and Mr. & Mrs. Rajesh Tikoo & family
3	July	13 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	Evening	Haar Navami Sharika Jayanti Smt. Niva Rani Kaul & family
4	July	16 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	Evening	Bhagwaan Gopinathji Jayanti Kashmir Sabha Kolkata
5	August	24 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	Full day	Janamashtami Kashmir Sabha Kolkata
6	October	11 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	Full day	Dussera Kashmir Sabha Kolkata
7	January	14 <sup>th</sup> 15 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	Sunday	Annual Hawan Kashmir Sabha Kolkata
8	January	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Sunday	Full day	Koshalhomm Kashmir Sabha Kolkata
9	February	26 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Full day	Salaam - Shivratri Kashmir Sabha Kolkata
10	April	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Sunday	Full day	Navreh-Zang Tray Kashmir Sabha Kolkata

To be announced:

1. Sports Day and Picnic
2. Cultural function



November to December 2016

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# PART I



## Editor's Message

I have had the pleasure and privilege of editing the *Vitasta* annual numbers for the last four years. The *Vitasta*, which is the official publication of Kashmir Sabha Kolkata, with few exceptions, has been bringing out its Annual Number for the last 41 years till now. It has proved to be a very meaningful expression.

The *Vitasta* publication in recent times has been focusing on problems of our community at large that have arisen as a result of mass exodus of our brothers in Kashmir who were forced by circumstances to leave their homeland and take refuge away from the Valley mostly in camps throughout the country. Indeed it can safely be said that Kashmiri Pandits are at the present juncture at their social and economic crossroads. This small Brahmin Community of India is facing the danger of disintegration.

The wide dispersal of the members of the community in post 1947 India has brought about a mini-revolution in the community's old social ties and its time honoured set of values. The old and once cherished set of values have undergone a sudden metamorphosis. The old moorings, both social and cultural, are being lost. We must not however lose our identity. How best to ensure this is of vital importance for our cultural and social survival.

We should make sure that the present generation of Kashmiri Pandits who have settled in various parts of India and outside religiously encourage the use of the Kashmiri language in their respective homes. Attempts should be made to ensure that written materials are available to sustain and enrich the language. It is obvious that we should not make the same mistake that the earliest migrants from Kashmir committed in neglecting the use of Kashmiri language.

We, the Kashmiri Pandits, must think collectively as Kashmiri Pandits and not get overwhelmed by the struggle for existence individually. If our past history in this land is any guide and witness, we have always survived all crises and there is no reason, we cannot survive the present one. For this we have to change our thinking pattern, our old attitudes, our old norms and try to break new ground.

Our Kashmiri Pandit Community (KP) is living in exile since 1990 and there are still so many K P families who continue to suffer till today facing a lot of troubles and continue to live in a pathetic state in the camps in miserable condition.

Now the time has come for Kashmiri Pandit Community from all over India to unite and to raise its voice to remain self reliant collectively and to fight for our cause with sincere efforts and pressurise the Governments to take action.

No Government of India till date has taken any serious interest for the betterment and safe settlement of Kashmiri Pandits in their forefather's native land. Had the Governments, both centre and state, been sincere enough this problem would have been unconditionally solved long back. However, we are sure and strongly believe no one can take Kashmir away from us since our roots are there. We just need to look at things in the right perspective and have faith that our Kashmiri Pandit race will not fade out. Kashmiri Pandits have been welcomed where ever they have settled.

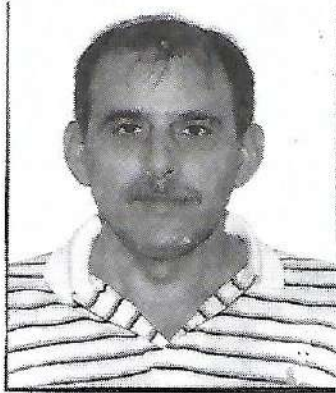
What has happened cannot be undone, but we have the power to unite and become one Kashmiri Pandit entity and return to our motherland with great honour and dignity. It is with this thought that our Sabha organised a Panel Discussion on "25+ Years Post Exodus of Kashmiri Pandits, the way forward for Kashmir".

This Annual Number is exclusively devoted to the proceedings of the panel discussion. We are sharing views of highly qualified scholars with a larger audience. We hope people of all walks of life will find the proceedings useful to chalk out a "Forward Path". Our sincere thanks to Observer Research Foundation, Kolkata for being our knowledge partner for the event and for helping in compiling the proceedings of the panel discussion.

*Om Shanti.*

*Bina Misri (Editor)*





## President's Message

Dear Biradari Members,  
Namaskar!!!

By the time you all get to set your eyes on this annual number, I will be at the fag end of my tenure as President of the Sabha in Kolkata for the third year on the run.

It has been a matter of great pleasure and honour for me to have been elected unanimously all three years of my tenure. I have sincerely tried and hope have been able to fill in the big shoes of my worthy predecessors who have had the vision to set up the Sabha some 6 decades back and then follow it up with the construction of the Kashmir Bhawan in Salt Lake, Kolkata.

My interaction with some of these living legends and pillars of the Sabha in Kolkata has personally been a matter of great learning for me. I salute their spirit of selfless service from the core of my heart & soul.

It was, with the active support of my executive members, that we were more than honoured to felicitate all the living legends with a Lifetime Contribution Award in a ceremony held on Jan 16, 2016. My salutations to all of them and pray God Almighty bestow all of them with a healthy long life for them to continue guiding us in matters of community and otherwise.

We have during the last two years been working on the upgradation of the services & facilities in the Bhawan. Some activities like air-conditioning of the halls and replacement of old doors and windows have been completed but the overall upgradation is still a work in progress. Plans to install an elevator are in the making as are the plans for renovation of other facilities. These are huge capital intensive work. We have been able to get a large portion of the work done through outside community sponsorship but the Sabha has also landed up with fairly large capital expenses. Therefore as a measure of mitigation, I take this opportunity to appeal to all the members to come forward with voluntary donation.

This year, we were also able to hold a seminar in Kolkata to raise the awareness of the plight of our community and in our small way contribute to the fight for the rights of our community. My thanks to all the panellists and more to the members the core committee members who made it possible with their yeomen service in planning and executing the plans with seamless co-ordination required for an event of this nature. I can't help but make a special mention of the services rendered by the convener of the Panel Discussion, Mr. Ashok Dhar without whose active support it would simply not have been possible. A special thanks to Mr Dhar. It is worth mentioning here that the entire expenses of this Panel Discussion were met through sponsorship from Mr. G. Mursheed of Kaizer Construction. It is only appropriate that I use this space to thank Mr. Mursheed for his large heartedness in not only sponsoring the event but also for his extra ordinary support of the upgradation of the Bhawan.

In the end, I would like to put on record my deep appreciation for the support received from all the Executive Committee members and the community members especially Mr. Rakesh Kaul who has been by my side through thick and thin all these years and made my journey thus far pretty smooth and an absolute joy.

Warm regards  
Suneel K Kaul



VIKAS RAZDAN

## Secretary's Report

It is a matter of pride and pleasure for me to be associated with the Kashmir Sabha Kolkata and even greater privilege and honour to have been considered suitable for the post of Secretary for another term. It is proud to be part of this family which is deep-rooted even today.

I am thankful to our respected seniors who have spent a considerable amount of thought into action without which Kashmir Bhawan would have been just a dream. This place is a converging point to our rich cultural heritage, beliefs, tenets and dogmas and will remain forever to our future generations to come.

In the year 2015, I tried to amalgamate into the shoes of my predecessor which were big and ever demanding. Although, It is very difficult to match every stroke of his, but I have put in my best efforts to add quality to my assignments with whatever time and resources available. I apologise for anything that might have hurt the sentiments of brethren but believe me as I have no malice at heart.

### Concerns

The receding and dwindling attendance of brethren in annual functions being held at Kashmir Bhawan . Kolkata which is a metropolitan and is spread vastly which makes it difficult to cut through the chaotic lanes and reach the venue.

Bhawan without any participants is just like the Sky without Sun. It is henceforth requested to all Biradari members to be a part of this bigger family of ours, where we share and relish our moments from past and carry the way forward.

Younger generation needs to be involved and a strategy is required to engage them in our annual functions to ensure participation with introduction of variety of things that are liked by them.

As we are in the 27<sup>th</sup> year of exodus from our native homeland Kashmir, we must act as torchbearers for our generations to come and carry on our cultural legacy which was once our source of Pride.

### Condolence messages

The Kashmiri pandit community lost some members which were revered as founders and contributors to Kashmir Sabha, Kolkata

### Annual Functions 2015 16

Kashmir Sabha Kolkata has celebrated various functions which include

Zang Tray	Sharika Navami
Jyeshtha Ashtami	Janamashtami
Dussera	Get Together

Annual Havan

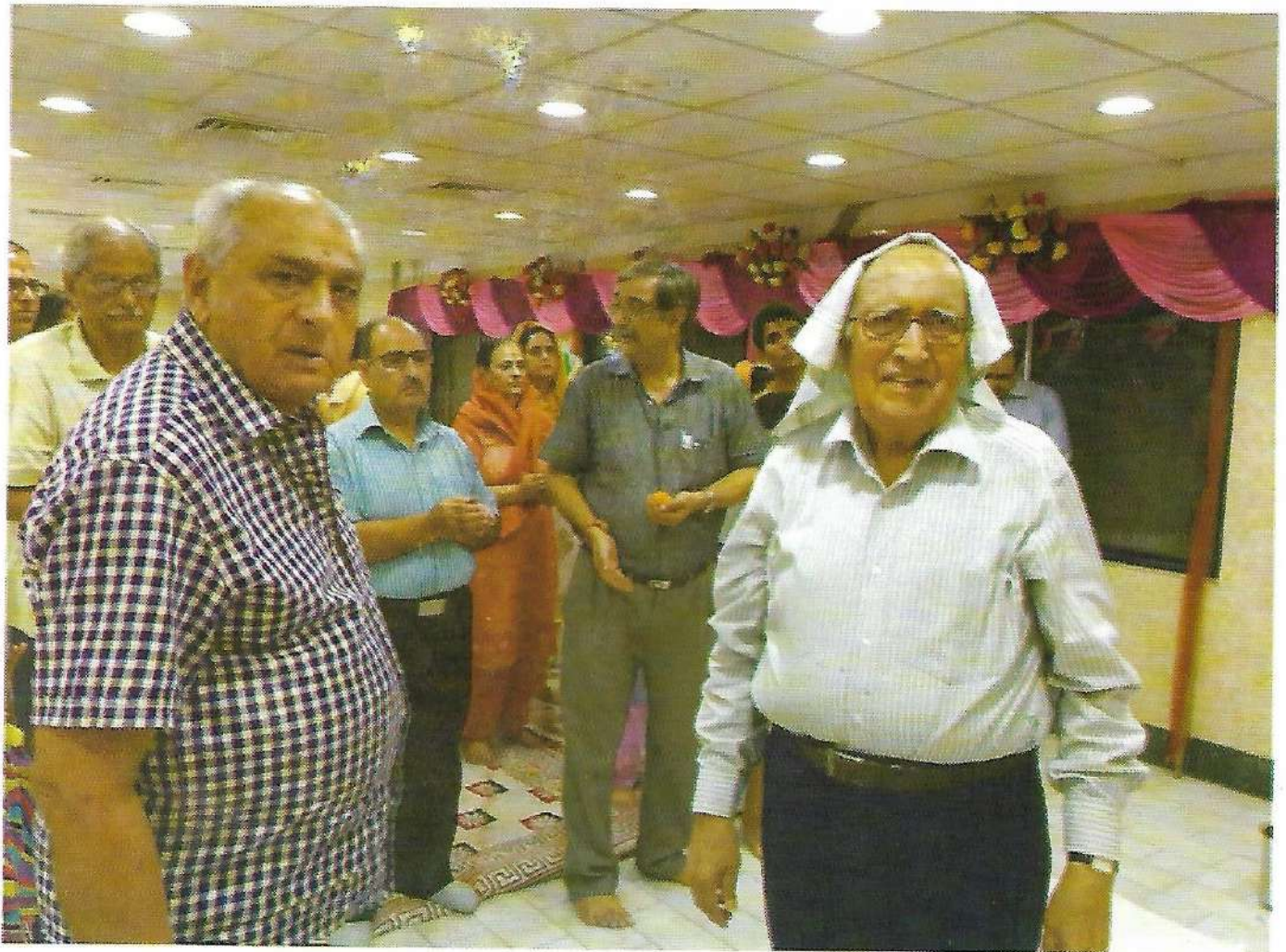
### Special Functions

Seminar on historical perspective of Kashmir Shaivism

Felicitation Ceremony of Smt Beena Budki for Hindi Basha Setu Samman.

### Message

As it is, the world of today has come to its extremes; mankind in general continues to suffer tremendously and that too at random and endlessly. Over centuries various political, economical, industrial and scientific revolutions have taken place. Regardless of how external factors are ever changing our day to day existence, the world has come to realise and recognise the ultimate fact that society will not improve fundamentally as long as the people themselves fail to transform the negative and destructive tendencies inherent in them. Therefore, the inner change for the better in a person is the first essential step in the process of making the Human race wiser, more reasonable and rational. Hence human (inner) revolution is the most basic of all revolutions and is the prime need of the hour. In recent past all renowned world bodies have started to come together to contemplate seriously on this basic topic.







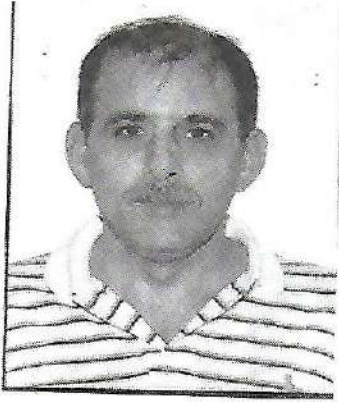


## PART II

# PROCEEDINGS OF PANEL DISCUSSION



## Welcome Address by Mr. Suneel Kaul, President, Kashmir Sabha, Kolkata:



Good morning ladies and gentleman!

