SHAIKH MOHAMMAD ABDULLAH AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN JAMMU & KASHMIR

ABSTRACT

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF

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IN

HISTORY

BY

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UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF

Prof. Tariq Ahmed

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ABSTRACT

"The right of self-determination is an inherent right of all peoples and no one can snatch it away. If we are free citizens then we have inherited this right automatically. ...so called "free elections" to decide the issue will not satisfy me." Shaikh Abdullah in 1968 in an interview with Urdu magazine 'Shabistan Digest' [Delhi].

This study with ample sources affirms that that the movement that was launched against the Dogra State was not communal. It was the nature of the Dogra State that shaped the movement of the Muslims. The Muslims, who constituted the sheer majority of the total population of the State, were lagging behind in every field and were governed like dumb driven cattle. They were discriminated by the Dogra Maharajas for a simple reason that they were followers of a religion different to the Dogras. It is therefore not surprising that the political movement Kashmiris launched in 1930’s under Shaikh Abdullah would take the religious colour and mosques and shrines were used as platforms. Initially started for the uplift of the Muslims of the State, the Muslim Conference under Shaikh Abdullah, broadened its outlook and accommodated the non-Muslims, and fought for the ‘Responsible Government. This continuity and change marks, the progressive march of the ‘national movement’ in Kashmir.

Transcending the traditional view that the conversion of the Muslim Conference into National Conference was a big step towards the unity of Muslims and non-Muslims of the State, this study affirms that the conversion of the Muslim Conference into National Conference was a mistake on part of Shaikh Abdullah. He transformed the Muslim Conference to accommodate non-Muslims, i.e. elite. The non-Muslim elites had associated themselves with the Dogra rule which had protected their religious and economic rights. As was expected, the non-Muslims did not join the National Conference which they knew; being part of the State was against their interests. But worst was that Shaikh lost his close friends and comrades who were not in favour of conversion.
The study also delves into Nehru-Abdullah friendship and finds that during the Quit Kashmir movement, Nehru's visit was not to support his [Sheikh's] movement. It, on the basis of strong sources asserts that Nehru's motive was to convince Shaikh to end his movement, which Nehru believed would help Muslim League's two-nation theory. Needless to say the Quit Kashmir Movement was criticized by the Congress.

This division of the Muslims changed the future course of Kashmir history. So when in 1947, India got independence from long British rule and a new country by the name of Pakistan emerged on the world map, Kashmir could not attain its cherished goal. Shaikh Abdullah being the most popular leader of Kashmiris never tried to come to terms with his erstwhile colleagues, to save Kashmir from the partition. Indeed, seeing the impending partition of India, Shaikh Abdullah and Ghulam Abbas tried to form a joint front to prevent their State and to decide its future. But it was beyond their power to with stand the political storm of subcontinent.

In the given surcharged political situation, Shaikh Abdullah's slogan of "freedom before accession" lost its relevance. Having complete faith in the 'socialist and secularist' Nehru, who assured the world that the future of the State would be decided by a plebiscite, Shaikh attested the limited accession in his utterances. The presence of Shaikh Abdullah in Delhi on 26th October made the accession conditional and limited. In the absence of Shaikh it would have not been different as those signed with Junagarh and Hyderabad. Although Shaikh Abdullah had no official status at that time, but being close to Congress and the stand of Congress that accession should be decided by the people not by the ruler; made Shaikh an indispensable part of the of accession. Although it was because of Shaikh's pro Congress attitude that Kashmir got plunged into another slavery, but he got something [autonomy and promised plebiscite] to show his people the results of their twenty year's hard struggle. However, when India [read Nehru] retreated from its pledge of protecting the autonomy of the State and conducting of plebiscite, Shaikh also developed
other thoughts—in which an independent Kashmir was not excluded. This led to the arrest of Shaikh in 1953 by his old friend Nehru.

Shaikh Abdullah took over as the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir at a time when there were many forces pulling in different directions and the future of Kashmir was unsettled and uncertain. Nevertheless, he did commendable work in the socio-economic field of the State. His ‘land to tiller’ reform without the compensation to the landlords was no less than a miracle. The simple village people could now afford to drink the milk from their own cows and eggs of their fowls. Mr Eric Tyndale Biscoe who was closely associated with Kashmir since 1931 sums up that “nowhere else in the world has one man made such a peaceful revolution during this generation.” For the first time, a Prime Minister was seen touring villages on foot or horseback; moving among the people, speaking to them in their language. Under Shaikh Abdullah, the State got its first university; 35 per cent of the budget was allocated for education. He got abolished the hereditary ruler-ship of the Dogras and made the office elective. However, in the political field Shaikh’s period proved to be the continuation of the autocratic Dogra rule. He ruled as a dictator and did not allow democracy to flourish in the State for which he was fully backed by Nehru. Shaikh had no following in Jammu and Ladakh. Just as the Dogra rulers were foisted upon Kashmiris, so was Shaikh foisted upon the people of Jammu and Ladakh. They never accepted him as the sole spokesman of Jammu and Kashmir. They were never reconciled to the abolition of Dogra rule and self-imposed exile of Maharaja. He was losing his popularity among the Muslims and non-Muslims backed by Indian communalists, were not ready to accept his’s rule. Finding himself between the devil and the deep blue sea, Shaikh started developing the idea of independence.

Kashmir was projected as a show window of Indian secularism. But the Indian democracy and secularism could not satisfy the Kashmiris who found subtle difference between the Dogra State and the Indian sponsored NC’s rule. Really Indian democracy failed in its test in Kashmir. The selected
politicians and unrepresentative leaders received generous grants in lieu of their endorsement to accession. The farce and rigged elections [except of 1977] were deemed as equal to plebiscite. The shame of ‘Indian democracy’s’ shame in Kashmir was so ashamed that it stopped at Pathankot.

Like all personalities of history Shaikh Abdullah too is many persons, much opinion. His achievements and failure are not his alone. They have impacted history and people of Kashmir. Being undisputed leader of Kashmir, his fate became the fate of Kashmir and his decisions right or wrong were taken as the decisions of Kashmir. For 20 years he had stressed on the people to accept nothing short to self-determination. In 1947 his decision was forced by circumstances; but in 1975 by signing the accord [the accord had no constitutional or democratic legitimacy] which was sooner discarded, Shaikh made the worst blunder. Nehru, who was as tall leader as Shaikh, in their respective spheres and regions, had only betrayed and imprisoned him, but Indira Gandhi who was no match to him, humiliated and totally destroyed him. From a tall leader of Kashmir he was reduced to a small politician hankering after the loves of office. But it was impossible for educated youth, whom Shaikh had trained and politicized, to accept the status quo. In fact Shaikh had gone so deep and far in inducting among the youth the desire of freedom, from where to get out was too difficult.

Nevertheless, ‘it did not bother Shaikh in his life time till 1982 because of his immense tall stature and unrivalled popularity.’ And also because the people considered him more as a religious leader than seeing him in ‘political terms.’ However, within a decade following the death of Sheik, an armed struggle was started by Kashmiris for their legitimate rights. Thus the present movement that started in 1989 was not all of a sudden but the continuation of the movement launched in 1930 for political rights. Shaikh was accused of treachery. Small wonder, then that the grave of Shaikh Abdullah became one of the main targets of attack in the beginning of 1990s. There is certain irony in present day that his grave near Dal lake at Hazratbal is protected by Indian
soldiers from the very people he had so loved and who virtually worshiped him. There is no gainsaying the fact that the outbreak of armed rebellion in late 1989 was thus an attempt to alter the status quo accepted by Shaikh Abdullah.

This study questions the validity of the Treaty of Amritsar of 1846, after the independence and partition of India. The formation of Jammu and Kashmir State [by the Amritsar treaty] by joining three different regions that differ in their geography, culture and history, itself was and is a problem. So the solution, though not final, lies in this that they may be separated as they were before 1846. Legally also, after the lapse of the British rule, all treaties as per the Indian Independence Act, lost their relevance and hence became obsolete, so why to continue that out dated Treaty of Amritsar? Like then, as now, the people of Jammu and Ladakh have, time and again, voiced against what they call “rule of Valley,” Or “hegemony of Kashmir Valley.” The regional problem is dangerous for the peace of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh.

India and Pakistan should give away their stereotypes of ‘integral part’ and ‘jugular vein’ and start peaceful but result oriented talks not only between them but also with Kashmiris. What is needed is sincerity and commitment to world peace; so that the flames of Kashmir are extinguished.

“Don’t tell my father I have died,” he says, and I follow him through blood on the road and hundreds of pairs of shoes the mourners left behind, as they ran from the funeral, victims of the firing. From windows we hear grieving mothers, and snow begins to fall on us, like ash. Black on edges of flames, it cannot extinguish the neighbourhoods, the homes set ablaze by midnight soldiers.
Kashmir is burning:
__Agha Shahid Ali
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Certificate

This is to certify that the Dissertation “Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah and His Contribution to Political Development in Jammu & Kashmir” by Mr. Showkat Ahmad Wani is the original research work of the candidate, and is suitable for submission in partial fulfillment for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

Prof. Tariq Ahmed
(Supervisor)
In the Memory of Late
Dr. Iqbal Sabir
DEDICATED

TO

THOSE WHO SUFFERED DUE TO ME

WITH THIS HOPE THAT THEY WILL FORGIVE ME

BEFORE MY..........
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SHOWQ AHMAD WANI
INTRODUCTION

And will the blessed women rub the ashes together? Each fall they
Gather chinär leaves, singing what the hills have re-echoed for four
Hundred years, the songs of Habba Khatun, the peasant girl who
became the queen. When her husband was exiled from the Valley
by the Moghul king Akbar, she went among the people with her
sorrow. Her grief, alive to this day, in her own roused the people
into frenzied opposition to Moghul rule. And since then Kashmir
has never been free...........

And the night’s sun there in Srinagar? Guns shoot stars into the sky,
the storm of constellation night after night, the infinite that rages on......

.Srinagar was under curfew. The identity pass may or may not have
helped in the crackdown. Son after son- never to return from the
night of torture- was taken away.

_ Agha Shahid Ali." The Country Without A Post Office."^1

Turning the pages of Kashmir history it becomes evident that the treatment
Kashmir has met from India was [is] not fair. Akbar, the Mughal ruler of India,
treacherously dismissed and imprisoned Yusuf Shah Chak, the last independent ruler
of Kashmir in 1585. Pandit Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India repeated history
when in 1953; he dismissed and imprisoned Shaikh Abdullah. Ironically, both Akbar
and Nehru are regarded as the secularist and broad minded rulers of India who
’repected’ the freedom of others. While as Yusuf Shah did not make any
compromise, Shaikh did, which reduced his personality among the Kashmiris though
not during his life time.

Collected Poems, Penguin, New Delhi, 2010[ rearranged mine to set it in chronological order]
Thomas Carlyle’s view that history can be largely explained by the impact of “great men” and Herber Spencer’s counter argument that such great men are the products of their societies, although contradictory but have great relevance with the freedom struggle of Kashmir. Shaikh Abdullah was an undisputed leader of Kashmir, who ruled the hearts and minds of common Kashmiris. The man who was cherished by Kashmiris, his photograph saluted, he revered as Shaikh Sahib and adored as bub[father] itself speaks why he should be studied. He dominated the politics of Kashmir from 1930s until his death in 1982.

In 1930 when Shaikh returned to Kashmir after his higher studies he was like many educated youth concerned with his career. He had least interest in politics. But the subsequent events brought him to lime light. With the passage of time because of his height, oration and boldness, he got the sight of elite section of society and was recognised as the leader of Kashmir by Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah. The unfortunate incident of 13th July raised the fortune of Shaikh Abdullah. He gave a good lead to the protests and processions from the front like a lion. He was rewarded for his boldness with the title of “Lion of Kashmir.” He started his political career as the speaker of Muslims through the platform of Muslim Conference founded in 1932. Towards the end of 1930s he converted Muslim Conference into National Conference to “accommodate non-Muslims” in the fight against autocratic Dogra rule. Shaikh who had successfully led battle against the Dogra State failed at the crucial time of partition “to act like a politician and made hurried attempts and hasty decisions.” But Shaikh himself was rendered helpless owing to the tribal invasion and the following
Indian intervention. Regarding accession Shaikh once said that “whatever happened was due to the force of circumstances.”

However his achievements as a politician do little match with his towering personality and popularity. Writing about the success and failure of Shaikh Abdullah, his biographer stated in 1980, when Shaikh was still alive and in power, “[F]rom the very start he spoke as a firm believer of Hindu-Muslim-Sikh Ithad, and found himself more closer to the views of National Congress. There can be no denying that he carried on with all courage his mission of Hindu-Muslim-Sikh Ithad, at a time when the whole of the sub-continent was in the grip of communal crisis. This is his success. The battle Shaikh Mohd Abdullah fought as a patriot and leader of masses, making his heroic appearance against the autocracy gave him many a things, but the battle he fought after partition could not establish him as a well-to-do politician. He in the outset rejected the scheme of separate homeland for Muslims. He time and again rejected two nation theory but after partition he could not link himself totally with the nationalists. This is his failure.”

He has remained an enigmatic figure because of his contradictory attitudes and statements. For example after his release on 29 September in 1947 regarding accession he, in an impartial tone, said, “Our first demand is complete transfer of power to the people in Kashmir. Representatives of the people in a democratic Kashmir will then decide whether the State should join India or Pakistan. If the forty lakhs of people living in Jammu and Kashmir are by passed and the state declares its

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2 Shaikh Abdullah’s interview with Shabistan Urdu Digest, New Delhi, 1968. The interview has been translated into English in the Testament of Shaikh Abdullah, with a Monograph by Y. D. Gundevis, Palit and Palit, Dehradun, 1974, p. 36.

accession to India or Pakistan, I shall raise the banner of revolt." But within no time, he contradicted his previous statement. Speaking at a gathering of 100,000 people at Hazuribagh, in Srinagar, on 5 October, he declared: "Of course, we will naturally opt to that dominion[India] where our own demand for freedom receives recognition and support.... we cannot desire to join those [in Pakistan] who say that the people must have no voice in the matter. We shall be cut to pieces before we allow alliance between this State and people of this type." Speaking in New Delhi on 21st October 1947, Shaikh Abdullah declared, "we will never allow Pakistan to coerce us.....the Government of Indian Dominion and the people appreciate our view. They are giving sympathetic consideration to our problems. But that has not been the case in Pakistan." More over and more importantly, while Shaikh Abdullah attested the 'accession' to India by remaining present in Delhi on the day the accession was signed; and also by his statements not only in Kashmir and India but also in Security Council. He also wanted to get passed a resolution in the State assembly to ratify the accession. But the same person during all this time though covertly developed an idea of an independent Kashmir, for which he had a controversial meeting with Loy Henderson the US ambassador to India in 1950. He also started a movement, which

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7 After the meeting Henderson in a message wrote to the US Secretary of State on 19 September 1950: “I had two secret discussions with Shaikh Abdullah [at the request of Shaikh]............ He was vigorous in restating that in his opinion (Kashmir) should be independent, that overwhelming
he led for twenty years, for the right of self determination to decide the future of Kashmir. This is a typical example of the kind of confusion that has always surrounded this “paradoxical figure.”

Although Shaikh’s struggle was against an autocrat ruler, ironically, he himself both as a leader of freedom struggle and after he assumed power, acted not different from that of his predecessor. History bears witness that Shaikh used all his might of influence, muscle power and hooliganism to frighten his opponents. Particularly after taking over as the Prime Minister of the State in 1948, his attitude towards those who did not second his views was not different from the attitude of the Dogra rulers.

Towards the close of the first half of the twentieth century, Shaikh in India was regarded as a charismatic leader of Kashmiris; a passionate nationalist, a devoted secularist and a close friend of Pandit Nehru. The same person, however, within no time, hence after became ‘a pro-Pakistani intriguer, an agent of West and a communist agent. Because of his somersaults, Shaikh who had[has] his admirers and critics in the whole sub-continent, in general “is not liked in India, forgotten in Pakistan and criticised in Kashmir.”

It is mainly because of the lack of an independent research on him that he has remained a controversial and disputed leader. Although hundreds of works have been published on modern history of Kashmir that are directly or indirectly related to Shaikh Abdullah but barring few they can hardly be called scholarly works. The big lacuna in these works is that they have been written, either by admirers or critics of majority population desire this independence.” Foreign Relations of the United States 1948, Vol. V. Part I, Washington DC, 1975, PP. 1433-35. For details see chapter IV.
Shaikh Abdullah. In addition those whose works are research based have discussed Shaikh in isolation through the prism of their own ideologies and principles.

In 1980, when Shaikh Abdullah after the accord was serving as the Chief Minister, F. A. Abba, got published a biography of Shaikh Abdullah under the title, “Profiles of Abdullah.” The book serves a very useful source material. The book actually provides the details of Shaikh Abdullah’s life in biographical form. The book is not research based but an account of the events of the life of Shaikh Abdullah. As the author himself admits, “the details given in this book are mostly based on the first hand information collected from those who were in one or other capacity close to Shaikh Mohd. Abdullah[colleagues of Shaikh Abdullah]. Being adherents of Shaikh and also party to crucial decisions of Shaikh, it is certain that they could not have come clean with him.

In 1985, three years after the death of Shaikh Abdullah, his ‘autobiography,’ Aatish-i-Chinar in Urdu hit the streets. Voluminous as it is, the work was the first comprehensive account of Shaikh Abdullah’s long political career. The work, however, cannot be fully trusted as according to George Bernard Shah, “all autobiographies are lies.” Firstly the work was published three years after the death of its ‘author’ itself casts doubts on its authenticity. In 2012 in an article published in a State sponsored Urdu magazine, Sheeraz, Advocate Gowhar challenged the authenticity of Aatish-i-Chinar. The magazine was banned and the published copies destroyed. Mohammad Yusuf Tang, who has actually edited this book, in the introduction of the book candidly, admits that many of the sensitive matters were not included in the book. Secondly the narration of certain events is not substantiated by

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8 See F. A. Abba, Profiles of Abdullah, op. cit., preface of the book
the primary sources, thus are highly doubtful. For example, regarding the conversion of the Muslim Conference into National Conference, he claims that poet Iqbal advised him for it. It is highly doubtful that Iqbal, who is regarded as one of the ideologues of the ‘two nation theory’ might have suggested it. The available contemporary sources on the other hand make it clear that it was the suggestion of Pandit Nehru.

Among the other biographies, mention may be made of Ajit Bhattacharjea’s ‘Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah: Tragic Hero of Kashmir published in 2008.’ Besides the long political career of Shaikh Abdullah, the book also deals with the contemporary history of Kashmir. It is actually a journalistic account rather than a research based effort. He has portrayed Shaikh Abdullah as one of the Muslim leaders of Congress who were disappointed with the consent of Congress to the partition plan. At many places, it looks the English translation of Aatsh-i-Chinar. The whole aim of the book seems to clear the misconceptions among the Indians about Shaikh Abdullah by highlighting his commitment to secularism. Indeed it is a sympathetic biography of Shaikh Abdullah by an admirer of his.


Then there are comprehensive works on the freedom struggle of Kashmir. These include, Prem Nath Baza’s The History of the Struggle for the Freedom, Cultural and Political: From the Earlier Times to the Present Day, [Pamposh Publications, New Delhi, 1954], Mohammad Yusuf Saraf’s Kashmiris Fight for

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Freedom, 2 Vols, Ferozoons Ltd., Lahore, 1977], Ab. Rashid Taseer's, Tarikh-i-Hurriyat-i-Kashmir, 3 Vols, and F. M. Hassnain’s, Freedom Struggle in Kahmir, [Rimla Publishing House, New Delhi, 1988]. Among the aforesaid works, Bazaz's and Saraf's works provide detailed accounts in a very lucid language. While as Saraf adopts a middle path to reach to Shaikh Abdulla; Baza on the other hand adapts offensive path because of his deep rooted rivalry with Shaikh. So, both suffer from objectivity. Taseer;s work is more or less a narration of political events. As Bazaz is offensive, so is Hassnain defensive- portrays Shaikh Abdullah as a divine entity.

Besides, the big problem which a researcher on modern history of Kashmir faces is lack of access to primary sources. There is nothing like selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru, Jinnah papers, or Nehru Museum when one comes to study Shaikh Abdullah. Most of the documents, some too sensitive and crucial were never maintained or preserved and remain mysteriously missing or were deliberately destroyed to hide the truth. I personally visited the head office of National Conference in Srinagar to get material related to Shaikh, the founder of NC. During the interview, Shaikh Nazir, the General Secretary of National Conference, who is also nephew of Shaikh Abdullah, candidly, admitted that most of the material [read history] had been destroyed during the period 1953-75, when Shaikh was outside the power and leading the plebiscite movement. Today, National Conference which was the name of Kashmir movement has been reduced to a regional political party. Likewise in the State archives of Srinagar and Jammu, the valuable documents have been dumped in the basement only to feed the silver fishes. Ironically the department which was to preserve the past is wittingly or unwittingly annihilating the history and identity of Kashmir which is indispensable for any nation. In spite of these shortcomings and hard ships I tried my level best to get all available sources- conventional and
unconventional, to fill the gap and to put forward the real picture and contribution and legacy of Shaikh Abdulla. That is the main theme of this study.

The first chapter deals with the nature of the Dogra State and the socio-economic condition of Kashmir from 1846 to 1930. The autocratic and communal nature of the Dogra State and its discriminative attitude towards the Muslims, provided the ground for and shaped freedom struggle.

The second chapter deals with the events and activities that led to the foundation of Muslim Conference. It also examines the nature of freedom struggle under the Muslim Conference; the transformation of the Muslim Conference into National Conference.

The third chapter examines the role of National Conference under Shaikh Abdullah; activities of Congress and Muslim League in Kashmir. It also deals with the sensitive issue of accession.

The fourth chapter deals with the autonomy phase of Jammu and Kashmir under the premiership of Shaikh Abdullah. It also traces the reasons of backing off of Shaikh Abdullah and Pandit Nehru from their early promises; the dismissal and arrest of Shaikh Abdullah by his trusted friend, Nehru.

The fifth chapter discusses the twenty years long movement by Shaikh Abdullah for Plebiscite which embarrassed India at international level. Subsequently, Nehru’s admission that Kashmir issue could not be settled without Shaikh. This led to Shaikh’s visit to Pakistan, but Nehru’s death buried the last hope of a peaceful settlement of the issue. It also examines the circumstance that forced Shaikh to make compromise by signing the accord with Indra Gandhi.
The sixth and the final chapter discusses with the return of Shaikh Abdullah to power not as a Prime minister but a Chief Minister like chief minister of Punjab, Rajasthan etc. The Kashmiris, because of Shaikh's dismissal and arrest in 1953 had forgiven Shaikh for his accession stand, and was revered as buh, but by signing the accord which was soon discarded by Mrs Gandhi, Shaikh began to be deemed as a 'traitor.'

The study ends with a brief conclusion. It briefly describes the role and Legacy of Shaikh Abdullah. There is no denying the fact that the present movement in Kashmir has its roots in them.
Chapter One

Socio-Economic Condition of Kashmir
Under The Dogra Rule (1846-1930)

*Beauty provoketh thieves sooner than gold,* ¹ The beauty of Kashmir has always become the cause of its slavery.²

The history of Kashmir is a sombre dark story. V. A. Smith has correctly judged it, “Few regions in the world can have had worse luck than Kashmir in the matters of government.”³ For many hundred years the people of Kashmir lived under a succession of foreign rules. Generally it is believed in Kashmir that the valley lost its independence in 1586, when Mughals under Akbar occupied Kashmir.⁴ Kashmir remained the part of the Mughal Empire for more than a century and a half. However, the Mughal rule was fairly just and enlightened, and their laws and ordinances were excellent in spirit.⁵ During the Mughal rule, Kashmir was on the whole, prosperous and fertile and the shawl industry first assumed importance.⁶ In 1753, with the declining power of the Mughal, Ahmad Shah Abdali, the ruler of Afghanistan occupied Kashmir and “established a brutally oppressive rule over the passive Kashmiris.”⁷ Abdali ruled Kashmir through his governors, who squeezed as much revenue as they could out of the ‘wretched people’ of Kashmir. Wealth had to be accumulated rapidly, as no one knew how many days would elapse before he was recalled to Kabul, to make room for some new needy favourite of the hour.⁸ In 1819 the cruel rule of Afghans came to an end but the miseries of Kashmiris continued. Kashmir was now occupied by Sikhs under Ranjit Singh.⁹ The rule of Sikhs was nothing more “than a new type of oppression, this time religious fanatics seeking revenge upon the helpless Kashmiri Muslims whose forefathers had once been

¹ Shakespeare, *As You Like It.*
² *Siyyat,* Lahore, November 7, 19.
Hindus.”

Moorcraft, who visited Kashmir during the Sikh period, says that “by a Sikh is punished by a fine to the Government. From sixteen to twenty rupees, of which four rupees are paid to the family of the deceased, if a Hindu, and two rupees if he was a Muslim.”

On Ranjit Singh’s death in 1839, there was chaos in Lahore, the capital of Punjab, followed by a scramble for succession, which weakened the Sikh state. It was under this situation that the Sikhs decided to challenge British authority south of the Sutlej, this provided the golden opportunity to Gulab Singh. In December 1845, war broke out between the British and the Sikhs, in which the Sikhs were defeated in the decisive battle of Sobraon on 10th February, 1846. After the defeat of the Sikhs, the British demanded an indemnity of the Sikh Government in Lahore, but since little of it could be taken in cash, they ceded Kashmir and the hill states situated eastward of the river Indus and westward of the river Ravi, to the British Government. When, after their defeat, the Sikhs surrender their hold over Kashmir, Gulab Singh “played his ace.” He offered the British 75 lakh rupees (750,000 pounds) for the possession of Kashmir. Consequently a treaty was signed between the British and Gulab Singh at Amritsar on 16th March, 1846, known in history as the Treaty of Amritsar, by which the British East India Company sold Kashmir to Gulab Singh and his male descendants. This treaty recognised Gulab Singh as the ruler of the area between the rivers Indus and the Ravi consisting of Jammu, Kashmir, Ladakh and Gilgit. Thus the modern State of Jammu and Kashmir, including Ladakh, Baltistan and Gilgit, came into existence. The State thus constituted was the largest of the Indian states in areas at the time of independence. Geographically, the State had four natural regions, Jammu in the south, Valley in the

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10 J. Korbelt, op. cit., p. 10; Jama Masjid in Srinagar was shut down, and aazan was forbidden.
11 Quoted in E. F, Neve, op. cit., p. 22.
12 Lord Birdwood, Two Nations and Kashmir, (Srinagar, 2005) p. 31. Gulab Singh was the important personality of the Dogra Rajput clan of Jammu. After consolidating his position in Jammu, he attacked and brought Ladakh and Sakardu under his control in 1830s and 1840 respectively. Gulab Singh though a feudatory of the Sikhs, played a treacherous role against the Sikhs in the Anglo Sikh war. Joseph Cunningham, History of The Sikhs, 1849, as quoted in Birdwood, op. cit., p. 32.
13 Ibid. p. 31.
14 Ibid. p. 32.
15 Lawrence, Valley, op. cit., p. 201.
16 J. Korbelt, op. cit., p. 11.
18 First Article of the Treaty.
centre, Ladakh between the valley and Tibet and Gilgit to the north.\textsuperscript{20} It presented special and extraordinary features in that its borders were contiguous to that of China, Afghanistan and Tibet. It was also easily accessible from Russian Turkestan. Tibet lay to the east. Thus, Kashmir was the base of the triangle at whose apex three empires met.\textsuperscript{21} Comparing with other treaties signed by the British with other Indian states, it was a unique, as there was no mention of appointing a Resident in Kashmir.\textsuperscript{22} Also “the territories of which the Maharaja was recognised as ruler were handed over to him in independent possession. While the supremacy of the British government was acknowledged there was no agreement on the part of the company to guarantee the internal security of the state.”\textsuperscript{23} Gulab Singh was ‘obliged to govern his foreign policy according to the views of the British Government of India while in the domestic administration, he was nearly independent.\textsuperscript{24} Thus the modern State of Jammu and Kashmir was different from other Princely States in the manner that it was ‘independent in its internal affairs, there was no Resident and the British Government had no control in the State administration. Ironically, the Kashmiris were not consulted while making this treaty.\textsuperscript{25} At the time of the treaty, the British did not consider the interests of Kashmiris. It is worth to quote Bazaz: “two millions of people in the Valley and Gilgit were sold like sheep and cattle to an alien adventurer and the whole transaction was made behind their back. The Treaty consisting of ten articles makes no mention whatsoever of the rights, interests or the future of the people.”\textsuperscript{26} Since the Kashmiris were not consulted, so for them, the treaty meant nothing, but “another century of exploitation by alien rulers”.\textsuperscript{27} Thus the British sold

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{22} K.M. Pannikar, The Founder of the Kashmir State: A Biography of Maharaja Gulab Singh, (Srinagar, reprinted 1989), p. 126. But due to the sensitive nature of the state where the majority of the ruled were Muslims and the ruler Hindu and also geographical structure, it became imperative for the British to establish its resident later on in 1885. See Victoria Schofield, Kashmir in the Crossfire, New Delhi, 1997, pp. 64-65.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{27} Ajit Bhattacharjea, Kashmir The Wounded Valley, (New Delhi, 1994), p. 54.
an area of 84,471 square miles and transferred unlimited power to a "Dogra Hindu ruler to rule over the Muslim majority population by this notorious treaty."  

