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## Genocide of Jammu Muslims of 1947 that changed demography & history of J&K

in India – by M J Aslam – 06/11/2020



Following Partition of Indian subcontinent in 1947, communal flare up erupted like volcanic lava almost everywhere. Unlike that of other communal killings, Hyderabad Muslim massacre of 1948 & Jammu Muslim massacre of 1947 are least talked about human tragedies in India seemingly in “national interest”. Jammu Muslim massacre of Oct-Nov 1947 is distinguishable from other massacres that took place that time elsewhere in Indian subcontinent mainly for the Ruler’s complete complicity in the gruesome genocide. There is historical evidence of it.

It is recorded & admitted that the ex-monarch of JK, Maharaja Hari Singh, was personally involved in that human tragedy of getting his Muslim subjects slaughtered in Udhampur, Chenani, Ramnagar, Reasi, Bhaderwah, Chhamb, Deva Batala, Manawsar, Akhnoor, Kathua, Talab Khatikan, Jogi Gate & other areas of Jammu division by RSS, Hindu & Sikh goons who were armed & supported by his [Dogra] soldiers, police & officers in administration from top to bottom. The Hindu & Sikh refugees from West Punjab & NWFP were disgruntled & incited by RSS cadres for killing Muslims of Jammu. This “real” ethnic cleansing was reportedly done by Hari Singh to change demography of Jammu province under a notion that if plebiscite was going to be held in JK, at least, Jammu would that way go to India under a “zonal referendum”. As a result of the State sponsored genocide, 61% Muslim population of Jammu division was reduced to 38%. The “mad orgy” of armed communal marauders fully supported by the monarch’s administration & troops forced lakhs of Muslims of Jammu division to flee from their homes to Sialkote & other adjacent places of “safety” along the border in Pakistan &

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Pakistan administered Kashmir. The preparation for the State sponsored massacre had been started off long before when *Muslim* soldiers in Dogra Army & *Muslim* personnel in Dogra police were ordered by the monarch to deposit their weapons with the State administration. It had commenced from Poonch where the monarch was facing revolt from the Muslims for unspeakable injustices and discriminations including back-breaking taxation on every household item from buffalos to wives. As the monarch had indecisively “boggled & intrigued” & delayed the decision about joining either of the two Dominions & kept Pakistan guessing under a well planned Standstill Agreement “for his own profit”, the people in Poonch had acted for him & declared “Free (Azad) government of JK”.

There has been official silence, for “obvious reasons”, of the State complicity in the gruesome massacre of Jammu Muslims. But some foreign reporters who were present at the tragic times in JK have reported about the mayhem in most unambiguous terms. The reporter of The Times, London, dated 10<sup>th</sup> August, 1948, has reported: “2,37,000 Muslims were systematically exterminated — unless they escaped to Pakistan along the border — by the forces of the Dogra State headed by the Maharaja in person and aided by the Sikhs. **This happened in October 1947, five days before the Pathan invasion and nine days before the Maharaja’s accession to India**”. (Confirmed in UNSC, Meeting No. 534, March 6, 1951). Other reporters have put the number of massacred Muslims either less (2, 00,000, per Horace Alexander’s article in The Spectator, dated 16-01- 1948) or more ( 5,00,000 according to Ian Stephens, Making of Pakistan, New York, page 200 & 6,00,000 per Christopher Sneden, What happened to Muslims in Jammu, Journal of South Asian Studies, Vol.xxiv, no.2 (2000)). Whatever the actual number of the victims of that barbaric savagery of Dogra Ruler let loose on his Muslim subjects, it is a fact that human killings by State sponsored genocide are “statistics” & mere not “numbers” as in usual killings.

In that hour of crisis, how Kashmiri-leadership-Muslims as “brothers in faith” or “co-religionists” of Jammu Muslims were responding or reacting to the painful tragedy that had struck them just for their practicing “different religion” of Islam & affiliation with pro-Pakistan MC is a question that apparently needs to be answered.

