

HEARTBURN IN JAMMU OVER “BIASED ANTI ENCROACHMENT DRIVES”

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KASHMIR CENTRAL

A KZINE INITIATIVE

EXPLORING GUREZ
BLESSED
BY NATURE,
OFF-RADAR FOR STATE

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15 MAY 2022

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LET US RISE AND REJECT TERRORISM

The killing of yet another innocent member of the minority community in central's Kashmir's Budgam district should not just be condemned. The entire Kashmir society must register its disapproval and rejection of such cowardly acts. The time has come when the entire society must in one voice reject terrorism. Those who provoke, instigate and justify the killing on one pretext on the other must be isolated.

Silence – for whatever reason – is a crime. It is our silence which gives license to militants to kill innocent civilians. We rightfully seek our space in the entire country. We expect that the values of a secular democratic nation should be upheld everywhere.

Then it is equally binding upon us that the traditions and the culture of co-existence must be revived and restored in Kashmir. The acts of terrorism sought to erase our cultural values. Our silence emboldened the terror ecosystem.

Kashmir needs to speak up. If we don't speak up today for our fellow citizens, we cannot complain tomorrow against those who don't speak up for us. In our own interest, we must break our silence. Our silence can justify provocations elsewhere.

Such dastardly acts by the terrorists have earned a bad name for us as a society. Earlier people would talk of brotherhood, co-existence and tolerance in Kashmir. Now we are a society reeling under terrorism, extremism and exclusivism. Let us remove this blot upon our society. Let us reject violence in its all forms and manifestations. We are already late. It should not get too late.

Bashir Assad

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SHAH FAESAL RETURNS TO IAS

BUT THE DAMAGE HIS RESIGNATION CAUSED TO KASHMIR SOCIETY HAS BEEN DONE

by **Bashir Assad**

In 2010, Shah Faesal became a household name in Kashmir after topping the elite Indian Administrative Services (IAS). And made national headlines as the first Kashmiri to do so.

The man who etched his name in the mind of every Kashmiri after this stupendous feat of 2010 has returned to the services after a gap of four years. Faesal resigned from IAS in January 2019 to float his own

political party, The Jammu and Kashmir People's Movement (JKPM).

In August 2019, New Delhi annulled the special status of Jammu and Kashmir by scrapping Article 35 A and Article 370 of the Constitution of India. Shah Faesal, along with many other political leaders and activists, was taken into what the administration termed as 'preventive custody'. He was released from custody after four or five months. After his release, a disenchanted Faesal gave up on politics, and publicly expressed his willingness to return to the elite IAS services.

The union government was yet to decide on his resignation from the IAS. Faesal moved an application formally seeking withdrawal of his resignation

to return to the services. The process was set into motion, and earlier this month, the government reinstated Faesal.

In any other state, this may have been simple. A star bureaucrat quits the services. Joins politics. Leaves politics, demands reinstatement in services, is back.

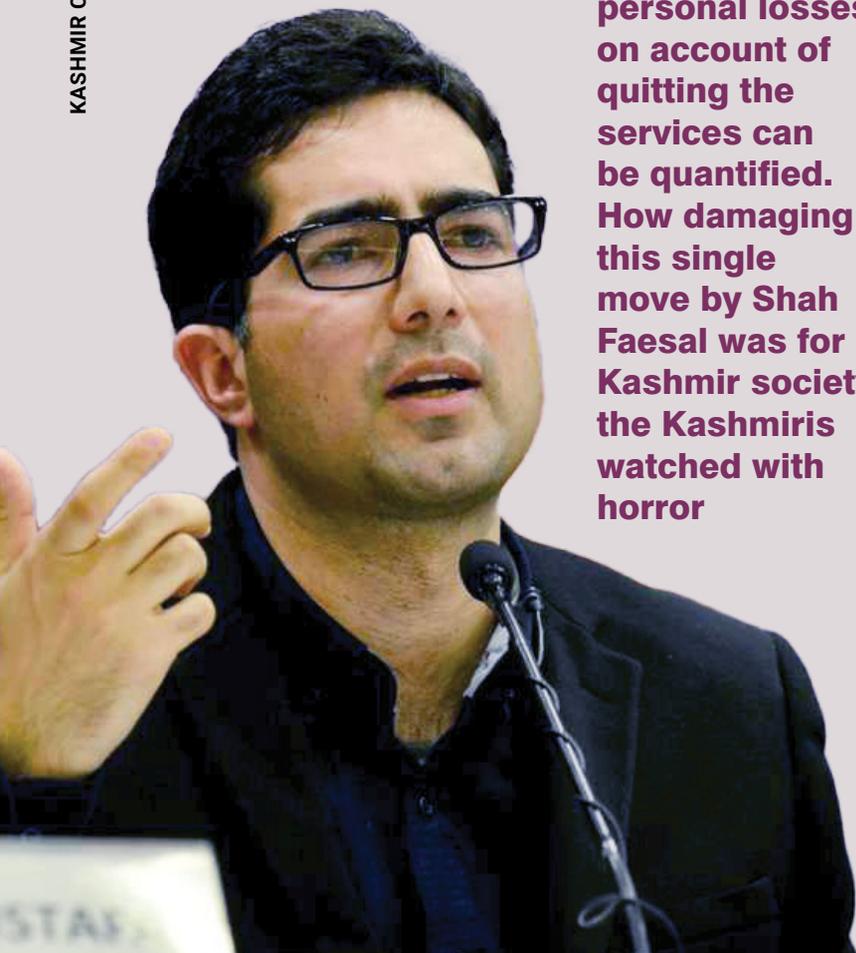
In Kashmir, it didn't pan out so simply.

