

MOST POLITICAL PARTY OFFICES ON SILENT MODE

VOLUME 2 | EDITION 16 | 17 APRIL 2022 | ₹40

KASHMIRCENTRAL.IN

KASHMIR CENTRAL

A KZINE INITIATIVE



PLEA TO RESTORE HARMONY

**Utterances At National
Level Against Muslim Minority
Strengthen Anti-India
Narrative In Kashmir**

KASHMIR CENTRAL

Volume 2 Edition 16
17 April 2022

EDITOR

Bashir Ahmad Bhat

MANAGING EDITOR

Bisma Nazir

**OWNED, PRINTED AND
PUBLISHED BY**

Bashir Ahmad Bhat
Registered with the
Registrar of Newspapers of
India under RNI No:

PUBLISHED FROM

J-24, Jawahar Nagar,
Srinagar, 190008

**ADDRESS FOR ALL
CORRESPONDENCE**

J-24, Jawahar Nagar
Srinagar, 190008

Email:

editor@kashmircentral.in

PRINTED AT

Access Publications
HMT, Srinagar
Mobile 6005737819

All Rights Reserved.
Reproduction in whole or in
part without written
permission is prohibited

All Advertising
enquiries, comments and
feedback are welcome at
kashmirkzine@gmail.com

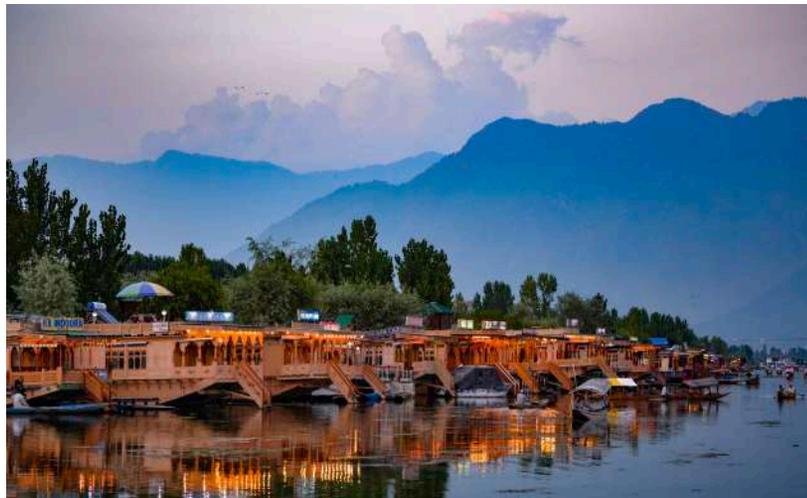
Periodicity: Weekly
Language: English
Price: ₹40

The information
contained in this magazine
has been reviewed for
accuracy and is deemed
reliable but is not necessar-
ily complete or guaranteed
by the Editor. The views
expressed in this digest are
solely that of the writers and
do not necessarily reflect
the views of KASHMIR
CENTRAL

Happy Days At Dal Again

The endeavour of one man can result in exemplary achievement and accomplishment. The resolve of LG Shri Manoj Sinha to ensure the cleanliness of Dal Lake has brought wondrous results.

The LG ensured that the drive to clean Dal Lake was carried out in full earnestness, and personally monitored the progress of the campaign. His efforts have borne fruit. The pristine beauty of Dal Lake, cleaned of weeds and filth, has delighted the Kashmiris and the lakhs of visiting tourists alike. This is indeed a very positive endeavour and deserves accolades. The Dal has been cleaned not just from the Boulevard side but also from Nishat side. To



a significant extent, its beauty and glory have been restored.

The Mughal Gardens of Srinagar need similar focused attention of the LG. These are favourite haunts of the locals and also the tourists. But the litter that we see strewn about at these beauty spots is a huge dampener. Be it the expansive gardens of Chashme Shahi, Pari Mahal, or the gardens at Harwan and Nishat, a massive cleanliness drive needs to be initiated by the UT Administration.

Other major tourist spots like Gulmarg, Pahalgam and the like also need dedicated brigades focused on cleanliness. The personal monitoring by the LG for developmental work at the favourite destinations in Kashmir for the locals and tourists shall further enhance their appeal and maximize their revenue potential by drawing more and more visitors.

Bashir Assad

Aisha ؓ said, "I heard the Messenger ﷺ saying: "The talbina gives rest to the heart of the patient and makes it active and relieves some of his sorrow and grief."

(Saheeh al-Bukhaaree (5325)).

