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KASHMIR CENTRAL

A KZINE INITIATIVE

URGENTLY NEEDED INTERNATIONAL AIR CARGO FACILITY AT SRINAGAR AIRPORT



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WHY YASIN MALIK PLEADED GUILTY TO CHARGES IN NIA COURT

J KLF Chief Yasin Malik was convicted by a NIA court on Thursday in a terror funding case. Interestingly, Malik pleaded guilty to all the charges leveled against him by the country's premier investigating agency. Even the Judge who heard the case had asked Malik whether he wants to rethink his plea. Malik stated that he has taken a conscious decision. He was accordingly convicted for criminal conspiracy and waging war against the state.

There are many criminal cases registered against Malik in various courts of law. The nature and seriousness of charges leveled against him could lead to his conviction in other cases too. That seems to be precisely the reason why he pleaded guilty. Malik knew that in one or the other case, he is going to be convicted.

Malik is fully aware of the consequences, and wants to project himself as a hero before people by pleading guilty. Those who know Malik closely had told me long ago that he would plead guilty rather than fighting in futility for proving himself innocent. About six months ago, a senior political leader and a close friend of Malik told me that Malik would never plead innocence because he knows the nature of charges he faces and the consequences thereof.

The NIA court may decide the quantum of punishment in next hearing possibly.



Bashir Assad

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URGENTLY NEEDED INTERNATIONAL AIR CARGO FACILITY AT SRINAGAR AIRPORT

In the interest of the tourism sector and also the manufacturing, horticulture and handicrafts sector, Srinagar-Sharjah flights must be resumed immediately. Plus direct flights between Srinagar-Jeddah must be started

by **Sheikh Sameer**



In international trade, two factors are supreme. Quality and time. Any lack on either of these fronts makes manufacturers and traders lose out to stiff global competition.

Globally, Brand Kashmir is identified with high quality. If we talk of edible products, Brand Kashmir carries imprinted double coding: High Quality, Great Taste.

On the strength of quality and taste, the produce from Kashmir can beat the produce grown anywhere. Ditto for our handicrafts. Incomparable workmanship and intricacy of craft are the hallmark of Kashmir.

Unfortunately, products which are much inferior to our products get a bigger market globally because of the second major factor in international trade – time. Our products are not able to reach world markets because Kashmir lacks strong Dry Port facilities.

While international air cargo facility from Srinagar airport has been announced by the Airport Authority of India, it has not been made operational till now. International air cargo facility shall significantly boost the entire economy of Kashmir - horticulturists, manufacturers, traders, artisans, weavers and more. It shall benefit lakhs of families across Kashmir that are engaged in high-quality horticulture and the production of supremely crafted artifacts.

International air cargo facility is a win-win for all and must be made operational soon. The producers will get the best prices. They will get new opportunities and new markets, and will be encouraged to aim for even higher quality

Sheikh Ashiq, President of Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) said that the valley's export-oriented industry has suffered immensely due to lack of dry port infrastructure. "All our products carry additional freight tariff for international transport, because first they have to be carried to Delhi for international cargo. This makes the cost escalate and our products become expensive in the global market.

During winter, at times the highway gets closed for days. Buyers lose confidence that products from Kashmir do not reach on time. Business gets diverted to China, Iran or the smaller Asian countries. Due to these challenges, our entire economy suffers." Sheikh Ashiq is a major exporter from Kashmir. He is on the Board of Directors of Carpet Export Promotion Council set up by the Ministry of Textiles, GOI,



Photo courtesy: thebetterkashmir.com



Photo courtesy: hindustantimes.com

and represents Kashmir on this august body.

A prime demand for Kashmir is that international air cargo facility should be made operational on urgent basis. There is a famous saying. Everything else can wait but not agriculture. “No area can match the flavour of the fruits from Kashmir. All horticultural

produce is highly perishable and needs immediate access to global markets. We don’t have direct international air cargo currently. The facility has been announced but it is not operational as yet. The government must consider the criticality of the requirement and make international air cargo operational for Srinagar on

urgent basis,” added Ashiq. “In the interest of the tourism sector and also the manufacturing, horticulture and handicrafts sector, Srinagar-Sharjah flights must be resumed immediately. Plus direct flights between Srinagar-Jeddah must be started.”

NEW OPPORTUNITIES, NEW MARKETS

The horticulturists point out that if air cargo facility is available, the fruit from Kashmir can reach the Gulf and even Europe within a few hours. When this happens, the producers will get the best prices. They will get new opportunities and new markets. They will be encouraged to aim for even higher quality.

International air cargo facility is a win-win for all and must be made operational soon.

The disruption caused by the annulment of Article 370 hit the Kashmir economy hard. Just when the economy was hoping to recover, the pandemic dealt a severe blow to national and global trade and tourism.

Export from Kashmir registered the peak of Rs 1700 crore in 2013-14. This dropped to Rs 600 crore in 2021-22. Provision of international air cargo facility and strengthening of Dry Port infrastructure shall significantly boost Kashmir’s economy, and be the life-saver for our horticulture sector and our handicrafts.

THE STATE NEEDS TO DO MORE TO PROTECT THE PANDITS



Sanjay Sapru
Patron Member &
Former Treasurer
All India Kashmiri
Samaj

After the killing of Rahul Bhat, there has been unprecedented Pandit mobilization in the valley, and expression of anger against the state. I have observed that this has raised several questions within Kashmir and the mainland.

One, how does the Pandit mobilization impact the conflict dynamics of Kashmir. Second, how does it impact the positioning of the state vis-à-vis the Pandits. Third, does the Pandit mobilization

impact the majority community in any way? There are other questions too.