The hundred years of Dogra rule under the auspices of the British "brutalized and destroyed every facet of civil life in Kashmir." Although Kashmir was under foreign rule since 1586, but the Dogras created a sort of Dogra imperialism by which the Dogras were considered "masters" as superior class and non-Dogras slaves, as inferiors. Immediately after taking over as the ruler of Kashmir, Gulab Singh determined to make his power felt through the length and breadth of his kingdom. He adopted harsh measures of punishment, which included cutting of nose, pulling off the skin, to put down rebellion. Since the Maharaja had paid to the British 75 lakhs, he considered each and every thing of Kashmir his property in which the Kashmiris had no share. He thus levied harsh taxes on the people to realize the paid amount. Hindus, as the coreligionists of the Maharaja were exempted from the taxes and the Muslims were to pay taxes. Everything was heavily taxed in Kashmir, and every person too, "the artisan and manufacturer alike. The people were in a state of squalid poverty, and the country swarmed with beggars." Every trade and profession of the Muslim community, excluding tailors, was taxed. Even the boatmen whose income was 2-8 rupees per month were taxed (for making the use of lake). "Their food," says Robert Thorpe, "is only rice, and the course vegetables the produce in their lake gardens, and the only fuel they can procure is dried house dung, and these people pay taxes." And if a boatman was not able to pay, his boat was seized by the revenue officers. The house tax was 4 to 20 annas and the fruit tax

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28 A.S. Anand, *The Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir, and Its Development and Comments*, (Delhi, 1998), pp.9-10 and 110. The total population of the state according to the census of 1941 was 40,21,616 out of which Muslims were 31,01,247, that is more than 77%. *A Hand Book of Jammu and Kashmir State*, p. 11.


36 Mrs Hervey, op. cit., p. 121.


39 Mrs Hervey, op. cit., p. 117.
was 3/4th of the price. Each village, yielding 500 kharwars (kharwar = 16 traks = 83 seer or 80 kgs.) of grain had to provide 2-3 animals a year as the animal tax. One-half seer of ghee for each milch cow, 1-10 fowls from each house and 2/3rd of honey wherever produced was taken as the share of the Government. Thus, the people of Kashmir (Muslims) were not able to use the milk of their own cows and the eggs of their own fowls. The right to legalise the marriage was framed out and Muslims (not Hindus) were made to pay marriage tax called as suthra-shahrt and it was an important source of income for the State. Dr Elmslie states that a tax called ashgul was levied on all the Muslims of Kashmir for the support of the Hindu priests, and were also made to pay for the Hindu temples called mandri. Everyone could not dare to wear a new or ‘better than the roughest’ dress as it was taxed. The Muslims were also to pay nazara and even the grave digger was taxed. Heavy duties were also levied on wood, which was very important for the people not only for construction and cooking but also to protect themselves from the severe cold during the long winter. There were other unusual taxes like zar-i- nakhas, a tax on the sale of horses, which was 5 percent of the purchased money. Even circumcision was taxed and in 1871 it brought 600 rupees revenue to the State. Taxes were also levied on bricks. The tax on baked bricks was rupees 50/1000 and unbaked was rupees 2/1000. The Dogras also realised tax from the ‘immoral’ fields like prostitution. There were two ill-famed centres of prostitution in Srinagar, Teshwan and Maisuma. Abduction of women from the State by a powerful organisation was a very common offence and they were sold to established houses of ill fame in India.

42 Lawrence, The Valley of Kashmir, op. cit., pp. 415-17.
47 Lawrence, op. cit., pp. 415-17.
48 Robert Thorpe, op. cit., p. 80.
50 L. Bowring, Eastern experience, op. cit., p. 85.
51 Saraf thinks that this was the reason that there were no pucha houses in Kashmir, Saraf, op. cit., p. 286.
52 Ishaq Khan, History of Srinagar, Srinagar, 2007, p. 115.
53 Letter from the Resident in Kashmir, no. 5301, dated the 24th November, 1926, Foreign and Political Department, File No. 468-1 of 1926, Simla Records, National Archives of India (NAI).
The Dogra Government both protected and encouraged prostitution in Kashmir because it would get good revenue from it.\textsuperscript{54} They legalised this institution by granting licenses and permissions to purchase girls for it. A license for one girl would cast about 100 Chilkee rupees.\textsuperscript{55} However, according to Robert Thorpe such sales took place because of 'grasping and avaricious nature of the government', since none but the very poorest and lowest classes of the people would sell their children.\textsuperscript{56} Thus each and everything was taxed, save water and air.\textsuperscript{57} Because of the heavy taxation the condition of people got deteriorated and they lived very poor life. Almost all the foreign travellers and British officials who visited Kashmir during this period substantiate this.\textsuperscript{58} Although the predecessors (Mughals, Afghans and Sikhs) had also levied harsh taxes and "had laid violent hands on a large population of fruits of the earth, the profits of the loom and the work of men's hands," but they (Dogras) "sucked the very lifeblood of the people" and "skinned the very flints to fill (its) coffers."\textsuperscript{59} Then there were corrupt officials who would charge much more than the fixed demand, worsening the already deplorable conditions of the people. Just only after two years, when the Gulab Singh took as the Maharaja of Kashmir, in 1848, the Governor General of British India, Lord Harding wrote to Gulab Singh that the misgovernment in Kashmir had caused great anxiety in British India and if the situation did not improve they would interfere in the matter.\textsuperscript{60}

\section*{Agriculture}

Kashmir during the Dogra rule was a feudalistic state in which agriculture was the main source of economy.\textsuperscript{61} And it was in this field, that the Dogra oppression was

\textsuperscript{54} Robert Thorpe, op. cit., p. 80. It is also substantiated by Sir Albion Banerji’s criticism on the administration of the Kashmir State, Government of India, Foreign and Political Department, Political, File no. 247, p. 1929, NAI.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{56} For further details see, R. Thorpe, op. cit., pp. 80-81; A. Bringman, op. cit., p. 31.
\textsuperscript{57} Lawrence, op. cit., p. 417.
\textsuperscript{58} See for example, Mrs Hervey, op. cit.; Younhusband, op. cit.; Bates, op. cit., and R. Thorpe, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{60} However, the British were more concerned about the Europeans, who visited Kashmir and the Maharaja agreed in 1852 for the appointment of a seasonal British officer, to supervise the affairs of the European visitors. See Bazaz, \textit{Inside Kashmir}, op. cit., pp. 35-6.
\textsuperscript{61} As per the census of 1941, more than 89 per cent people were living in villages and most of them were associated with agriculture. \textit{A Hand Book of Jammu and Kashmir} State (no date), Research Library NAI.
felt more.  

The whole of the land in Kashmir was the property of the ruler, i.e. Dogras.  

About three fourth of the produce of the land was taken as the land revenue by the State. The Dogras adopted region centric approach. Since they were from Jammu they considered Jammu as homeland and Kashmir as purchased territory.  

The Jammu peasants were treated mostly as the owners of land while as the peasants of Kashmir were treated only as serfs with no proprietary rights in land nor to its produce. Thus for the first time in the history of Kashmir, the ‘zamindars’ lost their occupancy rights or hereditary rights during the Dogra rule. They could occupy land so long as they could pay revenue, failed which, they were ejected from the land. Mr Wingate who was made the settlement officer of Kashmir before Lawrence also substantiates this. He records that while as the Kashmiri zamindars had no occupancy rights; the cultivators of Jammu were ‘independent and comfortable.’ After taking over as the ruler of Jammu and Kashmir, the Maharaja Gulab Sing confiscated the Muslim jagirs and declared them his own jagirs. Even the rent free jagirs (religious) of Muslims were confiscated. However, under the British pressure some selected and influential groups of people (Hilly Rajas, Naqshbandi family) were allowed to continue their jagirs. Even during the reign of Pratap Singh, when British resident had been there, the discrimination continued. By the order of the Maharaja Pratap Singh, dated 20th July, 1910, the Muslim jagirdars were required to pay nazrana on their succession to a jagir and the Kashmiri Pandit jagirs were exempted from similar payments. And during the reign of Hari Sing who was considered liberal, this policy

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63 Bates, op. cit., p. 100  
64 Ibid.  
66 The term zamindar in Kashmir held a meaning different from the zamindars of Indian subcontinent. The zamindars of Kashmir were only cultivators and not the intermediary class, revenue collectors.  
68 Younghusband, op. cit., p. 188.  
69 Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh, Compiled Under the Direction of the Quarter Master General in India in the Intelligence Branch, Delhi, 1974, p. 116.  

70 Mridu Rai, op. cit., p. 53.  
71 K. M. Pannikar, op. cit., pp. 135-36.  
72 They would act as the supporting structure of the Dogra rule, M. Rai, op. cit., p. 54.  
continued. In early years of his reign at least twenty jagirs worth of 500 to 1000 were
snatched from the Kashmiri zamindars (likely all Muslims) and were given to twenty
Dogras, out of which 18 were Rajputs (Hindus) and only two were Muslims.\textsuperscript{74} While
as the cultivators were mostly Muslims, the officials of revenue department concerned
with the land revenue were mostly Hindus. They would use all harsh measures to
release land revenue from the Muslim cultivators.\textsuperscript{75} According to Lawrence, “In
Kashmir the land revenue administration proceeds from the patwari, the village
accountant, and he is a Pandit... it has been pointed out that the patwari keeps three
editions of statement of holding (of each village), “one for himself, which may be
supposed to be near the truth, one for the tahsildar, and another for the villagers, the
two latter being prepared with a view to convincing each side of the excellent bargain
he has secured.” Over the patwaris was a small band of Pandits, who were employed
in the tahsil in various revenue capacities, but they did not condescend to manipulate
the taxation of individuals, and dealt with villages as a whole. Over the patwari and
the tahsil pandit was a tahsildar and one or two naib- tahsildars, mostly ‘Pandits. The
districts (wazrats) were presided over by officers known as Wazir Wazarat, all of
whom were Pandits. These Wazirs were subordinate to the Hakim-i- Ala or Governor
of Kashmir and his revenue establishment known as the Daftar-i- Diwan was
composed entirely of Pandits.”\textsuperscript{76} At the time of harvest, a regiment known as the
Nizamat Patlan’ accompanied by sepoys from the regular army would go to the
village to enforce the State’s claim.\textsuperscript{77} They collected land revenue harshly from the
cultivators and more than the actual demand,\textsuperscript{78} which was 3/4\textsuperscript{th} of rice, maize, millets
and buck wheat, and 9/16\textsuperscript{th} of oil seeds, pulses and cotton.\textsuperscript{79} There was a part of land
directly under the State, which was cultivated with begar (forced labour) from the
villagers.\textsuperscript{80} Besides the recognised method of land revenue system, the officials
enjoyed other perquisites which was known as ‘rasum.’\textsuperscript{81} Thus the Muslim cultivator
had to pay not only to the State but also to the ‘whole contingent of middlemen

\textsuperscript{74} Inqilab, 29 November, 1931, Lahore.
\textsuperscript{75} Lawrence, Valley, op. cit., pp. 400-01.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., p. 402.
\textsuperscript{78} Bazaz, Inside Kashmir, op. cit., p.61; The peasants were so frightened with the cruel behaviour that
the mere visit of official would send the pulse of the village up many degrees, Lawrence, op. cit., p. 5.
\textsuperscript{79} Lawrence, op. cit., pp. 402-03.
\textsuperscript{80} Bazaz, Kashmir, op. cit., p. 61.
\textsuperscript{81} Rasum was the revenue extracted by revenue officials from each village as their personal share. See
Lawrence, pp. 415-17.
between himself and the State, starting from the *shakdar*, the official in charge of watching the crops, to the *kardar*, the actual revenue collector.\footnote{Ibid, pp. 402-3.} And worse still, the soldiers would come at harvest time, and when the share of the State had been seized and "these men of war had helped themselves, there was very little grain to tide the unfortunate peasants over the cruel winter, when the snow lies deep and temperature falls below zero."\footnote{There is an old saying in the Kashmiri language, "Batta Batta Tah Piyada patta." (We cry for food and the tax collector is after us.), Walter R. Lawrence, *The India We Served*, (London, 1928), p. 127.} Gulab Singh, also brought the grain under his control, in Government granaries in the city of Srinagar so that to pay the city population through Government officials at a fixed price.\footnote{Ibid.}

While as the State would extract as much revenue as possible it never thought of improving the agricultural sector.\footnote{Ibid, op. cit., p. 157.} A large part of the cultivable land was under the city dwellers, absentee land lords, etc., and the cultivators employed by them were only the tillers.\footnote{Ibid.} Instead of encouraging the jagirdars to expand the cultivation by bringing more land under cultivation, they were given the fertile lands as jagirs in Kashmir.\footnote{Chitrakha Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity, and the Making of Kashmir*, (Delhi, 2003), p. 65; K. M. Pannikar, op. cit., p. 137.} In 1866-67, Rambir Singh introduced *chak hanudi* or chaks granted to Hindus in Kashmir.\footnote{Bazaz, *Kashmir*, op. cit., p. 229. Of the total area of the State, only 4.9 per cent was actually cultivated out of 5.6 per cent cultivable land, A Hand Book of Jammu and Kashmir State, p. 13.} By this chak dari system, the Kashmiri Pandits acquired a large land in the Valley.\footnote{Ibid, p. 231.} Ranbir Sing also encouraged Dogras to settle in Kashmir and granted them privileged access to Kashmiri revenues. They were given revenues of some villages as salaries, free wood to build houses, and were exempted from taxes.\footnote{Ibid.} In 1882 auctioning of villages (*izzad boli*) was adopted to the highest bidder. The auctioneers (Pandits and boatmen) were from city and had no knowledge about the capacity of the villages.\footnote{Ibid.} They would extract as much as possible from the villagers.\footnote{M. Rai, op. cit., p. 157.} With the result starvation became more or less a regular affair.\footnote{Ibid.} Because of the heavy land revenue demand and other taxes a peasant was left with only three months produce and the rest of the year he would spend on wild vegetables and

\footnote{Ibid, pp. 160-61.} \footnote{Lawrence, *Kashmir*, op. cit., pp. 404-05.} \footnote{Ibid, p. 405.} \footnote{Josef Korbal, op. cit., pp. 11-12.}
fruits. Mr Wingate had criticised the State Government and its revenue officials for their harsh policies, in demanding land revenue and other taxes, which had reduced the cultivators as a mere coolie, working in the property (land) of the State.

It is necessary here to mention that Gulab Sing after taking over as the ruler of Kashmir, had declared most of the necessities of life as well as the more important articles of commerce as the State monopolies. The sale of grain was a state monopoly but the officials in charge of it did not always sell it to the people who most required it or in the quantity they required and was sold on its double price (hike from 1 to 2 rupees), with the result, hoarding and black-marketing increased.

When the Government would collect the grain from the zamindars it was in kharwars and 1 kharwar was equal to 16 traks but when they would sell to the people, 1 kharwar was equal to 15 traks. The extra trak was charged as the expense of kharwar carrying the grain from the villages to city. Because of the high land revenue and other taxes and harsh policies of the land collecting agency, the people of Kashmir were sullen, desperate and suspicious. They had no rights but were only serfs. They rarely tasted their beloved food rice. Their condition has been aptly recorded by Bazaz, "Dressed in rags which can hardly hide his body and bare-footed, a Muslim peasant presents the appearance rather of a starving beggar than of one who fills the coffers of the state. He works laboriously in the field during the six months of the summer to pay the State its revenue and taxes, the officials their rasum and the moneylender his interest. Most of them are landless labourers working as serfs of the absentee landlords. They hardly earn as their share of the produce, enough for more than three months. For the rest they must earn by other means. During the six months they are unemployed and must go outside the boundaries of the State to work as labourers in big towns and cities of British India. Their lot, as such is not good, and many of them die every year, unknown, unwept and unsung outside their homes."

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95 He was the settlement officer of Kashmir in 1887.
100 R. Thorpe, op. cit., p. 53and 59.
101 Ibid, p. 53.
102 Lawrence, Kashmir, op. cit., p. 4.
103 Bazaz, Kashmir, op. cit., p. 252.
They would work as labourers in Punjab and after coming back, they had to pay custom duty on the goods, worth of few rupees (these goods included clothes for family essential commodities). All the income excluding the income tax, to the State would come from the poor people, but instead of spending even a meagre part of it on their betterment, it was spent on the maharaja and his administration, army, etc. The peasants in order to save some grain for their family would hide it underground. They also adopted passive resistance and left their lands fallow. In 1889, when Lawrence started his work as Settlement Officer in Kashmir, he found a large rich land (left) uncultivated. And the army was employed by the Government in forcing the villagers to plough and sow. It was after great persuasion of Lawrence that they returned to their lands. It was not surprising that the vitality of thee people had been undermined and the country witnessed successive famines, epidemics of cholera in 1877-78, great famine, '1888, 1892, 1900-1902, 1906-07 and 1910 and an outbreak of plague in 1903-04 which decimated the population. In 1877, there occurred a great famine in Kashmir for which neither were people prepared to meet the emergency, nor were the officials capable of mitigating its effects and ‘direful calamity was the consequences. There were heavy rains that destroyed the harvest, which was left to rot in the fields due to the rigid revenue mechanism that prevented peasants from harvesting grain until a revenue official was present at the site. Instead of helping the poor people the Government gave an order to search houses for seed grain and by this time the people were ‘utterly demoralised and rather than make their scanty stocks to greedy and unprincipled officials they hid their grain in the damp earth or sunk it in the river. In 1877 when Kashmir was in the grip of famine, some unknown Kashmiris presented a memorandum to the Viceroy at Delhi in which besides other things a grave charge was levelled against the Maharaja that in order to save the grain he had ‘drowned famine strained people in the Wullar Lake'.

104 Bazaz, Kashmir, op. cit., p. 233.
105 Salaries of the officials and Wazirs was more than the salaries in the developed European countries. See Bazaz, Kashmir, pp. 219-28.
107 Lawrence, The India We Served, op. cit., p. 127.
111 Lawrence, Valley, op. cit., p. 214.
112 Ibid.
According to F. Hervey, officer on special duty in Kashmir, the Maharaja told him that he expected "tangi" or distress to continue, and that there might be famine for one month, har or June. The officials had an interest in prolonging the distress, whereby they were to enable to amass at the cost of both the State and the people.\textsuperscript{114} They closed the borders of the State so that the famine stricken people might not migrate to Punjab where the mal-administration of the state would be exposed. However, the number of the victims was so large that the Government was forced to open the borders and the high migration of the people of Kashmir, towards Punjab started.\textsuperscript{115} It was impossible for the Muslims to buy a sufficient quantity of food to support their life. No government relief works were in existence, although people were dying in large numbers.\textsuperscript{116} It is worthy to notice that not a single Pandit died from starvation during this terrible famine.\textsuperscript{117}

The famine of 1877-78 had exposed the harsh land revenue system of the State and the exploitation of the peasants. In 1880, following the famine, Ranbir Singh announced a fresh land settlement.\textsuperscript{118} However, no serious work was done until late 1880s. The preliminary survey work relating to settlement operations was conducted by A. Wingate for about two years from 1887 to 1889. He was succeeded by Walter R. Lawrence, who carried out the first land settlement in Kashmir from 1889 to 1895.\textsuperscript{119} The main features of Lawrence Settlement were: (1), occupancy rights were conferred on zamindars in undisputed lands, (2) payment in cash was introduced, (3) beggar in its extreme form was abolished, (4) state demand was fixed for fourteen years.\textsuperscript{120} However, The Lawrence settlement was not so much successful in making rights of Muslims in land in par with the privileged sections (Pandits). The privileges

\textsuperscript{114} Kashmir Famine, Office Memo, K. W. Political A, December 1879. Nos. 155-186, NAI. The famine of 1876-78 was directly due, according to Sir Lepel Griffin and Dr Downer, to the maladministration of the corrupt native officials. Mrs. Ashley Corus Wilson, A Woman's Life For Kashmir, New York, 1901, p. 113.
\textsuperscript{115} According to Punjab census report, 1891, 11,775 Muslims of Kashmir were settled in Punjab in 1890's.

\textsuperscript{116} According to Lawrence the population of Kashmir was reduced from 127,400 to 60,000, Lawrence, Valley, op. cit., p. 213.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid, p. 215.
\textsuperscript{118} M. Rai, op. cit., p. 166.
\textsuperscript{120} See Bazaz, Freedom Struggle, op. cit., p. 133
of the Pandits and Dogras 'not only continued but were strengthened.' The condition of cultivators did not improve and they continued to remain as 'saga of poverty and oppression.' The new settlement of the land revenue was three times as high as that of the amount demanded in British (India) districts in the Punjab. In the first decade of the twentieth century the land revenue increased and was more than the half as much again as it was in 1890. By the Lawrence settlement, the name of the owner was entered but the government continued to be the owner of the land and the zamindars had no right of alienation or mortgage. Due to the land revenue paid in cash the peasant having no cash would take debt from moneylender (wadder, mostly Pandits) at high interest. Every year they would pay both in cash and kind but it would never end and the debt would, after the death of the father pass to his son and thus the peasants were only serfs of moneylenders (wadder). There was frequent increase in the rural indebtedness, after Lawrence settlement because land revenue was now (at least part of revenue) paid in cash. More than 70% of the village population of Kashmir were under the burden of indebtedness. And the problem had become such a severe that Hari Singh (the last Dogra Maharaja) promulgated, the Agriculturists Relief Act in 1926-27 to free agriculturists from moneylenders.

**Begar**

The system of forced labour, in which peasants could at any time be drafted the service of the state, was called as begar. The Kashmiri people were also forced to work for the State especially the begar* (forced labour) from Kashmir to Gilgit. It is necessary to mention here that the Pandits and the city people were exempted from it. So it were the Muslim villagers who were used as beasts of burden to carry

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123 Younghusband, op. cit., p. 177.
125 Younghusband, _Kashmir_, op. cit., p. 188.
127 Ibid.
128 Ibid.
130 C. Zushi, _Languages of Belonging_, op. cit., p. 66.
131 Robert Thorpe, op. cit., p. 73.
ammunition and grain for Dogra soldiers, from the Valley to Gilgit.\textsuperscript{132} Gilgit is in the north east of Jammu and Kashmir. It is a mountainous area with high passes, some as high as 17000 feet. There were no roads and the Kashmiri Muslims had to pass these high passes with loads.\textsuperscript{133} The means of communication were rough and rude in the extreme so that men instead of animals had to be used as beasts of burden.\textsuperscript{134} E. F. Knight who was contemporary and eyewitness says about these begars (forced labourers): "Heavily laden with grain, toiling along the desert crags between Astor and Gilgit, on a burning summer’s day was as pitiful as any to be seen on the roads of Siberia. But these were neither convicts nor criminals but Mussalman farmers, harmless subjects of the Maharaja."\textsuperscript{135} It was a miracle if anybody returned safe and alive.\textsuperscript{136} No care was taken for the comfort and even of the lives of the unfortunate wretches who were dragged from their homes and families to spent months walking through dangerous mountains with loads\textsuperscript{137} and were never paid their labour.\textsuperscript{138} "They fall", writes Knight, "on the road to perish of hunger and thirst, and, thinly clad as they are, are destroyed in hundreds at a time by the cold on the snowy passes."\textsuperscript{139} While many would die on the way and often it happened that when they did reach Gilgit they were sold as slaves to the wild inhabitants of that inhospitable region and even were exchanged for Chinese dogs.\textsuperscript{140} Most of the begar had to be carried on in the summer months, at the very season when they were needed in their fields.\textsuperscript{141} It had a bad effect on agriculture and there was decrease in the agricultural produce, which was a loss not only for the cultivator but also for the Government.\textsuperscript{142} Gilgit for Kashmiris was a constant terror and they would pay huge sums from 70 to 90, to Wazir Panu and it came to be known as ‘Wazir Panu’s share,’\textsuperscript{143} to purchase freedom.

\textsuperscript{133} Tyndale Biscoe, \textit{Kashmir and its inhabitants}, (Delhi, 1998), p. 236; Saraf, op. cit., p. 273 also Robert Thorpe, op. cit., pp. 73-75.
\textsuperscript{134} Younghusband, \textit{Kashmir}, op. cit., p. 177.
\textsuperscript{137} Knight, op. cit., p. 68. Mrs Hervey, who was in Kashmir in the early years of Dogra rule has recorded that it was really distressing to hear nothing but mourning and lamentation in every village one entered, as the men had been dragged away for begar. Mrs. Hervey, \textit{The Adventures of A Lady In Tartary, Thibet, China and Kashmir}, vol. 2 , (London, 1853), p. 229.
\textsuperscript{138} Robert Thorpe, op. cit., pp. 73-5; Bazaz, \textit{Kashmir}, op. cit., p. 63.
\textsuperscript{139} Knight, op. cit., p. 68.
\textsuperscript{140} Biscoe, op. cit., p. 236.
\textsuperscript{141} Knight, op. cit., p. 69.
\textsuperscript{142} Parveena Akhter, op. cit., p. 304; Lawrence, op. cit., pp. 414-15.
or exemption from *begar*. These men were collected from the villages with the aid of press-gangs and the sepoys always brought in more than were required so that those who had money could buy themselves off their hands. Although the *begar* was abolished in its extreme form in 1891, but most of the ills continued till 1920, when it was abolished forever. The beggar in its extreme was abolished in 1891 because of the efforts of the Resident and they were now given five rupees per month as wages. But later on it was given the name of *Kar-i- Sarkar* (work of Government, which continued up to 1947) and the officials would use them to work as *begar*. Briefly speaking, the man liable to *begar* was an "outlaw" without rights of any description, and *begar* was looked upon by the officials as an incident servitude which entitled them to take all things, either labour or commodities, free of payment, from the villages.

**Shawl Industry**

Kashmiri shawls were known for their quality world over and had a flourishing market in France. Up to 1870, the shawl industry was a well-flourishing industry and was at its zenith. But when Lawrence came to Kashmir in 1889, it had become a thing of the past, because of the defeat of France in the Gerro- France war of 1870 with which its European market came to an end. While as the Muslim villagers were cultivators, the city Muslims were mostly associated with small industries, in which shawl industry was the most important. When the Dogras took over as the rulers of Kashmir, the shawl industry was reorganised and heavily taxed. There was a *daghshawl* department and the stamp of which was necessary.

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144 The Kashmiri Pandits purchased occupancy rights and even whole villages, in lieu of granting freedom (exemption) from *begar* to the poor Muslim cultivators, Lawrence, *Valley*, op. cit., pp. 413-14.
145 Biscoe, op. cit., p. 236; Lawrence, op. cit., p. 414.
146 Saraf, op. cit., p. 279.
148 Lawrence, *Valley*, op. cit., p. 415.
150 Lawrence, *Valley*, op. cit., p. 375.
151 See Lawrence, op. cit., pp. 376-77 ; S. Abdullah, op. cit., p.5.
152 Lawrence, *Valley*, op. cit., p. 375.
for the selling of shawl\textsuperscript{154} and without which no shawl could be sold and there was a complete vigilance over the \textit{kharkhandar} by the Pandits.\textsuperscript{155} Although the \textit{shawl-baufs} (weavers) were Muslims, the Daghshawl Department was composed of Pandits. There were \textit{kharkhandars}, where the weavers worked under a kharkhanadar. The annual tax levied on each \textit{karkhanadar} was rupees 47-48, (chilkee rupees, till 1867 and then less by 11) for each \textit{shawl bauj}.\textsuperscript{156} Much larger revenue than that of land was realised from the shawl manufacture. Every shawl was stamped to make it legal, and the stamp duty was 26\% upon the estimated value (price of the shawl) The shawl baufs were not allowed to give up their work and were given a meagre wages of 3-5 rupees per month (it included the price of the rice).\textsuperscript{157} Because of the heavy taxation, the weavers in protest, in 1847, struck work and about 400 of them left the state and migrated to Lahore.\textsuperscript{158} Again on 29 April, 1865 they protested against the heavy taxation. But instead of redressing their genuine demands they were cordoned off by the Dogra forces and in the stampede that followed 28 fell into river and were drowned to death.\textsuperscript{159} The shawl weavers had become slaves and were not allowed to leave the country\textsuperscript{160} and if by anyway, a shawl weaver was able to fly to the Punjab; his family was fined or imprisoned.\textsuperscript{161} Some of them settled in villages and most of them cut off their fingers and thumb and made themselves unable to work.\textsuperscript{162} And due to the nature of the work many of them became blind or half blind.\textsuperscript{163} The miserable condition can be judged from the following words of Robert Thorpe: “Nothing but death can release him from his bondage, since the discharge of a shawl bauj would reduce the maharaja’s revenue by 36 chilkees a year.”\textsuperscript{164} The Dogra Government was only concerned with taxes and never thought in terms of developing the industry.\textsuperscript{165} The result was its decline by 1870’s. From 1826-70, the export of shawls averaged 25 to 28 lakhs of rupees per annum and in 1893-94 it was only rupees 22,850.\textsuperscript{166} Because of

\textsuperscript{154} S. Abdullah, op. cit., p. 3.
\textsuperscript{155} Robert Thorpe, op. cit., pp. 63-4.
\textsuperscript{156} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{157} Ibid, also, p. 67.
\textsuperscript{158} K.M. Pannikar, op. cit., p. 139.
\textsuperscript{159} Rashid Taseer, op. cit., pp. 58-60.
\textsuperscript{160} Biscope, op. cit., p. 238.
\textsuperscript{161} Robert Thorpe, op. cit., p. 70.
\textsuperscript{162} Saifuddin, Roznamacha, as quoted in Parveena Akhter, op. cit., p. 24.
\textsuperscript{163} Robert Thorpe, op. cit., p 67.
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{155} Partap, 27 February, 1926.
\textsuperscript{166} Lawrence, Valley, op. cit., p. 376-77.
the decline of industry the pressure on land increased so much so that the Census Commissioner for 1931 described the State as a ‘predominantly agricultural country.’

