

# THEY ARE SCATTERED – KASHMIRI PANDITS

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**ABSTRACT:** Her culture and traditions rose and fell with various kingdoms. She had seen many victories and defeats. But everything was lost at present just because of militancy. People became under poverty level, they lost peace and security. No slogans, no philosophy, no politics was able to save their valuable lives. They lost their everlasting dreams and hopes. After Independence, Jammu and Kashmir (J & K) was neither a part of India nor of Pakistan up to October 27, 1947. On October 22, 1947 Pakistan sent North West frontier tribes to Jammu and Kashmir. Their aim was to create a Azad Kashmir inside India and destroy the unity and integrity of the nation. On October 27, 1947 the Instrument of Accession was signed by the Maharaja Hari Singh and since then the dispute has revolved around this document. On November 2, 1947 Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru aired a speech on the AIR reaffirming the Indian Government commitment to conduct Plebiscite. This was the turning point in J & K history. Kashmir issue remains an unfinished agenda over this issue. India and Pakistan fought more than three times on this issue. This leads to insecurity in South Asia, because both nations are nuclear powers. The Tashkent meeting of 1966, Simla agreement of 1972, Lahore talk 1999 and Agra summits 2001 and other high level talks at different levels failed. On the one hand peace negotiations are going on and on the other hand Pakistan is sponsoring attacks like the one on Indian Parliament in December 13, 2001, and the Mumbai blast in July 11, 2006. Unemployment, poor education lack of proper education, increased divorces and broken families are the grim realities at present. Every year Indian government is spending cores to create everlasting peace in kashmir, but not yet success.

## Introduction

Kashmir situated the north of India, Near by Pakistan and China are very close to Kashmir. After get the independence from East India Company, Pakistan believes that in kashmiris majorities are muslims, So They will merged with Pakistan. But Maharaja Harising not intrested to merged with Pakistan and he Create a stand still Agreement between Indian and Kashmir. Thus he joined kashmir with India. It create so much of revenge against India by Pakistan. Pakistan's sponsored Militancy still going over Indian soil. They know, Kashmir is the head of the India. If head lost they can destroy the unity and integrity of India.

Militancy destroyed life of Kashmiri Pandits. After the independence Pakistan send tribal peoples to grab Kashmir with the help of its army. It created so much of conflicts and disputes between both nations. In 1989 militancy conducted massive attacks against minority Pandits. Fundamentalist stole their land and homes, even right to life also. The five thousand old Saraswth Brahmin communities had lost their traditions, customs and civilizations. Pandit communities are in exile. They are getting some subsidies and financial helps from authorities. But they had lost their freedom. Nothing is precious than freedom. They are living in two room tin shaded camps. Physically and mentally they are weak. Their children become the victims of great fear. Family envisages are broken, not getting proper education, all basic facilities are denied due to militancy. They are not getting any justice from National or State Human Right Commissions.

## Purpose

Main purpose of the study is that try to understand the reasons and causes of Pakistan's sponsored militancy over India. Every year both Governments are spending cores for these disputes. Sponsored militancy destroyed the living conditions of Kashmiri pandits and Islam believers. Ordinary citizens became the victims of cross – border fighting. Both Nations are Nuclear power nations. As per the World Bank report both nations' basic facilities and living conditions of ordinary citizens are very poor. But both are fighting for age old sentiments.

## Significance

The Kashmir issue is the main reason for several bilateral crises. It has always posed as a major threat to peace in the region. Kashmiri Pandits become the victim of the militancy. Since 1989 more than 350000 Pandits have had to flee from their homes. Till date sufficient measures are not undertaken for according justice and security to the aggrieved Pandits. Militancy affected the socio- economic life of Pandit community. Much attention from the authorities is needed to solve the problem of Pandits and their call for home land.

## Literature

In this section a perusal of works in the field of historical, political, cultural, social and economic issues, militancy and condition of Kashmiri Pandits are made. The following books discuss the historical, political, social, economic, and cultural and Homeland issues of the Kashmiri Pandits.

V.P Menon's, **The Transfer of Power in India** (1957) contains vital information about the partition and its problems. The story of transfer of power is covered in this book from the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939 to the beginning of a new phase of Indian history on 15 August 1947. The work ends with an account of the communal conflagration which followed immediately after partition. This book is very informative as it helps the study of the history of partition which leads to the Indo – Pak conflicts.