The Kashmiri Pandit community has been through one upheaval or another even after their forced dislocation. A recent phenomenon we started to experience after Article 370 was removed was that the Pandit community got further marginalized in Kashmir.

It is extremely sad that 30 years after our dislocation, the divide between the two communities has increased. But can one flourish without the other? Kashmir's development, prosperity and new leadership vision shall be realized only through our mutual brotherhood, compassion, collaboration and trust. Building these is our shared responsibility. The larger onus falls on the Kashmiri Muslim community to facilitate reconciliation and build trust.

PANDITS ARE THE BULWARK AGAINST THE RADICALIZATION OF KASHMIR



The Pandits feel very strongly about one thing. They know that if the Kashmiri Pandit will not stay in Kashmir, then Kashmir will not stay as a part of India. We are not sure whether BJP realizes this. If they did, perhaps the BJP leadership would have handled KP security differently after the removal of Article 370.

KP security was and even



A recent phenomenon we started to experience after Article 370 was removed was that the Pandit community got further marginalized in Kashmir. We didn't get anything from the annulment of Article 370. We only find our space reducing more and more in our beloved Kashmir

now remains an equally big challenge in the valley. But if the safety and security of the Pandits is not ensured in Kashmir, gradually the jihadis will keep increasing their space. It is the Pandits – born of the soil and water of Kashmir – who are the bulwark against the radicalization of Kashmir.

It is not just the Pandits who say this. Many of our fellow Kashmiri Muslims, who we grew up with, say that they are

immensely disturbed by the homogenization of Kashmir and also of the rest of India.

Homogenization has never been good for any society globally. Only the Pandits – the sons and daughters of the soil – shall stand against the homogenization of Kashmir. To meet the long-term security interests of India, the Pandits must be empowered by the state and not taken for granted.

KASHMIR FILES IS AN INCOMPLETE STORY - KASHMIR'S AGONY CUTS ACROSS ALL RELIGIONS



There needs to be greater sensitivity on both sides. The recent movie Kashmir Files shows the truth, but it is an incomplete story. Perhaps the makers chose to make it this way for higher viewership, for cinematic or dramatic considerations.

The movie should also have shown the pain and trauma suffered by the Kashmiri Muslim community. They too were victims of terrorist violence.

Then there was anger in Kashmir against the Pandits following the Jammu and Kashmir Migrant Immovable Property (Preservation, Protection and Restraint on Distress Sales) Act, 1997. The complaint portal was launched by the LG recently. The Pandits started applying under this Act, but the vested section among the majority community did not like it. All these developments have squeezed the space for the Pandit community in Kashmir.

We didn't get our ancestral lands or our houses back. We didn't get anything from the annulment of Article 370. We only find our space reducing more and more in our beloved Kashmir.

PANDITS WORKING AS PART OF PM PACKAGE NEED PROPER SECURITY

The Pandits working in Kashmir as part of the PM Package must be given proper security. They must be given assurance by the government that their living conditions and security infrastructure shall be improved. As of now, some of

them are living in one or two-room quarters provided by the government. Many are living in rented accommodation. The quarters provided by the government are in a bad shape.

These Pandits are all educated and qualified people. They are living in Kashmir because they want to be in their motherland. The love of their motherland is keeping them in Kashmir. The PM Package employees have been working and living in Kashmir 2012 onwards. Due to vested

and obdurate bureaucracy, everything possible is being done to slow down the return of the Pandits. This seems shocking, but it is true!

Otherwise there is no reason that even though ten years have passed, the construction of housing facilities for all migrant employees is still pending. If there was the right degree of government interest in it, the project would have been completed long back .





KASHMIR'S CIVIL SOCIETY IS SUPPORTING THE PANDITS

The change we are observing this time is that Kashmir's civil society is supporting the Pandits. They are vocal in their criticism of the terror ecosystem which killed Rahul Bhat.

Kashmiri Pandits are a peace-loving community. They would not have resorted to stone-pelting or any violence during their protest. But the police used tear gas and lathi charge to disperse them. I am thankful that the police did not use pellets. It is shocking that the police used those methods

If the Pandits are shouting "UT Administration murdabad, BJP murdabad", their distress is genuine. The police used tear gas and lathi charge to disperse them. I am thankful that the police did not use pellets. It is their democratic right to protest. Why was the democratic and genuine protest of the Pandits crushed by the police and the Administration?

to disperse the Kashmiri Pandits that are used for anti-nationals.

Information was in circulation that electric wire had been put up at the Pandit camp in Baramulla so that they would not be able to come out of their camp to protest.

All of this is so bizarre. If the Pandits are shouting "UT Administration *murdabad*, BJP *murdabad*", their distress is genuine. It is their democratic

right to protest. Effigies are burnt at democratic protests across the nation. Then why was the democratic and genuine protest of the Pandits crushed by the police and the Administration?

Pandits jaan hatheli par rakh ke Kashmir mein jee rahe hain. They are saying that give us guarantee of safety in the valley, or transfer us to safe zones in Jammu. What is wrong in this?

If the government wants to ensure the future of the Pandits in Kashmir, it must give them confidence. They may even have to spoon-feed them to some extent. What is wrong in this when the stakes are so high?

If India wants a hold on Kashmir, then the Kashmiri Pandit has a big role. If the Pandit will not be there, what is the *ladayi*? The way Pakistan has POK, they may fight for the occupation of Kashmir too. The government must create an environment where the Pandits shall feel secure. Millions are being spent on the majority community in Kashmir. Surely

the minority community also has rights which must be protected.