Communal Nature

The worst feature of the Dogra rule was its communal outlook. It discriminated the Muslims on the basis of their religion and also interfered in their religious affairs. The Dogra State was actually a Hindu State and its rulers tried their best to broaden its Hindu nature, with the result Kashmiri Pandits as a co-religionists’ class found it easy to get associated with it and the Muslims were marginalised. Regarding the nature of the Dogra Government, P. N. Bazaz, declared in 1941: “Speaking generally and from the bourgeois point of view, the Dogra rule has been a Hindu Raj. Muslims have not been treated fairly, by which I mean as fairly as the Hindus. Firstly, because, contrary to all professions of treating all classes equally, it must be candidly admitted that Muslims were dealt with harshly in certain respects only because they were Muslims.” It is reported that Gulab Singh in 1850, made a plan to reconvert the Muslims, but, the Banaras priests did not accept it, as according to them it would dilute the purity of Hinduism. In fact, in 1846, he made it clear that he would not allow Muslims to practise all their religious practices and that as a Hindu; he would have to give priority to the religion of Hindus. The British for the good of ‘ensuring the sway of Pax-Britannica,’ tolerated it. Colonel Torrens, who visited Kashmir (1859-60) during the reign of Ranbir Singh, records that the Dogra rule was the Hindu ‘rule’ which was run by ‘Hindu’ faqueers, detested by people, they prey upon, but supported and encouraged by the Government. In order to prove it a Hindu State it invaded Muslim places and erected temples. A large number of Muslim shrines and mosques were confiscated and declared State property, like Pather Masjid, Khanqah Sokhta, Khanqah Bulbulshah, Khanqah Darashikoh, Idgah.

168 M. Rai, op. cit., p. 80.
170 J. Korbel, op. cit., p.13.
171 For further details see M Rai, op. cit., pp. 86 and 93.
172 M Rai, op. cit., p 84.
173 For example Tukht-i- Suliman was invaded there was erected a temple, Lt. Col. Torrens, Travels Through Ladakh, Tartary and Kashmir, p. 300. Cited in Saraf, pp. 259-60
and so on in Srinagar and Khanqah Sufi Shah and Bahu Mosque in Jammu. In order to check the spread of Islam, a law was promulgated by the Government by which if a Hindu converted to Islam, he was debarred from the right of inheritance and in case of vice versa, he could attain the right of inheritance. Besides they (who would convert to Islam) were subjected to various difficulties and inconveniences by local officials. For a small minority, the majority was not allowed to slaughter cow, ox etc. Cow killing was banned and those found guilty were severely punished. First the punishment was death sentence but later on it was reduced to life imprisonment and then 7 years of imprisonment it is necessary here to mention that there were frequent famines in Kashmir and scarcity of food, as has been already discussed, and they had no alternative but to slaughter their own cattle, but it was not allowed. In the second decade of twentieth century, there were 117 prisoners in Kashmir, out of which 99 were Muslims, being punished for killing cows. Maharaja Ranbir Singh banned the catching of fish because of the belief that the late maharaja’s soul had transmitted into the body of a fish. Rambir Singh also closed the Friday market in Jama Masjid, Srinagar and opened a new market called Maharaja Gunj. Even the Muslim names were not tolerated and many Muslim names were changed into Hindu names; like Islamabad into Anatnag, Takt-I-Sulimani into Shankaracharya. After ascending the throne in 1885, Pratap Singh assured that no discrimination would be made between his subjects. But he could not fulfil his promise and came under the influence of Hindu religion and all his functions which were participated by military and civil officials, had religious tinge. In fact, he would say, “Do not give too much to Rajputs, use Kashmiri Pandits as much as you can and see that the Muslims do not

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174 Glancy Commission Report, p. 3. These were converted into granaries and ammunition centres. Malik Fazal Hussain, op. cit., p.153.
177 R. Thorpe, op. cit., pp. 77-78.
178 Tyndale Biscoe, Kashmir In Sunlight and Shade, 2006, Srinagar, p.119. Its influence was mostly felt in city and the villagers continued to eat beef, though secretly that is why in Srinagar even today the people do not take beef.
179 Knight, op. cit., p. 115.
180 Tyndale Biscoe, An Autobiography, (Srinagar, 2003), p. 188.
182 Saraf, op. cit., p. 303.
183 Sultan Pampori, op. cit., p. 52. Also G M. D. Sofi, op. cit., p.570.
184 M. Rai, op. cit., p. 175-76.
185 Ibid.
starve. He would not tolerate to see the face of a Muslim (till noon) and the shade of a Muslim over the water, which was brought from Cheshma Shahi for him, and the guilty was punished and imprisoned. Maharaja Hari Singh discouraged the business of Muslims and Muslim contractors. Instead of encouraging local contractors, the Maharaja encouraged the high contractors from outside and were given loans without any interest.

Administration

The Dogra rulers in order to have a class loyal to the State filled the State administration with the Punjabis and Dogras and also Kashmiri Pandits but not Kashmiri Muslims. Though the Muslims constituted the majority of the State population and the major tax payers of the State but they were not considered fit for the State business and very few (Muslims) were employed on high positions. In 1930 in the bureaucracy, Hindus and Sikhs held 78 per cent of gazetted appointments compared to the Muslim’ 22 percent. As regarded the existing proportion of Muslims representation in the services some of the most striking instances are quoted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Non-Muslims</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Executive)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric and Mechanical</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telegraph and Telephones</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs (Assistant Mahakdars and Upwards)</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue (Wazirs and Tehsildars)</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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186 G.L. Koul, op. cit., p. 123.
188 C. Zutshi, op. cit., p. 71.
190 Youngusband, Kashmir, op. cit., p. 186. The representation of the Muslims in the State services was inadequate, Glancy Commission Report, p. 18.
| Revenue (Girdawars and Patwaris) Mirpur  | 131 | 31 |
| Revenue (Girdawars and Patwaris) Reasi.  | 85  | 9  |
| **(Clerical)**                          |     |    |
| Finance                                  | 368 | 29 |
| Public Works                             | 194 | 3  |
| Judicial                                 | 162 | 21 |
| **(Menials)**                            |     |    |
| Public Works                             | 120 | 23 |
| Customs                                  | 314 | 108|
| Forest                                   | 784 | 278|
| Stationary and Printing                  | 66  | 5  |

(Source: Glancy Commission Report, p. 18)

There was no Muslim gazetted officer in most of the departments, like defence, hunting, scientific research, libraries, archaeology and agriculture.193 Thus the majority community of Muslims in Kashmir found themselves unrepresented under the British sponsored Dogra rule.194 Not to talk about the higher posts in the administration, the Muslims were even not employed in the lower posts. In early 1870's there was no Muslim occupying even a lowest position or clerk in the employ of Maharaja’s Government. It is here necessary to mention that at that time Persian was the official language of Kashmir, and according to Lawrence, many villagers (Muslims) would speak and write good Persian.195 While as the Muslims were not employed in the administration, they were to do menial work, and were ‘the hewer of wood and drawer of water.’196 The Kashmiri Pandits though in minority dominated the administration particularly the revenue department.197 Since the Pandits occupied

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193 Presidential address by Sheikh Atta Mohammad, All India Muslim Kashmir Conference (Amritsar), published in *Siyarat*, Lahore, November 7, 8, 1923. For further details see Saraf, op. cit., pp. 326-28.
194 M Rai, op. cit., p. 4.
195 Lawrence valley, op. cit., p. 229.
196 Bazaz, Kashmir, op. cit., p. 250.
197 As already mentioned see Lawrence, op. cit., also Bates, op. cit., pp. 96-98.
the administrative jobs, it gave them political power and authority. The Rajputs who being the brethren of the Maharaja, were appointed in the high posts in the administration, although, they were mostly illiterate. Although there were many Muslims from Punjab in the administration, they either were too much loyal to represent Muslim grievances or were not enjoying actual power. In 1930, a civil service recruitment board was formed for the recruitment of candidates in the state. It laid down that only those would be recruited who belonged to a notable family and were not above 20 years of age. It was against the Muslims because majority of them came from poor family or middle class, not notable family and they because of illiteracy would start education late of their age. The government had also veto to reject an appointment of any candidate. More over the recruitment board could appoint only 40% positions while as 60% was the monopoly of the government. Also in place of Persian and Urdu, Hindi and Sanskrit with which Muslims were not familiar, were introduced as optional languages. Even then the working of the recruitment board was not satisfactory. Even if some Muslims were able to get Government employment but they were never promoted. Instead the Hindus from other departments were brought to that department, where the promotion of a Muslim was due. Moreover they were sent to distant areas without increasing their pay.

The Kashmiris were also disqualified for military services and it became the monopoly of Dogras. Under the State's arms act, only Rajputs and Dogras were permitted to own and utilise fire arms, to use them against the Kashmiri people. It seemed that British too were not in favour of Muslims in the army. "One object of the Treaty of Amritsar was to establish a strong Rajput power in Jammu and Kashmir, which would achieve the British Government of the defence of a difficult country."

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199 Bazaz, op. cit., p. 298.
201 Rashid Taseer, op. cit., pp. 79-80.
202 ibid.
203 S. Abdullah, op. cit., p. 47.
204 Glancy Commission, p. 22.
205 Inquilab, 5 October, 1930, Lahore.
206 Vakil, Amritsar, 29 November, 1923.
207 G.L. Koul, op. cit., p.106.
208 Even outsiders were recruited in the army, Bazaz, Kashmir, op. cit., p. 95.
209 Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Report, 1931, pp. 6-10, JKA.
211 Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh, op. cit., p. 138, see also art 4 of the treaty of Amritsar.
Besides being, Hindu centric, the Dogra rule was also region centric. They considered Kashmir as the purchased territory and Jammu as home country. In a letter dated 13 December, 1918, to his Chief Minister, Maharaja Pratap Singh wrote, "as you are already aware the proprietary rights in all the lands of Kashmir belong to the ruling chief exclusively, for the simple reason that the territories of Kashmir were purchased by my late lamented grandfather, Maharaja Gulab Singh, and hence any sale of such land by anyone else is illegal." \[212\] Ranbir Singh made Jammu his capital and thus for the first time in the history of Kashmir, Srinagar lost its importance. \[213\]

**Education**

In the field of education, Kashmir was lagging behind in the whole subcontinent. \[214\] The modern education started in Kashmir with the coming of Christian Missionaries. In 1880, J. H. Knowles founded the first Christian Missionary School in Srinagar and the mission ladies founded the first girls' school at Fateh Kadal in Srinagar. \[215\] But it were the Kashmiri Pandits who took lead in modern education. \[216\] The Pandits were advanced in education because of the facilities provided by the Government which were not provided to the Muslims. \[217\] In 1891-92 the condition of education was like this. Out of a population of 52,576 Hindus, 1327 were receiving State education and out of 757,433 Muslims, only 233 obtained benefit from the State schools. That is although the Hindus formed only 7 per cent of the population, they had monopolies over 83 per cent of the education bestowed by the State. \[218\] Thus Muslims were backward in education. Many causes have been put forward for this backwardness. According to Lawrence, the villagers (Muslim) preferred Masjid schools, and stressed on moral education. \[219\] Also there was

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\[212\] Kashmir Government Records, File No. 191/H-75, block C of 1906, cited in Bamzai, p. 718. As has been already discussed in case of peasantry.


\[214\] The Hamdard, Srinagar, 17 May, 194; Lawrence, Valley, op. cit., p. 229.

\[215\] Ishaq Khan , op. cit., p. 162 and 167.

\[216\] Ibid, p. 171. Muslims were cultivators whose responsibility was to feed the State and Pandits by producing food and the later had to rule over them by entering into administration, Muslim Outlook, 5 May, 1923. Cited in V. Schofield, op. cit., p. 95.

\[217\] Bazaz, Kashmir, op. cit., p. 96; for data see Lawrence, op. cit., p 229 and Biscoe, Autobiography, op. cit., p. 52.

\[218\] Lawrence, op. cit., pp. 228-29.

\[219\] Ibid, p. 229.
apprehension about the Christian missionary schools. But the main cause was the indifference of the government towards the education of the Muslims. As the services of the Government were closed to them, they did not send their children to schools for even after getting education they would remain unemployed. Bazaz, a Kashmiri Pandit criticised the Dogra Government for its indifference towards education among the Muslims and not working for the welfare of Kashmiri Muslims and held the Government responsible for the backwardness of Muslims. Out of 2 ½ crore income, only 15 lakh were spent on education. But mostly non Muslims were benefited from this expenditure because of their dominant presence both as teachers and students. Moreover schools were not established in those areas where Muslims were in clean majority. Ironically, the schools in the Muslim areas were shifted from there to non Muslim areas. The aid given to Muslim schools was low than given to other schools.

With the turn of the century the Muslims became conscious and started thinking about their community. They sent petitions and requested the Government to establish the schools in their areas, but were turned down. The outside Muslims also highlighted the grievances of Kashmiri Muslims and supported them through their organisations, press and other means. In September 1913-4 a deputation of the All-India Muhammadan Educational Conference presented an address to Maharaja Pratap Singh. Among other things, it demanded free and compulsory primary education, assistance to enable the Islamic school to be raised to the collegiate grade, the grant of special stipends and scholarships for Muslims, the employment of Muslim professors, teachers, inspectors, etc., and the appointment of special inspector for Muslim education. Consequently, under pressure of public opinion, Pratap

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220 Ishaq Khan, op. cit., pp. 150-51.
221 Ibid p. 171.
224 See Bazaz, Kashmir, op. cit., pp. 251-52.
225 M. F. Hussain, op. cit., p. 112.
226 Ibid.
227 See ibid, pp. 114-16.
229 Ishaq Khan, op. cit., p. 171.
230 Akhbar Kashmiri, 21 January, 1925; Bazaz, Kashmir, op. cit., p. 238.
231 Saraf, op. cit., p. 319.
Singh, in 1916 invited Sir Henry Sharp, the Educational Commissioner, Government of India, to examine the educational system in Kashmir and to advise the future policy, and also to recommend for the development of education of the Muslims. Mr Sharp admitted that the Muslims were educationally backward. The following figures merely analyse the nature of its backwardness. “Muslims form 75.9% of the total population of the state; in the Kashmir province the proportion rises to 94%” but their proportion in the educational field was very low. “Only 15 per mile of male Muslims and nil per mile female Muslims were found literate in 1911 and, against 38 and 1 per mile for the whole population. Only 39.55 per cent of the pupils in public institutions are Muslims. “Even in primary schools the percentage of Muslim pupils [was] far below what it normally should be.” The proportion of Muslim students in private schools was higher than the public schools because as per Mr. Sharp, Hindu teachers neglected and discouraged the Muslim students. In the schools where the Mullahs had been appointed as teachers the number of Muslim students was much higher than the other schools. It was no surprising thus that the first recommendation Sharp Commission made was to appoint Mullahs largely as teachers. Among the other things Sharp recommended, the expansion of the primary schools, scholarships for the Muslims. Though Pratap Singh accepted these recommendations but were given never due publicity and were to a great extent ignored. The officials who were Hindus’ ignored these recommendations because they did not want Muslims to be appointed in the State services, which they considered their own monopoly. Instead of implementing the recommendations of the Sharp Commission, they did opposite. At the time of Mr Sharp there was a special Inspector for Muslim education, but he was deflected from his proper work and was deputed to discharge the general duties of an ordinary, assistant inspector in a

233 Ibid.
234 Ishaq Khan, op. cit., p. 172.
236 Ibid.
237 Ibid, p. 43; Report of the Srinagar Riot Enquiry Committee, 1931, Srinagar, p. 44. Therefore Glancy Commission recommended that the local teachers should be appointed in the villages, Glancy Commission, p. 13.
238 For details and figures see Sharp Commission, p. 44.
239 Ibid, p. 45.
240 Ibid.
241 Ishaq Khan, op. cit., p. 174.
242 Glancy Commission, p. 9.
particular division. Thus when in 1931-32, Glancy Commission was appointed, he found that the condition of Muslims had not improved. The proportion of the Muslims in the Education Department like other Departments was very low. The following figures substantiate it:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESIGNATION</th>
<th>MUSLIM</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>2201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headmasters of State</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headmasters of State</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors in College</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrators</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspector Staff</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gazetted Officers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Glancy Commission Report, p. 15.

In the Education Minister's Secretariat, there were 12 officials from the Secretary downwards, but none of them was Muslim.

Hari Singh took some measures which benefited the people. Primary education for boys in the cities of Srinagar and Jammu was made compulsory. But after some time he changed his behaviour and came under the influence of some officials. For example, in 1927, a Scholarships Section Board was formed for the education of State subjects. It consisted of three members, but none of them was

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244 Glancy Commission, p. 16.
245 Ibid, p. 15.
246 Ibid, p 16.
247 Saraf, op. cit., p. 344.
Muslim. They favoured their own community and thus in 1927, out of 12 scholarships, given only one was given to a Muslim. Besides there were also Orphan Scholarships and ‘Cow Protection’ Scholarships. But here again huge discrimination was made. Out of 190 students, who were given Orphanage Scholarships, only 42 of them were Muslims and 148 were Hindus. The Cow Protection Scholarship was given entirely to non-Muslims. Hari Singh also established Rajput Military School in Jammu in which only Hindus were given admission. The reason was that it was established by the funds of the Hindu religious gifts and the late Maharaja had ordered that it should be spent to ameliorate the condition of his own community only.

The doors of employment for Muslims were closed even if a qualified Muslim was there he was not employed and if employed he was given a low job and less pay as compared to his Hindu counterpart having the same qualification. Thus because of their inadequate representation in Government departments Muslims had to suffer in various ways. As Bazaz, observed: “In education department the Muslims felt that that they Hindu teachers and officials would not take as much interest in the spread of education among them as was necessary. In the medical department Muslim patients did not receive as much care as the Hindus. In the offices and courts Muslim clients were shabbily treated while the cases of Hindus were expeditiously described.” Time and again some influential Muslims would approach the British to intervene but of no avail. In 1924 when the Viceroy, Lord Reading visited Kashmir a memorandum was presented to him regarding the sufferings of Muslims by some Muslim representatives, in which they demanded, inter alia, the abolition of begar, better educational facilities, good representation of Muslims in the State services,

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249 Riots Enquiry Committee, p. 17.
250 Ibid.
252 Ibid.
253 Riots Enquiry Committee, 48.
254 Ibid, p. 47.
255 Statement of the Muslim representatives of Kashmir to Glancy Commission, 1932, file no. 23/22-p.1, 1932, iKA.
256 Bazaz, Kashmir, op. cit., p. 205.
257 For instance when in 1924, the workers of silk industry observed hartal and protested against the heavy taxation, a telegram was sent to Viceroy by Mohammad. Usman, Srinagar, Kashmir. Foreign and Political Department, File No.-19(2) - p/ 1924-NAI.
release of religious places and buildings and the proprietary rights to the peasants.\textsuperscript{258} The State Government did not tolerate it and the signatories were severely punished. Saad-ud-Din Shawk was banished from Kashmir, Khawaja Hassan Shah lost his jagir, Hassan Shah Jalali was dismissed from the office of zaildar.\textsuperscript{259}

In the late 1920s, when Indians were preparing for the Civil Disobedience Movement and Purna Swaraj, and the British were ready to give more constitutional concessions to Indians, the Kashmiris were still labouring under many disadvantages. Officially their disadvantages were made known to the outside world by Sir Albion Bannerji.\textsuperscript{260} Sir Albion Bannerji, the Foreign and Political Minister of Kashmir, resigned on 15\textsuperscript{th} March, 1929 and in a press statement at Lahore exposed the autocratic Dogra rule and the impoverished conditions of Muslims of Kashmir. Levelling the serious allegations against the Dogra rule, he said: "Jammu and Kashmir State is labouring under many disadvantages, with a large Muhammadan population absolutely illiterate, labouring under poverty and very low economic conditions of living in the villages and practically governed like dumb driven cattle. There is no touch between the Government and the people, no suitable opportunity for representing grievances and the administrative machinery itself requires overhauling from top to bottom to bring it up to the modern conditions of efficiency. It has at present little or no sympathy with the people's wants and grievances."\textsuperscript{261}

Thus it becomes clear that the people of Kashmir during the Dogra rule were labouring under many disadvantages. The Muslims, who constituted the sheer majority of the total population of the State, were lagging behind in every field and were governed like dumb driven cattle. They were discriminated by the Dogra Maharajas for a simple reason that they were followers of a religion different to the Dogras. It is therefore not surprising that the political movement Kashmiris launched in 1930's under Shaikh Abdullah would take the religious colour and mosques and shrines were used as platforms.

\textsuperscript{258} Bazaz, \textit{Freedom Struggle}, op. cit., p. 132; Saraf, op. cit., pp. 335-337.
\textsuperscript{259} Saraf, op. cit., pp. 338-39.
\textsuperscript{260} Sir Albion Bannerji, a civil servant from Bengal was senior minister of the executive council of the State.
\textsuperscript{261} \textit{Civil and Military Gazette}, Lahore, 18 March, 1929. Foreign and Political Department-1929, File No. 7(5)-R/1929, NAI.
Chapter Two

Incoming Lion of Kashmir: From Muslim Conference to National Conference

The absence of a popular protest until the end of 1920’s against the Dogra State was because of the mighty military power which had, what Tyndale Biscoe says, crushed the “manhood” of Kashmiris. However, by the end of 1920’s the Stage was all set for a revolution. A volcano was simmering in the hearts of Kashmiris. Only a spark was needed to light the fire; a leader was also needed to lead the revolution. And that was provided by two incidents in Jammu and Shaikh Abdullah respectively.

Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah who dominated Kashmiri politics for five decades was born in 1905, at Soura in Srinagar. His father Shaikh Abdullah Mohammad Ibrahim, who was a prosperous trader in shawls, had died fifteen days before Shaikh Abdullah’s birth. Shaikh Abdullah’s great grandfather was a Kashmiri pandit named Ragho Ram Koul, who converted to Islam in 1766, under the spiritual guidance of Saint Rashid Balkh. Shaikh Abdullah was brought up by his mother, Khairunnissa, and by his elder brother, Shaikh Abdullah Mohammad Maqboonool, who served as a drawing master in the Amar Singh Technical Institute, Srinagar. As per tradition, he was taught Arabic and Quran-i-Sharief in a local maktab. At the age of seven he was admitted in the Islamia Primary School, Nowshera, then in Primary School Vicharnag. He did his matriculation from State High School, Fateh Kadal in 1922. By now he had developed interest in studies and wanted to become a doctor.

He got admission for F.Sc in the S.P. College, Srinagar. Throughout, his stay at college, Shaikh Abdullah worked very hard to become a doctor. He was so obsessed with his aim of becoming a doctor that “[H]e gave no indications of even the least interest in politics ... and remained always indifferent to debates and discussions.” However, after passing his F.S.C, he failed to get admission in a medical college. Shaikh Abdullah in his memoirs alleges that his application to the State Government for deputation to some medical college, outside the state as a state

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1 Shaikh Abdullah, Aatishi Chinar, Srinagar, 2006, p. 5.
2 Ibid., p. 3.
4 He was discharged from Islamia Primary School with the explanation that the ‘boy lacked discipline.’ F. A. Abba, Profiles of Abdullah, Srinagar, 1980, p. 8.
5 Abdullah, op. cit., p. 11.
6 Abba, op. cit., p. 10.
nominee was rejected and given to a pandit student. He was even not given admission into B.S.C, class in the Prince of Wales College, Jammu.\(^7\) Shaikh Abdullah as a dejected man was convinced that there was no place for a Muslim student in the local colleges. And as such he went outside Kashmir and “joined the B.S.C, class in the Islamia College Lahore [1924] with the support of some Muslim philanthropists.”\(^8\) It was in Lahore that Shaikh Abdullah had his first “political schooling.”\(^9\) Lahore during those days was a ‘centre of cultural and political activity’- dominated by people like professor Dil Mohammad Alam, Shaikh Abdullah Abdul Qadir and his magazine “Makzan”, Lala Rajpat Rai, Sir Sikander Hayat Khan, Sir Mohammad Shafi. However, it was Sir Mohammad Iqbal and his poetry which fascinated Shaikh Abdullah.\(^10\) Iqbal’s poetry had such a deep impact on Shaikh Abdullah that ‘even in later years, he would begin his public speeches with a recitation of some of his verses.’\(^11\) It was also in Lahore that Shaikh Abdullah realised the pitiable condition of Kashmiri labourers in who were working there as wood cutters, load carriers, coolies and used as beasts of burden. “[they] were working as assess in the Punjab. My class fellows would occasionally lash insults and taunts on me, calling me hatoor.”\(^12\) It was this proletariat class, for whom Shaikh Abdullah worked in Kashmir and got their unprecedented support during his long career as an undisputed leader of Kashmir.

After completing his F.S.C, Shaikh Abdullah returned to Kashmir in 1927. Then he went to Aligarh Muslim University and got admission in M.Sc. Chemistry.\(^13\) This was the time ‘of great political unrest throughout the Indian subcontinent. Congress in its Lahore session of 1929, under the presidency of Nehru demanded complete independence. ‘Aligarh was the centre of the Muslim community’s political and economic aspirations in the subcontinent.’\(^14\) It was at Aligarh that Shaikh Abdullah saw Gandhiji for the first time.\(^15\) In 1929, when Shaikh Abdullah was still at

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\(^7\) Abdullah, op. cit, pp. 15-19.
\(^8\) F.M. Hussanain, op. cit., p. 34.
\(^10\) Abdullah, op. cit, pp. 39-40.
\(^11\) Saraf, op. cit., p. 52.
\(^12\) *hatoor* was a derogatory term for Kashmiris. Abdullah, op. cit., p. 39.
\(^13\) Again it becomes clear that he was not interested in politics; unlike the politicians and leaders of freedom movement of India who had degrees in law or the arts, Shaikh Abdullah choose chemical science, Alastair Lamb, *Kashmir A Disputed Legacy 1846-1990*, Oxford university Press, Karachi, 1993, p. 91.
\(^15\) Abdullah, p. 44.
Aligarh, Sir Albion Banerji, the Foreign and Political Minister under the *Maharaja*, resigned from the post and gave a statement on 15th March, 1929, in which he exposed the discriminative rule of the Dogra's. His statement had a great effect on Shaikh Abdullah. He was encouraged to write about the conditions of Kashmiris in "Muslim Outlook Lahore." This was first rung of his political ladder. After completing his Masters' degree in the second division, Shaikh Abdullah returned to Kashmir in 1930.

By the beginning of the 1930's the first batch of Kashmiri Muslim educated youth reached Kashmir after completing education from Aligarh and Punjab. Among those who returned were Shaikh Abdullah Mohammad Abdullah, Mirza Azizul Beg, G.M. Sadiq and Choudhri Ghulam Abbas, who would dominate the politics of Jammu and Kashmir later on. They were influenced by the political movements of the Indian subcontinent. At Lahore not far from Jammu and Kashmir, towards the end of 1929, the Congress adopted the *purma swaraj* (Complete Independence). Convocation of the workers of the 'States Peoples' was held and among the resolutions that it passed some were directly related to the Kashmir. Also the Muslim League took a new turn at its Allahabad session. Its president Mohammad Iqbal [who was revered in Kashmir] gave the idea of a 'separate Muslim State' or Pakistan.