On behalf of Kashmir *Sabha*, Kolkata it is my proud privilege to welcome you all to this event. Kashmir *Sabha*, Kolkata is a 60 year old organization of Kashmiri Pandits settled in eastern India. The need of this *Sabha* was felt by those who came either to study or work in Kolkata post 1947.

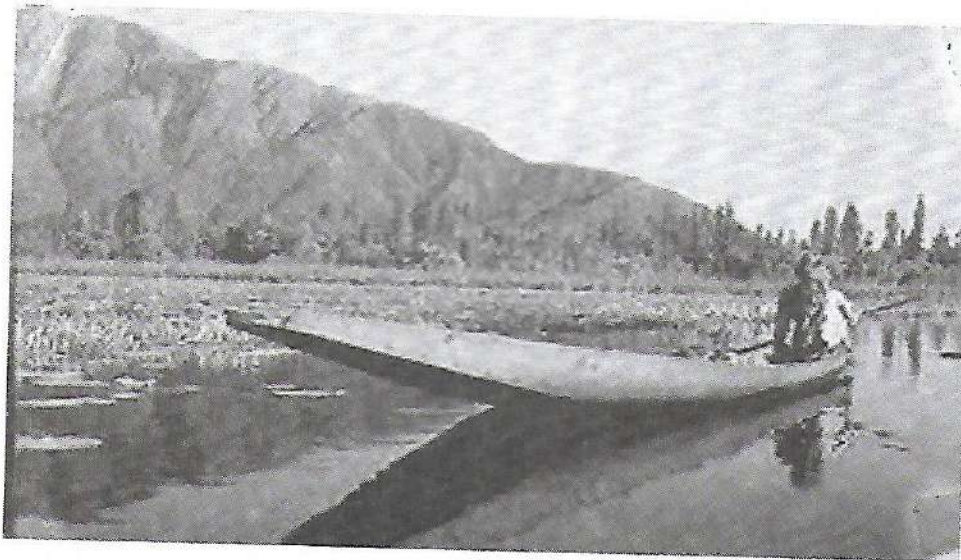
The need and role at that time was mostly to create a platform for social connect. But in 1990s and specially after the mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the valley, the role of the *Sabha* changed from the platform of social connect to not only providing help in rehabilitation of the internally displaced people but also the preservation of

culture, art, language, etc. I am not touching upon the subject of pain, anguish or suffering caused because of this and I leave that to your imagination.

I am sure you all are aware that Kashmir issue has been and is one of the areas of major concern in India and also in the whole of South Asia. Therefore, it is topical to have today's discussion on the theme *25<sup>+</sup> years post exodus of Kashmiri Pandits, the way forward for Kashmir.*

It is for the first time that Kolkata *Sabha* has decided to honour our senior *biradari* members who have over the years selflessly served as office bearers of the Sabha.

I am pleased to announce that the *Sabha* has decided to honour the following *biradari* members for their lifetime contributions – Mr. A. K. Dhar, Dr. B. K. Moza, Mr. B. M. Misri, Mr. B. L. ~~Raina~~, Dr. Chaman Lal Kashkari, Mr. P.K. Bhan, Shri P. L. Dhar, Mr. P. N. Tikku, Mr. M. K. Ogra and Smt. Niva Kaul. Some of the awardees are not now in Kolkata and we shall reach the awards to them. However, we are fortunate enough to have with us today some of those stalwarts who have also been the founding members of the *Sabha*. We would like to start our program by taking blessings and the awards will be presented at the end of the program. It is a matter of great honour for me to welcome you all.



# LIFE TIME CONTRIBUTION AWARDEES



*Mr. M.K. Ogra*



*Dr. B.K. Moza*



*Mr. P.L. Dhar*



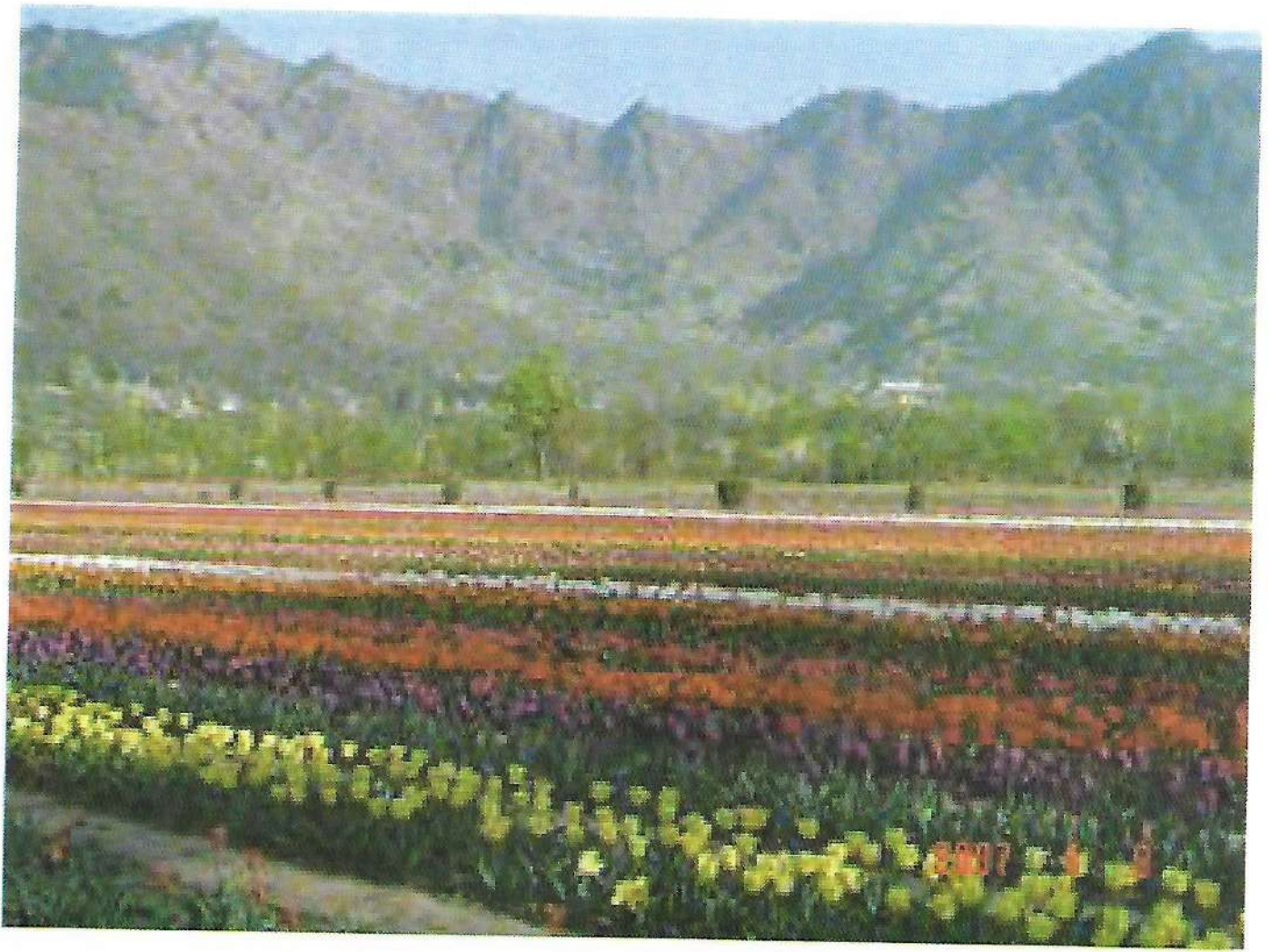
*Mrs. Niva Kaul*



*Mr. B.M. Misri*



*Mr. P.K. Bhan*



## Address by Mr. Ashok Dhar, Convener

A very good morning to all of you!

Let me first introduce the panel comprising the distinguished panelists that we have on the dias.

We have in chair Justice Sri Chittatosh Mookherjee, former Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court and Bombay High Court. Thank you sir for agreeing to chair the discussion and guide us especially on the legal issues that may emerge out of today's discussion.

Next to him is Professor Saugata Roy who needs no introduction. He is a Member of Parliament who has spoken

about Kashmir issues many times. 25 years ago when our *Sabha* organised a panel discussion on "Is Kashmir a threat to India's national integration and secularism?", he happened to be one of the panelists and coincidentally I was the convener of that discussion as well. Thank you sir for your kind presence this time too.

Then we have Lieutenant General John Ranjan Mukherjee - former GOC, 15 Corps at Kashmir who has seen real exchange in J and K. We thank you General Mukherjee and we are sure that your ground level experiences will enlighten us.

To the right of Justice Mookherjee is Dr. Manoj Joshi, Distinguished Fellow, ORF. He is

also the contributing Editor of Mail Today. He has been seen regularly on known television debates in CNN and others TV channels. As a veteran journalist he has written two books on Kashmir namely, *The History Retold* and *The Lost Rebellion* and many articles as well. Sir, your deep insight of events in post 1947 will help us to put the issue in context.

Regrettably Professor Amitabh Mattoo who was supposed to travel in the same flights with Dr. Joshi yesterday, was summoned by Mehboobaji for consultation to Srinagar. You are probably aware that new government is yet to be sworn in J and K following the sad demise of Mufti *Saheb*. Amitabhji has sent his deepest apology and asked me to convey the same to you.

Sitting next to Dr Manoj Joshi is Professor Kingshuk Chatterjee of University of Calcutta, a scholar of very high repute with special focus on Islamic studies. We warmly

welcome you Professor Chatterjee.

And sitting on the extreme right is Dr. B.K. Moza, an eminent scholar and researcher. He has been the past president of *Kashmir Sabha* and also the editor of *Vitasta*, the annual publication of *Kashmir Sabha*, Kolkata and has covered many issues including Kashmiri Pandits and Kashmir. Now, let me say a few words about the theme of today's discussion.

Kashmir is one of the oldest unresolved disputes between India and Pakistan which has threatened peace and security



in South Asia. Post 1990s, the situation has taken an uglier turn, especially after the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits en masse took place on 19 January 1990.

The night of 19 January 1990 will remain etched in the memory of every Kashmiri Pandit who lived in the valley at that time, when about 3 lakh people fled for fear of persecution outside Kashmir. Thousands are still struggling to survive in the camps in outskirts of Jammu. Besides, thousands and thousands of peace-loving people of all religions and communities lost their lives and property. We deeply mourn the loss of our brother and those who died fighting militancy.

It is in this backdrop we shall discuss today how we could pave the way for a satisfactory resolution of dispute in Kashmir. How we can contribute to creating an environment for a progressive, prosperous and peaceful Kashmir where Kashmiri Pandits too can return to their home with safety, security, dignity and honour?



There are a host of concerns but let me flag six key issues for deliberation by the esteemed panelists:

1. Various formulations have been tossed in the last decade for settling the Kashmir dispute. In fact people and some recent books (I mean those of you who have read Kasuri's book) indicate that both countries – India and Pakistan have more or less agreed on the contours of what is agreeable and what is not. One of the often cited solutions is conversion of LOC (Line of Control) to international border with some adjustments and some sort of self rule for both sides of Kashmir respecting sovereignty of India and Pakistan. In fact, a former Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir has recently spoken somewhat on similar lines. However, nobody from the Governments is willing to state it on record in public. Hence the first issue is: in what form and substance does the panel foresee a solution emerging for the resolution of the dispute?
2. Article 370, is a special article for Jammu & Kashmir in our constitution, which has remained debated. Hence, the issue is: should the temporary provision become permanent or be abrogated?
3. Post 1953, various state laws have been diluted and central laws are made applicable to the state. There has been a demand for abrogation of amendments carried out after 1953. While some people demand full integration, others demand autonomy or self-rule. Hence, the third issue is: where and how does one get a good balance?
4. Many theories have been spread by vested interests on how militancy gained ground in Kashmir and why Kashmiri Pandits left. It is necessary to have a closer view based on proper investigation and not propaganda. Hence, the fourth issue is: is it not time that a Truth and Reconciliation Commission is established to ascertain reason for the exodus, to

understand how militancy took its roots in the valley and suggest steps to avoid the same for future generations? In case of Rwanda, South Africa I have seen that such commission actually has helped to heal the wounds of people in conflict zones.

5. Though India is not a signatory, but it is important here to mention the 1951 UN Convention, where it has been stated that a refugee is a person who is forced to live outside his habitual residence for reason of fear of being persecuted for his race, religion or social grouping. Kashmiri Pandits had to flee because of

a fear and threat of persecution and lack of protection by the state. As they did not cross the international boundary of India but opted to stay within the country, they are entitled to be treated as Internally Displaced People (IDPs). Hence, the fifth issue is: should the government of India not recognise the Kashmiri Pandits as internally displaced people and be morally right and not take the shelter for legal sanction?

No lasting solution is possible for Kashmir without including Kashmiri Pandits in the dialogue. Kashmiri Pandits will always remain a minority in the valley. The issue is: Why should Kashmiri Pandits not be accorded minority status in line with the reverse minority principle?

6. Kashmir has been the cradle of Sufism, Shaivism and Buddhism. What we commonly call in Kashmir as *Kashmiriyat*. However, for past 25 years, we have witnessed the advent of fundamentalism and radical Islam. It is therefore time for the government and civil society to bring all moderate, secular and progressive forces together to pave the way for a prosperous and progressive Kashmir. Hence the sixth and the last issue is: how can this be achieved?