Faesal's resignation shook the faith and trust of thousands of budding youth of Kashmir for whom he was once the biggest source of inspiration. His personal losses on account of quitting the services can be quantified. How damaging this single move by Shah Faesal was for Kashmir society, the Kashmiris watched with horror

HOW HIS RESIGNATION IMPACTED KASHMIR

Faesal was idolized by every youngster of Kashmir who sought a great, happy career. He was Kashmir's top youth icon. After joining politics in 2019, Faesal became the most controversial person of the times in Kashmir. It was a fall from his earlier iconic image.

Now, Faesal was now abused by his friends and foes alike. It was not just about the personal damage to his career. Perhaps Faesal is aware of the intense social damage his decision caused. On April 27, he tweeted: "8 months of my life (Jan 2019-Aug 2019) created so much baggage that I was almost finished. While chasing a chimera, I lost almost everything that I had built over the years. Job. Friends. Reputation. Public goodwill. But I never lost hope. My idealism had let me down... I would undo the mistakes I had made... A part of me is exhausted with the memory of those 8 months and wants to erase that legacy... As I look back, many words I said, things I did, people I met, causes I stood for and means I adopted were wrong. I suffered for the choices I made..."



This is about the personal damage Faesal's decision to quit IAS and join politics caused. Tragically, the damage went much further. When a huge tree falls, the earth beneath it shakes.

FAESAL QUITTING IAS SHOOK THE FAITH OF THE YOUTH, ALIENATED THEM FROM STATE

Faesal's resignation shook the faith and trust of thousands of budding youth of Kashmir for whom he was once the biggest source of inspiration. His personal losses on account of quitting the services can be quantified. How damaging this single move by Shah Faesal was for Kashmir society, the Kashmiris watched with horror.

Shah Faesal's quitting the IAS had a phenomenal impact on the thought processes of millions of young aspirants in Kashmir. I do not know how far Faesal himself realized this. When Faesal quit politics, it was not seen as his political ambition. The youngsters read it as the message that the Indian state had failed Kashmiris yet again. The youngsters read it as the message that the Indian state could not even keep happy the Kashmiri who had topped its most elite examination. It was widely assumed that Faesal was quitting IAS because he was disillusioned with the Indian state.



May 26, 2010: Then Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh congratulating Dr Shah Faesal of Kashmir for being the Civil Services topper for 2010

When Faesal quit politics, it was not seen as his political ambition. The youngsters read it as the message that

- a) The Indian state had failed Kashmiris**
- b) It was widely assumed that Faesal was quitting IAS because he was disillusioned with the Indian state**

After he was released from preventive custody, Faesal had said, "I cannot lead my people down the garden path". The truth, however, is that Faesal's resignation snuffed out the dreams and aspirations of so many Kashmiri youth. His resignation had a deeply detrimental impact upon the emotional fragility of Kashmir society.

Though aspirational, Kashmiri youth are emotionally vulnerable. Pakistan is always ready to exploit the emotional vulnerability of the youth of

Kashmir. Faesal's resignation and the discourse he wanted to set further aggravated the alienation and sense of insecurity among the youth in Kashmir. His joining back is a great relief for him and his family. It may also be good for Kashmir society. But the damage caused to the emotional integration of Kashmiri youth with mainland India has been done. How much of it Faesal can now reverse remains to be seen.

Anti-Encroachment Drive In Jammu Decried For Being Discriminatory Against A Particular Community, Says Sheikh Sameer

HEARTBURN IN JAMMU

KASHMIR CENTRAL | 15 MAY 2022

A massive “anti-encroachment drive” has been initiated by the Revenue Department in Jammu city this year. The drive has come under sharp criticism from the aggrieved persons. They allege that the administration is selectively targeting a particular community, and that the drive has been initiated to harass the community.

It is undeniable that Jammu has emerged as a cosmopolitan city over the last few decades. It has accommodated people of all faiths, irrespective of faith and cultures. Jammu city has genuinely erased the blot of the horrific bloodshed of 1947, and has come a long way.

A big part of the greater Jammu region comprises hilly



areas. People from the hills, irrespective of their religious belief, have migrated to Jammu for better facilities. A large number of people from Rajouri and Poonch districts on one side, and Ramban, Doda, Baderwah and Kishtwar on the other side have settled in the outskirts of Jammu to avail better opportunities for their children.

Jammu has a natural advantage geographically. It is the gateway to the Himalayan regions of Kashmir and Ladakh. Because of its excellent air, road and railway connectivity with the rest of the country, Jammu serves as a convenient transit camp for the people visiting Kashmir and Ladakh.