These political meetings were also attended by many Kashmiris and it naturally imbued them with the zeal of starting a political movement in Kashmir for their betterment. So they belonged to the revolutionary era. However, Back in Kashmir their primary aim was to enter government services. But in Kashmir due to the discriminative policy of the Dogra rule against Muslims these educated young men who now formed a "middle class intelligentsia with a middle class political outlook" faced unemployment problem and felt 'frustrated; and began to organise themselves.' They used to discuss the unemployment and the politics of Kashmir.

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16 See first chapter.
17 After that the number of educated Muslim increased due to efforts of various social reform organisations prominent among them was the Anjuman-i- Nusrat-ul-Islam founded by Molvi Rasool Shah, a great educationist, popularly called Sir Sayyed-i Kashmir.
which led to the formation of ‘Reading Room Party.’ On May 8, 1930, the Reading Room was established at Fateh Kadal in Srinagar with Mohammad Rajab as president and Ghulam Nabi Gilkar as Secretary. It was a five men’s party- Molvi Basher Ahmad, Munshi Nasir-ud Din, Ghulam Nabi Gilkar, Mohammad Rajab and Muhammad Yahya Rafiqui. They would discuss the ‘current topics of the day,’ particularly the problem of unemployment among the Muslims. Shaikh Abdullah who had returned to Kashmir a month before the launching of the Reading Room refused to join it. After returning from Aligarh, Shaikh Abdullah’s main concern was to get job. After joining M.P. High School as science teacher he was a bit satisfied. At that time he never shared with others the idea of radical change which as they thought could only be achieved by showing Maharaja exit and there by ending age old rule of ruinous chicane and merciless tyranny.” Since, there were only few Muslim graduates so Shaikh Abdullah was frequently approached by Mohammad Rajab to join the Reading Room but Shaikh Abdullah refused to join. Since, no political party could be established; it was given the name of ‘Reading Room’ derived from the Aligarh’s reading room. An underground political cell was also created to work for the political uplift of the Kashmiris. They established contacts with Muslim newspapers at Lahore like Muslim Outlook, the Siyasat, the inquilab and also contactedit with Sir N. L. Bannerji, the editor of “Indian States” in London to write about the conditions of Kashmiris. It exposed the Dogra Government.

At that time in Jammu there was also an organisation called Youngmen’s Muslim Association and it came into contact with the Reading Room through the Lahore Press. A deputation was sent by it, to Srinagar which met Shaikh Abdullah and other people and they decided to cooperate and ‘coordinate their campaign.’

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21 Khan, Freedom Movement in Kashmir, p. 123.
23 Zahir ud- din op. cit., p. 34.
25 He was offered government service by the government and he joined as ‘science teacher in M.P. High, School Bagh Dilawar Khahan. Abba, p. 18.
28 There was ban on freedom of press, association, expression, platform and forming of political organisation.
30 Saraf, op. cit., p. 357, also Bazaz, Inside Kashmir, pp. 104-05.
Shaikh Abdullah joined the Reading Room in 1931, after he resigned from the
government service when he was transferred to Muzafarabad as a teacher. His joining
intensified the work and activities of Reading Room and it was changed into a
professional party. A memorandum was drafted by it and sent to the Government
‘registering their protest against the Civil Service Recruitment Board. The
Government invited its signatories for a meeting. Shaikh Abdullah [then ‘absolutely
unknown] and Abdul Aziz Fazli were chosen and they met three cabinet members-
Mr. Wakefield, Mr. Wattal and General Janak Singh on October 16, 1930. But the
Government remained adamant and even threatened the duo member delegation of
dreadful consequences for raising voice against the Maharaja. This meeting convinced
them that “it was useless to expect justice and fair play from the Dogra Government
and that it was time to rise to the occasion and prepare Muslims for a political
movement to gain their rights.”

The Reading Room now started a vigorous campaign against the
discriminative policies of the Maharaja and also to arouse the consciousness of the
Kashmiris by using the Punjab Muslim intelligentsia and press. This press campaign
accelerated the ‘pace of Kashmiri Muslims consciousness and also enhanced the
prestige of the leaders. The rising of Muslim subjects of the state against the
Maharaja demoralized and unbalanced the pandit community. Prem Nath Baza, the
great pandit leader and a visionary has aptly pulsed the nerve: “the surcharging
atmosphere now prevailing in the country unbalanced the pandit community. They
became suspicious, terror-stricken and demoralized. They now began to look upon the
Maharaja as their protector and refuge. They became the defenders of the powers that
were and thus came into clash with the dynamic times.” This attitude of the pandit
community proved dangerous for the freedom movement of Kashmir.

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31 The Civil Service Recruitment Board was setup by the Kashmir Government which framed certain
rules which appeared to have been framed to prevent the entry of Muslims in the government services.
According to its rules, ‘every candidate was required to deposit a sum of rupees fifty as fee, the
maximum age for recruitment was fixed at 22 years and the candidate should possess “good family
background”. More over the Government had the right to reject any one without assigning any reasons
32 Saraf, op. cit., p. 356.
34 Bazaz, Struggle for Freedom, op. cit., p. 144.
35 Ibid.
The greatest contribution of Reading Room Party was the revolution of 1931, which is as important as the “French revolution of 1789 is in the history of France.” The 1931 marked the beginning of the mass awakening in Kashmir. Although, Shaikh Abdullah was among many obscure young people in 1930’s but because of his astute enough to predict the course of politics, foresee political challenges, he succeeded in the chaotic political atmosphere of the 1930’s. The contribution and significance of Shaikh Abdullah lies “in the fact that he articulated, symbolised and directed the movement after that as long as he lived. Of course, like most popular leaders, he was as much led by his people as he led them.” He was not influenced by any radical movement of Indian subcontinent. Shaikh Abdullah’s main focus as also the Reading Room was to get government jobs. But what F.A. Abba has called, “things came to him all unsought.” He even distanced himself from those who believed in radicalism that only remedy of Muslim sufferings was the end of Dogra rule. He believed in reforming the government, “not to break up the old socio-economic links but to revive them, and to get cautiously and gradually upper hand over the situation.” Even after launching the movement he asserted that the movement was based on reformatory approach. “We have attempted to give a fair trial to all reforms believing that re-adjustment of human relationship will take place with the extension of the democratic framework to all fields of our national life.”

However, with the passage of time he became revolutionary and radical and mass driver and the voice of the illiterate and suppressed people. His speech and orientation of the cause made him the important leader; so much so the Maharaja considered the whole uprising against his rule, because of Shaikh Abdullah. In order to “curb his activities and to crush the mass movement” Shaikh Abdullah was transferred to Muzafarabad far away from Srinagar. By dislocating Shaikh Abdullah, the Government thought that “the tolerant atmosphere would easily be restored.” The Government was underestimating the mass movement, taking it only a movement of

36 Chitra Kachru, ‘Don’t Distort History,’ Greater Kashmir, October 7, 2009. The factors that contributed to the birth of mass uprising like the miserable plight of the peasantry and the masses has been discussed in detail in the previous chapter.
39 Abba, op. cit., p. 18.
40 Abba, op. cit., p. 24.
few educated Muslim youth. They forgot that what had come to surface was the result of long and continued suppression and tyranny.\textsuperscript{42} Since, the Reading Room party was mostly concerned with the discrimination against the Muslims in the services; the 'people's gatherings, demonstrations, meetings, speeches and debates reverberated the cries of economic imbalance and injustice; so, it became necessary to form a political organisation. But there was complete ban on the formation of a political organisation. However, the coming events made the way clear.

The pace of Reading Room was accelerated by few incidents which happened quickly one after another; which lent themselves to the slogan "Islam in danger."\textsuperscript{43} Two instances of interference with the religious affairs of the Muslims took place in Jammu which infuriated the Muslims and shaped the freedom struggle of Kashmir. On April 29, 1931, on the occasion of the Eid day, 'after the prayer was over on Nov. 27, 1931, and before the khutba was delivered the police entered the mosque and ordered the' the Imam to stop his khutba and 'Mussalmans to disperse.'\textsuperscript{44} On July 4, 1931, an incident of desecration of Quran happened at Jammu's central jail. "The profanation [sic.] of the Holy Quran was the immediate cause which ignited an inextinguishable fire of revolution for the first time in the history of Jammu and Kashmir state."\textsuperscript{45} These incidents of insult to religion roused the religious sentiments of the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir. A protest demonstration was organised at Jama Masjid, Srinagar on June 8, 1931. It was at this occasion that Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah, who afterwards became an undisputed leader of Kashmir, was introduced to the people of Kashmir by Mir Waiz Molvi Yosuf Shah, the grand Imam and leader of the time. Mir Waiz appealed to the audience to 'listen to the young man and advised them to respect and value his ideas.'\textsuperscript{46} Shaikh Abdullah in his maiden speech explained to the huge gathering the superiority of the Holy Quran and also

\textsuperscript{42} Abba, op. cit., p. 27-31.
\textsuperscript{44} Eastern Times, 5 October, 1931, File No. 663-p-1931, Govt. of India, Foreign and Political Department, and NAI.
\textsuperscript{45} Khan, Freedom Movement in Kashmir, p. 37. According to Shabnam Qayoom, in order to evoke strong public reaction against the Dogra State a plan was devised to stage the drama of desecration of the Holy Quran. For details see Shabnam Qayoom, Kashmir Ka Siyasi Ingilaab, Srinagar, 2007, pp. 49-50.
\textsuperscript{46} Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, 'Tahrikh-i-Hurriyati-Kashmir', Srinagar, the Aina (weekly), September 7, 1971, p. 5. Khan, p. 76; Mir Waiz introduced Shaikh Abdullah as "our leader" and asked the people to follow him. Saraf, op. cit., p. 361.
asked the people to struggle for their rights. During his course of speech the audience 'wept bitterly.' The growing popularity of Shaikh Abdullah among the people made Shaikh Abdullah more radical and anti Dogra.

The Government got enraged with the ‘political activities of the Shaikh Abdullah’ and transferred him to Muzafarabad. Shaikh Abdullah tendered his resignation and instead of accepting his resignation he was dismissed from services. Jan Copland says that after getting a huge financial assistance from Kashmir Committee, Shaikh Abdullah ‘threw up’ his job and ‘opened a small office in Srinagar staffed by full-time political workers.’ His dismissal infuriated the people of Kashmir and simultaneously enhanced the popularity of Shaikh Abdullah, who now fully devoted his time for the Kashmiri movement.

In fact, the protest movement of the Muslims against the ‘interference in their religious matters’ by the Government “had assumed a definite political character... [the demand of guilty involved in the desecration of holy Quarn should be punished] was soon coupled with the demand for Muslim share in the administration of the state.” The meetings and speeches, in which Maharaja’s discriminative policies were condemned, became the order of the day. At one such meeting on 25 June, 1931, an unknown man by the name Abdul Qadeer made a fiery speech. While pointing towards the Maharaja’s palace of Sherghri, he shouted, “Demolish this edifice of injustice, cruelty and subjugation.” There is great controversy regarding the nationality of Abdul Qadeer. However, mostly it is believed that he was a Pathan from Peshawar, and was a cook and guide of a European official in Kashmir. He was immediately arrested which returned the protests and demonstrations. People took keen interest in the trial of Qadeer. On 13th July, 1931, when his trial was to be held at Central Jail, Srinagar, a large people had gathered there to hear the case. Due to the delay in the trial the mob became ‘uncontrollable’ and shouted slogans and

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47 Abba, op. cit., p. 25, fn. also, Hussain, op. cit., p. 41.
48 For details see Hussain, op. cit., pp. 41-42.
50 Abbas, Kashmiri, op. cit., p. 68.
52 Fida Hussain, Freedom Struggle in Kashmir, op. cit., p. 43.
53 For details see, zahir-ud-Din, Flash Back: Kashmir Story Since 1846, pp. 37-40.
threw stones. The police in retaliation fired on the unarmed crowd that resulted the massacre of twenty-two Muslims.\textsuperscript{54}

The day, 13\textsuperscript{th} July, became known in Kashmir history as “Martyr’s Day”, ‘the official beginning of a struggle for independence from alien rule’.\textsuperscript{55} Although, Kashmiris had revolted from the very inception of the Dogra rule but the July revolution was “an eventful revolution and was the culmination” of all those political happening and movements.\textsuperscript{56} The killing shocked and infuriated the Muslims who took too streets and violently challenged the Maharaja’s rule which shooked the very foundations of the Dogra rule. For two hours in Srinagar the Government faded away and was controlled by the demonstrators. Mridu Rai, a recent researcher on Kashmir while highlighting the importance of the day in the history of Kashmir writes: “the significance of the date drew from the fact that it was the first time that a gathering of Kashmiri Muslims openly challenged the authority of the Maharaja and his Government.”\textsuperscript{57} Incidents of communal riots were also reported.\textsuperscript{58} The Muslims attacked the Hindu shops at Maharaj Gunj, whom they took the signs of repression. Between the Mophla rebellion\textsuperscript{6} of 1921 and the Calcutta riots of 1946; the July 1931 incident, in “terms of casualties and damage to property it was possibly the most serious communal outbreak in India.”\textsuperscript{59} Immediately after the incident the political leaders were arrested which further accelerated the anger of the people. The protests and strikes against the arrests of the political leaders had no precedence in Indian subcontinent.\textsuperscript{60}

For the first time the authority of the Maharaja was challenged and he was criticised by the people without the discrimination of sex and age. ‘They rendered the sky high and recited the appealing verses:

\begin{quotation}
The Quran is put to sacrilege, is it called justice
\end{quotation}


\textsuperscript{55} Lamb, \textit{Kashmir a Disputed Legacy}, p. 90.


\textsuperscript{57} Mridu Rai, \textit{Hindu Rulers Muslim Subjects}, p. 258.


\textsuperscript{59} Ian Copland, \textit{Islam and Political Mobilization in Kashmir, 1931-34}, p. 231.

\textsuperscript{60} Abbas, op. cit., p. 88.
The preacher is stopped to preach, is it called justice
He who makes a request is put to destruction and is imprisoned. Is it called justice.
Arrest of Abdullah added fuel to fire and enraged commoners. Is it called justice
They put commonest to trouble. As if they fried fish. Is it called justice. Who escaped
bullets, could not escape the persuading police. Is it called justice.\(^61\)

Poets' praised Shaikh Abdullah and the movement he started. A poet wrote:

One called Sher-i-Kashmir has appeared demanding freedom of press
Without arms and ammunition he cries a true voice
Full of sincerity for the Kashmirians he recites Allah alone.
At the door-steps of AMir-e-Kabir with humble posture. He begs freedom of
assembly. Appointment if Glancy Commission was the result of his efforts.\(^62\)

The Indian Muslims and there press condemned the oppression of the Dogra's
rule in Kashmir. At Simla 'An All India Kashmir Committee was set up by Indian
Muslims to campaign 'for the redress of the grievances of Kashmiri Muslims, to
pressurise the British Government of India to intervene in Kashmir. It also appealed
the Muslims of Kashmir and India to observe 14th August as 'Kashmir Day'.\(^63\) The
day was observed throughout, the sub-continent with great enthusiasm. Mention may
be made of Sialkot, Lahore, Gorakhpur, Deoband, Calcutta, Patna, Bombay, etc.\(^64\)
The Muslim Punjabi press, the Muslim organizations like the 'Kashmir Committee'
and Ahrsars highlighted the repression, which forced British Government to intervene
and pressurised the Dogra Government to establish an independent commission for
inquiry about the happenings in Jammu and Kashmir. The result was the
establishment of Glancy Commission.\(^65\)

Whereas the incidents of July 1931, gave an "irreparable blow to the prestige
of the Kashmir Darbar" at the same time it "launched the remarkable career of Shaikh
Abdullah M-the lion of Kashmir." By September 1931, Shaikh Abdullah after Mir
Waiz was the most "influential Muslim leader in Srinagar.\(^66\) The events of 1931,
helped much more to Shaikh Abdullah; hence after he came to be known as Sher-i--

\(^{61}\) Abba, op. cit., p. 34.
\(^{62}\) Abba, op. cit., p. 35.
\(^{63}\) Saraf, op. cit., pp. 454-456.
\(^{64}\) Saraf, op. cit., pp. 457-460.
\(^{65}\) the British Government might be worried about the happenings in Kashmir at a time when the
communism was making its firm base in China and Russia whose boundaries touched Jammu and
Kashmir, or lion of Kashmir because of his fearlessness. He was able to ‘assume the mantle of sole representative of the Kashmiri Muslims’ precisely because of the ‘moral support of the Mir Waiz Kashmir and the structural support of the all India Kashmir Committee.’ The Kashmir Committee which was established soon after the happenings of 1931 financially support Shaikh Abdullah from Punjab. At the same time he used the influence of Mir Waiz Yosuf Shah, the Imam of Jama Masjid Srinagar, in Kashmir, who actually introduced him to the people by declaring him their leader. On the one hand he used the ‘religious prestige of the Mir Waiz family’ to unite the Muslims of Kashmir on Islamic concepts; and on the other hand he used the ‘financial and structural support’ of the Ahmadiyas in Kashmir ‘with their contacts in the Punjab.’ Shaikh Abdullah actually used slogan of “Islam in danger” as a rallying point of Muslims which made him the “strongest local champion of Muslim demands, [having] a following greater than any other local leader.” The volatile political situation in Kashmir and his growing popularity motivated Shaikh Abdullah to give ‘his following and their demands an organizational shape.’ The result was the formation of a political organization by the name of ‘All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference in 1932.’

Pressurized by the British India Government from above and besieged by the people from below, the Maharaja was forced to set up an enquiry committee that ‘would look into and remedy the more obvious Muslim grievances. On October 20, 1931, the Maharaja announced the appointment of Glancy Commission, after the name of its chairman, B.J. Glancy, a senior member of the Indian Political Service called Glancy Commission in after the name of its chairman B. J. Glancy. The Glancy Commission Report ‘forms the magna Carta of the State.’ Among the various recommendations of the commission, the freedom to the press and platform similar to those which existed in British India was recommended. Taking advantage of this newly-founded freedom Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir formed a political organization by the name of ‘All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference in 1932. The inaugural session of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference was held at

69 Glancy commission and its recommendations have been discussed in detail in the first chapter.
historical *Pather Masjid* under the presidency of Shaikh Abdullah from 15\(^{th}\) October to 19\(^{th}\) October 1932. Its main aims were: \(^70\)

a. Organisation of the Muslims of the State;
b. Strengthening of unity between the Muslims,
c. Safeguarding of the political rights of the Muslims,
d. Struggle for moral, educational, social, cultural and financial uplift of the Muslims.

From the aforementioned objectives of the Muslim Conference including its nomenclature, it becomes clear that at this stage the Muslim Conference represented the Muslims of Kashmir and wanted them to unite under one “political umbrella” and to work for their betterment. \(^71\) Shaikh Abdullah’s attitude towards *pandits* also was harsh at least in the early stage of the movement. He outlined that the task of Muslim Conference and that of Kashmir was to ‘torn out Hindus, who from times past [had] been giving [the Muslims] trouble and exhorted the crowd to take revenge.’ \(^72\) Thus, in case of Kashmir movement Shaikh Abdullah was able to carry the day because the masses responded to his cry of “Islam in danger.” It was the time when a riot in Srinagar had hit Kashmir. Bazaz correctly judges: “it was surely not a suitable climate from [sic] introducing secular politics in the country.” \(^73\)

Like any other anti-colonial movement the Kashmiri movement was also launched on ‘progressive lines to end the oppression.’ It was actually a ‘war of the oppressed against the oppressor’ and the material used was religion to seek justice and redress.” If the ruler was Muslim,” declared a protagonist, “and his subjects the Hindus, the war would have been fought on similar grounds.” \(^74\) Shaikh Abdullah Abdullah believed that the socio-economic condition of the people could be improved only if there was ‘qualitative structural changes’ within the government. Shaikh Abdullah in order to mobilise the masses used religion and religious places where there were readymade public. It


\(^{71}\) Zutshi, op. cit., p. 229.

\(^{72}\) Delivery of a seditious speech by Shaikh Abdullah, Political Department, 1933, File No. 31, JKA, In Mridu Rai, op. cit., p. 273.

\(^{73}\) Bazaz, *the history of struggle for freedom in Kashmir*, p. 158.

\(^{74}\) *Al- Jamaat*, Delhi, 20 August, 1931.
was so because the masses who lacked the political consciousness could not be ‘provoked on political and economic groans; and also majority population (Muslims) were worst suffers. Moreover, the Dogra rulers had called their rule as ‘Dharma Raj’ or Hindu rule, in order to get the support of their co-religionists in Kashmir. Smith has asserted, “in transitional societies, religion can serve as the means by which the masses become politicized.” The mere fact that the movement was launched by Muslims and its nomenclature do not ‘necessarily make it a communal movement. Ian Copland has summarised the nature of the Kashmiri movement: “It would appear that religion was an essential factor in the process of mobilization, providing an avenue for organisation and a sense of communality among the Muslims which transcended the formidable barriers of class, education and region. But the root cause of the revolt was socio-economic- a determination on the part of the Muslims to win for themselves a prominent position in Kashmiri society.

Since, the Muslims who constituted the majority of the population, were denied the civil and socio-economic rights as were enjoyed by the Hindus and Sikhs, it was but natural that the movement that was launched would assume religious character and even communal tinge. Helped by the Hindu press in British India, the Kashmiri Pandits criticised the movement and dubbed it as a communal one launched against the Hindu rule. They failed to understand the true nature of the Kashmiri movement, which was to fight for democratic rights without driving their ruler out” and “played a historic role of anti-revolution to a finish” but failed. Since the Pandits of Kashmir had associated themselves with the Dora rule they considered the voice of Abdullah as not only against the Dora rule but also against them; for they believed that their protection and safety in Kashmir was in the Dogra rule.

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72 Zutshi, Languages of Belonging, chapters IV and V.
75 Statesman, Calcutta, October 31, 1931.
76 Khan, Freedom Movement, op. cit., pp. 182-197.
But Shaikh Abdullah very soon realised that in order to give his movement a proper shape and for its success it was necessary to make it an organization of all subjects of the state without discrimination of religion. Thus, in his first presidential address he declared: “the Muslim Conference is not a communal organization and its existence will prove beneficial to all the communities living in this state...I assure all of my countrymen, be they Hindus or Sikhs that we are ready to remove their sufferings as we have done in the case of Muslims. But they must also respect our just rights.”

A subcommittee was constituted by the Muslim Conference in March 1933, ‘to find out ways and means of uniting Hindus and Muslims.’ Although, there were few liberal Hindus who believed that the Government should grant Muslims their ‘legitimate rights; but they were not ‘wanting to come forward and express their consent to join the ranks’ of Muslim Conference. The Hindu leaders organised public meetings in which provocative speeches were delivered. “This caused a riot in Srinagar during October and passions ran very high. It was surely not a suitable climate from introducing secular politics in the country.” The Hindus had reservations; the cry of responsible government awakened them that their interests would be demolished; and “if the process was allowed to continue before long there would be a popular government in the country, which in other words would mean the rule of the Muslims the majority community in the state.” They therefore, linked themselves with the rule and even pressurised the Government not to become” just towards Muslims.” The Government labelled the Muslim Conference and Shaikh Abdullah as communal. “Shaikh Abdullah wants to out Maharaja and to establish Muslim raj in Jammu and Kashmir. To achieve this end he and his organisation, Muslim Conference, are agitating up and down the country.” Instead Shaikh Abdullah accused the State administration of holding communal views and insulting

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80 "Presidential Address Delivered by Shaikh Abdullah to the first annual session of the Muslim Conference on October 17, 1932", in Mirza Shafiq, op. cit., pp. 219-232.
81 Although, this committee could not function but at the same time it shows the presence of a ‘joint action in certain minds in the Conference.’ Bazaz, Inside Kashmir, op. cit., p. 187.
82 Bazaz, Inside Kashmir, pp. 189-90.
83 Bazaz, the history of struggle for Freedom in Kashmir, op. cit., p. 158.
84 Ibid., pp. 157-58.
85 Abba, op. cit., p. 44.
Islam, *Quran* and playing with the religious sentiments of Muslims; which made them to assume religious colour.\(^{86}\)

At the same time like the moderate Congress leaders Shaikh Abdullah realized that it was not easy to challenge directly the Dogra rule; so he lowered down his tone against the State to strengthen the roots of Conference. Thus, in a moderate tone he assured his loyalty to the Maharaja; "[W]e have no grievances against the person of Maharaja Bahadur. Instead, we are faithful to him in every respect. Our demands can never be called anti-government. In every civilized country the king always provides some rights to his subjects at his sweet will and the subjects often demand for more rights. But in spite of that their subjects are treated loyal and there is no doubt about their loyalty. The real faithfulness is that the ruler of the time should be acquainted with the aspirations and wishes of his subjects."\(^{87}\) Thus, Shaikh Abdullah did not want complete end of Maharaja's rule but wanted 'qualitative structural change' within the government, or responsible government, so that the political and socio-economic condition of Kashmiris could be improved.\(^{88}\) He also threatened to resign from the Muslim Conference unless its members obeyed his orders not to do illegal procession. In March 1934, he made an about turn when he announced that "it was time to come to...an agreement with the authorities in the Kashmir state."\(^{89}\)

Shaikh Abdullah was 'apotheosized' by the supports of Muslim Conference 'as their saviour' and 'a prophet sent by God to intervene on their behalf.' Many supernatural attributes and legends were attached with Shaikh Abdullah and was spiritually exalted. According to one such legend it was made public that in 1931, Shaikh Abdullah 'stepped forward to receive the cauldron of oil that was prepared by the oppressors for his community.'\(^{90}\) In the initial days Shaikh Abdullah found it hard to mobilise people on secular grounds. His activities were impressive but they

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\(^{87}\) 'Presidential address delivered by Shaikh Abdullah to the first annual session of the Muslim Conference on October 17, 1931', cited in Mirza Shafiq, op. cit., pp. 219-232, p. 222.
\(^{88}\) For details see, Khan, *Freedom Movement in Kashmir*, op. cit., chapter 4, pp. 231-280.
accomplished little. "Feeling that he was getting nowhere fast, Abdullah retired to Lahore to spend the winter in contemplation." Watching from Lahore the incidents of Kashmir, Shaikh Abdullah realised that "the Muslim masses appeared to respond to Islamic appeals and Islamic leaders to a far greater degree than to secular causes and political leaders like himself who just happened to be Muslim." Therefore, after his return he leaned towards Mir Waiz Hamdani who was younger and more radical. Mir Waiz Yosuf Shah being close to Darbar had earned the reputation of Darbar's man by urging his supports not to agitate pending the publication of the Franchise Report due sometime in 1933. Also Yosuf Shah did not like the activities of Ahmadiyas; Shaikh Abdullah did not want to lose the support of Ahmadiyas by siding with Yosuf Shah. The result was the separation of two. The separation was more based on "personality" than "any ideology."

At this crucial stage of the movement the two important leaders, Mir Waiz Yosuf Shah and Shaikh Abdullah drifted away from one another and got indulged in slanging match. Mir Waiz founded his own Azad Muslim Conference and labelled Shaikh Abdullah as an Ahmadiya because of the influence of Kashmir Committee on the Muslim Conference. Srinagar witnessed the violent political rivalry in the Muslim ranks between the supporters of Shaikh Abdullah called Shers or lions [after the name Shaikh Abdullah who was called sher or lion of Kashmir] on one hand and the followers of Mir Waiz Yosuf Shah called bakras or goats [after his beard] on the other hand. Mir Waiz Yosuf did not like influence of Ahmadiyas on Kashmir movement and Shaikh Abdullah's inclination towards the Ahmadiyas and asked him to check the activities of Ahmediya which had enhanced after the 13th July massacre; which he did not for he was financially assisted by them. The result was separation.

However, Shaikh Abdullah knew that the Muslims of Kashmir could not be evoked on secular causes, owing to their strong traditional and religious [Sufi or shrine based worship] attachments. Shaikh Abdullah therefore, took sides with Mir Waiz Hamdani of Khangah-e-Mualla, who represented and supported the shrine or

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91 His appeals to non-Muslims were falling on deaf ears and simultaneously the Muslim subjects particularly leaders did not like his 'secular tune.
93 Ibid., pp. 246-247.
94 Sana-ullah Bhat, Kashmir in Flames, p. 5.
95 A. Lamb, op. cit., p. 93.
96 Abba, op. cit., pp. 48-50.
Sufi cult of Kashmir, to broaden his social appeal. The growing popularity of Shaikh Abdullah [he took the case of peasants and also every time he was arrested his reputation spread ‘steadily’] had lessened the influence and prestige of Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah. He could not reconcile with it and drifted away from Shaikh Abdullah. Mir Waiz, who only a year enjoyed ‘the most powerful and influential in the valley, could not reconcile with the ‘sudden popularity of Shaikh Abdullah. He started a vilification campaign against Shaikh Abdullah and Ahmadiyas and ‘closed himself with Ahhrars, the arch rivals of Ahmadiyas. Khanqah-e-mualla, became now the seat of Shaikh Abdullah because of the support of Mir Waiz Hamdani. Interestingly, the pandits sided with the Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah, against Shaikh Abdullah although former was more religious in outlook and in tone.