Being closer to Best Of Mankind ﷺ

KANWAL
SINCE 1971
The Flavour of Kashmir

Talbeena
تَلْبِيْنَة
تَلْبِيْنَة
جو کی کھیر

اجزاء
• جو کا دلیا • کھجور
• بادام • کشمش
• الائچی پاورڈر • تخم خربوزہ

Ingredients: Barley (Pearls), Dry Dates, Almonds Raisins (Kishmish), Elaichi Powder, Musk Melon Seeds (Kharbooz).

NUTRITIONAL VALUE	
Serving Size 1 Cup	
Calories	145Kcal
Fat 4g	25%
Carbohydrate 22g	61%
Protein 5g	14%

Percentage is based on a diet of 2000 calories a day.

PRODUCE OF KASHMIR INDIA
KEEP IN A COOL & DRY PLACE

NET WT: 100g
Instant Mix Easy to Cook



Except Apni Party, Political Party Offices On Silent Mode

4

PLEA: RESTORE COMMUNAL HARMONY

8



DIL 14 CHAHTA HAI

On The Wings Of Folk Heritage, Kashmiri Singers Fly High



22

Female Kashmiri Performers Battle Patriarchy To Carve Their Own Space, Seek Fame

ITNA SANNAATA KYON HAI BHAI?

Are Kashmir's Political Parties Left With No Interest in Public and Politics?

Apni Party Stands Out

by Bisma NAZIR

Political leaders are for the people, and are made by the people. So are their political offices. A political office is not someone's resting place. It is a place where political leaders are supposed to interact with the general public and address their grievances.

A society cannot grow if its

political offices are desolated and its leaders choose to rest at their plush houses, expressing condolence and sympathy on social media and thinking that their job is done. When the political leaders have no interest in the public, then how can they expect that people will have interest in them? This is a two-way lane.

The offices of political parties in Srinagar are by and large deserted

these days. The number of workers visiting these offices has drastically declined over the last two years. The leaders of these political parties seldom visit their party offices. One catches their glimpse only when a rare party meeting of senior leaders is convened at the respective party headquarters.

The only exception is the Apni Party Office at Church Lane, where workers and leaders keep



The National Conference office at the Nawa-i-Subh Complex bears a forlorn look. A few office bearers and a thin staff trudge into the place now and then. The NC leadership comprising Dr Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah hardly visit the party headquarters



APNI PARTY THE HAPPY EXCEPTION

The Apni Party Office at Church Lane is the happy exception to the desolation that marks the offices of other political parties in Kashmir. The office is abuzz daily with the to and fro of leaders and workers of Apni Party.

Party President Sayed Altaf Bukhari makes it a point to attend the office when he is in Srinagar. Usually by 10 am, he is ready to go to the party office. Other leaders of his party too visit the office frequently. This is the place that actually bears the look of a political party headquarters. There is always one or the other activity happening here. Many commoners visit his office on a regular basis to get their issues resolved.

Across Kashmir, the leadership of all political parties barring Apni Party is looking confused. For them, the situation seems to be like choosing between the devil and the deep sea. To make matters worse, workers of these parties seem disenchanted with their leadership. This is more pronounced after the scrapping of Article 370 and 35A of the Constitution in August 2019. There are strong currents of disaffection because the party leadership has no answers to the questions posed to them by their respective cadres.

coming and going throughout the day.

NC OFFICE WEARS A FORLORN LOOK

The National Conference office at the Nawa-i-Subh Complex bears a deserted look. A few office bearers and a thin staff trudge into the place now and then. The NC leadership comprising Dr Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah hardly visit the party headquarters.

Things were different in January this year. There was some life in the party headquarters of Kashmir's regional political parties. Their leadership was upbeat that elections would be held anytime during the year. The movement continued for a few weeks. Now, the enthusiasm seems to have vanished as the Election Commission of India is silent on the issue of elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

For decades, the NC party headquarters was always marked by a flurry of activity. It would remain flooded with the movement and hectic parleys of NC leaders and workers. Now, the party office wears an almost forlorn look. Visit the NC office, and you shall find some police vehicles on the premises, and some policemen moving about. Occasionally, some workers from Srinagar city visit the office to mark their presence.

PDP President Mehbooba Mufti's fortified Fairview residence at Gupkar Road remains similarly deserted. It seems that the gate remains closed throughout the day. The PDP Office at Municipal Park has no visitors at all, and remains almost lifeless

Strangely, even at the residences of party supremos Dr Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah at Gupkar Road, one does not see many visitors waiting outside.