R.S Pandit, wrote **River of Kings** (1993) which gives detailed information about Kashmiri Pandits journey to present conditions. The author criticizes the silence of SHRC and NHRC. Author proves that Pakistan sponsored militancy destroyed all hopes and dreams of KP.

Kaul RU, in his work **The Wall of Kashmir** (1999) explained the minority problems in J&K and how Pandits becomes migrants in their own country. He says Kashmiri history itself paved the way for insecurity and uncertainty. He says that even before independence in J&K there were discrimination against minorities.

**Kashmir a Tragedy of Errors** written by Tavleen Singh (1995) explained the mistakes committed by India and Pakistan. According to her New Delhi must initiate steps to heal the wounds of the Kashmiris. It also provides some information about Kashmiri Pandits traditions, customs and present conditions. Author also forwarded some suggestions for settling this dispute.

Sisir Gupta's **Kashmir: A Study in India- Pakistan Relations** (1998) analyses the political, economic and social aspects of Kashmir. The author discusses the confusing chain of events and developments in the state of Jammu and Kashmir in the Indian sub continent and in the United Nations. He examines the claims and counter claims, the distortions in the Public representations, ideological, political and economic stakes that the Indian and Pakistani Governments see in Kashmir. This book sheds light to the interests of the outside powers in the Kashmir dispute and global policies of the great powers. He critically gives some suggestions for the settlement of this problem.

Nelson Thomas, in his work **Kashmir, the Valley of Mystery** (2000) expresses the mind of the Kashmiri and neglect of Indian rulers. Even UN, India and Pakistan are not taking sincere steps to solve these issues. Author argues that because of militancy ordinary people are suffering a lot. He has criticized Pakistani Governments and ISI.

Owen Benett Jones, work **Pakistan: Eye of the Storm** (2002) provides an insightful discussion and a comprehensive analysis of Pakistan's involvement in Kashmir. Besides a detailed discussion on Kashmir issue and Kargil conflict, the work facilitates a topical review of bilateral relations and the growing religious militancy in Kashmir.

Another work by J.N Dixit, **India- Pakistan in War and Peace** (2002) explores the important aspects in New Delhi-Islamabad relations. This book discusses the implementation of Kargil war and the antagonism of these two countries. It also analyses the Simla and Tashkant Agreements.

#### Data Collection

Data's are collected from Books, Interviews with political leaders, Army officials, Kashmiri officials, Survey and Researchers' visits.

#### Methodology

The methodology adopted in this study is mainly historical, descriptive and analytical. Both primary and secondary source materials have been used. The primary data for the study have been generated through structured formal interview method. The major tool for primary data collection was questionnaire. With the help of questionnaire the leaders of Political Parties, Army Officials, Pandit Organizations, and religious leaders have been interviewed. The persons interviewed include Central Minister and Chairman of NC Dr. Farooq Abdullah, DYFK National Joint secretary Mohammed Ameen, APHC Chairman Syed Ali Sha Gilani, JKLF Chairman Yassin malik, CPI (M) State secretary Yousaf Tarigami M.L.A, Kashmir people conference chairman Sajad Gani lone, Mrs Praveena Akthar, District Congress President, Srinagar, Mr. Bhat M K President, Helpline Humanity, Nagrota and Pandit Organization General secretary Chamman Lal.

Another source of information emerged from the field survey conducted by the researcher among the Pandits. The survey was conducted in December 2008, September 2009, and February and March 2010. For this purpose questionnaire was also prepared. On the whole one hundred people were interviewed. Many people were not interested to give answer to militancy related questions because they were afraid of disclosing many things. Secondary sources include data collected from books, and newspapers from J & K, India and abroad. Some information's were collected from Libraries of Kashmir University, viz department of Economics, Political science and History, Allama Iqbal centre Library, Central Library Srinagar and also libraries from various media offices of Jammu and Kashmir.

#### Hypotheses

- Pakistan's sponsored Militancy led the Kashmiri Pandits to become migrant refugees in their own homeland and put them on cross roads.
- Refugee Pandits are now socially, economically, educationally, mentally and physically in an undignified and backward position.
- Kashmiri Pandits have lost all their human rights in the wake of militancy.
- Majority of the Jammu and Kashmir people accept that the Pandits should be allowed to have their homeland.