The demands of Muslims “came to the Hindus as a bolt from the blue.” The non-Muslims sided with the Maharaja to protect the Hindu State. In a memorial to Maharaja they assured the Maharaja complete loyalty and support against the “disloyal Muslims of the cities of Jammu and Srinagar in complicity with outside pan-Islamic propaganda agencies, who abhor the very idea of a Hindu kingdom in northern India.” They considered the whole agitation by Muslims to replace the Hindu rule. They considered it their sacred duty to protect the Maharaja’s rule: “we hasten to avail of this opportunity to make an [sic] humble offer of our life, property and children-nay our all for the protection of your highness’ person and your Highness Raj.”

However, in spite of this criticism, the Maharaja could not ignore all the demands of the Muslim Conference. “Pressed by the British from above and by the Kashmiri people from below” the Maharaja enacted constitutional reforms.

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100 Khan, Freedom Movement in Kashmir, op. cit., p. 166. The followers of Anjuman Ahhar-i-Islam were called. They were the Muslims who formerly were Congress Nationalists but had the lost identity among the Muslims. In order to retain an identity in the world politics, they were anxious to find a platform. This opportunity came to them from Kashmir and highlighted the atrocities of the Dogra State over the Kashmiris. Confidential, File No. 498-P. (Secret) of 1931, NAI, pp. 1-2.
102 Memorial, op. cit., p. 2.
103 Korbel, Danger in Kashmir, p. 17.
continuation with the recommendation of Glancy Commission, the Government had appointed a Franchise Committee on 31st May, 1932, under the Chairmanship of Chief Justice Sir Barjor Dalal.\textsuperscript{104} The committee in its report called Franchise Report on 30 December, 1933, recommended the setting of a Legislative Assembly or Praja Sabha consisting of seventy five members. Out of its sixty non-official representatives only thirty three were to be elected, leaving the Maharaja with the majority vote. The distribution of seats was as follows:— (1) elected Muslims-21, (2) elected Hindus-10, (3) elected Sikhs-2, (4) nominated members-42.\textsuperscript{105}

Although, the proposed Praja Sabha was a powerless body, as the executive was responsible to Maharaja not to assembly; and its elected representation was limited and the right of vote confined\textsuperscript{106} to a limited population, the Muslim Conference decided to participate in the elections; to demonstrate its popularity in Kashmir and also to use the Praja Sabha as a forum to propagate its ideology of nationalism.\textsuperscript{107} Another positive development of the Praja Sabha was “that the elected representatives of Muslims and Hindus were brought together on the floor of the house where they began to realize that most of the basic problems were common to both.”\textsuperscript{108}

At this stage most leaders of Muslim Conference were in jails, While on the one hand it showed the strength of Muslim Conference against the Government at the same time it gave a ‘shattering blow to the prestige of Mir Waiz; because it won all the five seats of Srinagar. Commenting on the result of the election Mohammad Yosuf Saraf writes: “the result gave a shattering blow to the prestige of Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah. It showed unmistakably how a man totally unknown four years back had, by sheer dint of sacrifice and selfless dedication to the cause of his people, shattered the influence of a family which was undisputed and supreme for over a century.”\textsuperscript{109} While as the religious leadership had drawn its influence and following mainly from urban areas of Srinagar; “the vast majority of the Kashmiri Muslim population, the

\textsuperscript{105} Franchise Committee Report, op. cit., pp. 10-12.  
\textsuperscript{106} It was confined to zaildars, Imam, doctors, lawyers, teachers, title holders. The women were not given the right to vote. Only those having high qualification 21 minimum age was fixed, pp. 13-17, Franchise Committee Report, op. cit.,  
\textsuperscript{107} Abdullah, Aatishi Chinar, op. cit., p. 204.  
\textsuperscript{108} Bazar, the history of struggle for freedom in Kashmir, op. cit., p. 159.  
\textsuperscript{109} Saraf, op. cit., p. 505.
agriculturists, fell outside its sphere of influence." Shaikh Abdullah on the other hand derived his influence from all districts, localities and the Valley if not the whole State of Jammu and Kashmir. Ghulam Abbas who did not want to participate in the Assembly election, praises Shaikh Abdullah for giving a new life to Muslim Conference by convening its annual session at Sopore in 1934.

However, one important contribution of the Praja Sabha was that it brought leaders of Hindus and Muslims closer to each other. They did work for the goal of responsible government. Some liberal pandits joined the Muslim Conference. This according to a recent researcher on Kashmir, Chiralekha Zutshi shows that "the movement was not exclusivist in nature." Although, the movement in its initial stage at least up to 1933 was Muslim in orientation whose main focus was the uplift of the Muslim community of Kashmir. He [Shaikh Abdullah] believed that "the Muslims were to be protected not necessarily because of their Muslim faith but because persecution of any community in any form was to be fought and overcome." But after some concessions were given to Muslims by the Glancy Commission, the movement broadened its agenda and discourse "in clearly national terms, one that addressed the issues of the Kashmiri nation as a whole. Socialist ideals, which had the potential to unite people of different religious affiliations under a single political and economic program, became the basis of this movement."

The Muslim Conference took the issues of tenants and labourer classes without the distinction of religion and tried to unite the people of Kashmir on economic issues. For the first time Shaikh Abdullah overtly claimed to represent the both Hindu and Muslims of Kashmir. In his presidential address to the Annual Session of the Muslim Conference in December 1933, he urged the Kashmiri Hindus to join the movement on national front. Shaikh Abdullah also tried to free him and his Conference from the influence of the Punjabi organizations which he labelled as 'communal organizations'; and looked upon in terms of Kashmiri nationalist movement. Shaikh Abdullah accused them of misleading the Kashmiri movement.

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111 Abas, Kashmir, op. cit., p.133.
112 Zutshi, op. cit., p. 234.
114 Zutshi, op. cit., pp. 244-45.
115 'Presidential address of Shaikh Abdullah at the Annual Session of Muslim Conference at Mirpur from 15 to 17 December', 1933, Mirza, op. cit., pp. 291-307.
from the very inception. The *Hamdard*, the official mouthpiece of Muslim Conference condemned all Punjabi organizations as communal that misled the Kashmiri movement. "How did the communal mentality become widespread in Kashmir?"\(^{116}\) Through, the columns of *Daily Hamdard*, he expressed the necessity of a secular movement. "We want to build a joint front of Hindus-Muslims and Sikhs. The ambition of my life is to serve the land and people of Jammu and Kashmir who are oppressed by the extreme poverty, lack of freedom and opportunity. We cannot ignore the process of history. To us the arising of July, 1931, and what followed is no mere temporary phenomenon. We do not want to keep it rest, but it is our utmost need and desire to seek to develop it by meeting the changing conditions. It is my faith that changing conditions demand the close cooperation of all sections of the community."\(^{117}\)

Shaikh Abdullah’s move unto national ideology was boosted by the joining of some liberal *pandits* including Bazaz to Muslim Conference. Bazaz being ‘ahead of his times’ realised that the *pandits* of Kashmir had only one choice to join the movement and to work for change its direction; giving the changing political situation of the Indian subcontinent. He believed in nationalism. In a letter to Mahatma Gandhi he wrote: "it is nationalism that will save our country and our community because neither the Hindus nor the Muslims can wipe out the one or the other from the country... it is only nationalism that will save (non-Muslim) families (in Kashmir)."\(^{118}\)

Shaikh Abdullah and other Muslim Conference leaders were mesmerized by the incredible role of Bazaz in the Glancy Commission Report and afterwards even when his community dissociated him.\(^{119}\) He convinced Shaikh Abdullah that the real tussle in Kashmir was not between Hindus and Muslims; but between the oppressed and the oppressor.\(^{120}\) Even, Mr. Jinnah who visited Kashmir in 1935-36, advised the leadership of Muslim Conference that being in majority “they should not only win over the hearts of non-Muslims but also carry them along like a wheel of the political

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\(^{117}\) Cited in F.A. Abba, op cit., p. 51.


\(^{120}\) Saraf, op. cit., p. 508
vehicle." Thus, to secularise the Kashmiri politics and movement, Bazaz and Abdullah came closer to each other.

On 1st August, 1935, Shaikh Abdullah and Bazaz jointly started a weekly journal the Hamdard in Urdu "to popularise the ideology and to lay the foundation of progressive nationalism in the state." It was because of Bazaz that Shaikh Abdullah came closer to Nehru and Congress. Both extended their invitations to Nehru to visit Kashmir in 1936, "to boost their attempts at establishing a joint Hindu-Muslim national front in politics." It was also at this time that Congress developed interest in Kashmiri movement and Shaikh Abdullah sought its assistance for the movement. Nehru was greatly impressed by Shaikh Abdullah’s ‘political acumen’ and the Indian National Congress’s interest in Shaikh Abdullah had been growing since 1931. Shaikh Abdullah was also impressed by Nehru’s broadmindedness and wanted to employ him as an intermediary in negotiations with the Hindus for a united front against the Darbar.

In February 1934, he declared that "my highest desire is that the peoples of this country should fight for the liberation of their motherland without distinction of caste, creed or community...let Hindus and Muslims, by shedding their fears and misunderstandings of each other, launch such a movement." He even invited Nehru to Kashmir in 1936, to use his influence for the establishment of a joint Hindu-Muslim national front. After Nehru’s decline Shaikh Abdullah himself made it to meet Nehru in the NWFP, the meeting that not only impressed Shaikh Abdullah but also had a far-reaching consequences for the future of Kashmir. In a press Conference at Amritsar, after his meeting with Nehru and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, he declared; "communal tension in Kashmir is the result of propaganda by the communal leaders of Punjab. We want people of Punjab not to interfere in our internal affairs. Our next programme will be to follow the principles of the Congress party and

121 Abbas, op. cit., p. 213.  
123 Zutshi, op. cit., p. 249.  
124 The role of Bazaz cannot be overlooked in this regard  
126 ibid.  
after returning to Kashmir, I will strive to set up an organization which supports national ideology." Chitralekha Zutshi is of the opinion that, "Shaikh Abdullah’s decision to lean towards Congress and Nehru was "quite possibly the Congress’s increasingly leftist leanings on social and political issues, which were similar to the socialist ideas being propounded by the Muslim Conference for Kashmir at this time." 

To create a sense of unity and nationalism among the elected members of Praja Sabha without the distinction of religion, the Muslim Conference declared to observe 8th May, 1936, as ‘Responsible Government Day.’ But the non-Muslims did not join the celebrations. The Daily Martand, the official organ of the Hindu Yuvak Sabha dubbed the Muslim Conference as “an organisation of communalist Muslims which has come into existence for the protection of the Muslim rights. This organisation has been established with the idea of crushing the Hindus... it is therefore, not expected of its members that they will allow this organisation to work, like the Indian National Congress,... for the common cause of both the Hindus and Muslims.” The demand for a ‘democratic form of political system’ apprehended the non-Muslims. To end their apprehensions and also to prepare the public opinion for its acceptance, Choudhry Ghulam Abbas, assured them that their legitimate rights would be protected. In his presidential address he stated: “I on behalf of Muslims, appeal to my Hindu countrymen, that they should cooperate with us. I assure them that Muslims do not want to usurp the legitimate rights of any community. A Muslim wants justice for every community in the same manner in which he wants for himself. Let us, therefore, join hands together and struggle for the emancipation of our country.”

129 Zutshi, op. cit., p. 250.
130 The movement against the Maharaja was considered by them as against the non-Muslims, as for them the maharaja was there to protect their communal interests. So while as they wanted Muslim Conference to become nationalist at the same time they themselves were communalists; cited in Khan, Freedom Movement in Kashmir op. cit., pp. 325-26.
131 Choudhry Ghulam Abbas An important leader of the Muslim Conference from Jammu.
132 ‘Presidential Address Delivered by Choudhary Ghulam Abbas at the 4th Annual Session of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference held at Srinagar on 25, 26 and 27 October 1935’.
The appeal did not go in vain. The day was observed with great enthusiasm throughout, the State and besides Muslims the good number of Hindus also participated in it and demanded making the Assembly responsible to the people. Towards the end of that year a drama was played which shattered the Dogra regime and also highlighted the growing nationalism among the people of Kashmir. On 29th October, 1936, Sardar Budh Singh one of the elected Sikh members of the Sabha declared it a “toy assembly” and tendered his resignation. His decision was followed by other members also; “entire block”, writes Bazaz, “of the elected members with the solitary exception of one Hindu member, Amar Nath Kak, walked out of the Kashmir Assembly as a protest against the unsympathetic attitude which was persistently maintained by the Government towards the public demands.” commenting on this the Tribune wrote, “from the events that have happened in the Assembly during the last few days it is evident that there is a general awakening in the State and that the people can no longer be satisfied with the toy legislature, though, it may be given the grand eloquent name of Praja Sabha Shaikh Abdullah further demanded the responsible government from the platform of the fifth Annual Session of the Muslim Conference held at Poonch in 1937. In his presidential address, he declared: “we have demanded responsible assembly and independent administration from the beginning of the freedom struggle. Since, the last year, the demand for a better constitution has not remained a demand of the Muslim majority population in the state, but we hope that poor among the Hindus and Sikhs will also work shoulder to shoulder with us for the attainment of responsible government. We must sincerely continue our efforts in that direction, and bring it to the notice of the Hindu and the Sikh masses in the state.” Shaikh Abdullah’s desire and decision to transform his movement into a nationalist one like that of Indian Congress needed the support and participation of minority community.

Thus, we see from the very inception Shaikh Abdullah appealing the non-Muslims to join the Muslim Conference.\(^{137}\) To the sixth annual session of the Muslim Conference, Shaikh Abdullah as the president addressed as a nationalist, "like us the large majority of Hindus and Sikhs in the state have immensely suffered at the hands of the irresponsible government. They are also steeped in deep ignorance, have to pay large taxes and are in debt and starving. Establishment of responsible government is as much a necessity for them as for us. Sooner or later these people are bound to join ranks. No amount of propaganda can keep them away from us."\(^{138}\) A manifesto called 'National Demand' was published on August 29, 1938, which was signed by "twelve prominent Hindu, Muslim and Sikh leaders of the national bent of mind."\(^{139}\) The document was the landmark in the history of Kashmir for it was the joint document of all subjects of the state being signed by Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Its main demands were:\(^{140}\)

1. Establishment of Responsible Government in the State with a responsible executive having control over the purse of the State except on certain specified subjects which were to remain under the control of his highness;

2. An elected legislature founded in the system of adult franchise with special representation given to the labouring classes, traders, landlords and educational interests;

3. The principle of joint electorate for purpose of election to the representative institutions. However, seats could be reserved for the minorities with safeguard and weightage guaranteed to them by the constitution for the protection of their linguistic, religious, cultural, political and economic rights in the same manner as enunciated and accepted by the Indian national Congress to minorities from time to time.

4. The grant of basic rights of citizenship to all the people living in the state.

\(^{137}\) In fact in many ways the Muslim Conference seemed much broader in its outlook and programmes regarding the non-Muslims than the Congress in India. Shiekh, *Aatishi Chinar*, op. cit., pp. 221-22.


\(^{139}\) The non-Muslims who signed the document of National Demand were, P.N. Bazaz, Jai Lal Kilam, Pandit Kashyapa Bandhu, Pt. Sham Lal Saraf, Dr Shamboo Nath Peshim and Sardar Budh Singh. Saraf, op. cit., p. 527.

\(^{140}\) See Saraf, op. cit., pp. 540-41.
It was declared that the movement belonged to all communities and the goal of which was “to bring about complete change in the social and political outlook of the people and to achieve responsible government under the aegis of the Maharaja.”  

This joint document encouraged and convinced the Muslim Conference leadership to throw open the doors of the Conference to non-Muslims by ‘rechristening the Muslim Conference into a national body.’ Ian Copland affirms that right from beginning “left-wing of the Muslim Conference, led by its president, Shaikh Abdullah, sought to play down the party’s religious character, believing that the democratic movement would carry more moral and physical thrust if it was representative of all communities.” It is imperative to mention here that in 1934, Shaikh Abdullah toured the neighbouring states of Punjab, Frontier Province and other states of India “following the call from the leaders of Hindustan.” F.A. Abba believes that Shaikh Abdullah had interactions with different nationalist Indian leaders of different ideologies and parties, but he “found himself closer to Congress ideology, for it had already occurred to him that in his homeland, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs alike were facing the tyranny of feudal autocracy.” It strengthened the growing national outlook of Shaikh Abdullah.

Needless to say that while Shaikh Abdullah tried his level best to motivate Hindus to join the Muslim Conference and even changed its name; he did nothing to convince Mir Waiz faction to shun its activities and work for whole community. He instead guided his volunteers to fight against the followers of Mir Waiz, while himself carrying a hockey stick. So, politically the wedge that existed among the Muslims, Shaikhs responsibility could not be ignored.

Founded mainly for the concerns about jobs of Muslims and representation of Muslims; the Muslim Conference ‘assumed a political role. “The period from 1931 to 1935 saw the political might of Kashmiri movement gaining so much ground and so quickly,” that political parties of British India “were forced to take notice of

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141 Bazaz, the history of struggle for Freedom in Kashmir, op. cit., p. 162.
143 Ian Copland, Kashmiri Muslims and the 1947 Crisis, op. cit., p. 226.
144 Abba, op. cit., pp. 50-51.
happenings in Kashmir.” 146 At a time, when Indian National Congress extended its ‘scope from British India to the princely states’, Shaikh Abdullah became ‘deeply involved in Congress politics.’ In fact, Muslim Conference, his own movement was seen by him ‘as an extension of the Indian National Congress in Jammu and Kashmir.’ 147

Up to 1938, the Indian National Congress adopted an official policy of non-interference in the affairs of the states... ostensibly, out of respect for the princes' traditional rights of sovereignty.’ Nevertheless, it showed verbal sympathy. After the passage of act of 1935, a resolution was passed by the Congress working committee, held between 29 July, and 1 August, 1935, in which it declared: “the Indian National Congress recognises that the people in the Indian states have an inherent right to swaraj no less than the people of British India. It has accordingly declared itself in favour of establishment of representative responsible government in the states and has in that behalf not only appealed to the princes to establish such responsible government in their states and to guarantee fundamental rights of citizenship, like freedom of person, speech, association, of the press, to their people but has also pledged to the states people its sympathy and support in their legitimate and peaceful struggle for the attainment of full responsible government.” 148

However, after the rise of Congress in provincial elections of 1937, it ‘jettisoned’ its traditional policy of non-interference in the affairs of the states, when Peoples Conference with the active patronage of Congress ‘rocked princely India.’ 149 Particularly its main focus was on Kashmir. Nehru as a descendent of a Kashmiri Brahman took ‘passionate interest’ in Kashmir. In his presidential address to the all ‘India Peoples Conference’ in February 1939, at Ludhiana, Nehru, ‘gave public support to Abdullah and noted, “in Kashmir, I am glad to say, a number of wise and far-seeing Hindus and Sikhs threw their weight on the side of the popular movement and supported the ‘national demand’ which asked for a responsible government.” 150

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147 Lamb, Kashmir a Disputed Legacy, op. cit., p. 93.
149 Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, From Plassey to Partition, a History of Modern India, Delhi, 2007, p. 330.
150 Cited in Akbar, Kashmir, op. cit., pp. 81-82.
Since, Muslim League was less concerned ‘with such matters as the relations of princes with their subjects,’ Shaikh Abdullah therefore, was ‘quite impervious to the appeal of the Muslim League.’ Shaikh Abdullah met Nehru for the first time in January 1938, at Lahore Railway station [a meeting that had a far-reaching impact on the future of Kashmir and subcontinent] and along with him visited Northern Frontier Province where he met Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Shaikh Abdullah was greatly impressed by Nehru’s thought and ideology. It was Nehru who advised Shaikh Abdullah to broaden and change the name of Muslim Conference. At a time when Muslim League and Hindu Mahasabha were propagating that Hindus and Muslims were two separate nations, “Nehru sorely needed the support of an acknowledged secular Muslim leader with a mass Muslim following to counter the thesis” of communalists. Abdullah himself needed the support of Nehru to disprove the thesis of Kashmiri non-Muslims that the movement of Shaikh Abdullah was communal in nature. At the same time he criticized the Indian Muslim League’s policy of non-intervention in the princely states. It is imperative to mention that Gandhi himself was not in favour of intervention in the princely state, particularly in Kashmir. He even accepted the invitation of the Kashmir government to visit Kashmir as a state guest in 1939. Visiting Kashmir as a state guest might not look a big thing but the time he was to visit Kashmir made his decision a big thing.

By 1938, on behalf of the Abdullah group, which included many Hindus and Sikhs, the Muslim Conference decided to “end communalism by ceasing to think in terms of Muslims and non-Muslims” and invited “all Hindus and Sikhs who believe in the freedom of their country from the shackles of an irresponsible rule” to participate in the ‘freedom struggle.’ The Sixth Annual Session of the Muslim

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151 Muslim League because of the fear of ‘retaliatory action by its political opponents’ did not interfere in the states. Also like the British the League considered the princes ‘as a valuable counterweight to the socialist tendencies of the Congress,’ Ian Copland, The Princely States, The Muslim League, and the Partition of India in 1947, The International History Review, vol. 13, No. 1(Febr., 1991), pp. 38-69 p. 45.
152 Birwood, op. cit., p. 44.
153 See, Aatish Chinar, pp. 226-228, Abas, Kashmakash, p. 159.
154 Ajit Bhattacharje, op. cit., p. 52.
155 Times of India, May 19, 1939, ProQuest Historical Newspapers Times of India (1838-2001), p. 3.
156 It was only after the pressure from other leaders that Gandhi had reluctantly cancelled his visit to Kashmir. Times of India, July 22, 1939, ProQuest Historical Newspapers Times of India (1838-2011), p. 14.
Conference held at Jammu on the 25th, 26th and 27th March, 1938, is turning point in the political history of Kashmir, for it was in this session that a proposal was introduced for the change of name of Muslim Conference. Shaikh Abdullah who was the president of session said in his presidential address: “the demand for responsible government is not meant for eighty per cent Muslim alone but for all inhabitants of the state; therefore, it is necessary to March together with the twenty per cent non-Muslims. The main problem now before us, therefore, is to initiate joint action and form a united front against the forces that stand in the way of the achievement of our goal. This will require re-naming of our organisation as a non-communal political party, necessitating amendments in its constitution.”

At a time when the three years rule of Congress had disappointed Muslims of British India in general and were thinking in terms of a single Muslim platform; Shaikh Abdullah was busy to collaborate with Congress. Consequently, the Working Committee of the Muslim Conference met in Srinagar on 24th June, 1938, to consider the question of changing the name of the party. The marathon discussions lasted for five days and spread over fifty-two hours and finally the following resolution was passed:- “Whereas in the opinion of the Working Committee the time has now come when all the progressive forces in the country should be rallied under one banner to fight for the achievement of responsible government, the Working Committee recommends to the General Council that in the forthcoming Annual Session, the name and the constitution of the organization be so altered and amended that all people who wish to participate in the political struggle are enabled to become members of the Conference irrespective of their caste, creed or religion.” While as the princes had reservations to join the federation of British India, Shaikh Abdullah showed readiness to join the federation of Indian National Congress.

It is interesting to note that it was the time when Subash Chandra Bose had resigned from Congress and Maulana Azad was made president of Congress. Shaikh

159 Times of India, January 26, 1938, ProQuest Historical newspaper, Times of India (1838-2001) p. 12, Bazzaz, the history of struggle for freedom in Kashmir, op. cit., p. 166.
Abdullah found this change a “favourable and effected the change.”\textsuperscript{161} The General Council of the Muslim Conference met in Srinagar on 27\textsuperscript{th} April, 1939, and confirmed the resolution of the Working Committee of 28\textsuperscript{th} June. Consequently, a special session of the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference was held in Srinagar on 10\textsuperscript{th} and 11\textsuperscript{th} June, 1939, under the Presidency of Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, the known leftist. The resolution for the change of name was introduced by Maulana Mohammad Saeed Masudi, chairman of the reception committee. The resolution reads: “The special session of Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference approves the working committee resolution No. 5, of 28th June, 1938, for the change of the name of the Conference and for bringing about the necessary amendments and changes in its constitution, which was confirmed by the General Council in its session on the 27\textsuperscript{th} of April, 1939.”\textsuperscript{162}

Many Muslim leaders particularly from Jammu, initially some close colleagues of Shaikh Abdullah from Kashmir also, had reservations and apprehensions regarding the change. They considered it inappropriate to change the name for non-Muslims who had remained aloof from the movement and had attached themselves with the Dogra rule. They feared “that the Hindu-Sikh elements in the party would undermine the movement because of their vested interests in Dogra rule.”\textsuperscript{163} Important among them were Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas, Chaudhri Hamidullah, etc. Later on Abbas supported the move, after he was assured by Abdullah that National Conference would have its own individual character and would not be influenced by Indian National Congress. Shaikh Abdullah further made his argument in a socialist manner that tussle in Kashmir was not between Muslims and non-Muslims, but between “the haves and the have-not’s” and “no betterment of the people could be expected so long as the political struggle was not launched on these lines.”\textsuperscript{164} Consequently, all important leaders from Jammu, except Chaudhri Hameedullah, supported the Working Committee resolution to rename the party as all Jammu and Kashmir National Conference conditionally. Shaikh Abdullah will not

\textsuperscript{161} Abba, Kashmiraksh, op. cit., p. 62, f. n, Abbas, in his memoir claims that Shaikh Abdullah was also motivated by Gopala Swami Ayyanger, a Congress man, who wanted to convert Muslim Conference into a party that would be part of National Congress, for details see, Abas, Kashmiraksh, op. cit., pp. 169-170.

\textsuperscript{162} Saraf, op. cit., pp. 528-29.

\textsuperscript{163} Bazaz, the history of struggle for freedom in Kashmir, op cit., pp. 163-64.

\textsuperscript{164} Saraf op. cit., p. 530.
own Congress politics nor will he support the Congress in any case. Shaikh Abdullah in his memoir also confirms that he assured Abbas that National Conference would not be influenced by the Congress. Bazaz in his Freedom Struggle says that “Muslim leaders feared that the National Conference would become a hand-maid of the Indian Congress.” they were given full assurance that “the organization should keep aloof from the Indian national Congress as well as Muslim League. On these assurance misgivings of Abbas were allayed and he gave his fullest support to the resolution in the plenary session of the Conference.”