ALL QUIET AT PC AND PDP OFFICES

PDP President Mehbooba Mufti's fortified Fairview residence at Gupkar Road remains similarly deserted. A couple of police and private vehicles can be seen on the main entrance of Mehbooba's house. It seems that the gate remains closed throughout the day. The PDP Office at Municipal Park has no visitors at all. The office remains lifeless. Hardly any worker is seen visiting the office.

The only faces one sees at the PDP office are the employees here. No political leader of PDP marks his presence at the office. A man



standing outside the PDP office told KASHMIR CENTRAL that the only Hamid Kohsheen, a middle-rung PDP leader from Rajbagh visits the party office occasionally, flanked by a couple of friends. No other party leader is seen visiting the PDP office.

The situation at the Congress office on MA Road is no different. A shopkeeper near the party office laughingly remarked that only

some old and tired Congressmen visit the party office occasionally to kill time. There is no activity at the Congress office, the shopkeepers near the party office stated.

The party headquarters of People's Conference is at the residence of PC supremo Sajad Lone. Here too, there is no movement of other party leaders or political workers.

The General Secretary of the Congress in J&K, Surinder Singh Channi recently told KASHMIR CENTRAL, "Article 370 proved to be more harmful to Jammu than to Kashmir. The coming election will totally depend on people – whether abrogation of Article 370 has benefitted them or harmed them".

No doubt that the election will depend on the people, as it always has been. In this age-old equation, the political parties are missing. The more they interact with

The party headquarters of People's Conference is at the residence of PC supremo Sajad Lone. Here too, there is no movement of other party leaders or political workers



people and resolve their issues, the more their acceptability and popularity. Otherwise how will the people trust them with their votes? Why should they vote for someone who has no concern for them and is not bothered?

PLEA: RESTORE COMMUNAL HARMONY

Communal Hate In India Fans Insecurities In Kashmir

Pakistan Amplifies It To Deepen Anti-India Sentiment

by Bashir ASSAD

The fresh wave of communal tensions and attacks on minorities in mainland India is disturbing. Reports of organized clashes between the two communities in some parts of the country and the subsequent spillover of such incidents have a cascading impact on Kashmiri mind space.

Hate speeches are another major point of concern. Be it by any community, the impact of hate speech is always detrimental upon a nation. Our thoughts form our words. Our words drive our actions. Hate

speech hence forms the root of many forms of violence in the society. Those who see it in isolation will do a great disservice to the great nation that is India.

**PAKISTAN CAPITALIZES
ON HATE INCIDENTS REPORTED
FROM INDIA**

Pakistan's propaganda machinery is maximizing every incident of communal hatred in India. Its social media brigade is meticulously using such incidents to breed insecurities among the youth in Kashmir.



All incidents of communal hate reported from India are amplified and released in a deluge on the Kashmiri social media to build hate against the mainland. Comments made by youth in the mainland on social media platforms are edited and maximized in order to breed insecurity and hate among the Kashmiri youth. Hate speech by citizens in the mainland is used by Pakistan as ready-made fodder to inflame the Kashmiri youths.

As it is, the anti-India social media deluge driven by Pakistan indoctrinates our youth with enough venom. But Pakistan can choose to indulge in foul play and use foul language. It is not driven by democratic values, nor does it have any obligation to conduct itself as a responsible neighbour.

The same cannot be said about the bonafide citizens of India. We all live by an unspoken social contract by which we agree to conduct ourselves with grace and with responsibility as the citizens of the world's largest democracy. Those who indulge in hate speech or in hate-driven communal actions are demolishing the social contract that binds responsible citizens of a democracy. The Supreme Court and the government

must step in to control these flaming fires. Otherwise, innocents on both sides of the religious divide shall be consumed by these flames.

It is pointless to claim that why should citizens in the mainland conduct themselves with responsibility and grace if terrorists are targeting and killing minorities in Kashmir. The citizens of a progressive, development-oriented nation cannot be equated with terrorists. The conduct of the terrorists cannot become the benchmark for how the citizenry of free and democratic India must conduct itself.