Ladies and gentlemen Kolkata is the intellectual capital of India and I believe so too. Therefore, we hope intellectuals in the panel will share thoughts to shape the way forward for peaceful Kashmir. We pray for peace and prosperity for the 3 regions of Kashmir, especially Jammu and Ladakh. I hope that we can make a new thoughtful beginning in this New Year.

Lastly, I see some of the eminent citizens of Kolkata here. I would like to recognize Gen. Shankar Roy Chaudhury, former army Chief; Sri Krishnan Srinivasan, Former Foreign Secretary, and many others. I hope we have a good Q & A session as well.

With these words, Sir, I hand over the floor to you.

## Opening Address by Justice Chittatosh Mookherjee, Former Chief Justice, Calcutta High Court and Bombay High Court

Good morning everybody!

Now the meeting is set for the discussion which has many dimensions - whether it is political, international or as Mr Ashok Dhar has framed his 6 specific questions and more than anything else, a human problem to be solved both for the benefit and the welfare of the people of the valley and also for the world. I look forward for the fruitful discussion by the distinguished panelists and also distinguished persons on the floor. May I now request our first speaker Mr. Saugata Roy, a Member of the Lok Sabha to initiate the discussion.



## Address by Prof. Saugata Roy, Member of Parliament

Justice Chittatosh Mookherjee, distinguished members of the panel, distinguished audience ladies and gentlemen!

I am thankful to Mr. Ashok Dhar for having called me to this panel discussion. I have come here with no special knowledge on Jammu & Kashmir. In fact, I was looking forward to listening to Mr. Mattoo and Mr. Hangloo - both of whom are Kashmiri Pandits. But unfortunately they could not turn up.



It will be good if you could have a proper view of the Kashmiri Pandits in this discussion as I said I neither lived for any long period of time in Kashmir nor I claim to be an expert in Kashmiri issues. But as a practicing politician, Kashmir is an issue which comes up in Parliament every now and then. And I have had occasion to participate in the same. I just keep few of the points during my presentation.

The discussion today is on Kashmiri Pandits and the way forward. Now I would like to inform you that the Lok Sabha in its last session has passed a resolution for the rehabilitation of the Kashmiri Pandits in Kashmir Valley. The resolution was moved by a BJP member who spoke on the resolution supporting the same. So there exists a resolution of the Lok Sabha asking for resettlement of Kashmiri Pandits in the Kashmir Valley.

Earlier on the 'calling attention motion' moved strangely by a Telangana Rashtriya Samiti

member, the Government had replied that it has seized the matter and has taken steps to re-establish and rehabilitate Kashmiri Pandits in the valley. But the fact remains that the ruling party at the centre which has been very vocal earlier in highlighting the matter of the Kashmiri Pandits, has not been that vocal or articulate or proactive in settling this problem.

Here I shall briefly touch on why it might have been so and I shall not touch on the whole aspects of the Kashmir issue. I shall just give my brief views on what had happened in Kashmir and why it happened. To me it appears after studying the history of Kashmir post 1947 that we in India - the Government and the people - have made many mistakes vis-à-vis Jammu and Kashmir which has led to the present impasse.

The first of course was taking the Kashmir issue to the UN.

Secondly, the dismissal of Sheikh Abdullah's Government and his arrest in 1953. The process of reconciliation started after 22 years when Sheikh Abdullah was brought back from detention. He was the only big leader in Kashmir. After Sheikh Abdullah's demise we again made the mistake of having a rigged election in 1987.

Many people say that the rigged election of 1987 was a landmark event when the Kashmiri youth were mobilized slowly towards terrorism by the Muslim United front.

Also I want to remind you of the mistake we made in relation to release of Rubaiya, the daughter of then Union Home Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed (who left us recently). This incident gave the first push to insurgency in the state. So, 1990 is the crucial year after Rubaiya's kidnapping and the subsequent release of the terrorists. I must remind you that the group responsible for kidnapping was not a pro Pakistani group but was Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) led by Yaseem Malik, who is mainly demanding independence for Kashmir. Slowly the movement gained momentum with liberal doses of help from Pakistan.

Again we remember the involvement of Mast Gul and the Mujahideens in Kashmir when Sharar e Sharif was destroyed. Another major mistake was made when after the death of Farooq the police fired on innocent people. At that time Jagmohan was the Governor who wrote a book 'My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir'.

These series of mistakes made over a period of time in Jammu & Kashmir has led to the present stalemate situation.

Now I have been to Pakistan several times, talked with counterparts including the present Prime Minister Nawab Sheikh. If you talk to Pakistanis they will host you, feed you but at the end of all that we will say that we have this problem ... why don't you improve trade? Why don't solve the railway connection between Munabao and Khokhrapar? What about the bus route to Muzaffarabad? What about sending Indian team to Pakistan? All these are not problems. The main problem is the unfinished business of partition that is Kashmir.

At least Pakistani establishment haven't accepted the fact that Jammu and Kashmir is not their part. If you go to Islamabad you will find there are road marks pointing to 'Muzaffarabad - Baramulla - Srinagar Road'. They believe that someday they will merge that way. I told them that as long as the Indian Army is there Kashmir can never be yours and no government ever in India can afford to give away the Kashmir Valley. There is 7.5 lakh troops placed only in Kashmir out of total 13 lakh.

We can recall here the agreement by which the line of control becomes the International border. You may ask for Azad Kashmir or Gilgit accepting military interventions but in reality it is not possible as India and Pakistan have now become two nuclear powers. Pakistan cannot hope to get back the Kashmir Valley as it is now. So what is possible is a seamless border where people and goods will be able to travel.

Now these are matters of high diplomacy, high politics. Coming back to the question of Kashmiri Pandits I do feel we need to send back the Kashmiri Pandits to the valley.

Now what I have felt in this matter is that the Government is hesitant. 500 crores were allotted in the budget for rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits. There are 5 lakh Kashmiri Pandits outside the valley and about three and half lakh Kashmiri Pandits are staying in the refugee camps in Jammu while one and half lakh are located in



Delhi. Government gives them some help though officially they have not been declared as internally displaced refugees. But it is absolutely necessary to put them back in the valley.

Now the whole question is when the Pandits were in the valley they were dispersed in different places of the valley. Today the Pandits may feel that if they are similarly dispersed there might be attacks on them and thereby security might become a problem. So there have been discussions that whether we could build the colonies exclusively for Kashmiri Pandits to deal with this problem.

So far as the rehabilitation of the Kashmir pundits is concerned my feeling is that the BJP or the Central Government have not received a clear signal from Mufti Mohammad Sayeed to start the process of rehabilitation. Mufti was a little *hatkay* from the Abdullahs. Mufti was always for giving a healing touch to the Kashmiris, to the Kashmiri youth who have been badly treated during this period of militancy. You don't have to see the film Haider to realise the trauma and anguish of the youth. Therefore healing touch is necessary.

It is a commitment of the Government of India that we must rehabilitate the Kashmiri Pandits and I strongly believe that this process should start immediately.

Now that Mufti is no more, Mehbooba is all set to redefine the relationship between BJP and her own party. She probably prefers to keep her cards close to her chest. In this scenario whether the people would overthrow her regime, is another issue altogether.

My heart goes out to the Kashmiri Pandits. They have been the best people in the country. They have occupied top positions in bureaucracy, corporate world and the best



example has been Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The condition that they have is very sub-human, sub-standard. Now in independent India we cannot really let a section of the people be subject to ethnic cleansing. As a civilized country we have a responsibility to take care of them and stand against that discrimination.

So, I am sure there are better experts on Kashmir than I am. I am only lay man, a practicing politician who gave a conclusive fact. I haven't even discussed with my party as to what their views will be. But I do believe that this problem calls for urgent solution and it must undo the mistakes of the past and start a new chapter in the Kashmir Valley.

Thank you!



**Justice Chittatosh Mookherjee:** Thank you Professor Roy! You have set out the contours of the problem. Any questions to be asked to Professor Roy?

### Question and Answer Session

**Audience:** Why did Mr Roy use the word "azad kashmir"? Should he reconsider using the word as POK instead?

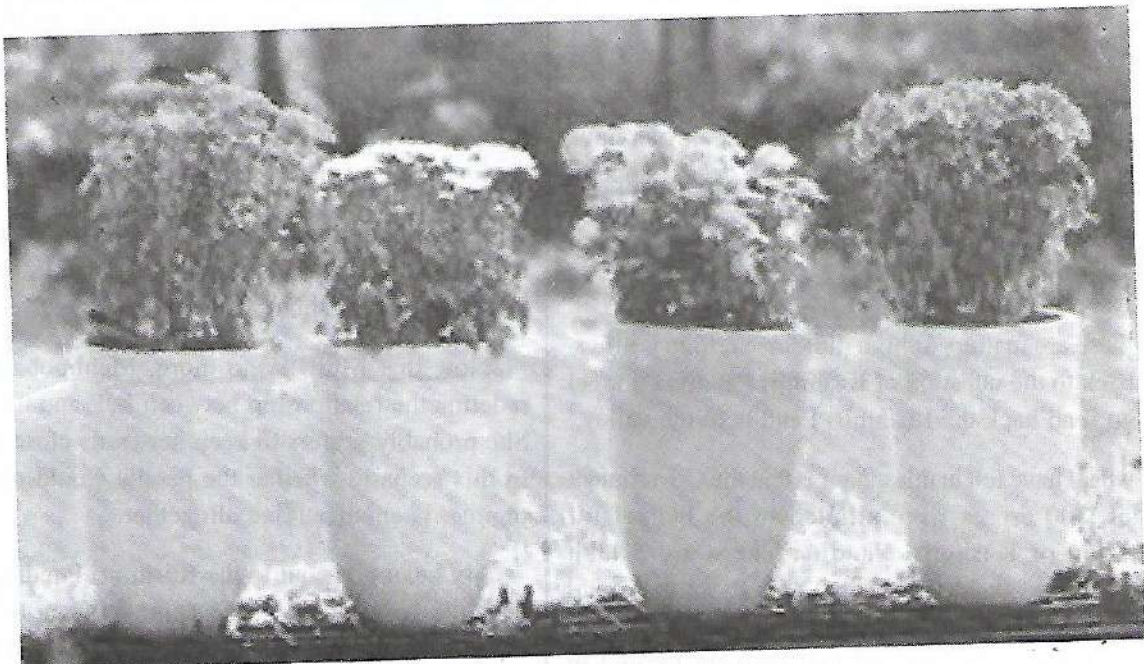
**Mr. Roy:** It can be POK ~

**Audience:** The entire plan which came probably under Mr Mufti to provide 50 acres of land failed. It was calculated that as much as 93 Kashmiri Pandits will be accommodated into a square feet area. what a crude joke !.

**Justice Chittatosh Mookherjee:** It is not a question rather a comment

**Audience:** Is it not possible for all the political parties of our country to take a united stand? I think that it will pave the way or a strong position vis-à-vis Kashmiri Pandits in kashmir.

**Reply from Mr. Roy:** It is possible, if the ruling party takes a lead. In case of Kashmiri Pandits there is no difference of opinion of non political or political parties.



## Address by Lt. Gen. John Ranjan Mukherjee, Former GOC, 15 Corps, J&K

Justice Mookherjee, the Chair and august audience at this discussion!

I have been in Kashmir during troubled times and what I will say here is from my heart. I have done a fair amount of research on what I am going to talk about.

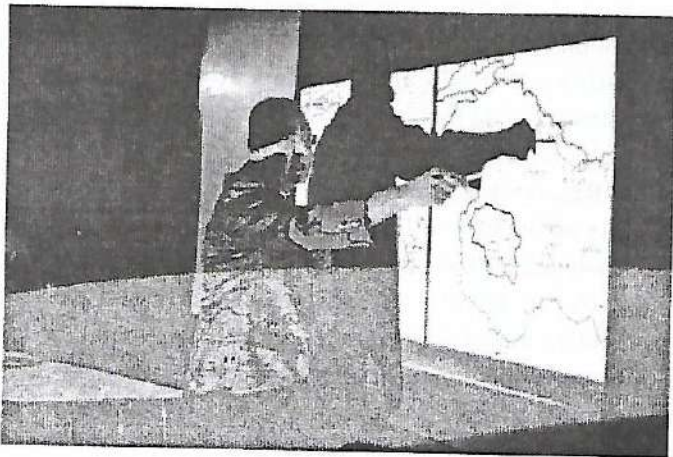
If you see the map (referring to the map on the slide) in front of you, you got various regions of Kashmir: Pakistan occupied Kashmir, Azad Kashmir, etc. This was further divided into two parts- the lower part been POK and upper parts we know as the northern areas. This area is known as the Shaksgam Valley which Pakistan has illegally ceded to China.

(Furthering referring to maps) Jammu in the South and Kashmir over here and across is the great Himalayan ranges, Ladakh and Aksai Chin that illegally occupied by China. When you refer to Kashmir you mean the Kashmir valley only without considering places like Ladakh, Aksai Chin, etc. These areas are more commonly identified as J&K. From this perspective, history has been so that the part often overrides the whole, ignoring issues relating to the whole.

When I was up in Kashmir I did a fair amount of reading and my Bible was Kalhana's *Rajtarangini*. (Reading the following extract from *Rajtarangini*): "The country may be conquered by the forces of spiritual merit but not by the force of soldiers." - Kalhana describes Kashmir as a country which delighted in insurrection in those days. According

to J.L. Nehru, the Muslim majority in Kashmir was not a result of conquest by Muslim ruler. It was rather the outcome of insurrection against the last Hindu rule which was spearheaded by a Muslim revolutionary. Kashmir has in fact been a melting point of many religions: alternating among Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam.