Thus, all the major opposition was removed and the way was cleared to change the name. The special session of the Muslim Conference was held at Pather Masjid Srinagar on 10th and 11th June 1939, which was presided by known leftist Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, “to get this resolution ratified by the mass of the Conference. In his presidential address, Sadiq said, “this day will be written in golden letters in the history of the national awakening of Jammu and Kashmir. The decision which you are going to take is not being watched only by the Kashmir Government but by the whole India.” There was a long discussion and a series of detailed lectures by the delegates in favour of the resolution. The resolution was later on subjected to vote; 175 votes voted in favour of the change of the nomenclature. Only three opposed the idea. It was at almost 2:00 Am., [intervening night of 11th and 12th June] that Sadiq declared the passing of the resolution and the formation of National Conference; a party of Hindus Muslims and Sikhs, “and one whose ideology was ostensibly secular.” The local units of Muslim Conference in Poonch, Mirpur and Kotli ‘repudiated this decision and decided to unite all Muslim leaders under one umbrella that would also act as a local unit the Muslim league in Srinagar.’ The National Conference as the name depicts was “the bearer of the” majoritarian nationalist ideology for the people of the state; and the organization of “downtrodden

165 Abbas, Kashmakash, op. cit., p. 178.
166 Shaikh Abdullah Aatishi Chinor, op. cit., p. 238.
167 Bazaz, the history of struggle for freedom in Kashmir, op. cit., pp. 163-64.
168 “Presidential Address by Khwaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, to Special Session of all Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, held on 10th and 11th June 1939, Srinagar, Mirza Shafiq, pp. 475-485.
169 Abba, op. cit., pp. 61-62.
170 Ian Copland, Abdullah Factor; Kashmir Muslims and the 1947 Crisis, p. 226
classes.’ The flag of the National Conference was red in colour with a white plough in the centre, depicting the socialist revolution for the peasants of the state, who form a majority.\footnote{172}{Hussainain, op. cit., p. 103.}

But many of the Muslim leaders particularly from Jammu ‘found party’s new orientation unpalatable.’\footnote{173}{Ibid., p. 89.} In Kashmir, M.A. Saber, Ghazi Aman-ullah Khan, Khawajka Ghulam Nabi, Mirza Ghulam Mohiud-din, Mr Abdul Aziz Mirpuri and others criticised Shaikh Abdullah and his new party and raised the slogan of “Islam in danger.”\footnote{174}{F.M. Hassainain, Freedom Struggle in Kashmir, New Delhi, 1988, 2002, p. 96.} Charges of corruption were levelled against Shaikh Abdullah and he was dubbed as ‘agent of Congress, who had been purchased by Hindus.’\footnote{175}{Ibid.} Under the command of Qureshi Mohammad Yosuf, an angry mob attacked Mujahid Manzil, the central office of National Conference on 15 June 1939.\footnote{176}{Rashid Taseer, Tarikh-i- Hurriyat-i- Kashmir, Vol. II, Srinagar, 1973, p. 58.} It is pertinent to mention here that at that time Sir Gopal Swami Ayyenger was the Prime Minister (Dewan) of Kashmir and he was accused of propagating the ideology of Congress in Kashmir. He played an important role in the division of Muslim leadership after the formation of National Conference.\footnote{177}{Ibid.} Josef Korbel traces the present tragic struggle’ to this date and holds Shaikh Abdullah responsible for it. “The origins of the present tragic struggle can, in a sense, be traced back to those months. Up to that time the Muslims had been united through the Muslim Conference. In 1939, this unity was broken. Responsible for this tragic schism was none other than the popular lion of Kashmir, Shaikh Abdullah Mohammad Abdullah.”\footnote{178}{Korbel, Danger in Kashmir, op. cit., p. 18.}

Thus, the ‘freedom movement’ of Kashmir during its first phase from 1931-39 had to face ‘serious threats from the forces of communalism having strong feudal ties; which as a consequence changed and shaped the ‘orientation, content and structure of the movement. Initially started for the uplift of the Muslims of the State, it broadened its outlook and accommodated the Non-Muslims, and fought for the ‘Responsible Government. This continuity and change marks the progressive march of the ‘national movement’ in Kashmir.'
Chapter Three

Multi-Faceted Lion

From National Conference to ‘Accession’

After transforming the Muslim Conference into the National Conference, Shaikh Abdullah tried to ‘lift it into the fold of Indian National Congress.’ This was an open breach of a promise he had made with Ghulam Abbas only a year before that the National Conference would remain aloof from both the Congress and the Muslim League. He also endorsed the policy of the Congress towards the World War Second in the National Conferences’ Anantnag session, held between 29 September and 1 October 1939. He along with many other leaders also attended the Tripura session of the Congress in March 1939. Within a couple of years he intermingled his movement with Congress and replaced Kashmiri identity with Indian identity “when there was no easy correlation between the two.” In the Mirpur session of the National Conference held on the 9-10th April, 1943 Shaikh declared that “as Muslims, we must believe that India is our home. We have been born out of its earth and we will go to the same earth. Our blood is mixed with every particle of this earth. India is our motherland and it will remain our motherland. It is our duty to free our motherland and our homes from the slavery of the foreigners.”

The formation of the National Conference and its adaptation of the Congress ideology was not liked by the supporters of the Muslim League. Under the leadership of Mr Ashiq Hussain a new party, Muslim League, was formed with its headquarters at Zaina Kadal. Shaikh failed to adopt an impartial approach toward the Congress and the Muslim League, which he had assured at the time of the conversion of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference. Many prominent Muslims did not like Shaikh’s pro-Congress attitude. The unhappy Muslim leaders decided to revive the Muslim Conference and for this an important meeting was held in Srinagar on 10th October, 1940, which was attended by 12 political workers, and thus reviving the Muslim Conference. They owed their allegiance to All India Muslim League. Two important leaders, Professor Ishaque from Jammu and Professor Aziz from Srinagar

also attended the historic Lahore session of the Muslim League, in which Pakistan resolution was passed. Mr Aziz was nominated a working member of the Muslim League.3 Particularly the Muslims of Jammu who did not enjoy the ‘same majority status’ which the Muslims of valley enjoyed, were “threatened by the prospect of being governed by a Hindu majority” and became “staunch supporters of the Revived the Muslim Conference.”4 Feeling uncomfortable with the pro-Congress orientation of the National Conference, Ghulam Abbas sought an explanation from Shaikh Abdullah. Abbas was not satisfied with the reply of Shaikh Abdullah and resigned from the National Conference.5 Many prominent workers, including six members of the legislative assembly, resigned from the National Conference. When, in September, 1940, the annual session of the National Conference was held in Baramulla, no Muslim delegates from the Jammu province except the Mirpur district attended. In contrast, large number of Hindus even from Jammu attended the session.6 This intervention from the British India complicated the politics of Kashmir in 1940s.7

It was in this surcharging atmosphere that Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan left the National Conference “on the charge that it was too cosy with the Congress” and joined Muslim Conference. Ghulam Abbas openly stated that “the Kashmir Muslim Conference is a part and parcel of the All India Muslim League.”8 The revival of the Muslim Conference supported by the educated section of the Muslims throughout the state “directly challenged Shaikh Abdullah’s position as the sole representative of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.” Their position was further strengthened by the joining of the Mirwaiz of Kashmir Yusuf Shah. The reaction of Shaikh Abdullah and his National Conference was indecent. The National Conference ‘descended to hooliganism’ and started a vicious campaign against the supporters of the Muslim Conference. Having an upper hand in media this propaganda had a

5 Chitralekha Zutshi, Languages of Belonging Islam, Religion, Identity and the Making of Kashmir, Delhi, 2003, pp. 262-63
6 According to Bazaz, they were motivated by Ayyengar, the Prime Minister, who was pro-Congress and “Gandhis” at heart to ‘join the ranks of the National Conference in increasing numbers.” Prem Nath Bazaz, The History of Struggle For Freedom In Kashmir, Srinagar, 2003, pp. 177-178
8 Khalid, Srinagar, January 12, 1943.
‘lasting impact on the reputation of the Muslim Conference.’ Shaikh himself was carrying a hockey stick in his hands to frighten his opponents. He even declared that “if to silence my opponents I have to take up a sword I will not hesitate to do so.” Shaikh Abdullah and his National Conference also unnecessarily criticized the All India Muslim League and its ‘ability in Kashmir.’ Although Muslim Conference had declared that “the Kashmir Muslim Conference is a part and parcel of the All-India Muslim League” but Muslim League and its ‘Pakistan scheme’ did not include Princely States, not even Muslim-majority Kashmir. It was much involved in strengthening its hold in Punjab and Bengal where it faced a tough resistance from regional parties.

Ironically, the reaction of the non-Muslims was not different from the earlier one. The majority of them were suspicious about the change. Only a microscopic minority of them considered it healthy development; but even then because of social pressure only few joined the NC. Shaikh Abdullah laments in his autobiography: “While on the one hand the educated Muslims did not appreciate our decision of conversion of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference, on the other hand the non-Muslims showed more disdain towards us. They wedged their vested interests with the rulers and considered Kashmir a Hindu state. Their rich and educated sections dominated them. As such they were not ready to support any such movement that would militate the interests of the rulers and their own vested interests. With great difficulty a few youths of the community joined the National Conference but they faced persistent pressures from their community; and they looked at any measure that was taken by us with suspicion.” Even those who joined the National Conference with few exceptions wanted to run National Conference as a local unit of Congress. Bazaz does not seem to be happy with this attitude of his community; “no step,” he writes, “was allowed by non-Muslim members to be taken and no decision adopted by the Conference unless and until it was strictly in consonance with the Congress philosophy and practice... This attitude...made the Muslim leaders uneasy but helpless... in trying to bring the National Conference under the hegemony of the Congress leaders, the Hindu and the Sikh members were not prompted by any burning

9 Prem Nath Bazaz, op. cit., pp. 184-85; Zutshi, op. cit., p. 263
10 Ibid., op. cit., pp. 185-86.
desire for freedom or even by the wish to secularism state politics. They only felt happy that by doing so they were helping the cause of Indian nationalism which, despite the statements of the Congress leaders to the contrary, was becoming another name for Hindu nationalism. Clearly it was the prompting of the communal mentality of the Hindus which was cleverly presented in a nationalist secular garb." 13 These non-Muslims up to then had served many Hindu communal organisations and it was only after the advice of Nehru that they had joined National Conference; so it was not expected from them that they would become nationalists at one stroke. They continued to `owe their allegiance to their communal organisations. The most vocal among them was the Hindu Rajya Sabha which advocated, publicly, the conversion of Muslims and the establishment of an orthodox Hindu Raj. 14 The high command of National Conference was a divided house. While the Hindu members were actively pulling in one direction the Muslim members were vigorously pulling in the other. At every step strife ensued. It was feared that the National Conference might prove stillborn. 15

Realising that he was losing ground among the Muslims 16 `without making a headway among the non-Muslims, Shaikh thought a novel plan to use religion. He arranged the celebration of the *Id-i-Milad* (the birth anniversary of the Prophet) and gave religious speeches in which he praised Islam. He also declared that he was a `Muslim first and a Muslim last. 17 At the same time in order to gain the sympathy of Hindus he invited Nehru to Kashmir. Nehru visited Kashmir in 1940. He toured Kashmir for ten days and advised the Hindus to join the National Conference to make a common cause for the establishment of responsible government. 18 Nehru remained in Kashmir for 10 days and his meetings with non-Muslims helped National Conference to gain the Support of Hindus to some extent. Before Nehru's visit, two prominent Pandit leaders, Pandit Kayshup Bandhu and Jai

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13 P.N. Bazaz, op. cit., pp. 167-68. Saraf, op. cit., pp 603-4  
14 Saraf, op. cit., pp 603-4  
15 Bazaz, op. cit., p. 168.  
16 A police intelligence report from 1940 noted that "Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah is losing favour amongst the Muslims because of his nationalistic activities, which the majority feel to be detrimental to their interests." Political Department B 206/1940, Jammu State Archives  
18 Nehru advised the Pandits to join the movement, to strengthen the National Conference and Shaikh Abdullah. Times of India, June 11, 1940, ProQuest Historical Newspapers Times of India (1838-2001), p. 13; Saraf, op. cit., pp. 543-545.
Lal Killam, had resigned from National Conference on the grounds of Shaikh's religious tune. The Pandits resented the use of Islamic symbols by Shaikh Abdullah. They also opposed the celebrating of the Martyr's Day, the day where from the freedom struggle started; in their view it was an anti-Hindu movement and could not be celebrated as a national day. Later on Bazaz also left National Conference. Shaikh Abdullah was disillusioned and in a public meeting in Srinagar on 28 July, 1941, he lamented, "in a country like Kashmir where Kashmiri Pandits cannot even tolerate the construction of a bathroom by Muslims on the banks of Jhelum, what is the use of preaching nationalism? People who cannot even tolerate the washing of hands and face by us on the banks of Jhelum, surely, cannot be united with us." Thus Shaikh's decision to start a national movement on secular groans was received with cold shoulders. His decision seems unidirectional. While as he did his best to persuade the Muslim leaders for the conversion of the Muslim Conference to National Conference, no or little was done to politicise Hindus about the nationalism. The result was that on the one hand he lost many prominent colleagues and on the other hand the non-Muslims did not join his new party. However, his strong bonds with Congress and his own towering personality and leadership saved Shaikh and his National Conference. Sheik did not snap his ties with the Indian National Congress because he was of the view that alliance with the Congress was essential to secure funds and publicity for the National Conference. The movement that was launched against the Maharaja had assumed new all India character and that of an anti-British status.

At the same time Shaikh and his movement tried to collaborate with the Dogra Government. The National Conference in February 1943, on the pretext of the changing international situation due to the war, announced its "supreme desire to stand with solidarity in these hard times by [a]... ruler who has shown deep concern for the people." It "convinced many Kashmiris that Shaikh Abdullah was willing to go to any lengths to gain political power." Friendly relations were established with

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19 Saraf., pp. 545-46
20 Ibid., pp. 545-467
21 Ibid., p. 547.
22 Bazaz, op. cit., p. 178.
Gopalaswami Ayyengar, the Prime Minister of the State. Instead of holding by-elections to fill the vacant seats in the assembly, the Prime Minister proposed that since the National Conference was the “acknowledged popular” party, the NC’s suggested candidates could be nominated by the special orders of the Maharaja to fill the eight vacant elected seats in the assembly. These seats were falling vacant after the resignation of eight elected members of National Conference over the script controversy. The State Government had ordered the dual script—Devanagari and Persian as medium of instruction in schools.\(^\text{24}\) The working committee of the National Conference agreed readily the ‘undemocratic proposal.’\(^\text{25}\)

Due to war economy there was shortage of foodstuffs, firewood, kerosene etc which created serious problems for the people. The National Conference involved itself with the Government in the ‘distribution of essential commodities, particularly rice, kerosene and fire wood. It was not unexpected that some of the National Conference cadres “succumbed to temptations.”\(^\text{26}\) The State Government set up a fuel committee to supply fuel to the inhabitants of the hard hit areas. Gopalaswami Ayyengar who was a strong nationalist and supporter of Congress rewarded Shaikh for this collaboration by appointing “NC members to the boards responsible for issuing rice ration tickets and permits for fuel, and to the parliamentary committee set up in 1943 to make proposals on constitutional reform, and instructed the police to let its supporters demonstrate freely in the streets.”\(^\text{27}\) In 1944, following the adoption of the committee’s recommendations for a limited system of diarchy, Mirza Afzal Beg of National Conference and Ganga Ram, “an ultra-loyalist Dogra politician,” were appointed by Hari Singh as his Public Works Minister and Home Minister respectively.\(^\text{28}\) National Conference’s compliance with the Dogra state, for which it was rewarded, alienated Kashmiris from the NC which they thought had weakened the “freedom movement.”\(^\text{29}\) The common people who suffered heavily due to high prices, shortages, and black-marketing towards the closing of the war took the National Conference ‘as an arm of the Government and a defender of reaction.’

Writing in October 1943, after a shooting in which several demonstrators were killed

\(^{24}\) For details see Hassnain, op. cit., pp. 104-105
\(^{25}\) Bazaz, op. cit., p. 186
\(^{27}\) Ian Copland, “Abdullah Factor” op. cit., p. 232.
\(^{29}\) Ibid., p. 217.
and dozens wounded in Jammu, the Resident declared that it seemed 'only a matter of
time before the restlessness already visible among the rank and file of Abdullah’s
followers resulted in massive desertions to the Muslim Conference.'\textsuperscript{30} Furthermore
the hard economic situation due to war disappointed the common people. Since NC
had associated itself with the Government, its image was damaged and popularity
diminished.\textsuperscript{31} Gopalswami appointed Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, an important
member of National Conference, as a member of the committee. There was hue and
cry from various sections of population which alleged that the committees had refused
to grain them because 'they were supporters of the Muslim Conference or followers
of Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah. Their ration cards were also cancelled. The press reported
that corruption was rampant at the depots and a big portion of the fuel went into black
market the profits of which were shared by the officials and non-officials alike.\textsuperscript{32} Thus
"[b]y 1943," writes Zutshi, "the National Conference[read Shaikh Abdullah] had
betrayed Kashmiris by not only subordinating their movement to the Congress, but,
more importantly, its collaboration with the Dogra State threatened to jeopardize the
very \textit{raison d'être} of the movement."\textsuperscript{33} Voices of dissent were raised against the
National Conference. Shaikh Abdullah was asked to sever his links with the Congress
'and choose the socialist path to address the issues facing Kashmiris.' He was accused
of giving up economic and political reforms for gaining "political power and the
favour of Congress leaders."\textsuperscript{34}

In order to recover its ebbing influence among Kashmiris, the National
Conference under the influence of some communists,\textsuperscript{35} came up with a
comprehensive plan of socio-economic reconstruction, called \textit{Naya Kashmir} or the
New Kashmir Manifesto in September 1944.\textsuperscript{36} N N Raina an eminent communist

\begin{footnotes}
\item[30] Barton to Wylie, 12October, 1943, IOR R/1/1/3913, cited in Ian Copland, op. cit., p. 233
\item[31] Bazaz, op.cit. p. 217; Zutshi, op. cit., p. 293.
\item[33] Chitrakhet Zutshiop. Cit., p. 275
\item[34] Zutshi, op. cit., p. 285.
\item[35] Some important communists who worked in the National Conference and tried to influence its
thinking were G.M. Sadiq, P.N. Jalali, J.N. Zutshi, D.P. Dhar etc. From 1938 to 1950, the
Communists played a vital role in shaping the policies of the National Conference.
\item[36] It is believed that it was written by an important Indian communist leader B.P.I. Bedi along with his
English wife Freda. After the transformation of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference,
the communists of British India visited valley in order to win the cadre. KM Ashraf, for example
visited the valley in 1940s. In 1942, N N Raina came back to his homeland for 'political work. He
became an influential member of the left-wing in the National Conference. A study circle at Dal Gate
in Srinagar was set up by the communist activists "to propagate the philosophy of Marxism and
\end{footnotes}
leader of National Conference stated that the manifesto 'was not produced in a high
tide of mass upsurge. On the contrary political activity in 1943-44 had fallen to its
lowest ebb when the document was published.'\textsuperscript{37} It was in pursuance of this manifesto
that after assuming power, National Conference under Shaikh Abdullah could
legislate some of the most radical land-reform legislations in a short period between
1948 and 1950; like land to tiller by the Big Landed Estates Act of 1950. In its
formation, 'the experiences of the Soviet Union were the main inspiration. In the
introduction of \textit{Naya Kashmir} Manifesto, Shaikh Abdullah, for example wrote: "in
our times Soviet Russia had demonstrated before our eyes not merely theoretically but
in her actual day to day life and development that real freedom takes birth only from
economic emancipation."\textsuperscript{38} The \textit{Naya Kashmir} Manifesto was presented by Shaikh
Mohammad Abdullah before the open session of the National Conference at Srinagar
on 30 December 1944. \textit{Naya Kashmir} plan can without any doubt be called as "[T]he
most important contribution of the National Conference towards the articulation and
channelization of Kashmiri popular aspiration." It is a (socialist) political document,
containing aims and objectives of the Jammu and Kashmir National
Conference, with respect to the future constitutional, framework, economic
planning, agricultural and industrial growth and socio-educational uplift of the
state. It in unambiguous terms explained the charters of peasants, workers and
women. N.N. Raina, claimed thus: "no sector of national movement in this
subcontinent, conceived of anything like this document. The Fundamental Rights
resolution of Karachi session of the Indian National Congress, or even the Lucknow
and Faizpur sessions respectively in 1936 and 1937, are miles behind in their
democratic content from the point of view of common people."\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{37} N N Raina, op. cit., 1988, p. 121.
\textsuperscript{38} \textit{The Political and Economic Manifesto of Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, New Kashmir.}
Published by Shaikh Nazir Ahmed General Secretary Jammu and Kashmir National Conference,
other information missing.
\textsuperscript{39} N.N Raina, "Hegemony of the Working People: A Specific Feature of Our Freedom Movement,"
Naya Kashmir was divided into two parts—the Constitution of the State and the National Economic Plan. According to the proposed constitution of the state there would be a single citizenship to all inhabitants of Jammu, Kashmir, Ladakh and the Frontier Regions, including the Poonch and Chenani Ilaqas.\footnote{New Kashmir, op. cit., p. 35; See also Hassnain, op. cit., p. 118.} It proposed the establishment of the National Assembly, elected by citizens of the state by electoral districts on the basis of one deputy per 40,000 population, for a period of five years. It advocated the establishment of councils for national education, cultural uplift, women’s rights, communications and health to ensure the restructuring of all areas of the state. According to Naya Kashmir, there would be socialization of all instruments of production and the reorganization of property relationships. It declared that land belonged to the tiller and the landlord had no right over the land or the peasant.\footnote{For details see New Kashmir, op. cit., pp. 35-72.} The plan envisaged the establishment of rule of law and equal protection of law for all citizens and recourse to quick, chief and impartial justice, the establishment of legislature to be elected on the basis of adult franchise, the establishment of peoples’ courts in all districts and tehsils. With the high court at apex of the judiciary the right of women to elect and to be elected in all the institutions on the basis of equality with men, equal opportunity for all children, right to free education to all students, etc.\footnote{Ibid.} The National Economic Plan envisaged a radically new rural economy. It suggested fundamental changes in prevailing land relationships. More specifically it proposed a system of planned economy ensuring the people a reasonable standard of living. Reorganization of agricultural relations with emphasis on the principle ‘land to the tiller’, establishment of cooperative associations for cultivators, peoples’ control over forests, industries, banks, regulation of the price level and fixation of wage bill, etc. It further envisaged the setting up of various national council including those concerning with agriculture, public health, education and housing. To the plan were attached three charters, first for peasants, second for workers and third for women.

So far as the future of the state after the lapse of British rule in India was concerned the manifesto was ambiguous. However, the Maharaja was given promise that he would continue to exercise the right of general control over the administration of the state. It envisaged a political system based on the democratic principles of
Responsible Government with the elective principle applied from the local panchayats right up to legislative assembly. Even in his speech to the session which adopted the manifesto, Shaikh was ambiguous on this issue. He declared that “The all Jammu and Kashmir National Conference has always championed the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity, and at all times we have held that the biggest obstacle in the way of India’s freedom is the difference and distrust between the two great communities....our duty, along with that of our countrymen, was to support the move for unity.” He further linked the fate and future of Kashmir with the independence of India: “the independence of India is the essential prerequisite for the independence of the State peoples.”

The Naya Kashmir Manifesto was criticized by the Muslim Conference, Yuvak Sabha, the representative body of Kashmiri pandits, Bazaz, a socialist and even Lala Bansilal Suri, a prominent Gandhian member of the National Conference criticized it. Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah criticized it as un-Islamic. The Pandit community represented by the Kashmir Yuvak Sabha feared the dominance of Muslims in the plan. Bazaz, dismissed it as an “interesting though thoughtlessly drafted document, envisaging the establishment of a communist State yet, opportunistically enough, it guaranteed the perpetuation of the alien Dogra rule in Kashmir.” Lala Bansilal Suri resigned from the National Conference at the time of the introduction of the Manifesto. According to him the Manifesto was anti-national and pro Kashmir and pro-Muslim. In spite of this criticism, however, the Dogra Government was moved by the Naya Kashmir and announced plans for diarchy on October 2, 1945. According to this plan two ministerial posts were to be given to a Hindu and a Muslim who commanded the confidence of the State legislature. While the Muslim Conference boycotted this offer, the National Conference welcomed the offer.

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43 Cited in Hassnain, op. cit., p. 127.
44 The Tribune, Lahore, October 15, 1945.
46 Hamdard, Srinagar, May 9, 1945. Zutshi, op. cit.
47 According to N N Raina, the ‘Lahore Resolution’ passed by Muslim League in which a separate land for the Muslims was demanded. Kashmir was obviously a candidate for the Muslim majority grouping envisaged in the North-West. In order to save his rule in a Muslim majority State the Maharaja started negotiations with the leaders of National Conference through his new Prime Minister R C Kak, appointed in 1944 for the future of the State. The NC leaders were encouraged by the Maharaja to come with a document for the future. When the Maharaja returned from abroad in March 1943, he was welcomed by Shalik Abdullah at Mujahid Manzil [headquarter of NC] and presented him the Manifesto a year before its publication. N N Raina, op. cit., p. 120.
The division of the Muslims of Kashmir was depressing the Muslim League at a time when its dream of Pakistan was coming true. Jinnah did his best to bring the two parties together and also paid a visit to Kashmir in 1944 nearly a decade after his second visit in 1936. He was given a royal welcome by both the Muslim Conference and National Conference leaders jointly. He held meetings with the Muslim Conference leaders and National Conference leaders particularly Shaikh Abdullah for a reconciliation and forming a single Muslim party.48 His appeal to the Muslims of Kashmir to join the Muslim Conference, which he declared the only representative body of Kashmiri Muslims, in the annual session of the Muslim Conference only increased anti-League feeling of Shaikh. Speaking at the annual session of the Muslim Conference on 17th June, 1944, Jinnah, declared, “I feel happy and confident that Muslims have now awakened and are united under the flag of the Muslim Conference.................Among the people who met me, 99 percent supported the Muslim Conference.”49 Shaikh Abdullah was upset and infuriated by the Jinnah’s declaration. He criticized Jinnah and even threatened him that “if Jinnah does not give up the habit of interfering in our politics it will be difficult for him to go back in an honourable manner.”50 Jinnah responded emphatically, “when I, after careful consideration, suggested that Mussalmans should organize themselves under one flag and on one platform, not only my advice was not acceptable to Shaikh Abdullah but, he indulged in all sorts of language of a most offensive and vituperative character in attacking me. My advice to the Musalmans that the differences can only be resolved by argument, discussion, exchange of views, and reasons, and not by goondaism and one thing that I must draw the attention of the Kashmir Government about is that goondaism must be put down at any cost, and there should be a constitutional liberty of speech and freedom of thought, which is the elementary right of every citizen under any civilized form of government.” 51 Although the Muslims of Kashmir were more inclined towards NC but in the Indian context they were supporters of Jinnah

48 For details see Saraf, op. cit., pp. 622-628.
49 Saraf, op. cit., p. 629.
50 Bazaz, op. cit., p. 205.
51 Cited in ibid., pp. 206-207.
and Muslim League not the Congress. They had accepted Jinnah as the leader of the Muslims "beyond the valley."\(^{52}\)

Shaikh responded by inviting top leaders of the Congress and the States People’s Conference to the National Conference’s Sopore session in 1945. The important leaders of Congress and State Peoples Conference who reached Kashmir following the invitation included, Jawaharlal Nehru, Moulana Abu-ul-Kalam Azad, Khan Abdul Gaffer Khan, Mian Iftiqar-ud-Din, Jai Narayan Vayas, Asaf Ali and Kanya Lal Vaidya.\(^{53}\) It was reiterated that National Conference was determined to bring the political movement in Kashmir even closer to India. In a speech in honour of Moulana Azad in Hazuri Bagh, Srinagar, Shaikh declared that “our future and our fate is connected with the freedom struggle of India……the National Conference has accepted the principle of self-determination for all communities.”\(^{54}\) However, there was a huge gap between Shaikh’s thought and practice. Although he claimed NC as the sole representative of all Kashmiris, but he was never willing to “accommodate political and ideological differences from within and without its ranks.” Rather he resorted to ‘emotional and physical violence against his opponents.\(^{55}\) Nehru advised the pandits to join National Conference which he believed represented the majority of Kashmiris. He appealed them that “if they wanted to live in Kashmir, they should join the National Conference, or bid goodbye to their country.”\(^{56}\) It served two purposes. First to strengthen the position of Shaikh Abdullah who was facing a serious challenge from the Muslim Conference backed by Muslim League. Second strengthening the position of Shaikh backed by Congress would help in making Kashmir a part of independent India. Nehru was not ambiguous about it. In a speech he declared that “the question of the independence of Kashmir is linked to the independence of India. Kashmir cannot make its one-half inch mosque by staying independent………..inevitably this mulk [Kashmir] will have to stay connected to Hindustan.”\(^{57}\)

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\(^{52}\) Zutshi, op. cit., p. 303. For example on the eve of the visit of Jinnah even the strong men of NC could be seen in the welcome reception and other functions, see Ian Copland, op. cit., pp. 230-231.

\(^{53}\) Hassnain, op. cit., p. 130.

\(^{54}\) Cited in Hassnain, op. cit., p. 130-31.

\(^{55}\) Zutshi, op. cit., p. 294; Saraf, op. cit., pp 649-50.


\(^{57}\) *Hamdard*, Srinagar, August 6, 1945.
However, Shaikh did not succeed in using Nehru’s influence to recover his position. That is why he now started direct negotiations with the leaders of Muslim Conference. In this regard a secret meeting was held on 28 March at Jammu between the two parties. The meeting was attended by Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas the president of the Muslim Conference, Afzal Beg, Khawaja G.M. Sadiq, Maulana Syed and Shaikh Abdullah of the National Conference. There was possibility of amalgamation of National Conference with the Muslim Conference; but “no decision was reached” because of the “the rivalry between Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas and Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah for the leadership of the proposed new party which if formed is expected to ally itself with the Muslim League.”