GROWING MISTRUST BETWEEN COMMUNITIES IS DAMAGING INDIA'S GLOBAL IMAGE

The growing mistrust between communities that have lived together for centuries with harmony is reflecting badly on the global image of the country. Research and analysis over decades has established that far-right Hindu extremism and Islamic extremism feed off one another. Each helps the other to sustain



PHOTO: OPENDEMOCRACY

Those who indulge in hate speech or in hate-driven communal actions are demolishing the social contract that binds responsible citizens of a democracy. The Supreme Court and the government must step in to control these flaming fires. Otherwise, innocents on both sides of the religious divide shall be consumed by these flames

Hate speech hence forms the root of many forms of violence in the society. Those who see it in isolation will do a great disservice to the great nation that is India



PHOTO: BBC.COM

and flourish.

It has also been observed that the growing extremist tendency amidst the majority community in mainland is strengthening the religious extremism in Kashmir. The utterances at the national level against the Muslim minority further strengthen the anti-India narrative in Kashmir.

Admittedly, Kashmir has been in the grip of religious extremism for decades. The fundamentalists who drive the narrative of terrorism or Jihad are exclusivist in their outlook.

There is also no denying of the fact that many among the miniscule minority community of Kashmiri Pandits who chose not to leave in 1990 are living under fear as terrorists keep attacking and killing them mercilessly. The fear among the members of minority community in Kashmir is deep now. Pakistan is adding fuel to fire by consistently inciting and indoctrinating Kashmiri youth. Pakistan exploits the utterances against minorities in mainland India to its strategic advantage.

The hatred-filled social media platforms in India are amplified by Pakistan to breed fears among the Kashmiri youth and push them to religious extremism.

The religious polarization and the hatred expressed by some members of the majority community against the minorities in the mainland cannot be justified.

WHY PAKISTAN CANNOT BE A TEMPLATE FOR INDIA

Pakistan and its ideological extensions in Kashmir don't follow any rulebook. They are on the perpetual mode of undermining, rather demolishing the principles of humanity. That is precisely why the peace-loving people across the world who believe in human values and coexistence call such extreme action as terrorism. Given this fundamental difference in outlook between the Indian nation and the Pakistani state, the events unfolding in India go against the Indian ethos, culture and of course against the tenets of the Indian democracy. One cannot justify the communal hatred



PHOTO:BBC.COM

The growing mistrust between communities that have lived together for centuries with harmony is reflecting badly on the global image of the country



which has engulfed many states in the country. Pakistan can choose to indulge in foul play and use foul language. It is not driven by democratic values, nor does it have any obligation to conduct itself as a responsible neighbor. The same cannot be said about the Indian citizenry. We all live by an unspoken social contract by which we agree to conduct ourselves with grace and with responsibility as the citizens of the world's largest democracy. Those who indulge in hatred, or those who are create wedges between the communities are

demolishing the social contract that binds responsible citizens of a democracy. Some people justify the provocations by the majority community in India by citing the killing of members of minority community by terrorists in Kashmir. Such talk and sham justifications demean and denigrate Indian culture and ethos. Majoritarianism by one community in one particular region of the country cannot justify majoritarian supremacy in any other region. The conduct of Pakistan-sponsored terrorists cannot become



PHOTO:BBC.COM

Majoritarianism by a community in one region of the country cannot justify majoritarian supremacy in any other region. The conduct of Pakistan-sponsored terrorists cannot become the benchmark for how the citizenry of free and democratic India must conduct itself

the benchmark for how the citizenry of free and democratic India must conduct itself. Unfortunately, hostility between communities is deliberately fanned by political leaders. There are deliberate attempts to foster contempt for each other. Hindu fundamentalist groups consistently try to normalize the theory of the "clash of civilizations" by Hindu extremist groups. Strange though it may seem, within a nation bound by its Constitution and also the common interests of the citizenry, there seems to some sort of unwillingness to coexist.

CIVIL SOCIETY MUST RISE AND STEM THE NEGATIVITY

The rising animosity between the communities has resulted in the rise of disturbing incidents of Islamophobia and deadly terror attacks. These claim the lives of innocents, and fuel more hate and fear against each other. All such incidents help extremist groups to strengthen their divisive narratives. At

times, these degenerate further into terror activities. The competing fundamentalist narratives are potentially dangerous for a country which has earned so much of goodwill and respect in the global community. These machinations admittedly fetch political dividends to politicians on both sides of the religious divide. But the nation has to pay a price for it. As the there is no meaningful and constructive engagement and interaction between the two communities, one often witnesses a vicious circle of rage. Fear among the people of one community feeds fear among the members of another community elsewhere. This ultimately results in a toxic cycle of violence followed by more violence, making it difficult to achieve peace and stability. The powerful Indian civil society must step in to open the channels of communication between the two communities. Leaving politics and politicians aside, the Indian civil society must educate people and remind them of the great Indian ethos and culture reflected in the Constitution and the democratic values of the country.