PANDITS ARE SOFT TARGETS FOR ATTACK

It is tragic that even now, Kashmiri Pandits are being killed in the valley like sitting ducks. They are soft targets for attack. The killing of Rahul Bhat has hurt the sentiments and shaken the confidence of the people who are our angels in Kashmir. They represent the

hope of the entire community to return to the valley. If they are betrayed – *agar vo dagmaga gaye* – the entire community shall feel betrayed once again.

The conditions specified by the government in their contract as part of the PM package are one-sided. Their contract says that they shall be employed only in their home district. Their position is not transferable outside their home district. It is unfair to force them to work at places where the government cannot ensure their security. The betrayal of the Kashmiri Pandits is the betrayal of the idea of India in Kashmir.



DEMAND FOR SATELLITE TOWNSHIP FOR PANDITS

The government must develop a 'Satellite Township' based on the concept of 'New Smart City'. The Kashmiri Pandits and also other communities can live in this township.

Building such a township is not such a big thing. Private builders are building such townships in various parts of the country over a few hundred acres. In order to secure the interest of the nation, the government can build a similar township in Kashmir.

The township should be self-sufficient in terms of security, infrastructure, economic avenues, decent housing, educational institutions, health care facilities, recreation centers, commercial complexes, etc. The township can have a

The township should be self-sufficient in terms of security, infrastructure, economic avenues, decent housing, educational institutions, health care facilities, recreation centers, commercial complexes, etc. It is the best way to come out of the situation that the Pandits face in the valley today

small university, good schools, industrial park. This shall make it self-sustaining. It is the best way to come out of the situation

that the Pandits face in the valley today.

The Pandits who are working and living in Kashmir as part of employment provided in the PM package can be settled in these townships. Not in flats or apartments. They should be given plots in the township and time-bound interest-free loan to build their houses there. This will create a sense of ownership and attachment with the houses. If the government finds that this model is successful, it will encourage the return of Kashmiri Pandits to the valley in large numbers.

This Smart City Project must be taken up by GOI with a proper implementation plan and a specific timeline to which the state must adhere. The government must fast-track its execution.

Infantilization of Women in J&K's Colleges and Universities

Dil Hai Chhota Sa Chhoti Si Asha

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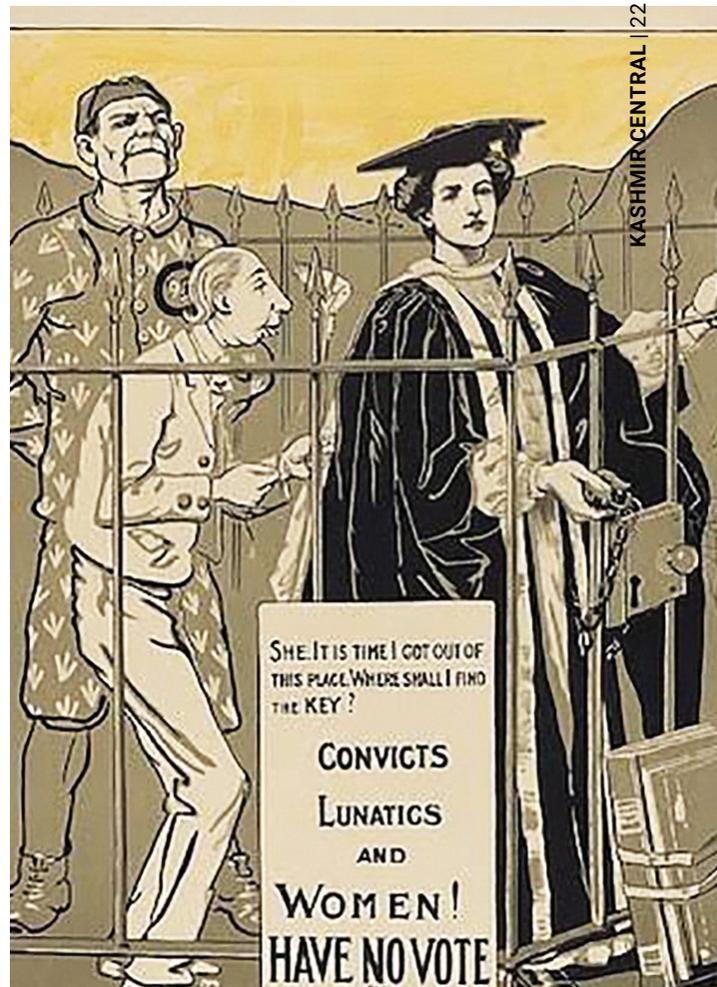


by **Mareeya Fazaz**

September 2015. Students at institutions throughout Delhi were welcomed by bold, colourful words strewn across their campuses. The words were *Pinjra Tod*. Meaning - Break the cage.

Pinjra Tod, which began as a Facebook group, gained traction after a minority institution, Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI), issued a circular barring the female students from being out at night. *Pinjra Tod* became an autonomous student-run collective effort from Delhi University (DU), JMI, Ambedkar University and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU).

University women flocked to the streets to protest unjust limits on their mobility. In the name of concerns, girls rejected moral policing and opted not to be taught how they should handle





themselves. Countless women took to social media to relate their painful experiences of being infantilized – being treated as infants. This included moral policing, discrimination by guards, wardens, and principals – all in the name of gender.

In November 2015, the women submitted a 45-page report to Delhi Commission of Women (DCW). Within days, DCW sent a letter to JMI, contesting the legality of the ban. This was the movement's first success in refusing to be infantilized by the government once more.

WOMEN CLAIMING THEIR SPACE IN A MISOGYNIST SOCIETY



Women claiming their space and fighting for their freedom in a misogynist society – this

After the Pinjra Tod campaign of 2015, countless women took to social media to relate their painful experiences of being infantilized – being treated as infants. This included moral policing, discrimination by guards, wardens, and principals – all in the name of gender

definitely gets me going. I have often encountered people in the mainland assuming that Kashmiri women don't care for these freedoms and also assuming that Kashmiri women don't have a voice. It is amusing that we women face infantilization not just within Jammu and Kashmir, but also in the way how Indians from the other states regard and stereotype us.

