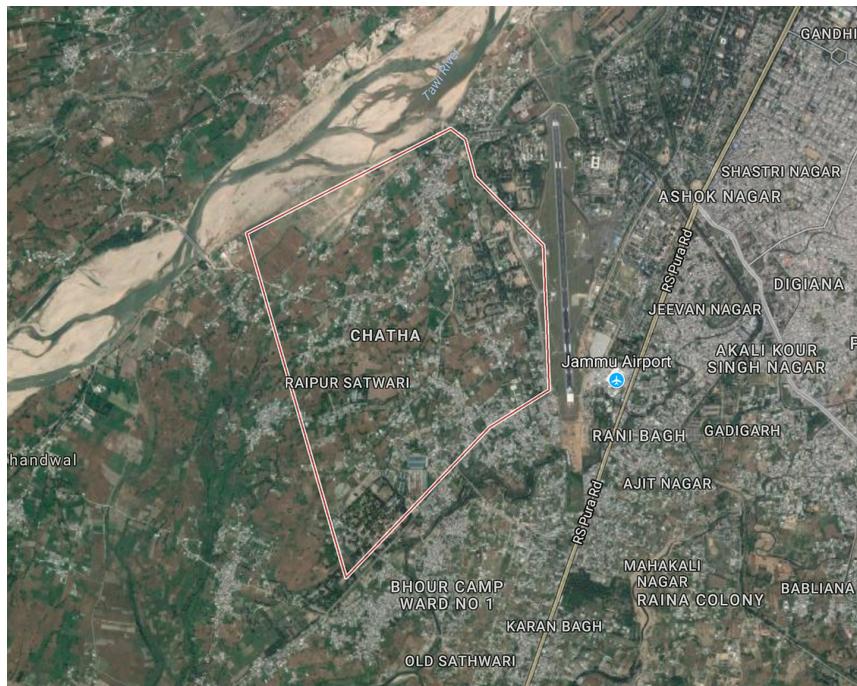


Jammu, October 1947

Ramanjit Singh



Chatha, Jammu - Site of Muslim massacres in October 1947

As the Punjabi Hindu and Sikh refugees from Sialkot and Rawalpindi migrated to Jammu, they conspired and took revenge on the Muslim population of Jammu. Aided by the Kashmir riayast army and police, what transpired was one of the worst massacres of hundreds of thousands of innocent Muslims in 1947. Cycle of revenge and counter revenge formed the tragic story of the madness that had engulfed the province.

Journalist Hamid Mir wrote a moving piece in the Indian Express about his grandmother Ghulam Fatima who went missing in Jammu during the Partition. He also writes about the atrocities that women on both sides faced during the riots.

Link to article: <http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/missing-since-1947-ghulam-fatima-india-pakistan-partition-independence-day/>

Excerpt:

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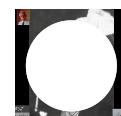
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What It Was Like



Samundari of Prithviraj Kapoor

But as my grandmother's bus drove out of Jammu city, it was stopped by a gang of armed Hindus and Sikhs. They ruthlessly killed all the males in front of the women and children. My mother was a small girl. When the attackers asked the women to come out from the buses, my grandmother Ghulam Fatima told my mother, Mumtaz, to hide under the dead bodies. She pushed her two smaller daughters, Jamila and Shamim, also under the bodies. A baby son was crying in her lap. He was too small to hide, so she ran with him into the nearby jungle. My mother, on the other hand, was able to conceal herself and her younger sisters amid the pools of congealing blood. They survived.

As for Ghulam Fatima and her baby son, my sobbing mother recounted what a relative had said, later. How Ghulam Fatima was last seen defending herself with a stick in her right hand and her little son in her left hand, but she was overpowered easily and dragged away by her attackers.

Another book, "Partition and Locality" by Ilyas Chattha, is a moving account of the rape and murder of both Muslim and non-Muslim women in Punjab. I read horrifying details of a train carnage in Kamonke (near Lahore) and the abduction of Hindu women. I belong to a generation of Pakistanis brought up by a parent who witnessed the trauma of partition first hand. I simply cannot forget my mother's tears, for her own missing mother. To me, independence is a reminder of the sacrifices made by my grandmother Ghulam Fatima and thousands of other women like her.