DIL CHAHTA HAI

On The Wings Of Folk Heritage, Kashmiri Singers Fly High

MAREAYA FAYAZ tells of how Kashmiris are discovering and bringing to the world the ways in which music can transcend the boundaries that conflict and violence want to impose



meet so many people in the mainland for whom Kashmir is just a violent headline. So many people in India and also abroad see Kashmir with a singular lens. They think all we live and breathe here is conflict. They think that is our solo reality.

How wrong they are. Yes, we are forced to live with the stresses and strains of conflict. Yes, the peace of our cities, our towns and villages is more fragile than what people in the mainland have experienced.

And yet, life blossoms and blooms here. Our youth surge with the enthusiasm and the happy spirit that so defines the young. Our young men and women are defining every day – through their many talents and accomplishments – what it means to be a Kashmiri. For you see, militancy is only a sad part of Kashmir. It doesn't define who we are.

And who are we? We are the holders of a 5000 year old civilization. We are the people whose folk arts, folk dances and folk traditions have entranced for ages. We are the repositories of our rich, varied heritage and our culture. Whether the militancy masterminds like it or not, we are taking forward our glorious heritage and culture with style and glory.

Even with so many restrictions, young Kashmiri artists have found a way to keep alive the folk music and dances of Kashmir. It is com-

monly said that music transcends boundaries. We Kashmiris are discovering and bringing to the world the ways in which music can transcend the boundaries that conflict and violence want to impose.

Militancy tried to suffocate our voices. Militancy tried to suffocate our songs. But folk arts and folk traditions refuse to die. They grow like an invisible force within us, keeping their cherished space in our hearts and minds.

The talent of Kashmiri youth has developed new wings with the freedom that the social media brings to us. A new generation of youthful singers and musicians has emerged in the Valley, successfully fusing folk music and poetry with modern melodies. So we have artistes who are celebrating folk music, and we also have artistes who are celebrating fusion music. Both kinds are finding huge appreciation within the Valley, and also within the large Kashmiri diaspora globally.

Several young musicians who are familiar with new-age music and modern singing instruments, and also have knowledge of our music traditions, have risen to prominence in recent years. Many of these youth have been re-creating folk music using innovative methods and procedures. In recent years, a number of musical ensembles have emerged in Kashmir, organizing hugely popular singing events both indoors and outside.

We are the holders of a 5000 year old civilization. We are the people whose folk arts, folk dances and folk traditions have entranced for ages. We are the repositories of our rich, varied heritage and our culture. Whether the militancy masterminds like it or not, we are taking forward our glorious heritage and culture with style and glory





Waqar sings in Urdu, Punjabi, Pahadi, and Kashmiri. His videos register millions of views and likes on YouTube

WAQAR KHAN

Waqar Khan, in his mid-20s, is a songwriter from north Kashmir's Karnah, a town near the Line of Control. Waqar sings in Urdu, Punjabi, Pahadi, and Kashmiri. Courtesy this wide repertoire, Waqar has been garnering popularity within Kashmir and also in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir. Waqar has unquestionably established himself as a unique talent. His Pahari songs are popular on both sides of the international border. His captivating voice and grasp of Urdu Gazal notes and phrasing have made him popular in this genre too. Waqar Khan's videos register millions of views and likes on YouTube.

NARGIS KHATOON

Nargis Khatoon is one of the most well-known of the new generation of young Kashmiri musicians. Khatoon, a 21-year-old singer and poet, has been singing and writing poems for a long time. The year 2020, when the epidemic hit globally, proved to be a great year for this aspiring artist. Bollywood celebrity Sushmita Sen shared a song video by Nargis with lovely comments for her. Nargis strums the guitar beautifully. She has the strongest affinity with Kashmiri music. Nargis says that every time she plays outside Kashmir, she makes it a point to start with a Kashmiri song.



The year 2020, when the epidemic hit globally, proved to be a great year for this aspiring artist. Nargis begins all her performances outside Kashmir with a Kashmiri song

AISAAR ASHIQ



Aisaar Ashiq, a 22-year-old singer-composer from Srinagar's Lal Bazar neighborhood, is commonly seen singing at musical events in Kashmir. He recently performed in cities like Chandigarh and Jammu.