During the years of Pinjra Tod and also later, there were discussions on this subject in my friends circle. A section of women supported the restrictions on our freedom in the name of safety and security. Other women opposed it. They said these restrictions meant that we women don't have a mind to decide what is right or wrong for us, and hence the society must supposedly control us all the time.

KASHMIR UNIVERSITY – HOSTELLERS FACED SIMILAR RESTRICTIONS



The women empowerment movements in India and worldwide – I am inspired by them. During the time when the Pinjra Tod movement was happening in Delhi, I enrolled

in Kashmir University for LLM (Master of Law). I had just moved into the hostel premises. The gates of the hostel would close at 6 pm. One could not imagine going out in the campus thereafter.

If you told the gatekeepers you wanted to return to the hostel after 6 pm, they would shout demeaning words. If you argued, God forbid, then the threat followed – We are going to call your parents! Here I was at the university – doing Master in Law, but being treated like a child who had to be locked up in a hostel at 6 pm. Many women studying there were baffled by this attitude of closing access to the university library, the playgrounds and other common areas so early. Other women took it for granted. To each her own.

IN THE DINING HALL – NO TROUSER AND SHIRT, NO EARPHONES

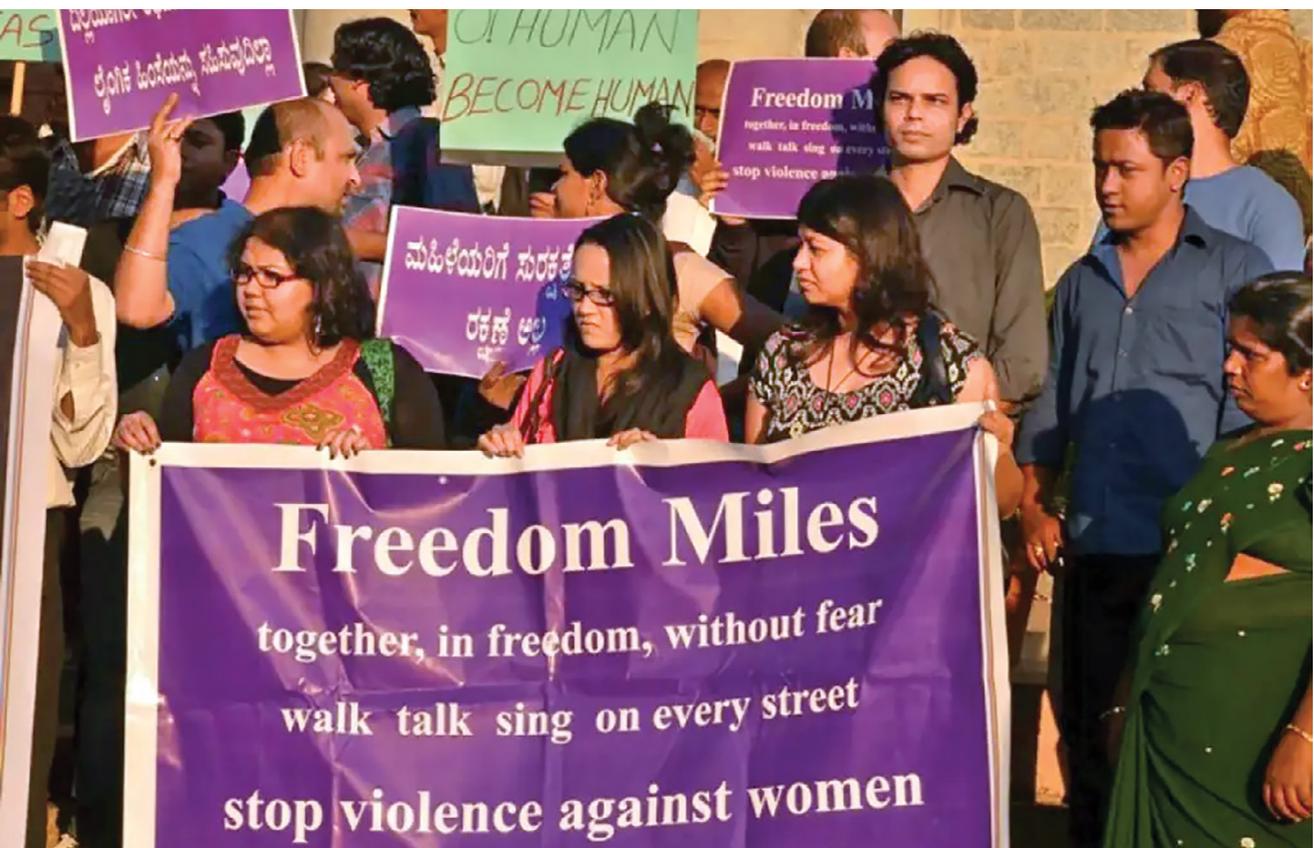
When I entered the dining hall in my hostel at Kashmir University for the first time, the caretaker asked me, “Why are you wearing trouser and shirt? It is not allowed. Didn’t you see the notice on the wall?”

I was amazed to see that there was really a notice to this effect. It said: “Boarders are not allowed to wear night suits or shirts in the dining halls and they should not wear any earphones in the dining halls.” Imagine the infantilization of women that they could not wear trousers and shirt in the dining hall, and not use earphones.

I asked my classfellows who stayed in the boys hostel whether there were such restrictions in their hostel too. They laughed and said there were no such restrictions. I guess all rules are meant only for women.