Meanwhile the political situation in British India was changing as fast as the weather of Kashmir. On 12 May 1946, the Cabinet Mission sent to India declared that when the British left India, its Paramountcy would lapse and the rights of Princely States would return to them. This announcement of an imminent independent *Dogra* State of Jammu and Kashmir sent Abdullah into a ‘flurry of political alliance-making.’ In a telegram to the members of the British cabinet mission, Shaikh wrote, “we declare to world that this sale deed [Treaty of Amritsar, 1846] confers no privileges equitant to those claimed by states governed by treaty rights. As such case of Kashmir stands on unique footing and people of Kashmir press on Mission their unchallengeable claims to freedom on withdrawal of British power from India. We wish to declare that no sale deed however, sacrosanct can condemn more than four million men and women to servitude of an autocrat when will to live under this rule is no longer there. People of Kashmir are determined to mould their own destiny and we appeal to Mission to recognise justice and strength of our cause.” In a tough message sent to the Cabinet Mission, Shaikh Abdullah wrote, “today the national demand of the people of Kashmir is not merely the establishment of Responsible Government, but their right to absolute freedom from autocratic rule. The immensity of the wrong done to our people by the ‘Sale Deed’ of 1846 can only be judged by

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58 Fortnightly Report of the Kashmir Residency for the Fortnight Ending the 15th April 1946, Political Department, File No. 5(S)-P(S)/46, National Archives of India [NAI].

59 The telegram sent by Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah, president all Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, to the members of the British cabinet mission, while they were in Srinagar, cited in State Versus Shaikh Abdullah, Kashmir On Trial, with an introduction by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Lion Press, Lahore 1947, p. 224.
looking into the actual living conditions of the people. It is the depth of our torment that has given strength to our protest.\(^\text{60}\)

In order to prevent the Maharaja from continuing his rule after the lapse of the British rule, and also to regain his popularity\(^\text{61}\) Shaikh launched ‘Quit Kashmir Movement,’ declaring the Amritsar Treaty of 1846, ‘a sale deed’ and so asked the Dogras to leave.\(^\text{62}\) In particular he attacked the ‘Treaty of Amritsar’ by which Kashmiris were sold as slaves. He exhorted the people “to be prepared for “bullets and guns” and to use slogans such as “Quit Kashmir”, “Break the Amritsar Treaty,” etc.\(^\text{63}\) Shaikh in a tough language said, “I announce it to the world that the descendents of Gulab Singh have no right to rule this land. We were not even told at that time when the British sold this land to him. Now, when the British have to quit India, we tell Hari Singh to quit Kashmir. We will collect fifty lakhs by contribution and tell him to vacate this land.”\(^\text{64}\) He attacked the first ruler of Dogra dynasty for betraying the Sikhs, as well as the British who had sold Kashmir, to him, as dacoits. Shaikh Abdullah and other important leaders of National Conference were arrested on 20 and 21 May.\(^\text{65}\) On the one hand he asked the Dogras to leave Kashmir and on the other hand sought the support of Kashmiri Pandits for the ‘national struggle of Kashmir.’ In a speech he stressed that “those Hindus who....[believed] that Dogra rule should remain, should....[not] forget that.... Kashmiris [were treated] as a bought up race without distinction of religion.\(^\text{66}\) The non-Muslims did not support his Quit Kashmir Movement. They were not willing to accept Hari Singh as an autocrat. Most of the non-Muslim leaders particularly from Jammu, who would identify themselves with Dogra state, were threatened by the

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\(^{61}\) the resident in his fortnightly report in February 1946 to the secretary of state reported that National Conference “is gradually losing ground and numbers of its supporters are deserting the party and joining the Muslim Conference.” Fortnightly Report of the Kashmir Residency for the fortnight ending the 28\(^{\text{th}}\) February 1946, File No. 5(5)-P(S)/46, Political Department, NAI, see also Josef Korbol, Danger in Kashmir, Srinagar, 2008, p. 20.

\(^{62}\) The Hindustan Times, 24 May 1946, press cutting on Quit Kashmir Movement, Department of Information, Srinagar.

\(^{63}\) Fortnightly Report of the Kashmir Residency For the Fortnight Ending the 15\(^{\text{th}}\) May 1946, [Confidential], File No. 5(5)-P(S)/46, Political Department, NAI.


\(^{65}\) Fortnightly Report Of The Kashmir Residency For The Fortnight Ending the 31\(^{\text{st}}\) May 1946. NAI.

\(^{66}\) Daily Herald, 26 May 1946, press cuttings on the Quit Kashmir movement, Department of Information, Srinagar.
call of Quit Kashmir Movement. They feared that in due course all powers would transfer into the hands of Muslims. However, some Pandits supported his Quit Kashmir call with caution and realization ‘that his efforts in due course would transfer all political power into the hands of the state Muslims.’ During this agitation the Pandits had been rallying their forces in support of the Maharaja. Numerous telegrams were despatched to the, Hindu newspapers and Congress leaders, condemning the agitation and endeavouring them to present a “more accurate picture of the situation to the people of British India.” Some of these communications had been inspired by the state authorities but mostly these were spontaneous on the part of Pandits. The Muslim Conference declined to be drawn into the agitation and its leaders were pleased that the Government had dealt with Shaikh and his supporters so firmly. The Muslim Conference declared that “the agitation had been started at the behest of Congress leaders......to restore the lost prestige of the Nationalists.”

Shaikh Abdullah launched the ‘Quit Kashmir’ movement at a time when negotiations were in progress between Muslim Conference and National Conference for amalgamation. The agitation derailed the negotiations. Nehru and his Congress who had supported Shaikh from many years could not tolerate this negotiation. The response of the state was ruthless and the agitation was forcibly crushed. In an interview with the Hindustan Times, R.C. Kak, the Prime Minister of the Maharaja, said, “We have been preparing for it eleven months and now we are ready to meet the challenge. There will be no more vacillation and no weak-kneed policy. We shall be ruthlessly firm and we make no apology about it.” Surprisingly after launching the ‘Quit Kashmir movement’ Shaikh Abdullah made his mind to leave Kashmir for Delhi to have meeting with Nehru who had invited him to Delhi. But he was arrested at Ghari on his way to Rawalpindi en route to Delhi. The time this news reached Srinagar, all members of the working committee and leading workers of the National Conference had been arrested. The agitation came as a bolt from the blue to Nehru. Nehru along with Dewan Chaman Lal, Asaf Ali, Baldév Sahai, Tajammal Hussain of the Indian National Army and several others left for Kashmir and was arrested on 20th

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67 Eastern Times, 30 May, 1996, Information Department cuttings, Srinagar.
68 Fortnightly Report of the Kashmir Residency For the Fortnight Ending the 31st May 1946.NAI.
69 Fortnightly Report Of The Kashmir Residency For the Fortnight Ending the 31st May 1946. NAI.
70 Harmand, Srinagar, May 16, 1946. Times of India, 30 July 1946.
71 Hindustan Times, 27 May 1946,
72 Times of India, May 23, 1946; ProQuest Historical Newspapers Times of India (1838-2001), p. 5.
June at Domel. Maulana Azad, the then president of the Congress asked him to come back in order to continue the “valuable work he was doing for the Congress in connection with the negotiations with the Cabinet Mission. Nehru willingly returned” though not without misgivings.”

Nehru in a meeting with Rajani Palme Dutt, leading British communist, correspondent of London “Daily Worker,” in Rawalpindi told him that “the object of his mission to Kashmir was to stop the agitation and secure the release of Shaikh Abdullah and others as neither Congress nor the States Peoples Conference was prepared to launch drastic offensive against Kashmir or the many other states which deserved it.” However, if Shaikh had expected that Congress would support his movement he was soon proved wrong. The Congress offered only “lukewarm support” to his agitation because it “directly challenged the policy of the All India States Peoples’ Conference, which was to achieve popular government in the states under the aegis of the Maharajas of the states.” Most Congressmen from a religious and sentimental point of view had regretted the attack on a Hindu ruler.

Acharya Kripalani, the Congress President declared that the Quit Kashmir demand was “unjust and unreasonable” for the Maharaja was the son of the soil who had purchased Kashmir and did not take it through “bloodshed and treachery.” He advised the people to give up Quit Kashmir slogan and instead demand “Panchayat Raj” which he described as “People’s Government under the aegis of the Maharaja.” In a meeting of the ‘All India States Subjects Conference, Patel advised strongly that “no agitation against individual states should be launched or pursued, rather the princes and states problems should be dealt as a whole.” Shaikh too was not happy with the attitude of the Congress. Shaikh conveyed this to Rajani Palme Dutt in an interview in the latter half of July 1946.”

While as Congress leaders, Mr. Asif Ali, Ghaffar Khan, and Nehru came to Kashmir, Rama Chandra Kak, the Prime

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73 Resolution of the Congress Working Committee 25 Sep. 1946, Letter from Vallabhbhai Patel to R.C. Kak, Political Department, 28-9-46, D. 6686-P/46, NAI.
74 Disturbances in Srinagar, Kashmir State, Intelligence Bureau Home Department, 9-8-46, File No. 167-P(S)/46, Political Department, NAI.
75 Zutshi, op. cit., p. 297.
76 Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Extracts From the Punjab CID Abstract of Intelligence No. 22, Dated the 8th June, 1946. File No. 167-P(S)/46, Political Department, Disturbances in Srinagar, Kashmir State, NAI.
77 Times of India, May 26, 1947, p. 8.
78 Reference: Confidential Telegram No. 68, From Resident in Kashmir to Secy. Political Department by G.F.B. Abell, 17-6-46, Political Department, NAI.
79 “Disturbances in Srinagar, Kashmir State... During the Trial of Shaikh Abdullah, Intelligence Bureau Home Department,9-8-46 File No. 167-P(S)/46, Political Department, NAI.
Minister of the Maharaja visited Bombay and met there with Gandhi and Sardar Patel. Gandhi succeeded in persuaded Kak to lift ban on Nehru’s entry to Kashmir. Nehru therefore again visited Kashmir on 24 July 1946. His visit was more concerned with the transfer of National Conference into a definite branch of Congress, because speculations of merger of National Conference with Muslim Conference had alarmed him. Rumours ran high that Mujahid Manzil, the National Conference office, would be handed over to the Congress and that the Congress flag would be flown over the building. Shaikh Abdullah was trialled for his three speeches and was convicted under section 124(A) and sentenced to “three years simple imprisonment with fine of rupees five hundred on each score.”

Ghulam Abbas who was arrested after a ‘campaign of action’ similar to Jinnah’s in British India, was also held in the same jail where his archival rival Shaikh Abdullah was held. According to Josef Korbel who met them separately in 1948 that the two leaders discussed in ‘many night-long conversations——— in prison the possibility of a reconciliation and resumption of the common struggle. “Both leaders recounted these conversations with feelings of sadness and nostalgia. They seemed to share the belief that the split in “1939 had been the beginning of all their troubles.” But this reconciliation never took place. Even though they were sincere and serious about the reconciliation but the factors that were to shape the future of Indian subcontinent and Kashmir were beyond the control of Shaikh Abdullah and Ghulam Abbas.

On the eve of partition of India, because of its strong socialist programme and message, and charismatic leadership of Shaikh, National Conference was the dominant party in Kashmir if not in Jammu. The Congress leaders who visited Kashmir advised non-Muslims to join National Conference which was the ‘nationalist and secular party.’ Muslim Conference was facing internal crisis and failed to fill the void left by the National Conference. The Government had successfully crushed the

80 Fortnightly Report of the Kashmir Residency for the Fortnight Ending the 30th June 1946. NAI.
81 Letter From Rai Bahadur R.C. Kak, Prime Minister to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dated 12th September 1946 Political Department, No. F. 13-C/46, F.167-P(S)/46, 597K-P(S)/46 NAI.
82 Fortnightly Report of the Kashmir Residency For the Fortnight Ending the 16th August 1946. NAI.
84 Korbel, op. cit., p. 21.
85 Ibid., p. 22.
‘Quit Kashmir’ agitation and most of the nationalists were imprisoned. Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas, the president of the All- Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, Agha Shaukat Ali, general secretary, Moulvi Nooruddin, president of the committee of action and Mr Allarakha Sagar, a prominent leader of the Conference, were arrested on 25th October 1946 by the Government for objectionable speech and agitation against an order banning the annual session of the Muslim Conference. Following Ghulam Abbas’ arrest a dispute broke out between Mirwaiz and Hamidullah over the presidentialship. The squabbles among the leaders of the Muslim Conference had weakened the party and it was unlikely to be in a position to give National Conference a serious trouble in valley. However, compared to 1942, the Muslim Conference was ‘immeasurably stronger particularly in Jammu division because of the considerable support of the professional classes and students who were enthused with the idea of Pakistan. In the January 1947 Assembly elections which were boycotted by National Conference, and when all the Muslim Conference top leaders were behind bars, the Muslim Conference won sixteen Muslim seats out of twenty-one; five out of six seats in Poonch and Jammu. The polling of 30 per cent in the harsh winter when the snow-clogged roads made it impossible for people to come out of their homes was claimed by the Muslim Conference “as a smashing victory and... that the National Conference’s appeal for a boycott had been largely ignored.”

The year 1947 is a turning point in the modern history of Indian subcontinent. Zutshi, a modern researcher on Kashmir does not consider 1947 a turning point in the history of Kashmir. “I look,” writes Zutshi, “at 1947 not so much as a turning point in the history of Kashmir, but instead as a significant year in the evolving narrative of Kashmiri political culture. During this year, in the context of the momentous changes taking place, the debates over regionalism, religious affiliations, sovereignty, and the legitimacy of both the Dogra state and the National Conference were articulated even more vigorously than in earlier years.” So far as the fate of the Princeely States was concerned the Cabinet Mission on 12th May 1946 had declared the ‘possibility of

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86 The Statesman, 27 Oct. 1946, D. 6834-P/46, NAI.
87 "Appreciation Of The Position Resulting From The Arrest Of The Muslim Conference Leaders on 25th Oct. 1946, D. 274-P(C)/46, Political Department, NAI.
88 Ian Copland, Abdullah Factor, op. cit., p. 236.
89 The Dawn, 15 January 1947.
90 Korbel, op. cit., p. 22.
91 Zutshi, op. cit., p. 299.
political fragmentation in the subcontinent by declaring: "... his majesty’s government will cease to exercise the powers of Paramountcy. This means that the rights of the States which flow from their relationship to the Crown will no longer exist and that all the rights surrendered by the States to the Paramount power will return to the States." Later on Mountbatten’s plan of 3rd June 1947 reaffirmed this view: “His Majesty’s Government wish to make it clear that... their policy towards Indian States contained in the Cabinet Mission Memorandum.....remains unchanged.” Furthermore the Princely States were given legally full freedom to decide their future by the Indian Independence act of July 18, 1947, the act which provided the legal basis for the transfer of power from the British to the successor’s Government of India and Pakistan. They were to accede to either India or Pakistan or to remain as independent entities. While as the Muslim League declared that the Princely States were free to “join the Hindustan Constituent Assembly, or the Pakistan Constituent Assembly, or decide to remain independent.” The Congress was reluctant to give this type of freedom to them, because the majority of the Princely States were ‘located in that part of the Subcontinent which was to form the Indian Union.’

Thus to prevent the apparent ‘balkanization’, of the Subcontinent and to stabilize the relations between the Dominions and the Princely States, a ‘Ministry of States’ under Sardar Patel was established in India. Because of this effort of the Congress, majority of the states acceded to India.

By August 15, 1947, all the Princely States except three [Hyderabad, Kashmir and Junagar] had acceded to either India or Pakistan. The Maharaja of Kashmir was totally in dilemma about the future of his kingdom. He had not good relations with Nehru because of latter’s frequent interventions in the internal affairs of Kashmir ‘by coming to the assistance of Shaikh Abdullah.’ Also, because of the ‘heavy-handed measures by his administration staffed chiefly with royal kinsmen, court favourites, and Hindus from outside the State, his Muslim subjects who formed the majority of his State were not happy with him. So he had no hope of surviving his kingdom in a Muslim country, Pakistan.’ However, the mass violence and ‘an unprecedented exchange of population’ in the Punjab, forced the Maharaja to come to

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94 Alice Thornier, op. cit., p. 19.
some understanding with the successors of the British paramount authorities, India and Pakistan. On 12 August 1947 the Maharaja announced his willingness to negotiate Standstill Agreements with both India and Pakistan, to ensure that old arrangements of trade, communications and services continued with what that had hitherto been British India. Three days later, on 15th August 1947, Pakistan signed the agreement but India “neither accepted nor rejected” the agreement. India argued that such an agreement needed full discussion with an official of the state Government. No such discussion ever took place on the matter. With the result no standstill agreement was reached between India and the Kashmir Government.

However, it seemed from the events that followed that India did not want a temporary agreement with the Maharaja but a permanent one. The Indian leaders were no means; reconciled to the prospect of Kashmir’s inclusion in Pakistan. Since its borders on Afghanistan, sovet Tadzhikistan, Sinkiang, and Tibet, Kashmir was conceived as both a gateway to greater Indian influence in Central Asia and a bastion of defence. In addition the Congress, particularly, Nehru could use ‘Kashmir as a living demonstration that a distinctively Muslim community would survive and prosper in the secular atmosphere of the new India.’ To persuade the Maharaja of Kashmir to accede to India, many prominent Congress leaders visited valley. In May 1947, Acharya Kriplani, the President of the Congress visited Kashmir. In order to woo the Maharaja, as said earlier, he criticized the Quit Kashmir movement as an absurd demand on part of Shaikh Abdullah to ask the Maharaja to leave. The rulers of Patiala and Kaparthala States, who had acceded to India, also visited Kashmir in that connection. Then the most important of all, was the visit of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi visited Kashmir in the beginning of August 1947 ‘to strike to deal with the Maharaja.’ Bazaz in a sarcastic way writes, “the apostle of truth announced before departure for Delhi that his tour was absolutely non-political and under taken simply as a formality to redeem a thirty- years old promise made to last Maharaja Pratap

95 Lamb, op. cit., p. 121.
96 Michael Brecher, op. cit., p. 23; lamb, op. cit., p. 122.
97 Alice Thornier, op. cit., p. 18.
98 Ibid.
99 The purpose of these visits was to devise ‘some formula whereby the Maharaja could join independent India.’ Lamb, Crisis in Kashmir, 1947 to 1966, London, 1966, p. 41.
100 Abid.
101 From the very beginning Gandhi was posted with up-to-date information regarding Kashmir affairs. Tribune, 25 January 1947.
Singh at the Kumbh Mela in 1919. But soon after the Mahatma return[ed] the real nature of the tour became evident.” The most important event that was followed after the visit of Gandhi in Kashmir was the dismissal of the Prime Minister of Kashmir, Pandit R.C. Kak, who was the staunch supporter of an independent Kashmir; and ‘was widely suspected of favouring some kind of rapprochement with Pakistan’ to succeed in his mission. He was replaced by Janak Singh and then Mehar Chand Mahajan.

Another important development was the release of Shaikh Abdullah. The Maharaja was advised to release Shaikh Abdullah, the friend of Nehru to give accession a ‘legal’ colour. In fact, even before the appointment of Mahajan, the Maharaja had engaged his Deputy Prime Minister, R.L. Batra to negotiate with Shaikh Abdullah, then still in prison. Alastair Lamb thinks that the “the kind of terms” of the negotiation was to “secure Shaikh Abdullah’s freedom in exchange for his collaboration with the Maharaja’s Government over the accession question.”

Nehru was aware that Pakistan would not like to lose Kashmir and would adopt all measures towards that end. To tackle the situation, the release of Shaikh was necessary. In a letter to Patel on 27th September 1947, Nehru gave vent to his apprehensions. “it is obvious to me from the many reports I have received that the situation there in (Kashmir) is a dangerous and deterioration one... I understand that the Pakistan strategy is to infiltrate into Kashmir now and to take some high action as soon as Kashmir is more or less isolated because of the coming winter” Realising that the Maharaja being a Hindu would face difficulty to meet the situation in a region where the Muslims formed the majority, Nehru advised him that “the Maharaja should make friends with the National Conference so that there might be this popular, support against Pakistan... We have definitely a great asset in the National Conference provided it is properly handed. It would be pity to lose this. Shaikh Abdullah has repeatedly given assurance of wishing to cooperate and of being opposed to Pakistan; also to abide by my advice. I would again add time is the essence of the business and things must be done in a way so as to bring about the accession of Kashmir to the

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103 Lamb, Crisis in Kashmir, op. cit., 1966, p. 42.
104 Lamb, Disputed Legacy, op. cit., p. 129.
Indian union as rapidly as possible with the cooperation of Shaikh Abdullah”\textsuperscript{105} The message was clear that the Maharaja should release Shaikh. Besieged from all sides the Maharaja made his mind to release Shaikh but not before securing an undertaking of loyalty to the Maharaja from Shaikh. Consequently Shaikh was released on 29 September 1947 after he assured the Maharaja his loyalty and the support of his organization. In a letter to the Maharaja on 26 September 1947, he wrote, “... I assure your highness the fullest and loyal support of myself and my organization. Not only this but I assure your highness that any party, within or without the state which may attempt to create any impediments in our efforts to gain our goal, will be treated as our enemy and will be treated as such,”\textsuperscript{106} Thus Shaikh, who just a year before had asked the Maharaja to quit Kashmir, became his “most obedient subject.”\textsuperscript{107} If Nehru, Gandhi and others pressed for the release of Shaikh it was because they considered Shaikh Abdullah “a congressman in everything but name- a democratic socialist, an arch-enemy of communalism, and a personal friend of that most secular of Indian politics [sic], Jawaharlal Nehru.”\textsuperscript{108}

The events that followed in Kashmir after the release of Shaikh make it to believe many that his release was purchased by Congress for accession to India. “In quick”, writes Alice thornier,\textsuperscript{109} “succession all voices in Kashmir pleading for accession to Pakistan were silenced: newspapers were censored or shut down, journalists were interned „to prevent further criticism of the state Government.”\textsuperscript{110} Neither such negotiations were held with Ghulam Abbas nor was he released although charges against him were less severe. Shaikh had been sentenced nine years imprisonment. Possibly, Shaikh was the only political leader ‘in the State who could head a popular administration inclined towards India.’\textsuperscript{111} In a very few weeks suspicious began to be voiced in Pakistan that the Maharaja of Kashmir did not intend

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\item[105] Durga Das, (ed.) Sarad Patel’s Correspondence, Navajivan Trust, Ahmedabad, 1971, pp. 45-47.
\item[106] For full text see Karan Singh, Heir Apparent, pp. 81-82.
\item[107] See ibid.
\item[108] Ian Copland, Abdullah Factor, op. cit., p. 240.
\item[109] who was an analyst on India for the U.S Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service during the second world war and had interviewed Nehru, Jinnah, Patel, Shaikh and other leading political figures during 1945-46.
\item[110] Alice Thornier, op. cit., p. 21.
\item[111] Alastair lamb, Crisis In Kashmir, op. cit., p. 42
\end{footnotes}
to remain neutral, but was, in fact, negotiating secretly with the object of eventual accession to the Indian Dominion.\textsuperscript{112}

But after his release, sensing the mood of the people, Shaikh adopted a different approach. The Muslims of Jammu region were inclined towards Pakistan. In Kashmir, where Shaikh had an unprecedented support of the people, the Muslims acknowledged him as the leader ‘up to Kohala,’ [boundary line Kashmir and Punjab] but beyond that their leader was Jinnah. Those who lived through those years and have survived to us report that ‘it was a common sight for followers of both the Muslim Conference and National Conference, and other parties in Srinagar, to have photographs of Shaikh Abdullah, Jinnah and Mohammad Iqbal hang side by side on the walls of their shops and homes.’\textsuperscript{113} Mehjoor who is called the poet of Kashmir and was held high esteem by the nationalists composed an exciting poem in October 1947, beginning with a line, “though I would like to sacrifice my life and body for India yet my heart is in Pakistan.” Not only was he arrested and imprisoned but his poem banned and destroyed. The poem itself cannot be located in Indian part of Kashmir.\textsuperscript{114} Shaikh was not ignorant of it. So after his release he remained ‘ambiguous about the accession of Kashmir.’ In one of his speeches after his release, he demanded ‘responsible government’ and popularised the slogan “Freedom Before Accession.”...... “Our first demand is complete transfer of power to the people in Kashmir. Representatives of the people in a democratic Kashmir will then decide whether the State should join India or Pakistan. If the forty lakhs of people living in Jammu and Kashmir are by passed and the state declares its accession to India or Pakistan, I shall raise the banner of revolt.”\textsuperscript{115} Shaikh’s release had made Pakistan apprehensive and suspicious. Realising the importance of Shaikh and also to prevent him from making any negotiation with the Indian leaders a delegation of Pakistan comprised of Mian Iftikhar-ud-din, Brigader Habib-ur Rehman, Dr Mohammad Din Tasir and Shaikh Hassan reached Srinagar to reach on an agreement with Shaikh regarding Kashmir’s accession to Pakistan. But Shaikh was not in hurry and wanted

\textsuperscript{112} Alice Thornier, op. cit., p. 20.
\textsuperscript{113} Saraf, Vol.1 op. cit., p. 665; Zutshi, op. cit., p. 303.
\textsuperscript{114} Cited in Bazaz, Freedom, op. cit., p. 295.
time "to put out the fire and restore peace." To clear the apprehensions of Pakistan, Shaikh assured the delegation that "neither the friendship of Pandit Nehru of Congress nor their support of our freedom movement would have any influence upon our decision if we felt that the interests of four million Kashmiris lay in our accession to Pakistan." Abdullah also agreed to send two of his colleagues, Sadiq and Bakshi to Pakistan to discuss with the leaders of Pakistan. Shaikh himself left for Delhi. Bakshi G.M later on revealed that the Pakistani leaders were "unwilling to support any proposal for a popular poll on accession in Kashmir unless the National Conference was privately pledged to vote solidly for Pakistan." India itself was not certain about the mood of Shaikh particularly after the massacre of Muslims. M K Singh the Deputy Director of Intelligence Bureau of India in an un-official note on 26 October, 1947 recorded: "the attitude of Shaikh Mohd. Abdullah, who has recently visited Delhi, is not quite clear. The killing of Muslims that he has witnessed ... has no doubt left a bitter taste in his mouth."

Pakistan doubted the intention of Shaikh. Although Shaikh had popularised the slogan, 'responsible government before accession,' but at many occasions he ruled out accession to Pakistan. In one of a meeting speaking at a gathering of 100, 000 people at Hazuribagh, in Srinagar, on 5 October, he declared: "Of course, we will naturally opt to that dominion where our own demand for freedom receives recognition and support... we cannot desire to join those [in Pakistan] who say that the people must have no voice in the matter. We shall be cut to pieces before we allow alliance between this State and people of this type.......in Kashmir we want a people's government. We want a government which will give equal rights and equal opportunities to all men irrespective of caste and creed. The Kashmir government will not be the government of any one community. It will be a joint government of the Hindus, the Sikhs and the Muslims. That is what I am fighting for." Early on in a speech on 2 October, he vehemently criticized the 'two nation theory.' "In Kashmir," he declared, "we will not allow the spreading of this poisonous 'two nation

\[117\] M. Brecher, op. cit., p. 35.
theory'......the creation of Pakistan has rendered Muslims of Madras, Bombay, Uttar Pradesh, Jullundhar, Delhi and Eastern Punjab homeless. These Muslims know where their shoes pinch." The Pakistan press and leaders attacked Shaikh Abdullah and his National Conference for their "unholy alliance" with the Maharaja. When Shaikh went to Delhi after sending his two colleagues to Lahore, there he 'reaffirmed his policy against joining Pakistan.' Speaking in New Delhi on 21 October, 1947, Shaikh Abdullah declared, "we will never allow Pakistan to coerce us......the Government of Indian Dominion and the people appreciate our view. They are giving sympathetic consideration to our problems. But that has not been the case in Pakistan." Shaikh was making these anti-Pak statement because he believed rather he was made to believe by Indian leaders that Pakistan although created would not survive. On the eve of partition it was the belief of many observers that Pakistan was not a viable concept. "It seemed inevitable that the new Islamic State would collapse, and the resultant chaos, if allowed to extend to Kashmir and the strategic mountain borderlands, would provide an almost irresistible temptation for Soviet meddling." A number of Indian politicians even from new formed cabinet not only hoped this collapse but 'were prepared to take active steps to bring it about.' Sir Claude Auchinleck, who commanded the Indian army on the eve of partition and transfer of power, in a secret note to his superiors in London wrote on 28 September 1947[a day before Shaikh was released], "I have no hesitation whatever in affirming that the present Indian cabinet are implacably determined to do all-in their power to prevent the establishment of the Dominion of Pakistan on a firm basis. In this I am supported by the unanimous opinion of my senior officers, and indeed by all responsible British officers cognizant of the situation." However, 'the lull in Kashmir was broken in the spring of 1947' when an open revolt broke out in Poonch an area in north-western Jammu sandwiched between the Kashmir Valley to the east and Rawalpindi division of north-western Punjab to the

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121 Ibid., p. 17.
west.\textsuperscript{126} The Muslim majority areas of Jammu division were greatly influenced by the Muslim Leagues ideology.\textsuperscript{127} They were ‘influenced by rumours that the Maharaja intended to accede to India’; and to prevent it they started a ‘revolutionary movement.’\textsuperscript{128} The army sent there to suppress the revolt forbade them from observing Pakistan day. They became restless and a revolt was started by them in the second week of August, called “Poonch revolt” against the Maharaja and the raja of Poonch which spread to other parts\textsuperscript{129} The Dogra army in order to ‘assert the Maharaja’s rule “wantonly plundered whole areas inhabited by Muslims and set fire to their homes……more and more platoons of the Dogra regiments were drafted to crush the Muslims into submission. This started a small battle in that part of the country. The Government started to massacre people without letting the world know what it was doing.’\textsuperscript{130} The revolt was given a good lead by Sardar Mohammad Ibrahim Khan, a lawyer and landowner, who was a Muslim Conference member of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislature. He transformed and directed it towards Poonch liberation movement.\textsuperscript{131} Shaikh Abdullah who was in Delhi confirmed in his two statements through ‘Associated Press of India that the Poonchis were in open revolt against the Maharaja. Although he was sympathetic towards the Poonchis but ‘reaffirmed his policy against joining Pakistan and “freedom before accession.”\textsuperscript{132} Poonch was a traditional recruiting ground for the Indian army; some 40,000 soldiers from it had served the British during the Second World War. The Maharaja’s Government tried to confiscate all arms and ammunition from the local Muslims; but permitted the non-Muslims including the Hindu communal organization of RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh], to carry arms. The coming of migrant Hindus and Sikhs from west Punjab to Jammu added fuel to the fire. The Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS), Akali Sikhs and members of the Indian National Army from India ‘in connivance with the police of Maharaja started the massacre of Muslims in Jammu. The Jammu massacre helped the Pakistan cause as it pushed ‘all hitherto

\textsuperscript{126} Sumanta Bose, \textit{Kashmir: Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace}, New Delhi, 2003, p. 32.
\textsuperscript{127} Being close to Punjab and having the similarity in culture and language as Punjabis.
\textsuperscript{128} William Barton, ‘Pakistan’s Claim to Kashmir,’ \textit{Foreign Affairs}, Vol. 28, no. (Jan., 1950), pp. 299-308, p. 30
\textsuperscript{129} Ian Copland, ‘Abdullah Factor,’ op. cit., pp. 243-44.
\textsuperscript{130} Bazzaz, op. cit., pp. 322-323.
\textsuperscript{132} Cited in Korbel, op. cit., pp. 69-70
nationalist or uncommitted Muslims into the pro-Pakistan camp. The Jammu and Kashmir Government authorities by the beginning of October overtly took part in the massacre of Muslims. Along the State’s border with Pakistan in the region of Gujarat and Sialkot, a depopulated zone was created. The non-Muslims were evacuated and the Muslims were either killed or driven across into Pakistan.