Ishfaq Kawa is a household name in Kashmir for his mesmerizing songs. Ishfaq, a singer, lyricist, composer and director, has emerged as a youth icon and social media sensation

ISHFAQ KAWA

Ishfaq Kawa is in his mid-20s. He is the son of a farmer from Bandipora in north Kashmir. Kawa is a well-known name in Kashmiri music and singing. He is the man who successfully translated various Hindi songs into Kashmiri and received significant acclaim for his groundbreaking work.

Kawa is one of the few young Kashmiri vocalists who has remade a number of well-known folk songs utilizing new-age techniques and modern instruments. All of these singers have been using social media platforms like Instagram and YouTube to upload their songs and have got thousands of followers and likes on these platforms.

THE POPULAR WEDDING SINGERS OF KASHMIR

Songs and dances at weddings are an old Kashmiri tradition. There are many wedding singers who are highly popular in the Valley. Now, they are also using the social media platforms to fly high and find new admirers and new markets.

These wedding singers are doing a tremendous job in keeping our culture of singing and dancing flourishing and vibrant. Many transgender wedding singers too are a big hit on social media.

Reshma is a popular wedding singer of Kashmir. The duo of Chinki and Minki, again highly popular wedding singers, has been taking the social media by storm.



Chinki and Minki, popular wedding singers

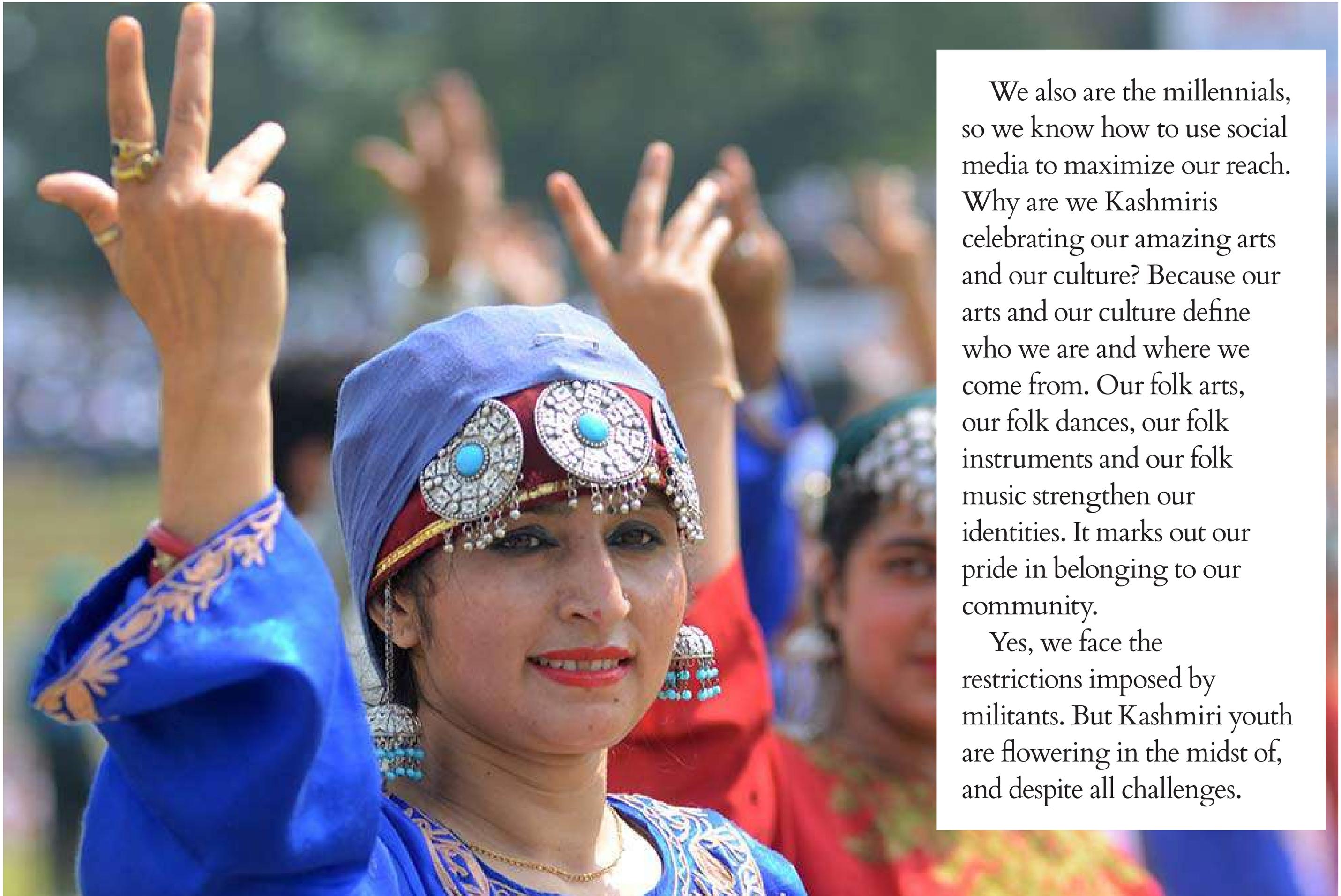
SUFI SINGERS OF KASHMIR

Kashmir is witnessing a growing breed of Sufi singers. Among them, the all-women band of Yemberzal is gaining huge popularity.

The new breed of singers and dancers in Kashmir are proving that they shall not bend to politics driven by religion. They have decided to find their groove in the beloved forms of Kashmiri music and dance, and keep our cultural heritage thriving. The guns will not silence the fire of these artists.



Reshma, popular for wedding songs sung in unique style



We also are the millennials, so we know how to use social media to maximize our reach. Why are we Kashmiris celebrating our amazing arts and our culture? Because our arts and our culture define who we are and where we come from. Our folk arts, our folk dances, our folk instruments and our folk music strengthen our identities. It marks out our pride in belonging to our community.

Yes, we face the restrictions imposed by militants. But Kashmiri youth are flowering in the midst of, and despite all challenges.

THE PASSION TO SING, THE WINGS TO FLY



**Female
Kashmiri
Performers
Battle
Patriarchy To
Carve Their
Own Space,
Seek Fame**

Bushra Ishtiyag, shown here playing a harmonium, and her sister sing together in the style of the Sufi genre.

Photo: GLOBALPRESSJOURNAL.COM

Pragaash, a three-member all-girl Kashmiri rock band received accolades both nationally and internationally in 2013. Sadly, it suffered hatred and venom on social media in 2013. Pragaash got caught in the darkness of bigotry.