One would find on a closer reading that Kashmir had a history of insurrection. The interesting part is that the more you read *RajTarangini*, you come to know exactly the same areas which used to be the sanctuary of security and peace in those days continue to be the same areas which are abode of peace and security even today. Since partition, Pakistan has often made military transgression into the valley disguised as civilian or tribal people in order to grab Kashmir. Tracing back to Sougata Roy's idea of errors made in the beginning of Kashmir as a new state of India, I shall add another error. This error was one related to decision by the then government in not letting army have a free hand to neutralize Pakistani forces in the valley. I am confident in case of a free hand- history and geography of Kashmir would have been different and no part of it had to be siphoned off as it has been after Independence. It was stopped and instead the issues taken to the issues of UN. This would in turn, could prevent Kashmir issue from being internationalized by raising it in UN by Pakistan. When 1971 took place the Pakistan army decided that they would never forgive India for that defeat. So throughout whatever war has taken place and strife that has been created are by the Pakistani army not the Pakistani people. Therefore, the



Kashmir issue is not a problem that is limited to ambiguity of territories, contestation of histories but also expands to clash of dissenting philosophies and ideals.

In census 2011 Jammu constitute 26 % of the total area of the state of J & K and 45% of the population. In Jammu and Kashmir as per 2011 census, 66.3 % are the Hindus while 30% are the Muslims and out of the Muslims about 65% are the Shias. Of total Muslim population in Jammu, about 8-10% are ethnic Kashmiri Sunni Muslims. The majority of the agitating Muslims in Kashmir are that of the Sunni sect which constitutes a minority in the valley. Therefore, the agitating forces are not representing the voice of the major part of Kashmir. Again it is interesting to note that only 3-5% of the total population of Jammu is Kashmiri.



The terrorists are pooled from Pakistan which I have discovered during my interaction with the tribal people living in parts of J&K. I still believe that had a referendum been conducted in Kashmir, about 90% of people would have opted to be part of India.

In Kashmir 20% are Gujjar Bakarwals, and the other mountain tribes. About 10 to 15% are Hindu and Sikhs in Kashmir and this includes the Kashmiri Pandits. Although Kashmir occupies 16% of the area of J and K, it constitutes 52% of its population.

There is a London based independent survey company known as Mori. They did the first survey in 1999 and again in 2000. They repeated the same survey in 2007. The report revealed that out of 65-70% of Sunni Muslims of the Kashmir valley nearly 15-20% are pro India. In 2007 the figures were even better than before. The report estimated 5 to 10% of the total population as Pro Pakistan. 10 to 15% are pro independence, not indicated by Mori.

A greater autonomy to the citizens of Kashmir and good governance will bring to bear on the public opinion and would build a positive attitude of Kashmiri people towards Indian government. In J&K, the minority Kashmiri Sunni Muslim have obtained the seats of political power and are dictating terms for all, stated Gen. Mukherjee... As per the 1996, political delimitation, Kashmir has been given 46 seats, 37 seats to Jammu and 4 to Ladakh. And therefore it is these 46 seats which steer wheels the government there. Non Muslims were 28.4%, Hindu, 1.8 % Sikh, 1% Buddhist.

As far as POK is concerned, nobody wants to talk about its total population. Pakistan has never divulged the census figures for POK and the northern areas but by extrapolation from the British census results it is revealed that POK is about 3 and a half to 4 million population. Out of that, ethnic Kashmiri are only two and a half lakh which may have gone up to 3 lakh now. Only a tiny part is Kashmir. What about the rest? The rest is made up of mountain tribes, Gujjars, Bakarwal, Afghans resettled by Pakistan and the rest are almost 75% of resettled Punjabis. They have changed the demography. They have vandalised the whole of POK in the Northern areas. Why would the Kashmiri run away to Pakistan when he is ruling the roost in Kashmir? Pakistan calls all residents of POK Kashmiris whereas there are mainly Punjabi Muslims who today hold the reins of power.

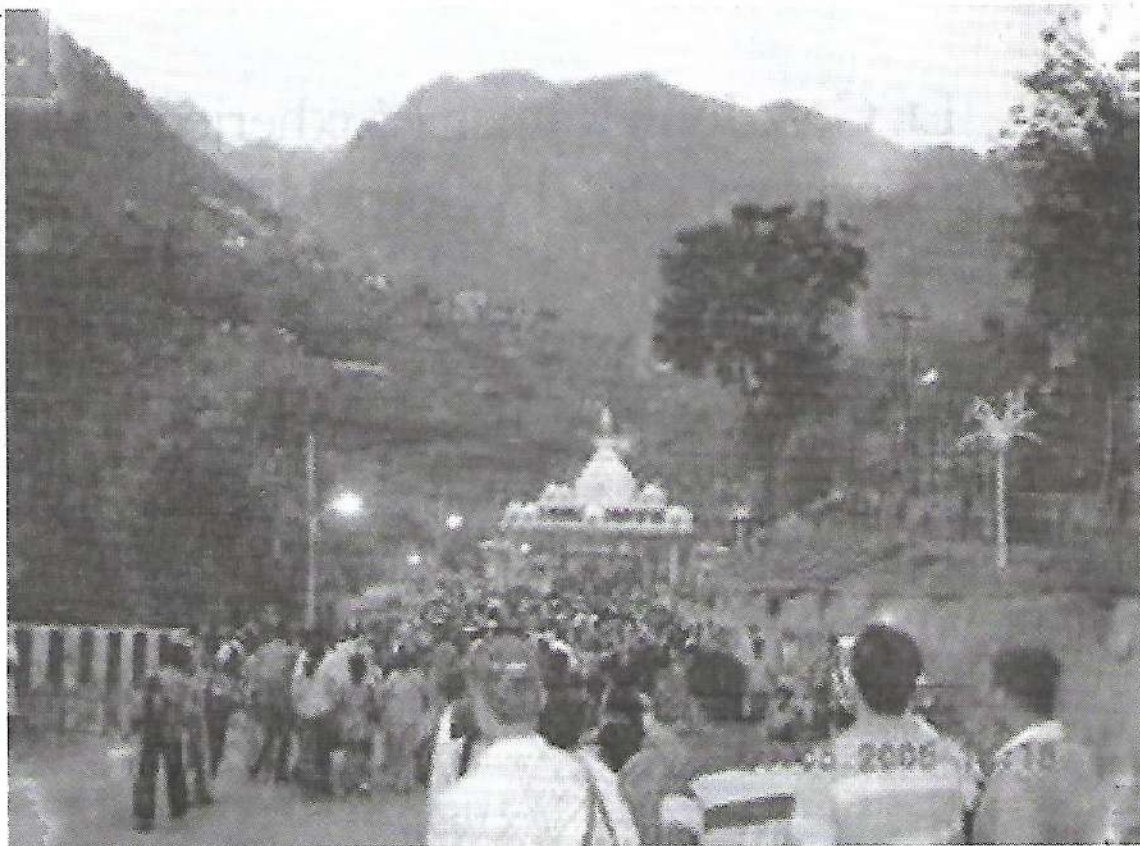
To me not only an overriding majority of Kashmiris in India support the Indian government but a large part of population in POK whose nationality and democratic status are in question, are more than willing to toe the Indian line.

Before I conclude let me say few words on what could be way forward, Gen. Mukherjee made several suggestions. A) Enforce secularism; fundamentalism should be outlawed totally and cracked down upon. Good governance has no problem fighting over elections. B) India has to be economically strong in order to solve Kashmir issue. Resolving Kashmir issue or shifting the Kashmiri Pandits up in the valley is only a ministerial part of the resolution of the problem, not the whole problem. C) India has to ensure its military strength and create capabilities in order to enforce her will. D) India has to stop being a soft state. As long as India is a soft state she can't take a decision, not even the decision to move the

Kashmiri Pandits back. Ensure a more effective counter terrorism force. E) India has to deal more effectively with China. Dr. Manoj Joshi has written excellent treatises on how we should deal with China. If China stops supporting Pakistan resolving Kashmir issue will be easier. F) The Srinagar government irrespective of whichever party in power, be it the National Conference or PDP, has been trying to change the demography of Jammu and Ladakh. That has to stop. G) India needs to clamp down on the separatists. Gilani should have been locked up and the key thrown away long ago. H) Reverse the ethnic cleansing. If the Chinese can do it in Tibet and the Pakistanis can do it in POK and in northern areas, why will India not have the guts to do it? Of course it needs the amendment of article 370. There were governments that have had the absolute majority in the country so that they could have done what they wanted to. They failed due to lack of political will to do so. The Kashmiri Pandits have to go back to the valley. They have to find a way where they

will be comfortable and can settle.

Hence, article 370 needs to be re-examined and the mountain tribes need to be looked after. The most neglected parts of people in Jammu and Kashmir are the mountain tribes, the Gujjars, the Bakarwars, the Baltis and a whole lot of them. They will vote for India 100%; they are mostly pro-India. Yet they are not supported by the Srinagar government. One therefore, needs to re-examine Sir O.N Dixon, Ayub Khan, Nehru, Musharaf and Noorani options with an open mind. Part people have already talked about. Under the circumstances change of government is needed as the immediate step, the rest of the issues would follow. I admit the difficulty of getting back what was with Pakistan. Changing the demography is also important. Even if the issues take 50 years to get settled, they should still be resolved. One should strive to move towards toward a European Union type of solution.

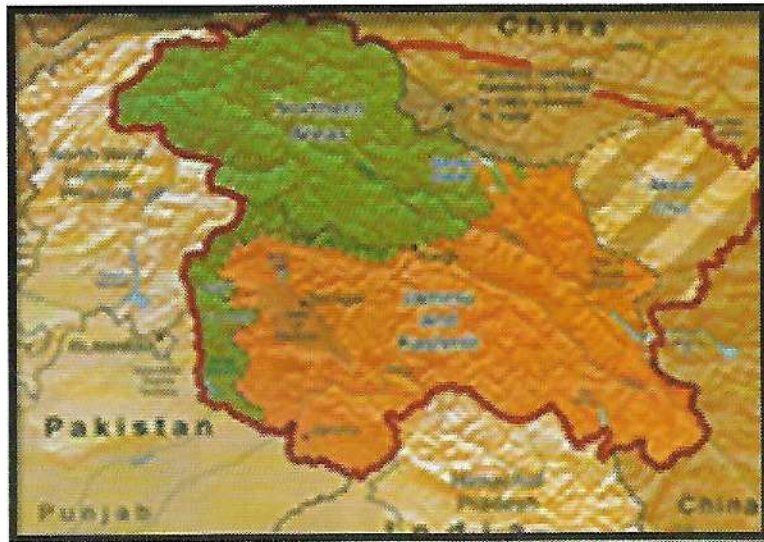


# **KASHMIR**

Power Point Presentation

By

Lt. Gen. John Ranjan Mukherjee  
Former GOC, 15 Corps, J&K



## Aspects Of Geography Regions

- Jammu, including part of Poonch and Bhaderwah (it originally had Jammu, Jasrota, Udhampur, Reasi, Mirpur districts)
- Kashmir (it originally had Kashmir North, South and Muzaffarabad districts.
- The Ladakh region, all with India including part of Baltistan.
- Today's Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) called Azad Kashmir by Pakistanis (a portion used to be part of Jammu region and the Northern in the Kashmir region)
- Northern Areas (NAs) of Gilgit, Skardu, part of Baltistan, the 'Frontier Ilaqas' – Puniyal, Ishkoman, Yasin, Kuh, Ghizar, Hunza, Nagar, Chilas; parts of the Internal Jagirs/Dependencies – part of Poonch, Bhaderwah, Chaneni - with Pakistan - semi autonomous

## Aspects Of History Related To The Problem

- ❖ 'The country may be conquered by the force of spiritual merit but not by the force of soldiers. The inhabitants are afraid only of the world beyond.' Kalhana -First Book I, Stanza 39, Rajatarangini'.
- ❖ Kalhana describes Kashmir as, 'A country, which delighted in insurrection', 'In that land fond of rebellion', Book II, Stanza 1803 – 1805.
- ❖ 'Kashmir did not become Muslim by conquest, but by local insurrection and revolution headed by a Muslim official of the last Hindu Ruler of Kashmir, Queen Kota' – Nehru.
- ✓ Indo Aryans Dominance 800 Bc
- ✓ Belief – Pandavas Ruled Kashmir
- ✓ Emperor Asoka Conquered Kashmir 273 – 232 Bc
- ✓ Kashmir Then Became Predominantly Buddhist
- ✓ After Asoka Death Reverted To Hinduism

- ✓ Ad - Kushan King Kanishka - Buddhism
- ✓ Mirakula, White Hun Conquered Kashmir, Brought Back Hinduism - Insurrection
- ✓ King Lalitaditya, Hindu With Religious Tolerance
- ✓ Avantiraman & Jaisimha, Both Hindu Rulers
- ✓ Islam Entered Thru Sufi Saints Mid 13th Century
- ✓ 1339, Rinchina (Ladakhi) Seized Kashmir, Converted To Islam - Insurrection
- ✓ Sultan Sikander Forced Conversion To Islam, Ethnic Cleansing – Kashmir Became Muslim Predominant
- ✓ Zain Ul Abaddin - Religious Tolerance 1421 – 72
- ✓ 100 Yrs Of Insurrection
- ✓ Mughals - 1586 To 1752 – Peace, Tolerance & Stability
- ✓ Then Afghan Ahmed Shah Durrani In 1752 – Intolerance, Death, Ethnic Cleansing & Insurrection
- ✓ Conquered By Sikhs & Gulab Singh (Dogra) Rule From 1820. Gen Zorawar Singh Conquers Ladakh. British Make Gulab Singh Maharah Of Kashmir.
- ✓ Dogra Rule Under Brit Suzerainty Till Indep
- ✓ Despotic Rule – Muslims Disturbances From 1920s. Mc (Like MI - Mirwaiz) & Nc (Sheik) Formed
- ✓ Quit Kashmir Movement. Mc Aligned To Pak
- ✓ Pak Engineered Tribal Invasion
- ✓ 1947 - Maharajah Accedes To India – Ia Inducted
- ✓ 1947 -48 Operations
- ✓ Un Sponsored Cf – Case To Un
- ✓ Proposal For Withdrawal Of Troops & Plebiscite
- ✓ Pak Refused To Withdraw Pa & India Refused To Accept A Us Plebiscite Administrator
- ✓ Proposals Made Including Plebiscite For Entire State, Division, Including By Ayub Khan – Not Accepted By India. Sheikh Arrested
- ✓ 1965 – Jihad – Op Gibraltar
- ✓ 1966 – Al Fatah – Liquidated 1972
- ✓ 1968 – Release & Plebiscite Front – Unlawful
- ✓ 1970 – Jknlf Hijack Ia Plane To Lahore & Blow Up
- ✓ 1971 War – Pak Defeated. 1986 -87 Ussr Defeated
- ✓ Pokaran Blasts

- ✓ 1983 – Prep For Proxy War Starts
- ✓ 1986 – Proxy War Starts In Punjab
- ✓ 1988 – 89 – Starts In Kashmir & Ner – Ia Deployed
- ✓ 1990 /91 Exodus Kashmiri Pandits
- ✓ 37. 1993/94 - Controlled – Foreign Jehadis Inducted
- ✓ 38. 1996/97 – Under Cont. 1998 - Pokaran
- ✓ 39. 1999 – Kargil, Terrorism, Ethnic Cleansing Sikhs
- ✓ 40. 2001 – Parliament Attack – Op Parakram
- ✓ 41. 200i – 05 – Peace Under Musharaff
- ✓ 42. 2006 – Proxy War Restarts At Low Key – Govt At Loss As To What Next.