Yet another advantage for Jammu is that every year, it hosts thousands of students

from Ladakh. The two major communities of Ladakh – Muslims and Buddhists – prefer Jammu as a safe educational and economic destination over Kashmir. The valley has been under the grip of terrorism, extremism and exclusivism. Someone has well captured the reality. “Mahatma Gandhi no more sees the ray of light in Kashmir, as he has seen complete sunshine in Jammu.”

Jammu has emerged as a vibrant mix of all cultures, and a major economic hub in north India. Three major reasons for this phenomenon are a) The migration of people from the hills; b) The exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir and c) The seasonal migration of Kashmiris to Jammu during winter.

Jammu has inculcated a spirit of positive and healthy competition, with students from the city, Kashmir and Ladakh mixing here. Jammu presents a true picture of a progressive, aspirational and tolerant society.

The emerging political polarization is a cause of worry. It is impacting and polluting the minds in Jammu, though slowly.

POLARIZATION OVER ANTI- ENCROACHMENT DRIVE

It is because of this polarization that the people of a particular community who have migrated from the hills of the region have criticized the “anti-

People are genuinely demanding that action should be taken against the land mafia that colonized these areas and sold plots. This has not been done. Instead, people who have put their life investment in building houses here are being dispossessed



encroachment drive” which has been going on in Jammu since March this year. These charges are being leveled by dozens of aggrieved persons. They allege that the J&K Administration is selectively dispossessing the people of one particular community of their legal and legitimate possessions.

Questions are being raised as to why the administration, under the garb of removing encroachments on state land, is indiscriminately and forcibly evacuating people. This is being done even though the land is registered in the name of these people, and they have legitimate revenue mutations in their favor.

Another important question which is being raised is that for decades, the administration allowed the real estate brokers to sell state and community land to the beneficiaries. It allowed these colonizers to develop residential colonies. As part of the advancing colonization, all amenities including road, electricity and water supply were provided to these colonies.

Now, the people are genuinely asking that action should be taken against the land mafia that colonized these areas and sold plots. This has not been done. Instead, people who have put their life investment in building houses here are being dispossessed. Dozens of structures including buildings and shops have been demolished partially or completely near Bhatindi crossing on the Narwal- Kunjwani bypass, Sidhra, Belicharana, Nikki Tawi and Sunjwan.



CHARGES THAT DEMOLITION DRIVE IS BIASED

On May 12, the Revenue officials accompanied by a heavy contingent of police and equipped with JCBs and demolition squads demolished structures on proprietary land belonging to a family that migrated from the Bedarwah district and settled in Jammu about 50 years ago. The property was purchased by the family from locals, and they have legal and valid revenue documents.

According to the family, about eight or nine years ago there was a complaint that the land under the particular Survey Number registered in their name was situated at a distance from the land they were occupying. The matter was investigated by

Vast acres of state and forest land have been encroached upon in Jammu outskirts. But who is to be blamed for the encroachment? How is it possible without the support of revenue and forest authorities? Hundreds of acres of state and forest land was occupied by the land mafia, who sold it to the people at exorbitant prices

the revenue officials. The officials submitted the report that the land occupied by the family was the same as indicated in the survey numbers.

In March, the revenue officials demolished the housing



People who invested their life earnings in constructing these houses are being made to run from pillar to post. They are being questioned by the same revenue officers who made false entries in the records in the favour of the land mafia for monetary and other benefits



unit and shed constructed over the land, and uprooted a number of huge mango trees. The aggrieved family went to the court with the revenue records. The court stayed the demolition drive till the next hearing on March 21. On the given date, the court again issued the order of maintaining status quo till May 22. The family stated that on May 12, the revenue officials – in violation of court order – demarcated the land and raised a sign board of “Jammu Smart City” there.

Similar “dispossession” drives was reported from other parts in Jammu outskirts. This correspondent made several attempts to reach out to the revenue authorities for their comments on this controversial issue. Deputy Commissioner Jammu Avny Lavasa and Financial Commissioner

Revenue Shaleen Kabra did not respond to calls or WhatsApp messages.

Initially, the aggrieved persons initially resisted the demolition in March, forcing the authorities to suspend the drive. The administration assured the people that their grievances would be looked into sympathetically.

LAND GRAB HAPPENED IN CONNIVANCE WITH OFFICERS

It cannot be denied that vast acres of state and forest land have been encroached upon in Jammu outskirts. But who is to be blamed for the encroachment? How is it possible without the support of

revenue and forest authorities? Hundreds of acres of state and forest land was occupied by the land mafia, who sold it to the people at exorbitant prices.

It is known that the revenue and forest officials were hand in glove with the land mafia. Now, people who invested their life earnings in constructing these houses are being made to run from pillar to post. They are being questioned by the same revenue officers who made false entries in the records in the favour of the land mafia for monetary and other benefits.

The administration is within its rights to retrieve encroached land. But this must be done in an impartial manner and in a way to spread harmony, not spread hatred. These are legitimate questions which the Revenue and Police Departments need to answer.

BLESSED BY NATURE, OFF-RADAR FOR STATE

by **Bisma Nazir**

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FOR Edition 19 of KASHMIR CENTRAL – the previous edition – we interviewed some prominent hoteliers of Kashmir on the development of tourism in the Valley. A common refrain from them all: Develop Gurez as a tourism destination. It holds immense potential.