But the human spirit constantly yearns to achieve and accomplish. Sakeena Reshi, Nargis Majid and other female singers and dancers of Kashmir are making themselves seen and heard. They are competing and creating a niche for themselves in the male-dominated entertainment industry of Kashmir.

Bigots on the social media label women entertainers as shameless and un-Islamic. The patriarchal moral high ground is always there. If music is haraam in Islam, why haven't the male entertainers faced the wrath of fundamentalists, one might ask.

It is because the patriarchs don't want to give space to women. One, they want to restrict women's choices. Second, they want to determine what choice a woman can make.

RICH TRADITION OF FEMALE ACHIEVERS

Kashmir has a rich history of female artists and achievers. It is dismaying to see that there is little tolerance for women who push beyond traditional gender roles. All women achievers who want to explore a career beyond the strict boundaries grapple with a complex social structure. They yearn for personal fulfillment in the field of their choice, but are also threatened by criticism or worse from aggressive elements within the community.

In Kashmiri society, religion and gender politics has been prominently intertwined. Women have been doubly disadvantaged – both on the outside and within – when art is restricted or allowed in terms of gender. The religious undertone in the Valley has been adverse to women's freedom of choice.

Despite these challenges, women artistes and entertainers continue to make space for themselves. Kashmir continues to serve as a source of inspiration for these women who are pursuing their dreams. Various elements of music have flourished in Kashmir over time. In the Valley, music has always been present. The 14th-century mystic poetess Lal Ded and the 16th-century mystic poetess Habba Khatoon – also

known as the “nightingale of Kashmir” – had a deep influence on our cultural consciousness. Sadly, the Valley's cultural heritage of poetesses and women singers has also been subjected to religious censorship in the recent decades.

Music is a beautiful and treasured part of our Kashmiri heritage. Kashmir boasts of a private radio station that primarily broadcasts music. Given our strong connectedness to music, the online attack on women entertainers on the social media platforms is highly unfortunate. A casual observer can assume that this online attack on women entertainers is religiously motivated. This is not the case. The opposition to women entertainers has its roots in the misogynistic approach of Kashmiri men and women who willfully ignore the early Islamic musical traditions.

This is an odd dissonance that must be combated

from within. Women in Kashmir must regain the lost musical space. They must rediscover our forgotten lyrical sounds and instruments. They must explore and strengthen the Muslim and Kashmiri musical traditions of the Valley.