ALL RULES ARE FOR WOMEN ONLY

This reminds me of what a senior friend told me about the time she was doing Masters in English at Jammu University. All girls were supposed to be in the hostel by perhaps 7 pm. One day in the department, she curiously asked a youth studying with her whether they too were locked up in the hostel by that time. “The



I KNOW I SHALL BE JUDGED FOR ASKING THESE QUESTIONS

I know that a lot of readers will be scandalized that I am even questioning it. They will judge me wrongly even for questioning the locking up of women scholars in the hostel in the evening.

I know what the varsity authorities will say, if they read this write-up. They will say – No. The women are not locked up.

Only their movement is restrained. The varsity authorities will say – Restrictions are imposed on the demand of the parents. If we don't do it, the parents will object that why have you allowed what we don't allow at home? Do we allow our daughters to go out at night? Then why have you allowed it?

I am reminded of a very well-reasoned write-up I read in Outlook magazine when I was doing some online reading on the infantilization of women scholars in institutions of higher learning. The writeup is by Sohinee Roy, Associate Professor at North Central College, Illinois, USA. Sohinee writes on the very South Asian practice of adult students seen as children: Such a myopic view of education forgets that institutions of higher education are involved in the very adult endeavor of producing knowledge. Production of knowledge involves more than regurgitation of information in exams. It requires critical thinking, ability to synthesize complex ideas, and imagine possibilities and connections where none exist. It requires education beyond the undergraduate degree.

This is the point I am trying to make. Are our institutions of higher learning grasping that they have to produce scholars who are equipped with all this: "critical thinking, ability to synthesize complex ideas, and imagine possibilities and connections where none exist". Where a woman cannot be given the responsibility of her choices, what kind of critical thinking or the ability to synthesize complex ideas do we expect?



young man laughed so hard! Even after several minutes, he wouldn't stop laughing! He was so tickled by the thought that boys could be locked up at any time! And with girls, it was taken for granted. Nobody questioned

it," recalled my friend.

So this has been happening for decades. All rules are only for women. That's the way a patriarchal society works. Now I am a PhD scholar at Jammu University. I enjoy more

freedom than I did at KU, but Jammu University also has some discriminatory rules for female students. There still are hostel timings for women. So even if access to the library is 24X7, it means nothing for women.

Common Assumption: LATE NIGHTS FOR WOMEN MEAN UNBRIDLED TIMES

A senior woman journalist who had worked in a reputed media house for many years told me of an experience in Srinagar. She said that in 2015, she was conversing with a young journalist of Rising Kashmir about media working in the valley.

The young man had about three to four years of experience at that time. He told her that though there was presence of women in Kashmir media, they did not have any night shifts. The journo then asked her, “Did you have any night shifts?” She told him that night shifts for the entire staff were put on the roster on and off.

The journo told her, “So you all would have been making it out every night when you were in the office on night duty.” The senior woman journalist was shocked at this bizarre assumption. “What rubbish!” she told the man. “What crazy ideas you have!” But the young Kashmiri would not budge. He was convinced that night duty in a media office meant unbridled times for the men and women. When even our educated men like journos live with these assumptions, it is not surprising that woman shall be judged for anything they want to say outside the accepted norms.

More in the next edition.



Delimitation Commission Report

A Step in the Right Direction

The Delimitation Commission has tried to stay away from any divisive politics in the assembly seats under each of the five Lok Sabha seats. The Parliamentary constituencies have been reorganized in such a way that exactly 18 Assembly constituencies are under each parliamentary seat

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Professor Gita

Bamezai is former Dean of Academic Affairs and former Head, Department of Communication Research at Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), New Delhi

The Delimitation Commission report has been received with mixed reactions, though the issue is of great significance in extending democratic representation to many disenfranchised population

groups and geographical areas of Jammu and Kashmir. The recommendations of the Commission have brought under their purview not just the communities but geographical areas which had remained unrepresented because of their hard geographical



Aerial view of Jammu.
Photo courtesy: Daily Excelsior on Twitter

Delimitation has agitated people and parties in the past. It was made into an emotional and regional issue rather than a governance issue. In the 90s, there was uproar against the state government's intrinsic policy of keeping Kashmir region over-represented in the Legislative Assembly