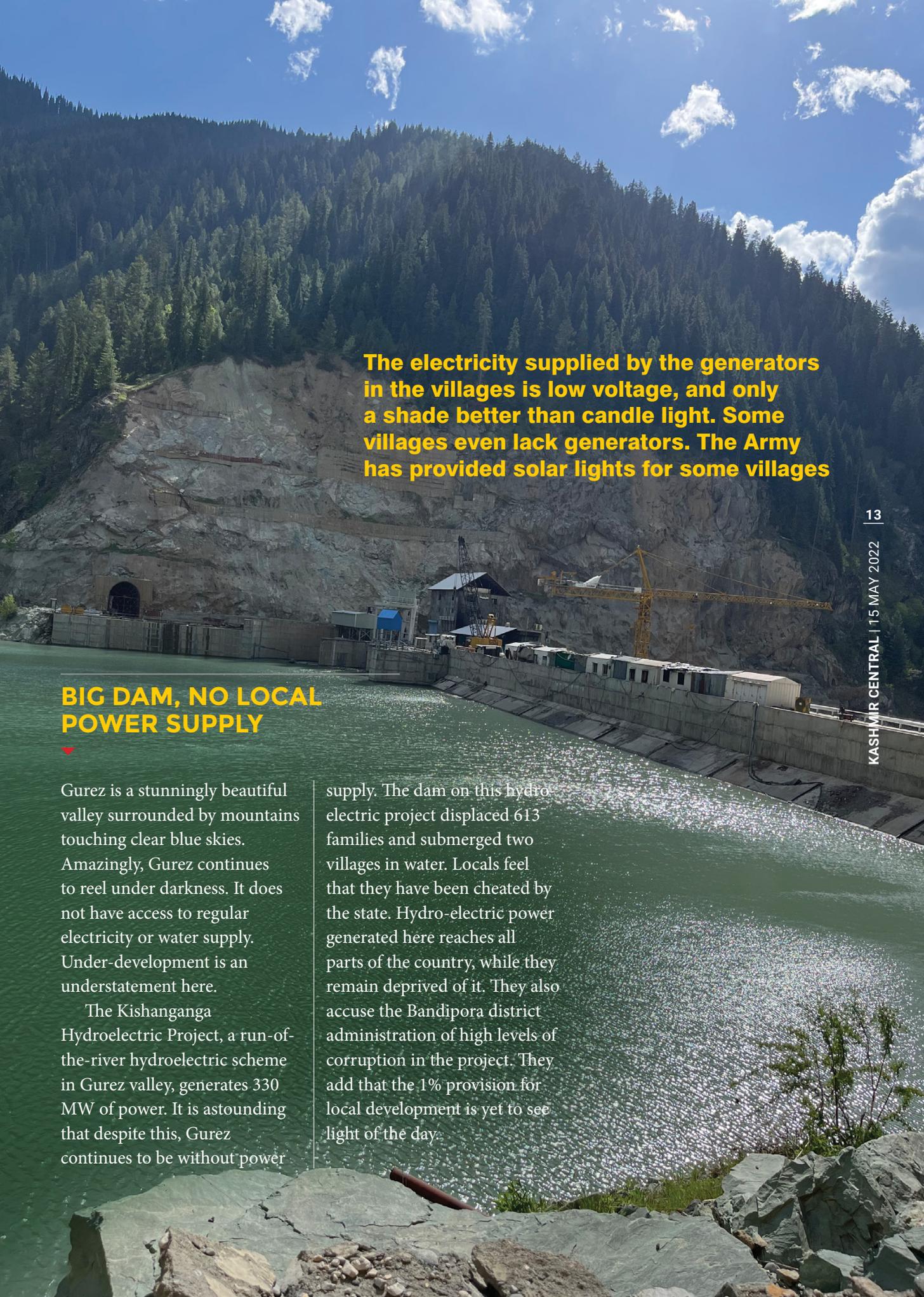
This is a strange predicament. Everybody in Kashmir knows how breathtakingly beautiful Gurez is. As are other amazing parts of Kashmir. Yet, little has been done to develop Gurez valley, though in beauty it can

equal or even beat most parts of Europe that the world finds so enchanting.

Amidst the noises of development and improvement in quality of life, Gurez valley in north Kashmir's Bandipora district can remind visitors of Stone Age. Gurez does not have proper power supply, and faces acute scarcity of electricity. Each village has a generator that provides electricity for five to six hours daily. Gurez also lacks regulated water supply.

The locals know they live in an enchanted land. But they are disheartened by the callous attitude of successive regimes towards their land, and seem to have come to terms with the harsh reality.

Gurez continues to reel under darkness. It does not have access to regular electricity or water supply. Under-development is an understatement here



The electricity supplied by the generators in the villages is low voltage, and only a shade better than candle light. Some villages even lack generators. The Army has provided solar lights for some villages

BIG DAM, NO LOCAL POWER SUPPLY

Gurez is a stunningly beautiful valley surrounded by mountains touching clear blue skies. Amazingly, Gurez continues to reel under darkness. It does not have access to regular electricity or water supply. Under-development is an understatement here.