## Demography – J & K

### Population - 1.25 Cr (2011)

#### Jammu

#### 1. Jammu has 26% of area, and 45% of its population

- About 66.3 % are Hindu.
- About 30% are Muslim and of the Muslims, about 65% are Shias. Of Muslim population in Jammu, only about 8 – 10 % are ethnic Kashmiri Sunni Muslims (Rajouri, Bannihal), or about 3-5% of population of Jammu – 15 - 18% Muslims of J & K are from Jammu, the majority of them are anti Pakistan.
- About 4% are the other ethnic groups.

**2. Consequent to my interactions with the people I am firmly of the view that if it ever came to a referendum at least 90 % of population of Jammu Region would vote for being part of the Indian Union.**

#### Kashmir

- 20% are Gujjars/Bakkarwals/,mountain tribes

- 10 – 15 % Hindus and Sikhs (including about 460000 Kashmiri Pandits and Sikhs forced out of the Valley)
- 5% Shias,
- 1% others
- 65 - 70% Kashmiri Sunni Muslims (Valley floor).
- Kashmir has 16% of the area of J & K, but 52% of its population. Of 65 – 70 % Kashmir Valley Sunni Muslims -
- 15 - 20% are pro India, (MORI survey 60%).
- 5 - 10% are pro Pakistan, (MORI survey 6 %).
- 10 - 15% pro independence, (not indicated by MORI)
- 55 - 65% are fence sitters (MORI survey is 33 %).
- As long as we give greater autonomy and govern J & K correctly, at least 70 to 80% would vote as part of India. (Mehbooba has earlier NOT been pro India)

#### Ladakh

- About 52 % Budhist
- About 45 % Muslim (majority Shia) – reportedly now increased dramatically
- About 3 % Others
- Total Indian J & K has breakup of 68 - 70 % Muslim - 13% are Shias, 14 % are Gujjars/Bakkarwals, 15 % are from Jammu and non Kashmiri –none of this 42% have any love for Pak. Balance are Kashmiri Sunni Muslims dominating politics of J & K and dictate terms to balance (1996 political delimitation gives Kashmir 46 seats against 37 seats to Jammu and 4 to Ladakh). Non-Muslims form -
- 28.4 % Hindu.
- 1.87% Sikh.
- 0.9 % Budhist.
- Balance others.

When one examines the overall ethnic linkages and population of entire J & K now with India comprehensively, I have no doubt that **India has backing of at least 70 – 80%** of the total population. There may be some who opt in favour of independence and some others who may opt



to join Pakistan, and that also primarily from the Kashmir Valley. I state this after a long period of inter action with the people of the region during extremely troubled times. If one were to analyse these facts region wise, in all probability we would find about **95% of Jammu, 70 to 80% of Kashmir and 99% of Ladakh being in favour of continuing in the Indian Union.**

## POK

- Ethnic Kashmiris not more than 2.0 – 2.5 lakhs.
- Mountain tribes (Gujjars/Bakkarwals) 3.0 lakhs.
- Afghans resettled by Pakistan about 3 - 4 lakhs.
- Balance - majority of Punjabis descent including Mirpuris & Pakistani Army ex-servicemen.
- Pakistan claims she has 0.8 million Kashmiri refugees. Unlikely to be more than 10000 - 15000 Kashmiris, as Kashmir has always had Muslim majority - refugees are Jammu Punjabis who fled during partition.
- Pakistan calls all residents of POK, Kashmiris, whereas they are mainly Punjabi Muslims who today hold the reigns of power.
- It is these fake Kashmiris that Pak demands, must decide the fate of Kashmir! Only about 5 - 10 % of POK has any right to have a say in issues pertaining to J & K.

## NAs

- Whilst no there are no demographic details given by Pakistan, by extrapolation from British 1946 census, it is unlikely the indigenous ethnic population is more than 50%.
- Assuming all media reports and feedback from people coming to India from this region (including terrorists) to be at least partially correct, Pakistan is engineering a demographic change resettling Afghans and Pakistani Army in these areas in large numbers – to the tune of 50% of the total population figures.
- The ethnic population in this region is the mountain tribes who are Shias/Ishmaeli/Nurbakshi religious denominations and consists of the Balti, Beda, Boto, Brokpa, Shin, Yashkun, Pathan, Mongol, Tadjik, Turk, Sippi, Gujjars, Bakkarwals, Paharis, Drokpa, Dard, Changpa, Garra, Mon, Purigpa, Gaddi, a few

Kashmiri and some other minority ethnic groups.

## Overall Analysis

Pakistan is currently living in a world of fantasy, as not less than 80 – 90% of the population in Indian J & K and probably a large part of the indigenous people of Pakistani held J & K, stand staunchly behind India irrespective of their grievances over issues of the pattern of Indian governance. Pakistan realizes this very well and hence now rules out the holding of a plebiscite to obtain the will of the people of J & K.

## The Way Forward

- Secularism
- Prohibit Fundamentalism In All Religions
- Good Governance & No Fudging Elections
- Make Country Economically Strong
- Resolving Kashmir Not The End To Pak Aims
- Ensure Mil Strength & Create Capabilities
- Stop Being A Soft State – Tit For Tat Essential
- Ensure A More Effective Ct Force
- Befriend Other Neighbors & China
- Block Current Efforts At Demographic Change
- Clamp Down On Separatists – Gilani & Party
- Reverse The Ethnic Cleansing & Try To Follow Chinese & Pak Example
- Look After The Mountain Tribes – Friends
- Re-Examine Art 370
- Continue Talks From Position Of Strength
- Rexamine The Sir Owen Dixon, Ayub Khan, Nehru & Musharraf, Noorani Options With An Open Mind To Find A Solution. Even Consider A Referendum On The Indian Side & Put Pak On Back Foot. Look At Soft Borders After The Above. More Cbms & People To People Contact Essential.
- Ultimately Try To Work Towards A European Union Type Of Solution.

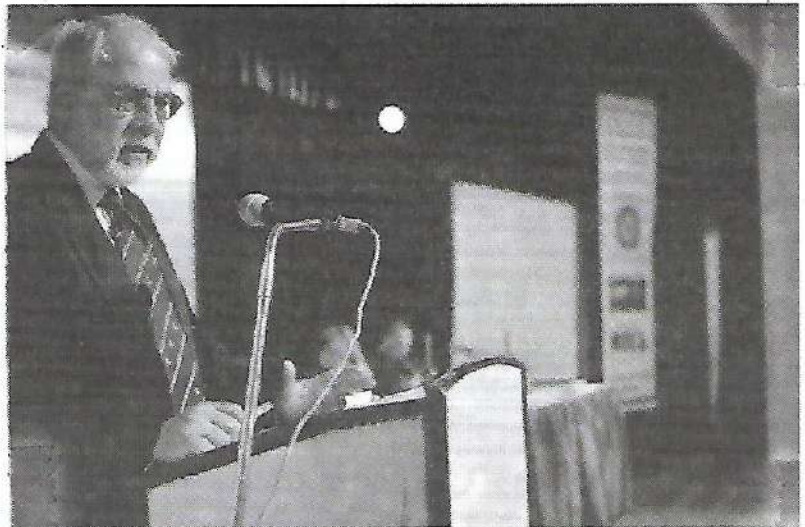
## Address by Dr. Manoj Joshi, Senior Journalist and Distinguished Fellow, ORF, New Delhi

Thank you Justice Chittatosh Mukherjee, Mr. Dhar, the Kashmiri *Sabha* for having me here to speak on this subject on which I have devoted considerable amount of time in the past. It is difficult to divorce Kashmir problem meaning what is happening today from the historical precedence. But as Gen. Mukherjee pointed out the sub regions of Kashmir indicate the complexity of the issue. Besides sub regions was the question of history. After all Kashmir was an independent state, a large Independence State, bordered both by Pakistan and India.

The British in their typical style partitioned what is British India i.e., the province of Punjab, the province of Bengal. They left the issue of States to the States themselves and said that the ruler had the ultimate right to decide who they could choose to go with. However, this rule was verbal. There was an Independence of India Act which was formed by the British Parliament but that act did not contain any provisions with regard to the states and it was truly left to the rulers to decide. Pakistan argued that Kashmir was populated by Muslim and it should come to Pakistan. Pakistan's arguments were factually incorrect because of the simple reason that in 1947 even Jinnah did not see it that way. Otherwise there is no reason to accept the accession of Junagarh which is Hindu majority state in Pakistan, had he believed the states should be divided along communal lines.

So the Pakistanis created the myth subsequently that somehow the partition was on religious lines. V. P. Menon brings out the efforts that were made by Jinnah to seek the accession of Jodhpur to Pakistan which remained unfulfilled.

The origin of this dispute so far as Pakistan is concerned is very messy. The fact of the matter was that Mr Jinnah and Liyaqat Ali Khan decided that they were going to grab the state by force. They had made plans for this contingency and there exist enough evidence to show Jinnah and Liyaqat Ali Khan were aware of this plan. However, in the end Pakistan failed because the Indian Army landed



up there and pushed Pakistani elements out.

Then of course comes the question as to why was the army stopped when it was stopped? To answer this pertinent question, I would argue that this was an act of political foresight by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru stopped the Army along the areas beyond which there would be no significant concentrations of Kashmiri Muslim population. This was a prudent decision according to me. It would be so difficult to manage Kashmir, Gilgit – Baltistan, had it been a part of India. Had otherwise been the case today, there would be a Muslim Prime Minister, the politics of this big Indian Union would be completely skewed in the direction of Islamism. Partition of Kashmir was regretful but looking back from today at what is happening in the Islamic state of Pakistan, perhaps partition has come out for good.

Militancy was deeply planned by Pakistan. The whole idea of putting Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) in the forefront was a very skilful plan. They realised that if they had put the Hijbul Mujahideens and Islamic groups forward then the militant group will not be supported. Keeping JKLF in the front, the *Mujahideens* pursued their own agenda.

However in Kashmir, there still exists support for independent Kashmir. This was evident and led to all

sorts of mistakes: releasing of JKLF leaders and Rubaiya's kidnapping. Looking at the entire gamut of issues, the situation of the Kashmiri Pandits at that time It was not as though on one day there were massive massacres. It was not like 5, 10 or 20 people were killed. It was that individuals living in Srinagar were targeted and killed. This generated enormous amount of fear in the minds of the other Kashmiri Pandits. Many of them were killed by criminal elements; it was not as though there was some movement or something behind it. However, insecurities developed since a large number of Kashmiri Pandits were killed in certain localities.



Hence, a large number of Kashmiri Pandits left. The date January 19th is very significant because that is also the date of the so-called Gawkadal massacre. That was the date when Indian State lost control of Kashmir. Mobs in the valley wrongfully considered that to be the dawn of *azadi* (independence). There were processions and slogans in favour of their demands.

Unfortunately Governor Jagmohan has often been blamed for this exodus. Governor Jagmohan cannot be solely blamed for what happened. Later he tried to help people if they could go back to Kashmir, by giving them back their lost government jobs. But, people left because they were scared of persecution. So it would be incorrect to blame Jagmohan.

I do not endorse the idea of settling the Kashmiri Pandits in ghettos in the valley where isolated areas are created and call it the Pandit colony. They can't be called smart cities because the valley is too small to host half a dozen citizens. A better term would be smart localities or towns. These smart towns should be opened up for everyone. The Pandits should be given space there but if other people want

to live in that area, they should also be welcome to live there. All said and done, Pandits are not the only refugees. There are other Kashmiri Muslim refugees as well.

That was when many of the Kashmiri Muslims middle class actually began to see the rest of India. They settled in Bangalore, Delhi and the other cities of India. It was a difficult period for all of the Kashmiri's because suddenly they were in a different group. They saw a social uprising, an uprising of the Kashmiri Muslims who were from the underclass, as it were.

But these people were crushed very soon. After 1990, came the more difficult period. Pakistanis got involved with the Hijbul Mujahideen who was then crushed by 1993. In 1993 Yasin Malik and other such people decided that they were Gandhians. Then the *Huriyats* came in the forefront. Thereafter came the phase when Pakistan realised 'yeh Kashmirion ke bas ka nahi hai'. Pakistan felt that it needed to send groups such as *Lashkar-e-Toiba*, *Jaish e-Mohammad*, and many such groups that started infiltrating in Kashmir. Even today the support for insurgency comes from Pakistan.