All these women wanted was to live in peace, but the brutal truth is that their successive generations are still searching for that elusive feeling. The people of the subcontinent certainly got freedom from British imperialism, but they remain slaves to their biases and to the hatred they spawned for each other all those decades ago. Today they are no more slaves of foreign invaders, but are slaves of this consuming hatred for each other.

In fact, they fear each other; they fear that they may, perhaps, find it in themselves to like each other despite this hatred. These people of the subcontinent – us — are worse in our behavior towards each other than the British who ruled for nearly three centuries.

"

Other reference links:

<https://thekashmirwalla.com/2020/11/unfolding-of-the-1947-jammu-massacre/>
<https://scroll.in/article/811468/the-killing-fields-of-jammu-when-it-was-muslims-who-were-eliminated>
<http://bit.ly/2uSC9KS>
<http://kashmirlife.net/circa-1947-a-long-story-67652/>
<https://www.punjabpartition.com/forum/online-articles-books/killing-fields-in-jammu-oct-1947>

From journalist Ved Bhasin's article

<https://kashmirlife.net/jammu-1947-issue-35-vol-07-89728/>

"

The worse happened in the Jammu city where the Muslim localities of Talab Khatikan and Mohalla Ustad were virtually besieged and the Muslims were even denied water supply and food-grains. In the lower parts of the city Lakhdata Bazar and Peer Mitha Bazar were the dividing lines between Hindus



Jammu,
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This Is Not
That Dawn

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and Muslims. Most of the Muslims outside the Muslim dominated areas were brutally killed by the communal marauders who moved freely in vehicles with arms and ammunition even when the city was officially put under curfew. The curfew, it appeared, was meant only to check the movement of Muslims. Some of us managed to carry some food-grains for besieged Muslim friends and others in Mohalla Ustad. Though Colonel Pir Mohammed and some other royalists had put up white peace flags on their houses the communalists made many efforts to attack them.

Hindus had taken up positions on their houses situated at the border line of Lakhadara Bazar and Peer Mitha. They were later joined by the troops from Patiala. The Muslims in Talab Khatikan area too had joined to defend themselves with whatever arms they could gather. Some reinforcement was provided to them by the Muslim Conference later.

There was mass killing of Muslims in and around Jammu. A large number of Gujjar men and women who used to supply milk to the city from the surrounding villages were massacred en-route. The Ramnagar rakh was littered with the dead bodies of Gujjar men, women and children. A colleague of mine, while on his morning walk in Ramnagar area, heard the shrieks of a child and found an 8-9 year old girl crying along with the slain bodies of her parents in Ramnagar rakh.

The worst carnage took place later when the Muslims in Talab Khatikan area were asked to surrender. They were shifted to the police lines at Jogi Gate, where now Delhi Public School is situated. Instead of providing them security, the administration encouraged them to go to Pakistan for their safety. The first batch of several thousand Muslims were loaded in about sixty lorries to take them to Sialkot. Unaware of what is going to happen to them these families boarded the buses. The vehicles were escorted by the troops. But when they reached near Chattha on Jammu-Sialkot road, in the outskirt of the city, a large number of armed RSS men and Sikh refugees were positioned there. They were pulled out of the vehicles and killed mercilessly with the soldiers either joining them or looking as idle spectators. The news about the massacre was kept a closely guarded secret.

Next day another batch of these Muslim families were similarly boarded in the vehicles and met the same fate. Some of those who somehow managed to escape the wrath of killers reached Sialkot to narrate their tales of woes and sorrow.

"

On Mirpur, journalist Ved Bhasin writes

"

The communal violence that gripped Jammu was not altogether one-sided. A large number of Hindu and Sikhs too were butchered in some parts of the region, particularly in Rajouri, Mirpur and areas now under Pakistan. In Rajouri while Hindus from the neighbouring Muslim dominated villages shifted to the town, the Muslims from the town migrated to the nearby villages or even crossed over to the other side. The Muslim gangs surrounded the town later and resorted to mass killings, loot and rapes. Similarly a large number of Hindus were killed in Mirpur district. While the Muslims from the district town of Mirpur migrated to the nearby villages and even to Jhelum, the Hindus from the villages started trekking to the town for safety.

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