The Kishanganga Hydroelectric Project, a run-of-the-river hydroelectric scheme in Gurez valley, generates 330 MW of power. It is astounding that despite this, Gurez continues to be without power

supply. The dam on this hydroelectric project displaced 613 families and submerged two villages in water. Locals feel that they have been cheated by the state. Hydro-electric power generated here reaches all parts of the country, while they remain deprived of it. They also accuse the Bandipora district administration of high levels of corruption in the project. They add that the 1% provision for local development is yet to see light of the day.

CUT OFF FROM THE WORLD FOR MONTHS, ARMY THE MAJOR SUPPORT

Gurez and Tulail, the twin tehsils of Bandipora district, remain cut off from the world for three to four months during winter. The road connecting the tehsils to Bandipora district Headquarters is closed for winters due to heavy snowfall.

Gurez and Tulail receive seven to ten feet of snow during winter. The locals say the Army regiments stationed there are their major support system. A

team of KASHMIR CENTRAL visited the area recently and witnessed an amazing bond between the locals and the Army.

In the last few years, Gurez has seen some development. A Government Degree College was opened. A sub-district hospital (SDH) was provided here, and some government buildings were constructed. But challenges remain.

The locals say that the teachers posted at the degree college do not work here. One way or the other, they manage to stay put at Bandipora district headquarters. The same is the case with the medical and para-

medical staff posted at SDH Bandipora.

Similarly, one can scarcely find the government officials posted at Gurez and Tulail at their respective offices. The reason seems evident. The world is used to living with regular supply of electricity and water, not without it. Hence government structures stand here minus any facilities, because the officials meant to provide the services are not available.

To whom do the people complain? There seems to be no accountability here.



The locals say that the teachers posted at the degree college do not work here. They manage to stay put at Bandipora district headquarters. The same is the case with the medical and para-medical staff posted at SDH Bandipora, or the government offices here

ROAD TO GUREZ IN BAD STATE

The road leading to Gurez continues to be in a bad state. It is full of potholes, and water flows over it at many places. The government officials up to the level of Sub District Magistrate (SDM) pass through the same routes. The road remains the same.

The electricity supplied by the generators in the villages is

low voltage, and only a shade better than candle light. Some villages even lack generators. The Army has provided solar lights for some villages. Some habitations lack access to even solar lights. Those living on hills in the area face these challenges more.

TOURIST SURGE IN GUREZ

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Notwithstanding the poor infrastructural development here, Gurez is so astonishingly beautiful that it attracts tourists. The Army is making consistent efforts to attract more and more tourists to Gurez valley, which will help in uplifting the local economy and give a better life to the locals.

According to the figures provided to KASHMIR CENTRAL by the local administration and the Army, only 352 tourists visited Gurez in 2020. Last year saw a big jump – more than 15,000 tourists explored Gurez valley.

In 2021, more than 15,000 tourists explored Gurez valley. 2022 is expected to fare even better. The Army expects more than 50,000 tourists in Gurez this year. Within the first few months of the year, 20,000 tourists have visited Gurez

2022 is expected to be even better on the tourism front. The Army expects more than 50,000 tourists in Gurez this year. Within the first few months of the year, 20,000 tourists have visited Gurez.

About 45 kilometers on the Bandipora-Gurez road, from Bandipora to Razdan Pass, has been upgraded. The road continues to be bad from Razdan Pass to Gurez. It is bumpy and



dilapidated . Yet the tourists enjoy the drive because of the unmatched beauty of the area.

Locals state that some influential people of the area exploit the tourists and misguide them for their personal benefits. They allege that the Dak Bungalow and other huge properties of the Tourism Department remain out of bounds for the tourists because of the tacit understanding between the officials of the Tourism Department and a private player in the hospitality sector.

The Army expresses helplessness regarding this local politics in the tourism sector. The Army says it is doing its bit to help the locals and draw tourists to the valley. The Army organizes exhibitions and events regularly to showcase the beauty of Gurez and the rich cultural traditions of the local Dard Shina tribe here.



ARMY'S SUPPORT FOR LOCAL POPULACE

Recently, the Army constructed a beautiful Log Hut Café here and dedicated it to the public. The café is now a popular hub for tourists and locals alike. The earnings are spent on improving infrastructure at the café.

“We invite NGOs to organize activities here from which the locals can benefit. We also do our bit. Beyond that it is the job of the administration to ensure the welfare of the tribals here,” said a senior Army officer.

SDM Gurez MR Mudasir told KASHMIR CENTRAL that the administration is trying to infuse a sense of accountability among the government servants posted in the area. The SDM acknowledged that the Army regiment posted here is doing a commendable job in supporting and strengthening the people here.

In order to promote tourism to the valley, the ‘Go Gurez’ campaign was promoted by the administration. The SDM said that the local youth who want to explore their talents and bring laurels to the valley are encouraged.

Gurez valley is a classic example of nature’s abundances and administrative apathy. The corrupt political representatives have enriched themselves, but have done little to uplift the local populace. The residents urge the LG administration to visit Gurez soon and initiate development projects here.