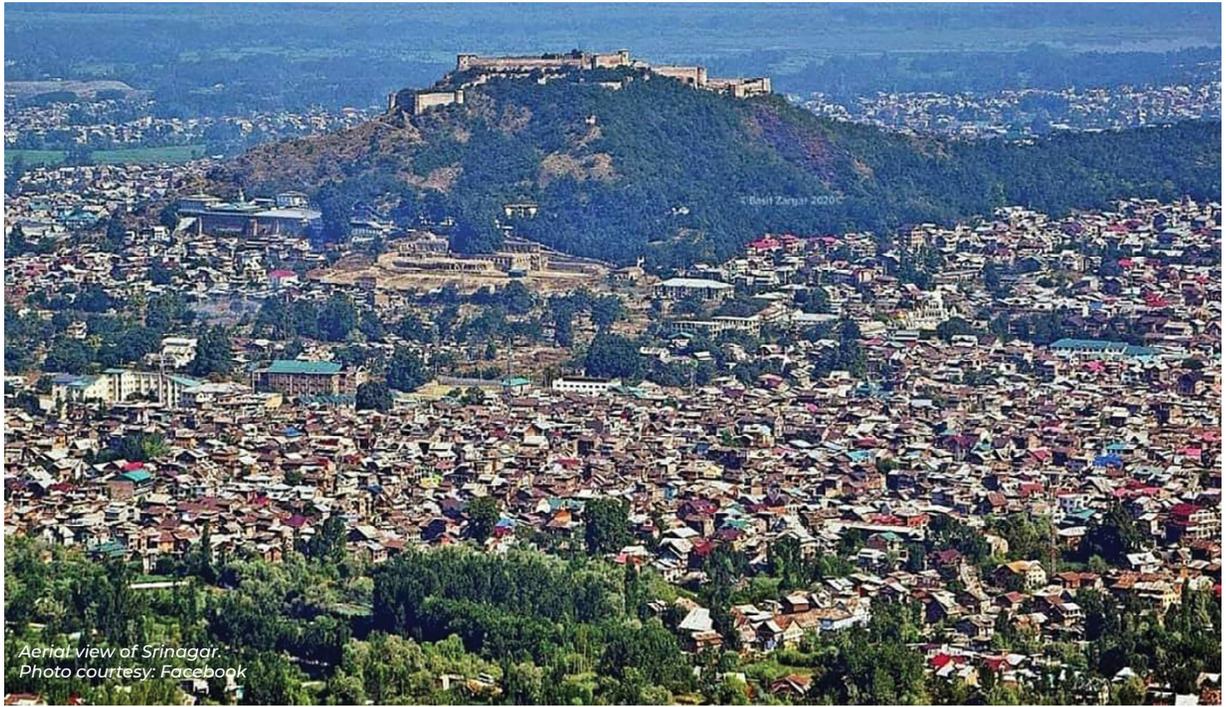
terrain, distance, remoteness and proportional size of the population.

The pending demand of some communities and their regions' development needs have remained unaddressed by successive state governments. The delimitation of both

Assembly and Parliamentary constituencies can be looked at from a purely governance issue and as a step towards the democratic representation of people.

The process of delimitation in J&K was undertaken as per the Census of 2011, since no

census took place because of Covid restrictions in 2021. Equally mandated for the Commission was the exercise of recognizing population groups which have remained unrepresented so far. It was also to ensure no undue advantage or over-representation of one group or region over the other. This procedure should adhere to the principle of 'one vote one value' as well and thereby abstain from any anomaly in the democratic process. Why has delimitation of constituencies been carried out and why has it



Aerial view of Srinagar.
Photo courtesy: Facebook

riled some quarters, including Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC)?

To understand the need to set up the delimitation commission requires a good understanding of the delimitation process instead of seeking to view the issues from any political or partisan prism. Delimitation was carried out earlier under the mandate of the J&K Constitution and the J&K Representation of the People Act of 1957, whereas Parliamentary seats in the state were governed by the Constitution of the Republic of India.

With the abrogation of the Article 370, the delimitation of both Assembly and Lok Sabha seats was to be considered under the Delimitation Act of 2002 and as per the 2011 census data. The last delimitation exercise was done in J&K in 1995. This had led to a large-

scale agitation in Jammu. . The charge was that the delimitation exercise had deprived the region of its due share of representation in the Assembly seats. Subsequently, Farooq Abdullah's government had set restrictions on delimitation in the erstwhile state until 2026, thereby making any possibility of reconciliation of issues impossible.

The Delimitation Commission was set up GOI two years ago in 2020 under the Chair of the retired Judge of Supreme Court Ranjana Prakash Desai and two members. These included then Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sushil Chandra and State Election Commissioner (SEC) KK Sharma. The Commission had the mandate to decide how the territorial constituencies would be in consonance with the population under the Assembly and the Parliament seats.

MAJOR ISSUES BEFORE DELIMITATION COMMISSION

Many issues had become preponderant in the changed circumstances in past 30 years since the exodus of Kashmiri Hindus and other displaced communities as a result of militancy. In addition, there was the issue of acknowledgement of refugees from POK, who had no status in the erstwhile state of J&K in terms of citizenship and representation.

The delimitation exercise was supposed to be done within a year. It took two years since work was disrupted by Covid. As per the report submitted by the Commission on May 5 this year, the total number of Assembly constituencies in J&K has gone up from 83 to 90, with

seven additional Assembly seats.

Before bifurcation as two UTs in 2019, the state had 107 MLAs in the Legislative Assembly. This increased to 114 including 24 seats for POK, though effective strength would be just seven additional seats. This increase translated in increasing six seats in Jammu region, taking the total to 43; and one additional seat in Kashmir valley, taking the total to 47.

Various political parties from Kashmir region have alleged that the allocation has implications for reducing the gap in favour of Jammu. Seven Assembly seats proposed in the districts of Kathua, Samba, Rajouri Reasi, Doda and Kishtwar are part of Jammu region. Kupwara is the lone additional Assembly seat in Kashmir region. Legitimacy of additional seats in Jammu region is based on the principle

of ratio of population and its geographical spread. In the past, this principle was ignored in favour of Kashmir.

The Delimitation Commission has tried to stay away from any divisive politics in the assembly seats under each of the five Lok Sabha seats. The Parliamentary constituencies have been reorganized in such a way that exactly 18 Assembly constituencies are under each parliamentary seat. An added feature of the reorganization which has missed many critics has been of bringing under each district all the Assembly seats therein.

Simultaneously, it became imperative for the Commission to reconsider the constituencies in the UT of J&K. The Commission has tried to do away with the old practice of dividing the state into two distinct divisions of Jammu and

Kashmir by redrawing territorial representative boundaries and treating it as one. This approach is reflected in combining of Anantnag district in Kashmir with Rajouri and Poonch in Jammu to carve out Anantnag-Rajouri as a Parliamentary constituency.

DELIMITATION HAS AGITATED POLITICAL GROUPS

Delimitation has created unrest among people and parties in the past. It was made into an emotional and regional issue rather than one of governance. In the 90s, there was a large-scale uproar against the state government's intrinsic policy of keeping Kashmir region over-represented in the Legislative Assembly.