Pakistan simply lacks any credible interest in Kashmir. The only thing is that it has subsequently gone to the United Nations. The

United Nations Security Council resolutions exist. To that extent India needs to settle this with the Pakistanis.

Right from the time of Shimla Agreement the concept that the line of control be hardened into an international border had been announced. When the discussion was going on under the UPA Government Dr Manmohan Singh stated that there was no question of changing borders. As the Prime Minister of India he could not change any borders but he could soften the borders. The idea behind the 4 point formula which Musharraf had overstated a bit was that if under the Indus Water treaty all the waters of Kashmir that go through the Kashmir Valley are by treaty promised to Pakistan so why not also involve Pakistanis in the watershed management? Why not get the Pakistanis involved a little bit in tourism management? Why not have a special economic zone in the Jammu area; in the place between Sialkot and Jammu, an area can be created. But nowhere in this formula was the idea of joint political management spelt out, for the simple reason that joint political management is not possible between a state which does not allow the non Muslim to become the President of that state and the state which is a secular state which has

completely different governance system. The idea was joint management in selected areas and softening of the border that was the four point formula.

Coming to the China and Pakistan issue, the Chinese interest in Pakistan has increased rather than decreased. The China - Pakistan economic corridor was announced last year with the promise of 46 billion dollars worth of investments. Earlier the Chinese were looking at Pakistan as a means of containing India in South Asia. Now the Chinese are often looking at Pakistan as a possible spring board for their Indian Ocean and West Asian interest. So the Chinese commitments have deepened more than anything else.

The Chinese are serious about developing railway lines and roadways etc. The Chinese scholars whom Dr Joshi interviewed said that in Gilgit and Baltistan they are ensuring that the local state does not collapse. By their investments there, they are preventing the rise of *jihadism* there, because according to them it's very important for them to prevent *jihadism* from anywhere around their border from Xinjiang. For them Xinjiang and Tibet are very important as far as India and Pakistan are concerned. The Chinese are almost paranoid about the national territory of Xinjiang and Tibet. So when they look at Pakistan, they look at Afghanistan, they look at India; they are looking at it through filters which relate to their national security. And they make no bones about it.

A lot has been said about article 370. I have reservation to identify India as an unitary state. I strongly feel India is not a unitary state. India is not a subcontinent but a continent. It is a continent with the different ethno linguistic groups. Anyone who has the illusion of ruling the country by sitting in Delhi will make a mess of the country.

I believe in more autonomy for everyone. But then everyone including Kashmiris should also ask, whether it is feasible to have election commission nominated by the Abdullah government or to have a Election Commission sitting in Delhi. If there is an Election Commission sitting

in Srinagar then Abdullah would undoubtedly win all the elections.

In fact, one of the great successes of Indian democracy has been the performance of election commission. Booth capturing is as common in Bihar as in Kashmir.

So the point here is whether autonomy benefits us or not? Whether Supreme Court sitting in Delhi will deliver more unbiased justice than a Supreme Court in Srinagar? So these are the questions that a very young republic needs to debate.

Coming to the issue of *Kashmiriyat*, having witnessed *Sharar e sharif* being burnt down and the effort by the Pakistani Islamists to destroy the uniquely Kashmiri brand of Islam, many people thought that *Kashmiriyat* was finished. But still there is life in it because people have gone through fire and they realised what they have lost. And they are keen on retrieving it. Looking at the statistics between 1994 and 1999 the number of civilians killed in Jammu and Kashmir used to be about 1500. Then again it rose after 2001. Again the number peaked up to 1100 and 900 in 2001. But in the last 4 or 5 years it has come down to 15- 25. So the rate of violence is down but violence is not down due to security and the efficiency of the state. It has come down as the people have understood. Hence, when the militant comes the people provide information to the intelligence agencies because they are tired of violence.

So most urgent thing today is to address the Kashmir issue not from the security point of view but to address it politically. The need of the hour is political leaders who will go there to Kashmir and takes up the issues. The Jammu and Kashmir police is fit enough to do the job. This country has been expanding its forces at an exponential rate which is not a healthy sign. And then there is the PLA drastically cutting itself. While concluding the discussion I intend to point out that Kashmir urgently needs a political solution. That in turn, requires political maturity and leadership from the top level leadership, the Prime Minister himself and a direct engagement with Kashmiri politics.

Thank you!

## Address by Dr. B.K. Moza, Former President of Kashmir Sabha Kolkata and Former Editor of *Vitasta*

At the very outset let me clarify that I am not a political scientist, not a columnist, I am a natural scientist. I have no credentials to be on the dais. But I have a strong point that I am a Kashmiri Pandit and I want to tell you my own life history as in case history for what has happened to my community. Let me share my personal experiences, experiences of one who has put up with the alienation and persecution of the largely displaced community. The first thing I intend to say is that the dispute was hanging from 1947. In November 1989 Justice Ganjoo was murdered, The 1990 exodus saw many murdered. This was not the first exodus but the 7th one. Kashmir which was the abode of Kashmiri Pandits was historically created by Kashyap Muni.

The history of Kashmir reveals that we belong to that place, our roots are there. These roots are 5000 years old. Later many temples were broken, Hindus were killed and the result was large scale displacement and exodus. There was Kashmiri shaivism.



In 1947 the princely state of Kashmir became an integral part of India. There was a mass movement in Kashmir which was led by Sheikh Abdullah. It was the Quit India Movement. It was at that time as the distinguished speakers have pointed out there was British India and then there were the princely states. And Kashmir was the biggest princely state, J & K.

Maharaja Harish Singh was the ruler of Kashmir and the common man led by the Sheikh Abdullah joined at that time the quit Kashmir movement. Kashmiri Pandits also joined forces to bid a final farewell to British rulers as well as the indigenous ones in Kashmir to enjoy the fruits of democracy. They were democratic, and secular. Hence, they gave their might to the secular movement of Kashmir. This was the reason why Kashmir chose to be integrated with India.

I witnessed the war between Pakistan and India in 1947. It was a horrific experience for me as a student of class 8 who experienced how the army was taking over civilian control, how people were coming on the streets and how aeroplanes were moving, how many casualties happened, etc.

My sister was in the border town which was adjacent to the Line of Control. My brother-in-law was a doctor and had to leave that place. He left home wearing a pajama with his family with a sense of complete loss of security and honour. He left his homeland for Rajasthan and did his practice over there.

Kashmiri Pandits were a progressive people. While they were not very rich, they were teachers, shopkeepers, clerks but all very dedicated and very intelligent. They had no exposure of what was beyond the mountain of Kashmir. They wanted to stay in that valley and were deeply attached to it. However, it was this community which got slowly evacuated not only as a result of a war with Pakistan but also because of the ravages of disparity, corruption.

Despite standing first in my class, I was denied seat in medical school. This was not only my story, but one of many cases that was common to Kashmiri Pandits. This explained the alienation in job and opportunities that the Kashmiri Pandits had to face in the valley. So the only way left was to come out for higher studies and better opportunities. My story is same as other Kashmiri Pandits. I am talking about the exoduses which I personally faced. I saw 1947 and also witnessed the exodus

caused by discrimination, corruption and denial of economic space and political space for the Kashmiri Pandits.

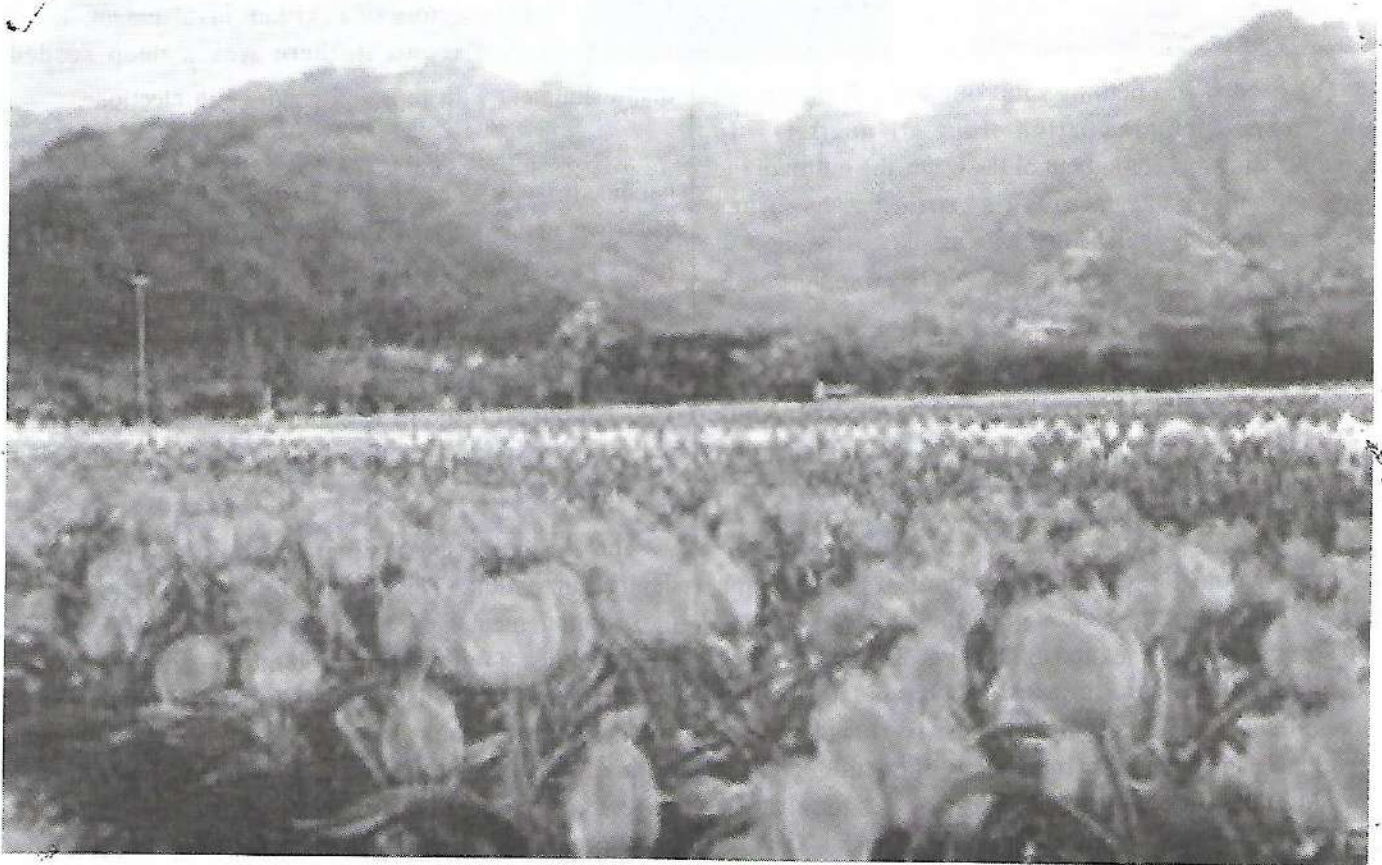
After the 1990 exodus, people were taken to the refugee camps. About 3-4 lakh of people were in camps in miserable conditions which were in areas of snake habitation. He identified Kashmiri Pandits to be reverse minority: minority in a state where the majority is of Mohammadan religion.

If Kashmiri Pandits had the protection for minorities, there should be equal protection for reverse minorities. This

includes reservations. Kashmiri Pandit is becoming distant from his own neighbourhood; he is losing his culture and his identity as a Kashmiri Pandit. There is also sense of loss of democracy as practically no one can vote as a displaced community, by and large.

I firmly believe that the Kashmiri Pandits have to be recognized as a reverse minority. I do here by also demand the recognition and settlement of internally displaced people.

Thank you!



## Address by Dr. Kingshuk Chatterjee, Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of Calcutta

(Addressing the diverse audience) I shall approach the issue somewhat from a distance by attempting to bring to fore national consensus on the matter. My preceding speakers point of view and the national consensus I intend to present are not mutually exclusive.



The exodus was nothing short of ethnic cleansing and must receive condemnation from all quarters. In contemplating any settlement of the issue, the return of the Pandits to valley is integral so as to ascertain that any attempt to ethnic cleansing shall be met with proper consequences. This is one principle where there should be no compromise.

Acknowledging and agreeing to Mr. Moza and General Mukherjee's persistent point, think there has been a considerable alienation of the Kashmiri Pandit community from Kashmiri mainstream for 25 years. In this regard, a truth and reconciliation process is non-negotiable part of any attempt towards settlement of the issue.

The Kashmiri Muslims have increasingly become disgruntled against the central government because of the anti-insurgency activities and military excesses in the valley existing for more than 3 decades. This has in face fed into more militancy and unrest in the valley. Too much military surveillance in civilian area for too long often stifles civilian freedom and gives rise to dissent. This may lead to collateral damages of high disproportion. In making such a view he

found concurrence with Mr. Roy who had spoken earlier.

Talking about truth and reconciliation process, I expect it to be an inclusive process. This must apply to the victims of militancy as well as militants. To this end justice should be rendered to the displaced, the disappeared and missing people. All the atrocities should be accounted for. Justice must be done and it must also be seen to be done. This will lay the foundation for a durable solution to Kashmir issue. Kashmir is an integral and in-alienable part of India. In the name of military, terrorism and counter terrorism efforts, Kashmir and its people have been scarred. No military solution is possible without making a political solution impossible. No political solution will be possible without the military resolve:-

A ray of hope can be observed in the nature and trajectory of Pakistani involvement. There was discontent, there was a deep seeded

disillusionment with repeated riggings in elections.