Gurez Urgently Needs Development



18

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1895. The book, 'The Valley of Kashmir' by British bureaucrat in India Sir Walter Lawrence was published. It came to be regarded as a valuable treatise on the paradise-like Himalayan region.

In his book, Lawrence called the Gurez Valley "one of the most beautiful scenes in all of Kashmir" framed by "mountain scarps of indescribable grandeur." He wrote that Gurez would rank among the most popular tourist destinations of Kashmir.

About 127 years later, Gurez is as beautiful as ever. But due lack of development and tourism infrastructure, the potential of Gurez has not been tapped.

Till 2007, the lack of development of tourism infrastructure could have been explained. For 60 years, from 1947 to 2007, Gurez was not open to outsiders for security reasons. Only the local tribes, the government employees working there and the Army had access to Gurez.

In 2007, Gurez opened for tourists. The lack of tourism infrastructure has continued for 15 years in this paradise land. It does not speak well for the state.

It is globally known that infrastructure development for the tourism industry has a positive cascading impact upon the local economy. Tourism industry stimulates investments in new infrastructure. This improves the living conditions of local residents as well as tourists.

This is the reason why Gurez urgently needs development.

**WHY SHOULD BOYS HAVE
ALL THE FUN?**

KASHMIRI WOMEN BEGIN DISCOVERING THE JOYS OF TREKKING

by **Mareaya Fayaz**



Photo by: Kashmir Mountaineers



Photo by: All Jammu Kashmir Mountaineering Federation

▼
Camping, trekking, climbing and sports have been dominated by men in Kashmir.

Women hardly participate in any of these activities. Schools in Kashmir – more so the schools run by missionaries – at times take students for camping trips. Leaving aside those school picnics, girls and women in Kashmir have hardly experienced any adventures on their own. There are trips with families, of course, but no outings with peers.

It's not that girls or women don't like being on their own. Nature has its own way

Women helping women to go out in nature has many positive aspects. One of them is creation of a non-judgmental space, where women can connect with nature, be their true selves and relieve the daily stresses of life

of refreshing the mind and body. And nature does not discriminate between men and women. It shares its beauty with all, irrespective of gender.

When I was in Class 7, I experienced the joy of camping and trekking for the first time. Our school organized a camp for us in the lush green woods of Gulmarg. I also remember with nostalgia the two other times that I went camping during my school years. Those

camping days are among the best memories of my childhood, and I cherish them.

Then again during my college time in Jammu, I had a chance to go out for camping with my friends. I thoroughly enjoyed the trip and the time I spent with my peers. Since then, there has been a lull in such activities. I shifted back to Kashmir and had to spend most of my time indoors, as no one among my girlfriends was willing to go



out on camping and trekking with me. I know why none of them was willing. It's because girls or young women being on their own was considered a bad thing – something that women in Kashmir don't do. The issue of "log kya kahenge" – what people will say – is a major concern for us. This has been the invisible, invincible barrier that has kept most women in Kashmir away from the things they want to pursue in life. It has kept them away from nature too.

In Kashmir, this trend of going camping and trekking with your peers is something that is done only by men. Women hardly get to experience this. The social taboo hangs heavy and does not allow women to enjoy such adventurous activities in the midst of nature, like men do.

If you check the Instagram and Facebook posts of Kashmiri men, you will find such photographs by the dozens. Men and boys sharing pictures of themselves in the woods,

The huge support from women participants made me realize that the children of the Valley are born with a natural love of the outdoors. All-women trips are the ideal platform for them



Abdul Basit
Founder, Kashmir Mountaineers

Photo by: All Jammu Kashmir Mountaineering Federation

drenching in sunlight among the lush greens that our valley has to offer. But for women, the adventure can only be some wedding or other function within the family, or at the most some family picnic or holiday.

MORE KASHMIRI GIRLS PARTICIPATING IN ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES

But is nature meant only for the enjoyment of men? No. I feel happy to see that younger Kashmiri girls are redefining the rules. They are claiming their space in nature's lap. I now





Photo by: All Jammu Kashmir Mountaineering Federation

witness the growing trend that women and girls in Kashmir have started going out into nature, and bask in its healing and the inner joy it brings.

Women helping women to go out in nature has many positive aspects. One of them is creation of a non-judgmental space, where women can connect with nature, be their true selves, be comfortable with one another and relieve the daily stresses of life. Hitherto, the pleasures of camping and trekking were restricted to men. But now we are witnessing a new era where women have started drawing this privilege.

With this new spark among women, new vistas are opening up in the commercial space. 'Team Mountaineers', a travel

agency in Kashmir, is helping women realize their dream of camping and trekking. The agency has been organizing camps and trekking expeditions for women, and Kashmiri women have been part of these activities. The founder of the agency is Abdul Basit, who has a Master's degree in Business Administration.

Speaking to KASHMIR CENTRAL, Basit said, "It is my dream of see Kashmir's tourism industry booming. There is huge potential in the tourism industry because of abundant natural resources. Kashmiri women should be the forerunners of this industry."

Basit is himself a traveller and loves to go on trips. He formed Team Mountaineers

in 2017. Basit says he drew inspiration from how the tourism sector is booming in other states, and how women participation in this sector is helping the industry to evolve.