The present delimitation has agitated political groups. They have alleged demographic implications to pitch Kashmir against Jammu. Omar Abdullah's claim of six additional seats for Jammu region not based on 2011 census is belied by the population data. It shows that out of the six districts in question, four districts of Kishtwar (57.75 per cent), Rajouri (62.71 per cent), Doda (53.82 per cent) and Reasi

(49.67 per cent), are Muslim majority. Samba (86.33 per cent) and Kathua (87.6 per cent) are Hindu-dominated.

A significant change achieved by this exercise is reservation of seats for scheduled tribes. This is the first such initiative to bring balance in social representation. The plea for fair representation of scheduled tribes has been done by assigning nine Assembly seats to ST population in J&K

for the first time – six in Jammu and three in Kashmir.

The step was welcomed by various tribal groups, especially Bakkarwals and Gujjars, in making the Legislative Assembly inclusive. In the erstwhile state, no such reservation was allowed. This is a step in rationalizing the distribution of seats among different groups of the J&K, which is as per the procedure and process followed in other states.



Aerial view of Jammu.
Photo courtesy: Wikipedia

There is speculation that GOI may hold assembly elections before year-end in J&K. The Delimitation Commission has worked hard to give the people of J&K a roadmap of governance with participation from all sections of the society



POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT OF KASHMIRI PANDITS

The Commission was apprised of the plight of Kashmiri Pandits. They were dislocated despite a sizeable population, and had to be given representation in the Legislative Assembly. Many political groups from Kashmir opposed the step, since the Delimitation Commission does not allow representation based on religion. As such, two nominated seats for Kashmiri migrants have been recommended by the Commission with a plea that one of them be reserved exclusively for a woman, and with a right to vote – as is followed in the Pondicherry Assembly. We shall have to wait and watch how the government views this recommendation. This will be a significant step in recognizing Kashmiri Pandits as a political entity.

To ensure a consultative process, the Commission sought views of various representatives of political parties. On the panel of the Commission were five Lok Sabha MPs from J&K – National Conference MPs Farooq Abdullah, Mohammad Akbar Lone and Hasnain Masoodi; Union Minister of State in PMO Jitendra Singh, and Jugal Kishore Sharma of BJP. They were nominated by the Lok Sabha Speaker as Associate Members.

The Commission invited representatives of the Election Commission officers of UT, and

persons from different regional/national parties for bringing a consensus to any conflicting views that would cause dispute based on regional, political or social affiliation. Consequent to such discussions, the delimitation order changed the names of Assembly constituencies keeping in view the demands of local representatives. Tangmarg has been renamed Gulmarg, Zoonimar is Zaidibal, Sonwar is now Lal Chowk, Padder is Padder-Nagseni, Kathua North is Jasrota, Kathua South is Kathua, Khour is Chhamb, Mahore is Gulabgharh and Darhal is Budhal.

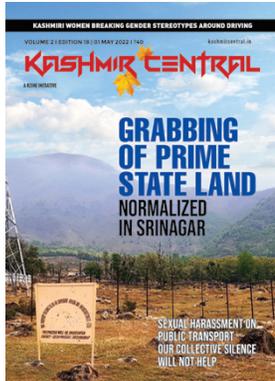
The Delimitation Commission in India is a high-powered body with its orders not permissible for scrutiny once the President of India specifies a date on which the Commission's report orders come into force. These orders are sacrosanct without scope for any modifications even when placed before the Parliament or in the state assembly since its report becomes law to be enforced. Despite this, a petition has been filed in SC challenging the delimitation exercise as not based on the Census 2011, since no such census was carried out in erstwhile state, and not constituting the Commission by the Election Commission.

There is speculation that GOI may hold Assembly elections before year-end in J&K. The Delimitation Commission has worked hard to give the people of J&K a roadmap of governance with participation from all sections of the society.

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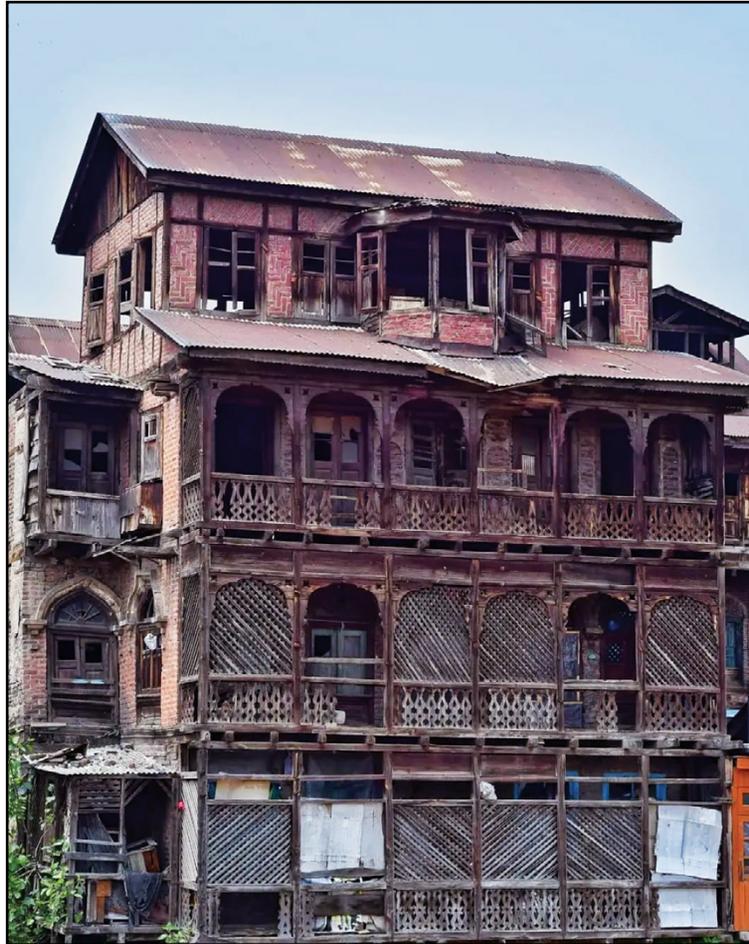