The disgruntlement was made use of Pakistan most successfully at a particular historical context of the 1980s when Pakistan was flushed with funds that was being popped into Afghanistan by the United States. Part of it was siphoned to further Pakistan's strategic & military objectives. From the late eighties through to the late-nineties those funds were kept on rolling and Pakistan did all it did to Kashmir. Kashmiri militancy is not entirely exported from Pakistan. It's really fuelled from Pakistan.

The Kashmir issue, one has to admit, developed as a democratic deficit. The effects of the democratic deficit, the disgruntlement that follows from that democratic deficit has been blown out of proportion on account of Pakistani intervention. Radical Islamic belief has ignited militancy and hatred in Kashmir. I can speak with little confidence in this respect I would say that Islam isn't itself radical neither is it moderate it is basically what you choose to make of it in the context you make it. Islam in content is

neither radical nor moderate. It is largely imparted shape by twisting context to suit private ends.

There were attempts made in past to give a healing touch to fundamentalism by promoting Sufism which preaches harmony and syncretism. He recalled how the value of *Kashmiriyat* had developed in the tense situations of 1970s and 1980s. However, it was from 1990s that the valley was engulfed in menace of militancy and intolerance which gave rise to radicalism and also Hindu fundamentalism. 1980s and 90s were particularly conducive for radical and hateful kind of interpretation of people's beliefs. And it also had the institutional prop of Pakistan's material support which made radicalism appear as an acceptable alternative. Radicalism attracted public attention. If for instance, Mohammed Omar Farooq gave a peaceful demonstration how many people would notice? If *Lashkar e Toiba* wished to carry out a bomb blast in which not a single man is injured but the car is damaged, will make headline news? Radicalism ensured more sensationalisation.

So radicalism was sensational enough to have appeared as an acceptable alternative in atmosphere of disgruntlement. So once that material prop is no longer available it would be logical to conclude that the alternative would not appear that acceptable.

Ideology does not occasion resistance in absence of material props and this has been historically demonstrated across time and space. I believe on the basis of my study of Kashmir and Islam that the rhetoric changes with circumstances & at present if Indian democracy is doing better in Kashmir it is not because there has been necessary change of the agenda. It is rather a change of strategy. In agreement with most of the panelists I think, the primary thing which needs to be considered for solving the Kashmir issue once and for all is the chances of autonomy or a large measure of it to the state. This needs to be negotiated over time.

Unfortunately most of the political negotiations end of



being lampooned in a media circus and well thought out negotiations coupled with concessions remain distant dream as they are difficult to justify in respective political constituencies both in Delhi and Kashmir. So India needs good and determined leadership which may be ready to compromise on popularity if the need should arise in view of long term goal.

One can start with confidence building measures like removal of AFSPA or at least limiting its zone wise application. The best solution has to be worked out by striking a fine balance between political leadership and military experiences. Perhaps, Article 370 must be made feature of all Indian provinces so that there would be no discrimination.

I firmly believe in this matter that Kashmir's bond with India would and could be more secured only if India loosens its stranglehold which the people of the valley despise. Right now the situation is more conducive for a better and a more favourable settlement. At present militancy is at a down swing, before it goes on an upswing on account of the existing disgruntlements, it would be advisable to loosen the bond somewhat in order to keep the bond in the first place.

Thank you!



## Question and Answer Session

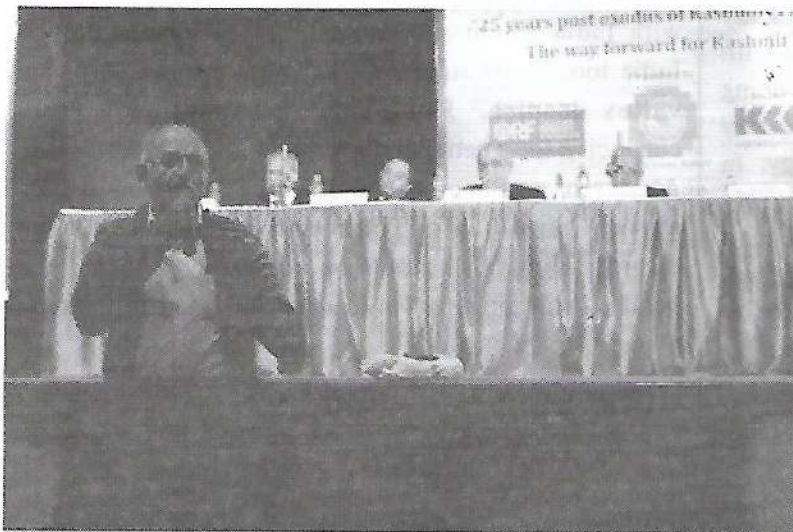
**Audience:** Namaskar, let me introduce myself. I have come from Ahmedabad. I am a Kashmiri Pandit, a migrant, a refugee who has suffered everything. I am the president of Kashmiri *Samiti* in Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar. I am a resident of Gujarat and an active member of all India Kashmiri *Samaj*. So here I am representing the Apex body of Kashmiri Pandits.

I still want to go back to Kashmir and wish to be cremated there; Kashmir is where my forefathers were burnt.

We Kashmiris are peace loving people, irrespective of our religion. Mehbooba ji has rightly said that she does not want to keep Kashmiri Pandits in small localities. My earnest request to the Government is to help me go back to Kashmir where I would live with dignity. Also we need protection.

**Audience:** I don't agree with Dr Manoj Joshi's contention that Kashmiri Pandits were not deliberately killed. As Mr. Moza has rightly pointed out the Pandits including some of the great intellectuals were deliberately shot.

**Reply from Dr. Joshi:** I was speaking of January of 1990. In January 1990 there was no mass killing. There were individual killings.



**Reply from Dr. Moza:** The Killing had started long back.

**Professor Hari Vasudevan:** I am Professor Vasudevan

and I am from the University of Calcutta. I have a question to ask both Mr Joshi and Dr. Chatterjee. In both the presentations you have talked in terms of autonomy against the backdrop of a princely state that has remained a princely state as it was in structure since 1947.

In the case of all other units in India there has been a major change that has taken place over the course of the time since our independence.

No princely state has remained a princely state either in structure or in the way in which it has functioned since 1947 and since the accession. Therefore we have a situation of an extraordinary state which has not been subject to the standard democratic and federal discussions that this country has gone through over the course of half a century. When you are thinking in terms of autonomy do you think it is a just demand even in terms of the Pandit question where people who were displaced clearly need rights of their own in that state? In terms of the problem of Ladakh, there are identities which were gradually being formed in a systematic manner as opposed to the identities which exist within the valley.

Do you think it is acceptable anymore to think in terms of mere autonomy? Simply to say that one requires autonomy in the region does not in any way give anybody

a sense of what kind of roadmap is going to be followed in case of autonomy being granted to this region. When Dr. Moza spoke he brought out certain issues which need to be addressed. It is important to think in terms of such perspectives and of the possible structural and institutional frameworks and hence, provide a number of possible alternatives than dealing with the questions of democracy, non-democracy, this party/that party, Pakistan/Non Pakistan.

**Reply from Dr Joshi:** The question is a very deep and serious one. Who can deny the unique history, the circumstances and legal issues of Jammu and Kashmir? The problem is that it is still on the books of United Nations. No country in the world recognises Jammu and Kashmir to be a part of India. Everyone including our so called friends and strategic allies see Kashmir as a disputed region.

The status of Jammu and Kashmir is very different from the status of, for instance, Tibet. Many people think that Tibet should be independent but Jammu and Kashmir is frozen in the post World War II scenario when plebiscites were being held in different parts of Europe. Nehru and Mountbatten picked up the popular phrase 'plebiscite' Nehru was talking about plebiscite in a state which had never had any kind of election anymore. It is difficult to hold elections in Jammu and Kashmir, even in normal circumstances. So the Kashmir problem has many layers. One layer relates to Kashmir's International status which needs to be addressed by dealing with Pakistan. The important task is to have people accept that Kashmir is a part of India; the second issue is the question of autonomy. Kashmir already has a lot of autonomy. It is at the same time quite tolerant.

There are other issues which need to be reflected upon. It is important to reconsider whether the election commission of the Union of India is better for Kashmir or the state wants its own Election Commission. Does Kashmir want the Supreme Court of India to be the final arbiter of Justice or does it want the supreme court of Jammu n Kashmir?

Most importantly, I believe that autonomy is not so much the substance as it is the issue of sentiment in Kashmir. There is a sentiment amongst people in the valley which is reflected in some of the voting figures. Some people resist the idea of closeness to India.

I am saying that we need to creatively suggest new ways to address that sentiment. That requires political leadership and finesse.

**Reply from Dr. Moza:** Does the question of autonomy solve the problem of Kashmiri Pandits unless they are given reverse minority rights?? The Pandits must be recognized as internally displaced and there should be proper legislation to back their claims.

**Reply from Dr. Kingshuk Chatterjee:** I do not think that the autonomy that was promised in 1952 can be on the plate anymore. As Dr Joshi has said Kashmir issue has more to do with emotions and sentiments of the people in the valley. The question is how you phrase it.

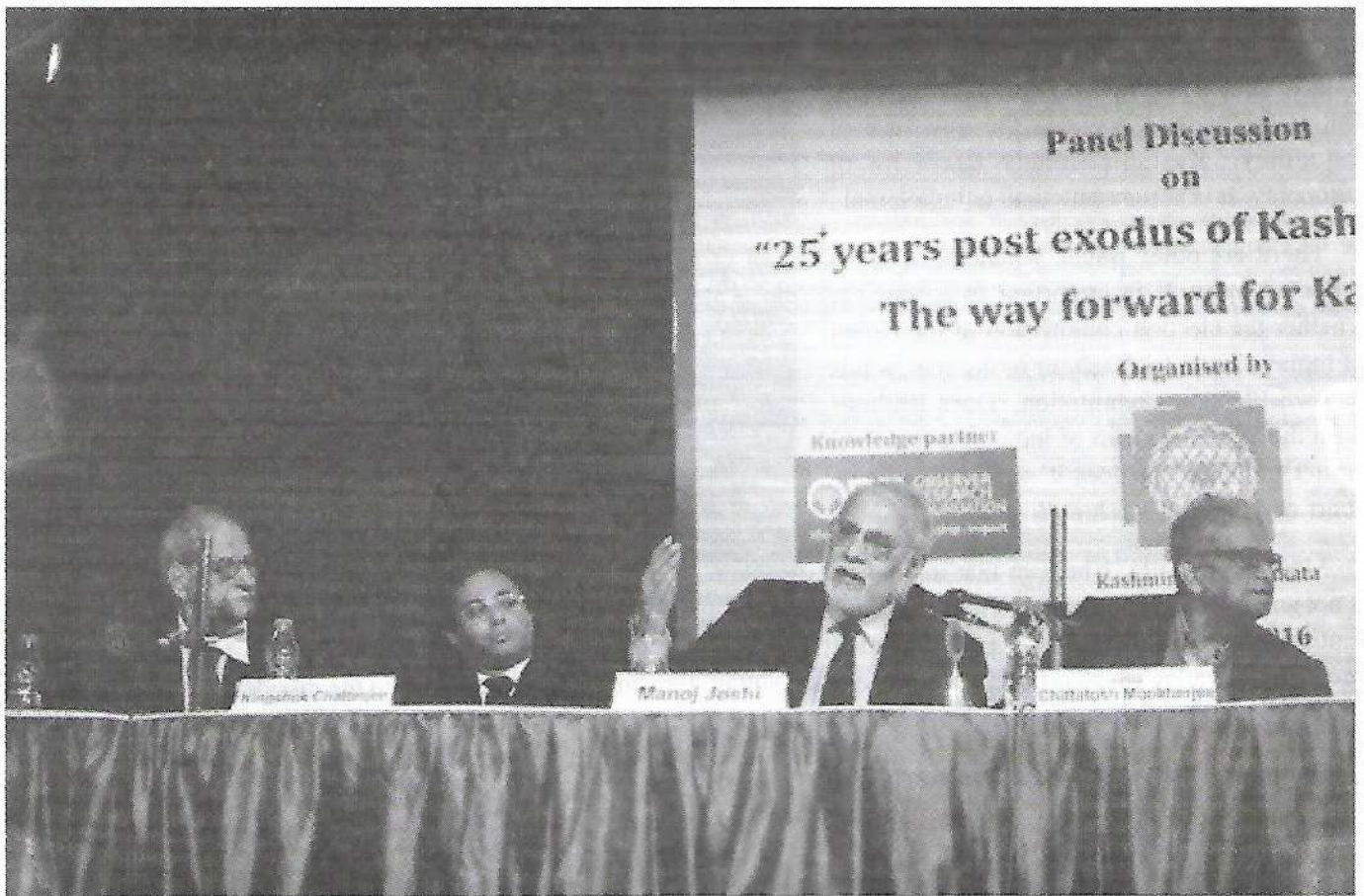


The more pertinent question is: what will be acceptable to both the Indian state and the dissident Kashmiri people? The people have moved on from article 370. In order to make it a democratic exercise of settlement of problems, there has to be a genuine engagement in working out a solution.

There has to be some re-negotiations. Such issues have to be discussed with open mind. Therefore, autonomy and a full and candid discussion of it is what is required.

**General Roy:** I am General Roy and I am not Kashmiri Pandit.

I feel that autonomy is an excellent concept but does anybody in the valley feel that we Indians have reached a stage where we are responsible enough to be an autonomous state? Whatever solution is found has to be enforced only after good governance is ensured.



## Concluding Address by Justice Chittatosh Mookherjee:

Now it remains upon me to say a very few words on the discussions about what we had and what emerges out of that.

So far as the unanimity of the panellists is concerned, they all agreed that the solution must be found in Kashmir- politically, emotionally, constitutionally. A unanimous solution is required in order to solve the problem of pandits. They are not wandering Jews. They have a dense culture, a tradition, and a religion of their own. Their dispersal from their homes has hurt their Kashmiri traditions which have been preserved for thousand years. The solution has not been arrived in unanimity.