1). Entire leadership of Muslim Conference, that overwhelmingly represented the Jammu Muslims, through its President Choudhary Ghulam Abbas, was behind the bars till ending 1947. So, obviously, they could not do much to prevent the communal carnage against Muslims. Sheikh Abdullah/SMA too was serving jail sentence of three years on sedition charges since May 1946. But on 29-09-1947, he was released by the ex-monarch at the behest of Nehru & Patel after tendering a “written apology” to him, the one whom he had been fighting over years for the rights of his people. It has to be noted that before his incarceration in May 1946, his struggle & public speeches had been directly against Dogra despotic rule that had been inflicting atrocities on the Kashmiri Muslims too; Jammu Muslims apart. Immediately, following his “orchestrated release” from prison, all of a sudden, the direction of his scathing attacks in public speeches, at all known Muslim shrines & other public places of Kashmir, changed from Dogra-despotism to the idea of two nation theory, its propounder-founder of Pakistan & sympathizers of Pakistan. SMA had a “cast role” in the whole drama that was scripted by Nehru & his men at Delhi for JK. Joseph Korbel has shed light on it in these words: “....Immediately after his release, Abdullah set up a number of meetings and declared at a gathering of 1,00,000 people at Hazuribagh, in Kashmir, on October 5 .....“We cannot desire to joint those [in Pakistan] who say that the people must have no voice in the matter. We shall be cut to pieces before we allow alliance between this State and people of this type”. Korbel proceeds to say: “... there can be no doubt that the sense of Sheikh Abdullah’s statement was *decidedly pro-Indian*, at least anti-Pakistani. The Sheikh’s subsequent actions are likewise significant. Soon after his release from prison and after

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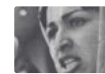
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a few days of campaigning in Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah visited New Delhi. In two statements ..... he confirmed that the *Poonchis were in open revolt against the Maharaja but he reaffirmed his policy against joining Pakistan*. He sympathized with the Indian policy of Hindu-Muslim unity but insisted on “freedom before accession.” (*Danger in Kashmir*): *SMA’s mantra of “freedom before accession” at such difficult time of Kashmiri’s history was just a ploy used by him to distance away Kashmiri Muslims from new Muslim State of Pakistan, see Nid e Haq by Munshi M Isaaq*).

**2).** Amidst the fighting that was going on against Dogra soldiers by Poonch rebels & SMA's full-throttle propaganda speeches right from the moment of his pre-planned-release from prison on 29-09-1947, Pathans from NWFP apart from assisting Poonch rebels, on 22-10-1947 launched an attack against Dogra soldiers to capture (Srinagar) Kashmir. There is a strong view that it was only when Pakistan was convinced that “the accession of Kashmir to India had become a fait accompli” that Pathan invasion of the territory took place. (Josef Korbel ; Christopher Snedden). At this crucial stage of JK history, two more important developments took place.

**(a)** Following Pathan attack that has to be seen in the light of entire scenario that was developing over months in JK, Hari Singh asked for military help to India while in the related letter addressed to Mountbatten he repeated Mountbatten’s already-declared words about Kashmir: “Naturally,... India cannot send... help.... without my State acceding to the Dominion of India.” (*Danger in Kashmir*). On 26-10-1947, when MC Mahajan, new MP of Kashmir who was an “Indian representative in Radcliffe Boundary Commission of Punjab”, together with VP Menon flew to New Delhi to meet Indian leaders for help, he found SMA already campaigning there at Nehru’s guesthouse from 24-10-1947. He was assured of help, apart from acceding to India, on the condition that SMA who was, as stated above, very much present in the meeting was inducted as Head of the Emergency Administration that was to be set up in JK by Hari Singh. **“Three days later, on October 30, the Maharaja appointed Sheikh Abdullah as the Head of Emergency Administration”.** (*Danger in Kashmir; Kashmir a Disputed Legacy*).