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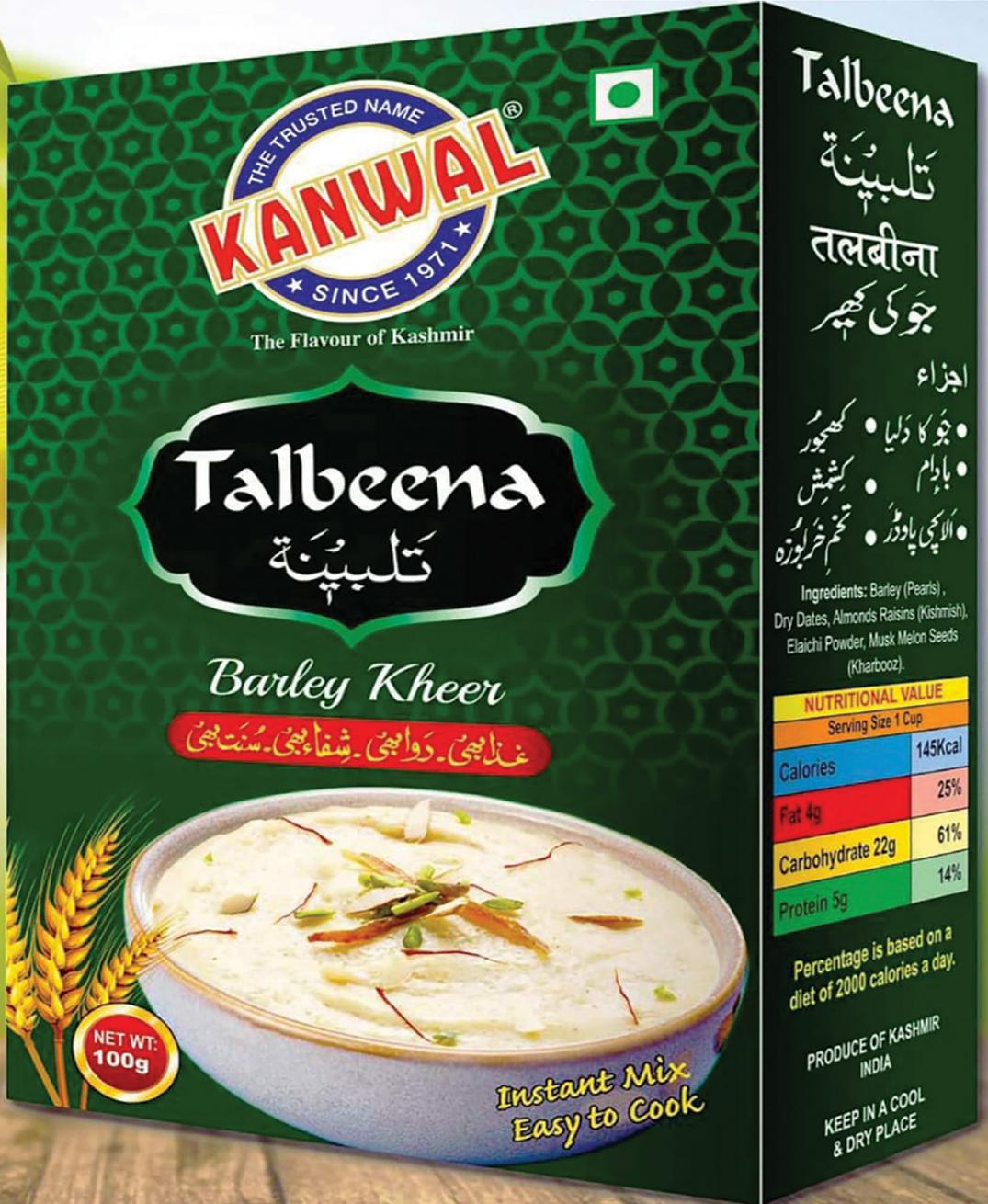
KASHMIR CENTRAL

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Aisha  said, "I heard the Messenger  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 



The packaging is a green and white box for Talbeena Barley Kheer. The front panel features the Kanwal logo at the top, which includes the text "THE TRUSTED NAME", "KANWAL", and "SINCE 1971". Below the logo, it says "The Flavour of Kashmir". The product name "Talbeena" is written in a large, stylized font, with "تَلْبِيْنَة" in Urdu below it. Underneath, "Barley Kheer" is written in a cursive font. A red banner contains the Urdu text "غذائے بھی، دوائی بھی، شفا بھی، سُنّت بھی". At the bottom, there is an image of a bowl of Talbeena Kheer, garnished with almonds and saffron. A circular badge indicates "NET WT: 100g". The side panel of the box contains the product name in Urdu, a list of ingredients, a nutritional value table, and the text "PRODUCE OF KASHMIR INDIA" and "KEEP IN A COOL & DRY PLACE".

KANWAL
THE TRUSTED NAME
SINCE 1971
The Flavour of Kashmir

Talbeena
تَلْبِيْنَة
تَلْبِيْنَة
جو کی کھیر

اجزاء

- جو کا دلیا
- کھجور
- بادام
- کشمش
- الائچی پادڑ
- 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