ALL-WOMEN TREKKING AND CAMPING TRIPS GETTING POPULAR

Team Mountaineers organized an all-women trekking and camping expedition in 2018. Initially they got 90 registrations from the women of Kashmir, but only seven girls participated. At the next all-women trip organized in 2019, 15 Kashmiri

girls took part. In 2021, the group organized the third all-women trip. In this, about 25 Kashmiri women participated.

The group also organizes camps and treks for schools and colleges, in which the participation of girls is 30 to 40 per cent.

Basit says that women in Kashmir are restricted from participating in outdoor activities due to security issues and the traditional thinking, due to which most parents do not send their daughters for camping trips. Basit is convinced that this shall change, and all-women camping trips shall become popular.

“Earlier I was skeptical about organizing expeditions for women. But the huge support from women participants made me realize that the children of the Valley are born with a natural love of the outdoors. All-women trips are ideal to allow women to enjoy such activities,” says Basit.

These all-women trekking and camping trips also received huge media attention, notably Radio Mirchi. Basit adds that being able to make a small difference in the lives of women by providing them with safe and secure outdoor adventures is very fulfilling for him. “I have observed that when women go on camping trips, they are more disciplined. They are better at communicating and handling tough situations. Outdoor tourism presents a huge opportunity to our gutsy women to build a career in the tourism industry,” Basit believes.



Daanish Dhaar
Founder
All Jammu Kashmir
Mountaineering
Federation

Photo by: All Jammu Kashmir Mountaineering Federation

Women are exploring nature more, and also participating in trekking and climbing activities. All-women groups offer them the opportunity to engage in such activities comfortably

KASHMIRI WOMEN CAN BUILD CAREER IN OUTDOOR TOURISM INDUSTRY

Another group making a mark in the outdoor tourism segment is All Jammu and Kashmir Mountaineering Foundation.

It organizes treks and climbing expeditions for tourists, and also for those from within the Valley. The organisation has been founded by Danish Dhaar, who has an MBA in finance. Daanish is a passionate trekker and climber.

Speaking to KASHMIR CENTRAL, Daanish said that the participation of Kashmiri women in treks was low earlier, but has been picking pace in recent years. “Women have to battle the old stigmatization of such activities, the thought of ‘What people might think’. That prevents women from coming

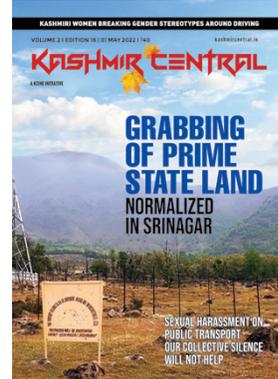
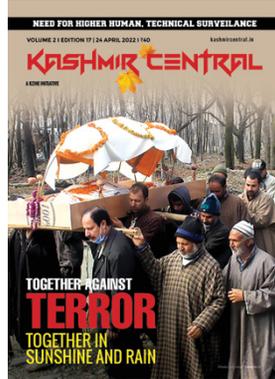
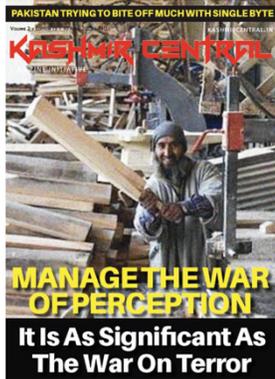
out and joining the treks. The society thinks that it is bad for women to go on treks and do outdoorsy activities. But I believe that these thought processes are changing. Women are exploring nature more, and also participating in trekking and climbing activities. All-women groups offer them the opportunity to engage in such activities comfortably,” highlights Daanish.

Kashmir Women’s Collective, an NGO which works for women, has taken initiatives to organize camping and trekking trips for women, and allow them to indulge in their love for nature. This year, women from all over India and also from Jammu and Kashmir participated in the winter sports at Gulmarg. A decade now, one may not have seen women athletes in Gulmarg. From snowboarding to skiing, all activities were dominated by males. With women making their mark in these sports, things have changed for the better.