#### Analysis and Conclusion

- Kashmir is a militancy prone state. The history of militancy in Kashmir dates back to 1949. Its causes are many and varied. Unemployment, poverty, army's misbehavior, role of political parties, kidnapping and discrimination from central and state government are the main factors that contributed to militancy in Kashmir valley. Till date, it is approximately calculated that more than 48000 innocent people had lost their lives in the valley due to militancy.
- It is found that Pandits are the worst sufferers of militancy in Kashmir. Due to militancy, Pandits lost everything. At present they are living in India, their motherland, as refugees.
- At this juncture time, the Pandit population is found widely scattered both inside and outside of India. Inside India there population is spread in the states of Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. At the international level, they could be seen living in the countries of UK, USA, and Canada. Moreover there are seven refugee camps in different parts of Delhi accommodating the Pandit population.

- At present the Pandits are in socially, economically and politically dilapidated situations. They are forced to live under social and economic constraints. Education of their wards remains a far cry. In terms of health, they are facing a deplorable situation.
- In the midst of all these difficulties and disabilities, they earnestly hope to have their homeland. Various Pandit organizations, NGOs, Kashmir Muslims and political parties also favor their demand for a homeland in the Kashmir valley.

Jammu Kashmir, located in the extreme north of the country is bounded on the north by China, east by Tibet and south by Pakistan. Nature has bestowed unlimited grace and grandeur to the valley. This valley is compared with Paradise. The amazing climate of Kashmir valley has always remained a source of attraction to lakhs of tourists every year. Jammu and Kashmir consists of three geographical divisions: Jammu, Kashmir Valley and Ladakh. The state is further divided into 22 districts. Kalhana in his book *Rajatarangini* stated the history of Kashmir. To put it briefly, her history is the ebbs and tides of the Hindus, Muslims, Mughals, Afghans and Dogras. In the 1901 Census of the British Indian Empire, the population of the princely state of Kashmir was 2,905,578. Of these 2,154,695 were Muslims 689,073 Pandits, 25,828 Sikhs and 35,047 Buddhists (Menon VP, 1957: 64). As per 2001 census, in J&K, the population was 1, 0143,700, out of this 66.97% were Muslims, 29.63% Pandits, 2.03% Sikhs and 1.36% Buddhists. Jammu and Kashmir's economy is predominantly dependent on agriculture and allied activities. In 2007, the state became one of the top tourist destinations in India.

Origin of Kashmiri Pandit community covers more than a period of five thousand years. Kashmiri Pandits are Saraswat Brahmins. Kashmir is the land of their ancestors and forefathers. The Kashmiri Brahmins are divided into 199 exogamous sections (gotras) the members of which profess to be descended from the Rishi or inspired saint whose name the gotra bears. Pandits celebrate various types of festivals of which Shivarathri is the most important.

These festivals give the identity of Kashmiri Pandits. They patronized artists and writers. Kashmiri Pandits faced so many discriminations and apartheid from the majority community. In Kashmir from 1911 to 1923 there were no Pandits in the list of high officer's post. In 1924-1925 they appointed one Pandit officer in high official rank. The traditional literary wealth of Pandits was given a fine treatment by Western scholars with the help of the local scholars. Many persons from this community had held distinguished positions like Indian Prime Minister, Army chief and Diplomats. One interesting thing to be noted is that most of the prominent personalities who belong to the majority community are related to the Pandits by blood (Pandit R S, 1993, 103).

Several factors contribute to Kashmir militancy. Chief of them are failure of democracy, shaded policies of central Government, poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, discrimination, fundamentalism, demand for separate nation, Pak supported militancy, casteism, corruption and army's misbehavior. Militancy related incidents were continuously on the increase since 1988. Hundreds of person's including civilians, members of Security forces and militants themselves lost their life in the milieu.

Right from 1949 Pakistan had involved directly in organizing subversive activities in Kashmir. India and Pakistan had fought at least three conventional wars, all of them for Kashmir. Although Pakistan occupied a part of Kashmir variously called POK or Azad (Free) Kashmir and part of it ceded to the Peoples Republic of China (Aksai chin) there is clearly the much larger original territory of the erstwhile Dogra kingdom lying under the sovereign umbrella of India at present. Pakistan sponsored militancy in the whole Kashmir valley not only destabilized the unity and integrity of the nation but also destroyed the beauty and glory of Kashmir. The minority Pandits of the valley became the victims of militancy. They were gunned down indiscriminately, hanged or murdered by other brutal means. They were tortured, molested and raped and harassed with threatening letters and telephone calls. Posters and bit notices were pasted on their doors and warnings through newspapers were given to them to leave the valley within a short and specified time (Kaul R U, 1999: 76-77). The micro study revealed that the people of the valley are in their quest for everlasting peace. Nearly 3000 persons have died in camps and elsewhere after their forced exodus from the valley. They died of sunstrokes (more than 1000) as most of them were used to the cold climate of Kashmir.