The legal part of the article 370 of the constitution has to be untangled. There has been lately a decision made by single judge of the Jammu and Kashmir high court regarding the question of the Kashmiri flag flying with the Indian flag. The matter is now with the division bench of the Kashmir High court.

As Mr. Moza has said that the Kashmiri Pandits' rights to return must be ensured and secured

India has not yet ratified the 1951 international convention. Similar problem had arisen with regard to the displaced persons of Bangladesh who had settled in Mizoram. The intervention of the Supreme Court, enabled their rehabilitation and made it possible for them to go back to Bangladesh after its liberation. I don't know whether a similar solution is possible as far as the Pandits are concerned.

Before a solution is found, it is important to highlight the magnitude of the problem before the public and then see how the solution is arrived at., We have to do so within the four corners of the constitutional framework. But we do not foresee any change in the structure of the article 370. Fair deal is necessary for those who lived in the valley but also for those who left the valley not by their own accord but were compelled by the situation to do so.



Now the other question is that of the integration of Kashmir into India and there could be no trading on that question. One solution could be to take the ceasefire line as the line of demarcation with two parts. We are grateful to general Mukherjee who pointed out that the territorially, the problem is confined to the Kashmir valley. The Shia Muslims and Hindus in Jammu who constitute a fairly large number are not involved in the kind of issues raised by Sunni Muslims in the Kashmir Valley. The other problem which looms large is the problem of the Islamic movement. It is necessary for us today to adopt a resolution that there must be guarantee of the right of the Pandits, the community, the region and its inhabitants. I believe the

minority right have to be spelled out and security needs to be ensured.

Thank you the participants! Thank you everyone!

Can we record unanimously that the solution would be the right of recognition of the Pandits to go back to their homeland? Hence, the Pandits should be recognized as internally displaced people not by their own volition but because they are compelled to do so. The Pandits's issue should be widely publicized and published at the same time. Thank you everybody very much.



## Vote of Thanks by Mr. Ratan Moza, Former President, Kashmiri Sabha, Kolkata



Good afternoon!

On behalf of Kashmir Sabha Kolkata I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the eminent panelists and Chair person for an enlightened discussion. I would also like to thank all the *biradari* members, intellectuals,

diplomats, academicians scholars and members from the media and public for participating in the event today. We are also thankful to Kolkata chapter of ORF who have been our knowledge partner of the event and who shall be bringing out the policy brief based on the discussion held today. We are also thankful to Kaizer Construction Company Limited for their continued immense support to the Sabha. Lastly I would like to thank all volunteer especially Rakesh Kaul for his continuous support to us.

Thanking you once again and wish you all a happy 2016.



# **MEDIA COVERAGE**

# Saugata Bats for Kashmir Pandits' Return To Valley



Statesman News Service

Kolkata, 16 Jan : Blaming the previous Union governments for the present political turmoil in Kashmir, Trinamul Congress MP Saugata Roy today said steps should be taken to rehabilitate Kashmiri Pandits, who were forced out of the Valley in early 90s. Speaking at a panel discussion organised by Kashir Sabha on "25+ years post exodus of Kashmiri Pandits, the way forward for Kashmir", Mr. Roy said that rigging elections in 1987 was a major setback and a series of past mistakes has led to the serious situation in Kashmir. We needed a solution to the problems, he said.

"The issue of rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits calls for urgent attention. The rehabilitation is yet to start and the government should take steps to rehabilitate them," Mr. Roy said.

With Sayeed's daughter Mehbooba Multi expected to take over as the new chief minister, Roy harped on the

**The Statesman** Sun, 17 January 2016

need for the Centre to initiate a dialogue on the rehabilitation issue. In the 1990s the situation in Kashmir Valley took an ugly turn, when Kashmiri Pandits were forced to leave the Valley following persecution and threats by terrorists groups operating in the valley.

Yesterday, in a memorandum submitted to Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) Jitendra Singh, a delegation of Sampurn Kashmir Sanguhan (SKS) sought his intervention for their demands, including rehabilitation of displaced Kashmiri Pandits and jobs for those who have crossed the age to apply for government jobs. Mr. Singh assured them that the Narendra Modi government is committed to ensure dignited return of the displaced community to the places of their origin in the Valley.

He further assured them that memorandum submitted by them will be ut up before the Home Minister for perusal. On 11 December, the Lok Saba adopted a resolution moved by BJP's Nishikant Dubey for immediate steps to rehabilitate people displaced from Kashmir.



# Business Standard

## Centre hesitant in rehabilitating Kashmiri Pandits: Trinamool MP

IANS Kolkata January 16, 2016 Last Updated at 17:12 IST

Observing that the Narendra Modi government has been hesitant in initiating a rehabilitation process for the Kashmiri Pandits, Trinamool Congress MP Saugata Roy on Saturday called for a dialogue with the Jammu and Kashmir government on the issue.

Roy was speaking at a panel discussion on the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits, organised by the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) here.

“We owe to the Kashmiri Pandits, their rehabilitation, to get them back in Kashmir. While a budget of Rs.500 crore has been allotted for their rehabilitation, I feel the central government is hesitant in getting them back to Kashmir,” said Roy.

Roy said unlike the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference leaders, the recently departed Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed was sympathetic to separatists which resulted in the Centre becoming hesitant.

“This hesitation perhaps is because the Centre did not get a clear signal from the Mufti government. Mufti is no more, but unlike the Abdullahs who were pro-India, Mufti had been catering to people having some sympathy for militants and sympathy for Pakistan,” he said.

With Sayeed’s daughter Mehbooba Mufti expected to take over as the new chief minister, Roy harped on the need for the Centre to initiate a dialogue on the rehabilitation issue.

“There is a need to initiate some sort of a dialogue process with the state government. While the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has always kept the cards close to their chest on this issue, I feel we must initiate dialogue with Mehbooba on the matter,” he added.

Speaking on the occasion, former Lt. General John Ranjan Mukherjee said India needs to stop being a soft state.

“India is a soft state, you can’t take a decision of moving back the Kashmiri Pandits, because you don’t have the gumption to do so. We need to stop being a soft nation,” said the former General Officer Commanding of the Army’s 15 Corps stationed in Kashmir.

Suggesting ways to tackle the Kashmir issue, Mukherjee said strict enforcement of secularism and outlawing all forms of religious fundamentalism were imperative.

“A major step which needs to be taken in this regard is befriending more of our neighbours including China. If China stops supporting Pakistan, life would be much easier for India,” said Mukherjee.

Scholar and former city head of Kashmir Sabha, - a social organisation - B.K. Moza demanded that Kashmiri Pandits be declared internally displaced refugees and granted reverse minority status.

“Unless and until reverse minority status is granted to us, our rehabilitation is not possible. Kashmir enjoys special status under article 370, because the inhabitants are largely Muslim, which is a minority community in total Indian context.

“In fitness to this constitutional guarantee, Kashmiri Pandits should also be provided a reverse minority status in Kashmir by the constitution,” said Moza.

All the speakers said the central government needed to take immediate steps to ensure the rehabilitation of nearly five lakh Kashmiri Pandits, mostly living in camps in Jammu and Delhi.

## Trinamool Congress Calls For Steps To Rehabilitate Kashmiri Pandits

KOLKATA: Senior Trinamool Congress leader Saugata Roy today said the Union government should take steps to rehabilitate Kashmiri Pandits, who were forced out of the Valley in early 90s, and added that a series of past mistakes has led to the serious situation in Kashmir.

“The rehabilitation process of Kashmiris is yet to start.

The government should take steps to rehabilitate the Kashmiri Pandits. The issue calls for urgent attention and the problem must be solved,” Mr Roy said at a seminar on Kashmiri Pandits.

“The situation has become so serious due to a series of mistakes that were committed. We need to find a solution to these problems,” Mr Roy commented.

In 1990s the situation in Kashmir Valley took an ugly turn, when Kashmiri Pandits were forced to leave the Valley following persecution and threats by terrorists groups operating in the Valley.

Yesterday, in a memorandum submitted to Minister of State in Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) Jitendra Singh, a delegation of Sampurn Kashmir Sangathan (SKS) sought his intervention for their demands, including rehabilitation of displaced Kashmiri Pandits and jobs for those who have crossed the age to apply for government jobs.



*Senior Trinamool Congress leader Saugata Roy said the Union government should take steps to rehabilitate Kashmiri Pandits.*

Mr Singh assured them that the Narendra Modi government is committed to ensure dignified return of the displaced community to the places of their origin in the Valley. He further assured them that memorandum submitted by them will be put up before the Home Ministry for perusal.

On December 11, the Lok Sabha adopted a resolution moved by BJP’s Nishikant Dubey for immediate steps to rehabilitate people displaced from Kashmir as the government asserted that measures are being taken in this regard.

**Story First Published:** January 16, 2016 17:40 IST

## **PART III**

**NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF PERMANENT MEMBERS  
RESIDING IN EASTERN INDIA**

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<b>Ganjoo Jitendra</b> Flat no 301, Dhakuria 7 Gariahat Road Kolkata 700031				9007713419	
<b>Ghosh Krishna Smt</b> Flat 15, Vivekananda Housing Society, 202, MANIKTALA MAIN ROAD KOLKATA 700054 Grover, Sunita Smt. 595, Block 'O', new Alipore, Kolkata 700053		2355 7709		9830699335	
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<b>Kaul Rajive</b> 14/1 Burdwan Road, Kolkata - 700 027	2248 5102 / 8220	2479 1670		
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<b>Sharma Krishna Smt.</b> 6 Amar Basu Sarani, (Near Ram Mandir), Kolkata - 700 007		2241 6515	9830200887	
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<b>Zutshi Surendra</b> 26 Nive Brook Road, Apt. No. 40 B, Edison, N.J. - 08820 USA			

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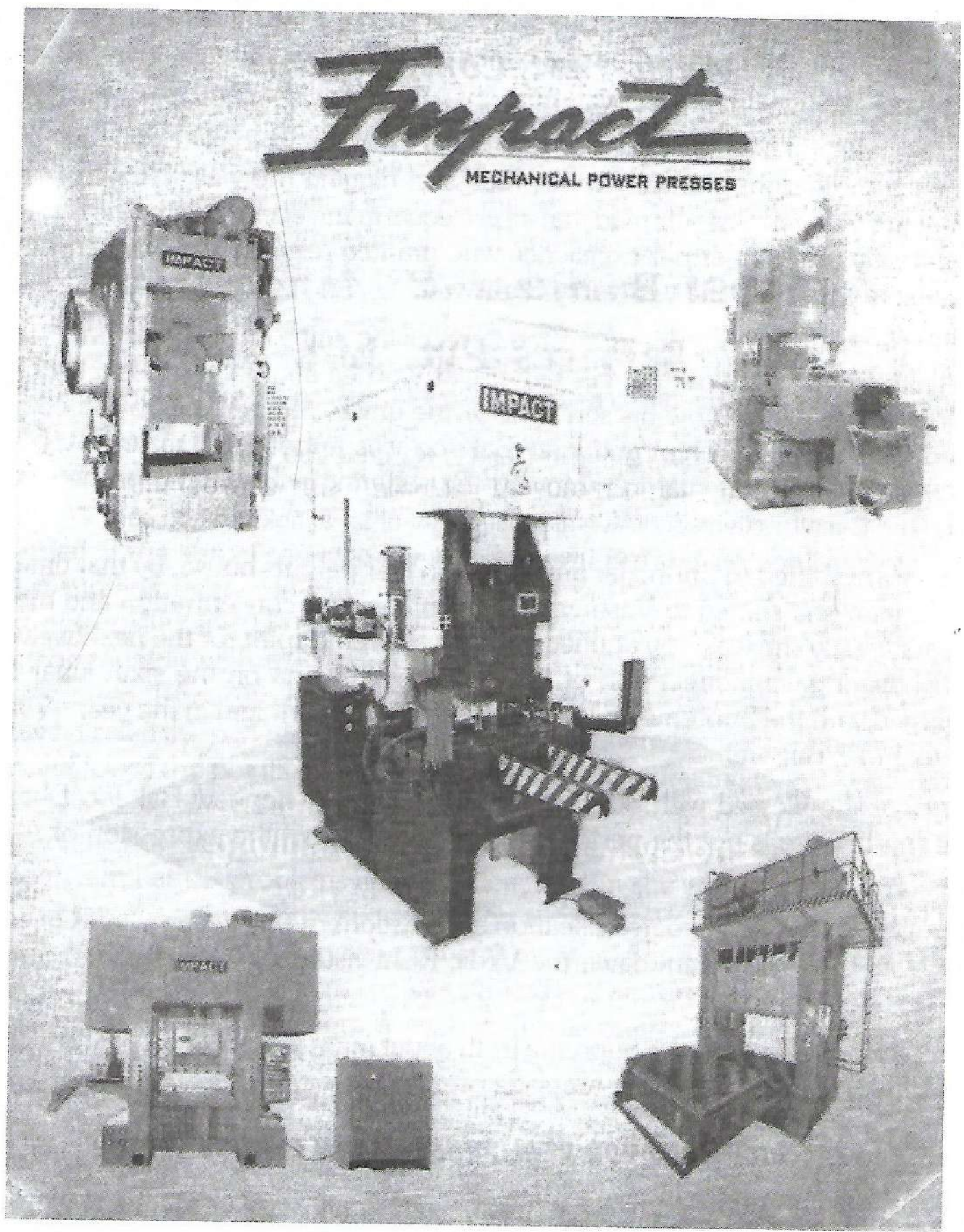
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You have left an empty space in our hearts in which nothing will ever fill.  
But, every time we close our eyes, we speak to you in a million ways.  
You carry to live on in our hearts like a legacy of love.