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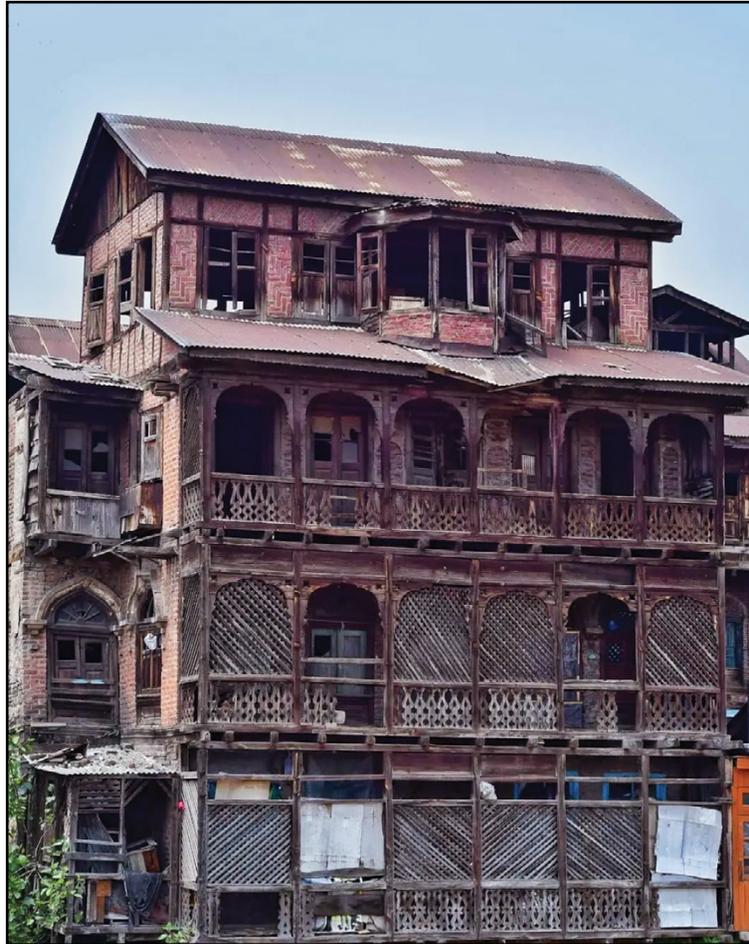


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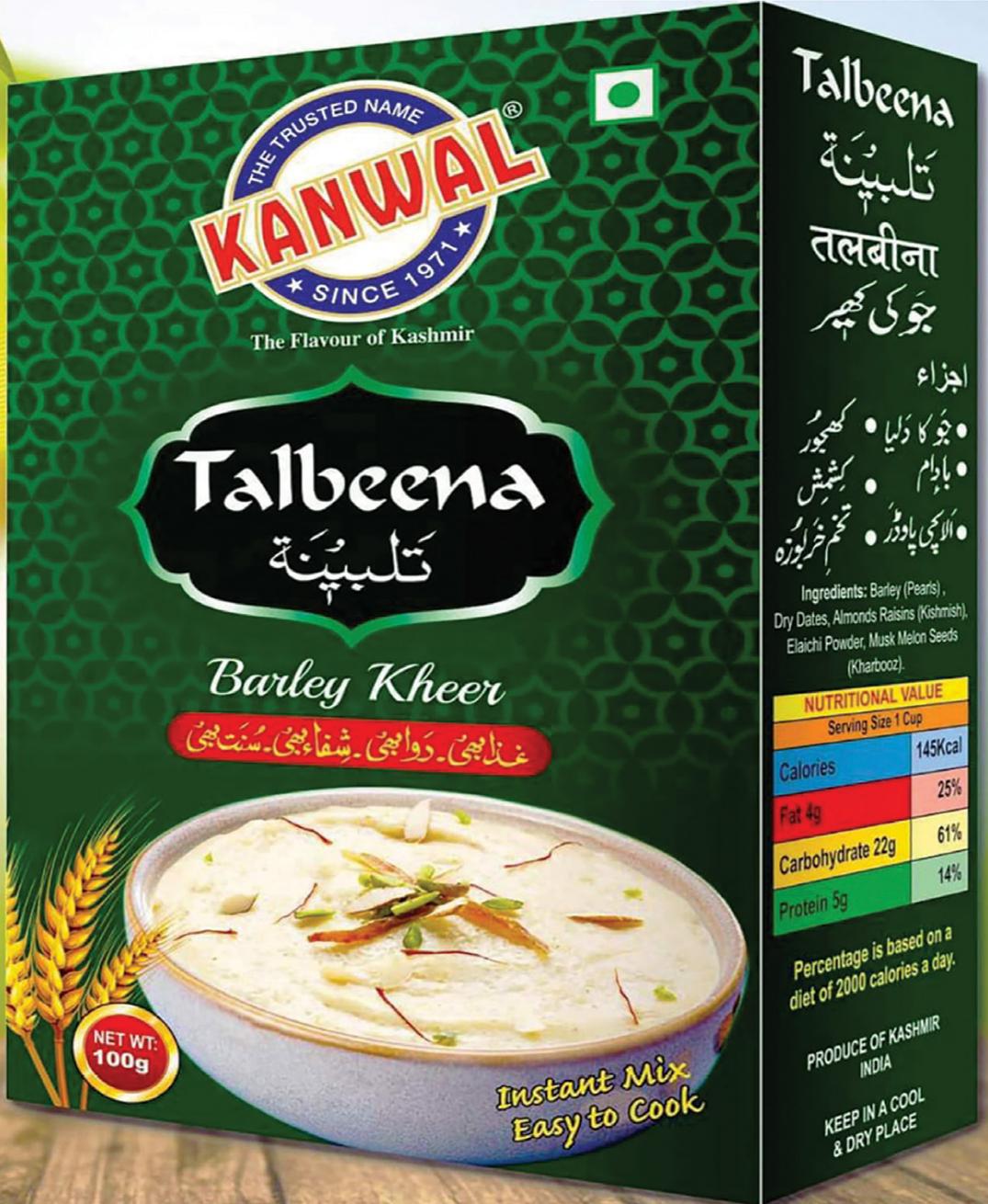
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A KZINE INITIATIVE

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)].

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اجزاء

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

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