The cohesiveness of the displaced families has broken as they were to undergo Diaspora for finding livelihood in various parts of the country. The structure of the Muthi migrant camp in Jammu revealed many facts. The relief measures provided by Government do not even satisfy the primary needs of the family. They have become the victims of the militancy and were struggling for survival. Discriminations and denial of chances are common. The dignity and worth of human person was disturbed. Terror and violence damaged their individuality and dignity. Most of the refugees were not interested to talk about their health conditions. In all the migrant camps there were cases of Cardio Vascular Stress, Hypertension, Coronary artery diseases (angina and heart attacks). Premature ageing and premature deaths, unnatural deaths, high incidence of serious and potentially fatal diseases and affliction with multiple disease syndromes, Poor medical aid and economic bankruptcy led them to the point of renouncing the very desire to live (Tavleen Singh, 1995:113).

The Kashmiri Pandit Women, who have entered the Sixteenth year in exile, appeal to the conscience of the civilized world. They were the worst victims. The genocide had badly affected the Pandit women and children. Many women became the victims of panic problems like mental and physical disorders, depression problems and anxiety disorders. Many children had lost their parents or rendered homeless and there is nobody to guide them towards the right direction. Many of them are facing cruelty at the hands of surviving relatives in the form of negligence and rejection. These children are under the influence of terror; they suffer from physical and psychological disturbances. The magnitude of psychiatric disorders during 1990-1994 has been the highest. It rose from 1762 cases in 1990 to 17,584 cases in 1994. More than 800 Pandit children during 1990-1997 had developed acute psychological troubles without any anatomical reason. These children had been witnessing cruelty in the hands of militants. Many of the displaced people, however, could not afford to send their wards to the public schools. Displaced populations' livings in camps are facing severe economic difficulties due to displacement and are struggling for their daily bread. Forced migration is one of the most visible and disruptive effects of armed conflict (Sisir Gupta, 1998: PP 192-193).

On the economic front displaced families have been hit hard. When the intensity of militancy increased, they were forced to leave their movables and immovable's. Due to lack of economic opportunities in the camps and its surroundings,

unemployment and underemployment became rampant. They had lost everything and they had to start from the zero level. Ecological and economic aspects of life ultimately affected the socio-cultural life and their ideology of beliefs, values and attitudes ( Nelson Thomas, 2000: 132).

They lost agricultural income, Business income, income from Jobs and small scale industries. There is a financial crisis among the refugee families. Economic crisis in the refugee camps led to the death of several persons year after year. Unstable financial conditions badly affected migrant Pandits life. The relief measure provided by state government was not sufficient for the families (Owen Beneet Jones, 2002:, 107). There are ten important Organizations in the whole nation working for the prosperity of the Kashmiri Pandits. 'Panun Kashmir' is a major umbrella organization working for Pandits protection and Security (Dixit J N, 2002: 163).

In Kashmir valley everyday minority community has been losing their rights and duties. It leads to severe violation of Human Rights in the whole valley and Pandits became the slaves of politicians, autocrats and militants. The statistics from various districts show that in Kashmir militants had taken away hundreds of lives in each incident. They tortured females and looted Pandits residence and killed them mercilessly. Hundreds of Pandits were severely wounded and admitted to various hospitals in Kashmir valley. Kidnapping, torture and all types of Human Right violations had taken place. Kashmir militancy had taken more than Forty Eight thousand lives till 19 September 2010. More than 30,000 houses belonging to Pandits, hundreds of their business establishments, educational institutions, cultural and religious institutions had been destroyed or burnt. About 105 educational institutions were destroyed, damaged, or burnt by militants. Several cases were brought before the NHRC and SHRC regarding violations of rights of Pandits. More than Sixty Nine years are gone both countries are fighting for a great Sentiments. Ordinary people became the victim of this war Game. I hope One day we shall meet again at Kashmir The Villa of Ever Lasting Peace and Glory.

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