**(b)** In October 1947, Pakistan government sent a delegation to SMA that included his friend Dr. M. D. Tasir, a former Principal of S.P.College & Khawja Abdul Rahim, Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi, both of Kashmiri descent, inviting him to visit Pakistan. SMA instead flew to New Delhi (probably on 24 October) to consult his friend, Nehru, & in the meanwhile GM Sadiq who was sent to Pakistan returned (*not to Kashmir as has been propagandized by NC followers for 07 decades but*) to New Delhi directly with a letter from Jinnah addressed to SMA requesting his support for accession with that country & assuring him that accession with that country would be limited to defense, foreign affairs & communication only, besides State would be having autonomy, right to secede & permanent representation in foreign office of that country. This letter was handed over to Nehru by GM Sadiq & SMA. Presumably, **the future threads of conditional accession with India that was going to happen just after few days were picked up from this letter.** ( *Nid e Haq, M Isaaq Munshi; Betrayal Yesterday, Distortion Today, Munshi Ghulam Hassan*).

**3).** Pursuant to the brutal Jammu massacre, tens of thousands of Muslims were forced to migrate *en masse* to Pakistan & PAK for “saving” their lives. It is forcefully held that SMA did not, as Emergency Head, do anything tangible to stop mass migration of Jammu Muslims that adversely changed the demography of Jammu division & that he & his activists forced them (their political opponents affiliated with MC) to the other side of border. But SMA's biographer contradicts it. He writes that he tried to dissuade them but they were not interested in remaining in Jammu province after the horrible carnage & wanted to go across the border. So, their desire was respected & they were facilitated in Lorries to reach to their destination in Sialkot through Suchetgarh border. (*Blazing Chinar*). But in Kashmir, it may not be out of context to say, he & his activists pushed

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many of their political opponents ( MC supporters) across the border. It seems as if the thinking ability of the common Kashmiri-Muslims to judge the motives behind Jammu massacre of their “brethren in faith” was almost *paralyzed* by the mendacious & malicious propaganda of NC as they remained during that critical period almost *indifferent to it simply because they had been enraptured by* SMA's sweet voice packaging a hidden agenda of his friend, Nehru, about JK.

**4).** There is no evidence recorded by any historian or writer that a simple FIR was ever lodged against those responsible for this carnage. In his memoirs, Blazing Chinari, written by M Y Tang for him, SMA is not giving any reference of any investigation ever having been initiated into the merciless carnage during his strong political power which he enjoyed as PM of the State. His total silence as if nothing had happened with Jammu-Muslims raises a few eyebrows. Was he under any compulsion from his friend Nehru not to do it as it would have lifted the lid on the cauldron of circumstances under which accession took place? Was it to protect some killers who had joined NC & who later became ministers & administrators even during his PM-ship? There is an “allegation” leveled against him that when his attention was drawn to Jammu Muslim massacre, he replied that Jammu Muslims had never recognized him as their leader. ( Krishan Dev Sethi; Qudratullah Sahab).

**5).** Amid the hush silence maintained at State level on Jammu massacre of Muslims, SMA during those most critical days remained actively busy right from his release from jail on 29 September, 47 in Pak-bashing, obviously, for not much difficult to understand the cast role he had inferably undertaken at Nehru's desire in the whole sequence of events that were unfolding before Partition, whether that were excursions by a line of Indian leaders to Kashmir to meet Hari Singh, or meeting SMA & cashing on his known-anti-Pak & anti-MC mindset or the like, without uttering a single word of condemnation on the wholesale slaughter & barbarity that was unleashed on innocent Jammu Muslims by hounds of Hindu-Sikh goons. Then came 5<sup>th</sup> February, 1948 when SMA accompanying Indian representatives in a written speech gave a full vent to his inner veins of hatred against Pakistan & its sympathizers. Not only that, he lambasted “Pathan invaders” for the atrocities they had inflicted on non- Muslims of JK, without condemning in a passing reference non-Muslim communal marauders who had just 2-3 months back blood-bathed entire population of Muslims in their homes in Jammu province. Instead, he defended Hari Singh by lambasting Poonch rebels who too were fighting for their basic human rights against the one & same despotic ruler. Following the said “famous speech”, he was just month following elevated from the position of the Emergency Head of Interim Administration of the State to the Prime Minister-ship under the monarchy of Hari Singh on 17<sup>th</sup> March, 1948. Rest is again history.

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