These women have faced adversity for pursuing their choice of career. They have faced abuse in

the male-dominated society of Kashmir. But they did not let the criticism stop them. They are an inspiration for other women who want to follow their dreams. Even when some of these women felt forced to leave Kashmir, they dealt with the challenge with grace.

All women achievers who want to explore a career beyond the strict boundaries grapple with a complex social structure. They yearn for personal fulfillment in the field of their choice, but are also threatened by criticism or worse from aggressive elements within the community. There is little tolerance for women who push beyond traditional gender roles



YEMBERZAL

Yemberzal, the all-woman Sufi band of Kashmir faced a daunting challenge in the form of online hate and abuse. The abuse began in 2020, when they started to get media attention. Online abusers threatened them for playing music in public and appearing in videos. Eventually, the women stopped appearing in video interviews, but they have continued to perform at various programs and concerts all over the valley, and have received many awards.

(UMERASIF/TRTWORLD)



UZMA AND BUSHRA ISHTIYAQ

Uzma and Bushra Ishtiyaq, twin sisters and a singing pair, gained news in Indian-administered Kashmir in 2016 after their performance on India's popular music competition, Sa Re Ga Ma Pa. The duo advanced to the competition's third round. Then came the death threats. The sisters state they received more gender-related slurs on social media and in emails that year than they can count. To flee the dangers, they traveled to India's capital New Delhi, where the competition was to be held. Many female singers state that the only way to stay safe and successful is to leave their home region.

These women have faced adversity for pursuing their choice of career. But they did not let the criticism stop them. They are an inspiration for other women who want to follow their dreams

MEHAK ASHRAF



Mehak Ashraf's name may be unfamiliar to most Indians, but she has steadily built a name for herself on the musical scene of Kashmir. The 21-year-old, who studies at a college in Srinagar, is Kashmir's lone female rapper. Mehak's choice to be a rapper is surprising, given the fairly conservative atmosphere of the city. But now Mehak is devoted to her chosen field. Mehak has spent the last nine years honing her craft as a rapper. She has broken the invisible glass ceiling. Mehak uses her vocal delivery of "rhyme, rhythmic speech and street lingo" to expose or red-flag urgent societal issues and challenges.

Her music has a large following on different platforms including YouTube, Instagram and Facebook. Most of them are youngsters. In an interview, Mehak stated that her family was hesitant regarding her choice of being a rapper on account of the comments she might receive.

MEHMEET SAYEED

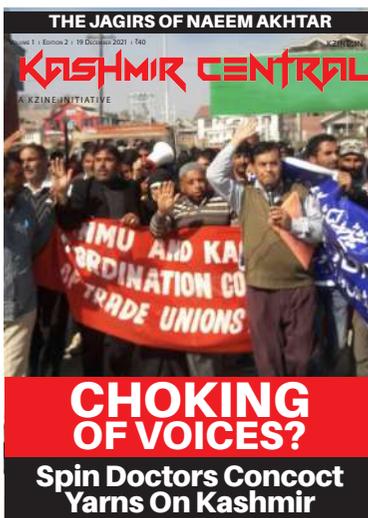


Mehmeet Sayeed, an eminent artist and singer of Kashmir has performed in noted global musical concerts on Kashmiri music and has delivered enthralling performances. Her career also put her in the limelight and also invited hefty online abuse of bigots. Undaunted by these challenges, Mehmeet encourages women to follow their dreams and not to be dampened by abuse and criticism.

SUBSCRIBE

KASHMIR CENTRAL

A KZINE INITIATIVE



YES! I wish to Subscribe to Kashmir Central

TERM	NUMBER OF ISSUES	PRICE	SELECT
6 MONTHS	24	₹1,080	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 YEAR	48	₹2,150	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 YEARS	96	₹4,320	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 YEARS	144	₹6,480	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name

Mailing Address

Pin code:

Email:

Contact No.:

Cash

Cheque No.

ACCOUNT DETAILS:

Account Title : Kashmir Central

Account No: 50200066073788

IFSC: HDFC0002419

Branch : Aramwari Rajbagh Srinagar, 190008

Signature

PLEASE SIGN AND SEND THIS TO
Circulation Department, KASHMIR CENTRAL,
J24 Jawahar Nagar Srinager J&K 190008

e-mail: kashmirkzine@gmail.com Circulation Phone:- 8491822527