The massacre of Muslims infuriated the tribesmen and the tribesmen from NWFP, who had close ties with the people of Poonch, pledged to take revenge against the Dogra State. Thousands of demobilised soldiers living in Poonch and Mirpur and hundreds of soldiers serving the Pakistan armed forces resigned joined ‘revolutionary armies’ to fight for the liberation of their nation. They began to filter into the State’s boundaries. In order to revenge against the killing of their brothers, in Jammu the tribesmen called for a *Jehad* against the Maharaja’s Government. It was 22 October 1947 and came to be called as ‘tribal invasion.’ “The invasion,” writes Josef Korbel, “was easily incited by the stories brought into the North-West Frontier Province by Muslims, fleeing before the terror of Dogra troops in Kashmir.” They were joined by the ‘Azad revolutionaries and supported by Pakistani volunteers from west Punjab and the adjacent states of Swat and Dir. Jointly they were commanded by General Akbar Khan, who used the pseudonym of “General Tariq,”[after the name of great Muslim military commander who had successfully defended Islam in Spain over a thousand years back]. The tribesmen in quick succession occupied Muzaffarabad and Uri in the North-West and besieged the towns of Mirpur, Poonch, Kotli, Jhangraer, Naoshera, and Bhimbar, in the south west of the State ‘dispersing and liquidating the demoralized’ Dogra troops.

On 24th October the existence of Azad Kashmir or Independent Kashmir was announced. The Azad Kashmir Government in a statement stated that the Azad

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133 Ian Copland, ‘Abdullah Factor,’ op. cit., p. 245.
134 Alastair Lamb, *Incomplete Partition*, op. cit., p. 128
135 *The Times (London)*, 10 October 1947 reported that “323700 Muslims had been exterminated. The census reports also show shocking decline of Muslim population in Jammu from 61 to 38 percent between 1941 and 1961.
136 Bazaz, op. cit., pp. 323-324. Lord Birdwood affirms that the tribal ‘invasion was the direct legacy of the previous State persecution of Muslims.’ Lord Birdwood, *International Affairs (Royal Institute of Internal Affairs 1944)*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Jul., 1952), pp. 299-309, p. 302.
137 Korbel, op. cit., p. 73
138 Based on a telegram signed by Mr Anwar, Civil and Military Gazette, Lahore, reported on 8 October that an “Azad” Government of Jammu and Kashmir has been formed with headquarters at Muzaffarabad, 20 miles from Pakistan border. When the Poonch revolt assumed the shape of a full-
Kashmir Government was formed “with the object of ending intolerable Dogra tyrannies and securing to the people of the State, including Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, the right of self-government.” It also asked both the Dominions India and Pakistan to help it in securing political freedom of Jammu and Kashmir. It claimed that it was a non-communal government which “will include Muslims as well as non-Muslims in the provincial cabinet which will serve the people, fulfill the temporary purpose of restoring law and order in the State and enable the people to elect by their free vote a popular legislature and popular government.” On 26th October through Uri via Jhelum Valley Road they entered the town of Baramulla, some fifty kilometres away from Srinagar.

While as they [tribes’ men] were knocking the doors of the capital city of Srinagar, the Maharaja, finding that he could not defend ‘Kashmir’ with his own resources, fled away to Jammu, the winter capital, his native region; and begged India for armed assistance to deal with this situation, though without offering to accede to India. On 24th October he sent his Deputy Prime Minister, R.L. Batra to New Delhi to ask Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel for Indian military help. India, however, held the view that “it would be the height of folly to send troops into a neutral state and that the accession of Kashmir to India was a prerequisite; but this accession would be conditional on the will of the people, as ascertained through a referendum as soon as law and order were restored.” Two days before the accession, on 25th October 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru in a secret telegram to Prime Minister of United Kingdom Informed him about the Maharaja’s appeal for assistance and India’s stand: “We have received urgent appeal for assistance from the Kashmir Government. We would be disposed to give favourable consideration to such request from any friendly state. Kashmir’s northern frontiers, as you are aware, run in common with those of three countries, Afghanistan, the U.S.S.R. and China. Security of Kashmir, which must depend upon its internal tranquillity and existence of stable government is vital to security of India ... helping Kashmir, therefore, is an obligation of national interest to

fledged tribal invasion for the ‘freedom of the state’, the Provincial Government was reconstituted on 24 October with Sardar Mohammad Ibrahim as its provincial head.


140 Korbel, pp. op. cit., 73-74.

India.” In addition, he made it clear that “question of aiding Kashmir in this emergency is not designed in any way to influence the state to accede to India.......the question of accession in any disputed territory or state must be decided in accordance with wishes of the people.”

Hari Singh in his letter of accession to Lord Mountbatten, the Governor General of India stated: “with the conditions obtaining at present in my state and the great emergency of the situation as it exists I have no option but to ask for help from the Indian Dominion. Naturally they cannot send the help asked for by me without my state acceding to the Dominion of India. I have accordingly decided to do so and I attach the Instrument of Accession for acceptance by your Government.” On 26th October 1947, the ‘beleaguered Maharaja’ signed the formal “Instrument of Accession” to India. As per practice the Maharaja through the accession ceded to India control over defence, foreign affairs, and communications. While accepting the accession on 27th October 1947, Mountbatten, as the Governor General of India made it clear that “it is my Government’s wish that, as soon as law and order have been restored in Kashmir and her soil cleared of the invader, the question of the State’s accession should be settled by a reference to the people.” Sheik visited Delhi on 25 October 1947 and at the residence of Nehru on 26-27 October, ‘with a view to bargaining both with Indian Government and through the Indian Government with the

142 Secret Telegram No. 392-PS, Dated 25th October 1947 From Prime Minister, India, To Prime Minister, United Kingdom, London, File No. 11(8)-PR/47, Government of India, Ministry of States (Political Branch), NAI.
144 Alastair Lamb doubts the date of accession. Maharaja was delaying the accession only to secure first the communication by improving the road from Jammu to Srinagar via Kathua. All this activity has been recorded in full detail in the first volume of ‘Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel’s Correspondence which was published in 1971. From these correspondence it becomes crystal clear that India was heavily engaged in some kind of military intervention in the State of Jammu and Kashmir in the mid September and by the third week of October a substantial foundation for such an operation had been laid, Patiala regiments were already stationed in Srinagar airfield and Jammu the winter capital, almost ten days before the direct intervention of Indian troops on 27th October 1947. For details see Lamb, Disputed, op. cit., p. 130.
Kashmir *Darbar* about the future constitution of Kashmir.  

From Delhi, Shaikh in a press statement urged the need to resist the tribal invasion which according to him was the covert attempt on part of Pakistan to absorb Kashmir into Pakistan.  

Shaikh Abdullah actively organized a ‘national militia’ to defend the city of Srinagar. “No proper administration was functioning in Srinagar. The only efforts to control the situation were being made by volunteers of the National Conference.”

In order to get the support of the Muslims of Srinagar and to save the minority it became desirable to India to set up an Interim Government under Shaikh Abdullah whose cooperation India considered the “only hope to save the situation.” Further the Intelligence agency of India was reporting in late October that “although he[Shaikh] is yet loyal to the national aspirations of the people of Kashmir and, perhaps, generally the Indian National Congress, he may not be in the same mood for long if no settlement is reached between his party and the Kashmir *Darbar*.”

Maharaja was convinced to form an interim government under Shaikh Abdullah. Thus when the Maharaja signed the accession on 26th October, he also agreed to set up an interim government headed by Shaikh Abdullah. Shaikh Abdullah took over as the Head of the Administration in the Jammu and Kashmir State on 31st October 1947. He appointed emergency officers in most of the departments that were to deal with the situation. These officers were drawn from his party National Conference. But the state Shaikh Abdullah inherited from the Maharaja was only the half of the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir that existed there before the partition of India. As the partition became evident, revolts were started by the people of tribal areas against the domination of the Dogra State. Like in Poonch, the people of Gilgit revolted against the Dogra regime and declared Gilgit part of Pakistan. That became the northern areas of Pakistan.

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147 Times of India, 28 October 1947

148 Mr Menon’s Report on his Visit to Srinagar, File No. 11(8) - PR/47, Government of India Ministry of States (Political Branch), Correspondence NAI, p. 3 and 5.

149 Kashmir Affairs- Accession of Kashmir State to the Dominion of India, op. cit.


151 Zutshi, op. cit., p. 309.
Meanwhile Indian troops, reinforced by armoured cars which had arrived by road via Jammu and the Banihal Pass and the helicopters pushed the raiders out of the vicinity of Srinagar. They then took control over Baramulla and Uri, a border town on 8th November. However, beyond there the Indian troops faced stiff resistance from the invaders. Their condition was further worsened by the approaching winter. In addition the Pakistan army had overtly come in the field and it had assumed the shape of first Indo-Pak war over Kashmir. Many observers believe that Nehru did not want to go beyond this area because of its tough geography but more importantly, his secular friend Shaikh was not popular beyond this region. The region then [as now] was dominated by non-Kashmir speaking Muslims who were supporters of Muslim Conference. Meanwhile the invaders had bounced back and liberated many areas from the Indian troops. It was because of these circumstances that Nehru took the Kashmir case to United Nations. As Lord Birdwood revealed: “December 1947 had not been a good month for India’s Army in Kashmir...apart from the initial advances from Srinagar, the Azad Kashmir troops were hitting back at many points along Indi’s tenuous lines of communications. There was therefore some relief in Delhi at the Government’s decision to take the matter to the Security Council.”

It may also because the local population and administration of Shaikh was not as supportive as before. Baldev Singh, the Defence Minister of India and Sardare Patel, accompanied by V P Menon, Secretary Ministry of State visited Jammu and Kashmir on November 4 1947. In his note Baldev Singh wrote about Srinagar, “the local population being largely Muslim has been inflamed by them (raiders) and has joined them. Military officers have reason to believe that many of the National Conference volunteers have acted as spies and let them down time after time. The Ministry (Kashmir Administration) has not been forthcoming with the co-operation and assistance which can be expected from a civil government whose territory has been violated and imminently in danger.” In contrast “[T]he position in Jammu [local

population was mostly Hindu] seemed to be better than at Srinagar as the population was behind our troops."\textsuperscript{154}

The changing mood of Shaikh and the people was possibly because of the killing of seven workers of National Conference by the Indian army when they had gone to welcome them. Their bodies were buried by the Indian troops in a trench. People were angry and raised anti India and pro-Pakistan slogans. Sofi Ghulam Mohammad, the former editor of Srinagar Times, an Urdu Daily from Srinagar, being an eye witness, recorded: "The mood of the people changed very immediately against the Indians ... there were slogans against India and in favour of Pakistan."\textsuperscript{155} They also attacked the residence of Shaikh Abdullah and hold him responsible for the incident. According to L.P. Sen, Shaikh Abdullah was so nervous that 'he began to feel suspicious about the intentions of Indian leaders.'\textsuperscript{156} In this surcharged situation Nehru felt it fit to take the case to the United Nations which sent a commission to investigate the matter. The commission succeeded in the beginning of 1949 in inducting the two dominions to agree to a ceasefire and a truce, with the respective forces occupying the territory in their hands at the time truce was accepted.\textsuperscript{157}

"Significantly," concludes Zutshi, "thus it was the revolt of the Poonchis against the authority of the Maharaja- not a Pakistani movement against the Indian State, as the later claims- that laid the foundation for the de-facto division of the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir in the coming months."\textsuperscript{158} The invasion and the followed Indian military intervention, thus, bifurcated the State of Jammu and Kashmir into India Administered Kashmir [East Kashmir] and Pakistan Administered Kashmir [West Kashmir].

In the given surcharged political situation, Shaikh Abdullah's slogan of "freedom before accession" lost its relevance. Having complete faith in the 'socialist and secularist' Nehru, who assured the world that the future of the state would be decided by a plebiscite, Shaikh attested the limited accession in his utterances. However, when India [read Nehru] retreated from its pledge of protecting the

\textsuperscript{154} Notes In the Ministry of Defence, Government of India, Ministry of States (Political Branch), Subject: Kashmir Affairs- Accession of Kashmir State to the Dominion of India, NAI.


\textsuperscript{156} L.P. Sen, Slender was the Thread: Kashmir Confrontation 1947-48, Orient Longman, 1969, pp. 87-88.

\textsuperscript{157} William Barton, op. cit., p. 301.

\textsuperscript{158} Zutshi, op. cit., pp. 306.
autonomy of the state and conducting of plebiscite, Shaikh also developed other thoughts- in which an independent Kashmir was not excluded. This led to the arrest of Shaikh in 1953 by his old friend Nehru.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁹ It will be discussed in the subsequent chapters
Chapter Four
Lion in Power (1947-53)
Shaik Abdullah as the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir

When the British left Indian subcontinent the inhabitants of the princely states were left at the mercy of their rulers and the independent states that succeeded the colonial state. The Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir soon became the battlefield between India and Pakistan and a region of world interest. As discussed in the previous chapter when the Maharaja sought military help from India against ‘invaders’ he was asked to accede his State to India and also to take Shaik Abdullah in the administration and “made [him] responsible for it along with the Prime Minister.” Consequently, on October 26, 1947 the Maharaja asked Shaik Abdullah “once his fiercest enemy,” to form an Interim Government and he was nominated as the Head of Emergency Administration by Maharaja “without precisely defining his powers and demarcating’ them from those of his Prime Minister, Mehar Chand Mahajan. Thus, Shaik Abdullah who had asked Maharaja to quit Kashmir in 1946 joined his Government. In spite of the fact that the Maharaja had a de jure prime Minister in the form of Mahajan, Shaik Abdullah agreed to be the Head of Emergency Administration. But Shaik soon found it difficult to work with the coalition of the Maharaja and Mahajan. “All Hindu communalists of the Jammu region joined hands with him (Maharaja) to block every effort of Shaik Abdullah to give the State an efficient administration during the trying times of war on the one hand, and economic recession on the other.” Maharaja did not trust Shaik Abdullah. Every action of Shaik was checkmated and he found himself ‘hemmed in on all sides.’ So, it was difficult for Shaik to work as the Head of the Emergency Administration as

1 Zutshi, op. cit., p. 326.
5 There were compulsions for India to rely on Shaik for he was the popular leader of Kashmir and “key factor in winning the plebiscite for India”, Balraj Puri, Jammu And Kashmir, Triumph And Tragedy Of Indian Federalisation, New Delhi, 1981, p. 74.
6 R. N. Kaul, Shaik Mohammad Abdullah- A Political Phoenix, New Delhi, 1985, p. 49
7 Ibid.
8 Mehar Chand Mahajan, op. cit., p.164.
9 Kaul, op. cit., p. 50.
long as the Maharaja-Mahajan coalition was there. Shaikh refused to work with Mahajan and demanded his removal. Also because of the growing influence of Jammu Hindu communalists, New Delhi found it necessary, to relieve Mahajan as continuation of him would "make Shaikh Abdullah suspect the secular nature of democratic India." Nehru on December 1, 1947, pleaded with the Maharaja, "if there is going to be plebiscite, then obviously we have to work in such a way as to gain the goodwill of the majority of the population of the State, which means chiefly the Muslims...the only person who can effectively deal with the situation is Shaikh Abdullah." The National Conference also in a campaign demanded the removal of Mahajan "who draws [ew] Rs 6000 per month without doing anything." In the given circumstances, India State had no option but to relieve Mahajan and to appoint Shaikh Abdullah as the Prime Minister. The appointment of Shaikh Abdullah as the Prime Minister was thought by India to "strengthen the hands of India in the Security Council where the accession of Kashmir was pending." In March 1948, the Maharaja was forced to 'end the Emergency Administration and nominate Shaikh Abdullah Prime Minister of Kashmir.' After the removal of Mahajan a meeting was arranged between the Maharaja and Shaikh through V. P. Menon by Patel "in regard to the formation of the ministry and the terms and conditions of their services." By a royal proclamation a 'popular ministry' was installed and "Shaikh Abdullah was sworn

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10 Ibid., p. 51.
11 Ibid.
12 Durga Das, *Sardar Patel’s Correspondence, 1945-50*, Vol. I, Ahmadabad, 1971, pp. 236-7. Because to Nehru Kashmir was Shaikh and Shaikh was Kashmir. In a letter to Shaikh on April, 25 1952, Nehru wrote, "for me the people of Kashmir were basically represented by you." *Selected Works Of Jawaharlal Nehru A Project Of Teen Morti New Delhi*, Vol. 18, p. 388. However, in contrast to Nehru's claim, Shaikh was no doubt the popular leader of Vale, but by 'no means representative of Jammu and Kashmir.' A. G. Noorani, 'Kashmir: Blunders Of The Past,' *Frontline*, December 29, 2006, p. 81. He had never commanded the support of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs of the Jammu. Chitralekha Zutshi, op. cit., p.312. Then, regarding the accession, the majority of valley people favoured Pakistan. Vice president of India Dr Radhakrishnan and Indira Gandhi who visited Kashmir during this period reported that majority favoured Pakistan. See Indira Gandhi’s letter to Nehru from Srinagar on May 14, 1948, *Two Alone, Two Together* ed. Sonia Gandhi; Penguin; p. 417. S. Radhakrishnan after his visit to Kashmir told President Rajendra Prasad that "even Shaikh Abdullah thought we would lose in a plebiscite." Rajendra Prasad conveyed that to Nehru on July 14, 1953: "in case of an overall plebiscite, India might not only lose the whole of Jammu and Kashmir, but would also have to face the problem of exodus and rehabilitation of the Hindu population of the State.” *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru, Vol. 23*, p. 288 fn.
13 *Khidmat*, *Urdu* Srinagar, 18 October, 1947.
14 See correspondence between Patel and Ayyanger, Maharaja and Mahajan, *Sardar Patel’s Correspondence*, op. cit., pp.133-144.
15 M. C. Mahajan, op. cit., p. 170.
16 Josef Korbel, op. cit., p. 204.
17 Puri, op. cit., p. 84.
in as Prime Minister of the State on 17 March at Jammu.” 18 For the first time during the 102 years of Dogra rule, a Kashmiri Muslim was appointed the Prime Minister of the Muslim majority State.19 With the removal of Mahajan, Shaikh Abdullah became the “undisputed head, with the title of Prime Minister (not Chief Minister as would be case in an ordinary Indian State) of a “popular” Interim Government amidst considerable publicity within the State.”20 The first Nationalist Cabinet consisted of eight members; (1) Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah, Prime Minister; and ministers (2) Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, Deputy Prime Minister (3) Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, Development (4) Mirza Afzal Beg, Revenue (5) Sham Lal Saraf, Civil Supplies and Local Self- Government (6) Girdhari Lal Dogra, Finance ; (7) Sardar Budh Singh, Health and (8) Pir Mohammad Khan, Education.21

However, the efforts of New Delhi to bring the two-erstwhile opponents together on a common platform failed. The Maharaja- Shaikh collaboration did not work. Both considered themselves the real rulers and did not like to work as a subordinate of one another. Both had grievances against each other and complained to their respective patrons in Delhi, Patel and Nehru respectively, about this.22 Shaikh Abdullah launched a “vilification campaign” against the Maharaja23 and said that his struggle with the Maharaja was still going on, because the latter was anxious to “rule and was not prepared merely to reign.” On March 1, 1949, speaking at Baramulla, he declared that “the primary issue before us is that of complete freedom from autocratic rule.”24 Shaikh Abdullah’s speeches forced Indian leadership in Delhi to persuade the Maharaja to abdicate in favour of his son, Karan Singh as the regent of the State.25 The Maharaja was

18 Puri, op. cit., p. 84; Kaul, op. cit., p.53; Following the Maharaja’s proclamation of forming Interim Government, Mehar Chand Mahajan submitted his resignation, Times of India, March 7, 1948.
19 Bazaz, op. cit., p. 409.
21 Bazaz, Freedom, op. cit., P. 409; A. Lamb, op. cit., p. 211(fst.)
22 Maharaja was backed by Patel in New Delhi and Shaikh by Nehru, Puri Triumph, op. cit., p. 86.
23 Satish Vashisth, Shaikh Abdullah Then and Now, Delhi, 1968, p. 69.
25 Puri, Triumph, op. cit., p. 83. Also, Nehru did not want the Maharaja to be present in Kashmir at this crucial time because he were charges against him of organising massacre of Muslims in Jammu.” Mir Qasim, My Life And Times, Delhi, 1992, p. 40. In a letter to Sardar Patel, Nehru wrote that the Maharaja’s presence is a constant irritant to various elements as well as to Shaikh Abdullah’s party something drastic happening was needed to end this deadlock. There were repeated references of autocratic rule of the Maharaja in the Security Council, which was hurting India at the International level. Patel’s Correspondence, op. cit., Patel, pp. 137-8, 164, 175.
persuaded by Sardar Patel "to abdicate in national interest." 26 Hari Singh decided to leave the State for a temporary period "for reasons of health." On 20 June, 1949, in a proclamation, Hari Singh announced that "all powers and functions, whether legislative, executive, or judicial which are exercisable by me in relation to the State and its Government—shall during the period of my absence from the State be exercisable by Yuvraj Shri Karan Singh Ji Bahadur." 27 On 20th June 1949, the Maharaja left the State for Bombay never to return. 28 Having the Maharaja enforced to live in an exile in Bombay, Shaikh Abdullah was now in total control of the State and 'the Kashmiri people had every right to expect that their popular leader would live up to his promises.' 29 As has been discussed in detail in first chapter that the nature of the Dogra State was feudal and autocratic; and tenants (who formed the majority of the population) suffered greatly, during the Dogra rule due to heavy taxation, indebtedness etc.

From the very inception of the struggle against the Dogra rule, Shaikh had raised their issues and had gained overwhelming support of theirs’. Now it was Shaikh’s turn to give some relief to them by implementing the economic reforms laid out in the Naya Kashmir Manifesto in 1944. So one of the first tasks of the new regime was to declare a moratorium of one year on all debts—a gesture most appreciated by the debt ridden peasantry and artisans of Kashmir. 30 In just one decision the quantum of debts was brought down by eight percent, from 11.1 million to Rs 2.4 million. The rights of peasants in mortgaged property were reinstated; the tenant was now protected from ejection and his share of the crop increased from half to two thirds. 31 Another important measure of economic reform adopted by Shaikh Abdullah was the abolishment of jagirdari in 1948.

26 Mir Qasim, op. cit., p. 40.
29 Korbel, Danger in Kashmir, op. cit., p. 204.
30 Times of India, May 17, 1948.
and thereby, at one stroke, eliminated absentee landlordism in the State.\textsuperscript{32} A Land Reform Committee was set up by the Government in 1949, for the reorganisation of agriculture in Kashmir.\textsuperscript{33} However, the greatest measure adopted by Shaikh Abdullah was land to teller, which had been a cardinal plank in all National Conference Pronouncements over the years. A committee was set up in April 1949 to prepare a plan for the transfer of land to the teller.\textsuperscript{34} More than a year of exhaustive study, on July 13, 1950, the "Kashmir Government introduced the most sweeping agrarian reform (Abolition of Big Landed Estates Act) undertaken in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent since the partition."\textsuperscript{35}

In pursuance of the fundamental plan for the economic reconstruction of the State, envisaged in 'Naya Kashmir Manifesto' in 1944, the Government enacted the 'Big Landed Estates Abolition Act', 2007,(1950). According to this act, the "right of ownership held by a proprietor in land owing more than 182 kanals (excluding orchards, fuel and fodder reserves and uncultivable waste land) shall extinguish and ceases to vest in him and shall henceforth vest in tillers of such land to the extent of their actual possession, provided that no tiller shall, with the land so transferred and that which he already owns, posses more than 160 kanals."\textsuperscript{36} The landlord was allowed to keep not more than 160 kanals (20 acres) of agricultural land, 8 kanals (1 acre) of land for residential use or vegetable gardening, 4 kanals (0.5 acre) as residential site, and 10 kanals (1.25 acres) of orchards—altogether 182 kanals (22.75 acres,). In addition, it was stipulated that the landlord must work on his land; otherwise it would be expropriated for redistribution or collective farming.\textsuperscript{37} There was also an interesting provision "for the confiscation of the property of "enemy agents" being largely defined as persons who had expressed a desire for Kashmir to join

\textsuperscript{32} Times of India, May 17 1948. The scheme for the abolition of jagirdari system had been prepared and to send to Karan Singh, the regent for his approval. Since the regent appeared to be against the abolition of the system, instead, the scheme was forwarded to the Secretary, Kashmir Affairs, Government of India, Vishnu Sahay. But the Government of India did not approve it. The reply from Delhi came unexpected to Shaikh and he in an emotional speech at Lal Chowk in Srinagar announced the abolition of the jagirdari system, without receiving the consent of the regent and New Delhi. Karan Singh, op. cit., pp. 120-21.


\textsuperscript{34} Korbel, op. cit., p. 208.

\textsuperscript{35} Michael Brecher, The Struggle For Kashmir, New York, 1953, p. 159.


Pakistan.” 38 Almost 4 ½ million kanals (563,500) were to be transferred to the
tillers and the tillers to whom lands were being transferred in proprietary right
were not required to pay (anything) by way of compensation.

The agricultural and social structure of Kashmir got drastically changed
by the land reform laws. The feudal system was abolished, landlordism
disappeared, and thousands of peasants living before in virtual slavery became
landholders. According to Kashmir Governmental sources, by the end of March
1953, 188,775 acres of land were transferred to 153,399 tillers, and by April
1953, collective farms were established on 87,500 acres of land. 39 This extra
ordinary Land Reform had far-reaching “social and economic implications.”
Quoting the Kashmir Governmental sources Hindustan Times wrote that
approximately 700,000 cultivars, mostly Muslims in Kashmir Valley including
250,000 Hindu untouchables in Jammu province acquired land at the expense of
10,000 landlords. 40 However, the land reform was not free from lacunae. The
landlords had been given the right to choose the area they wanted to retain. This
gave a landlord the tool to extort money from his tenant on the threat that he
would choose to keep his tenant’s portion of land with him. 41 The landlords, on
receiving the information that more than 182 kanals land would be taken away
from them, broke the joint family system and distributed the land among the
family members (male adults) to the ceilings of 22.75 acres. 42 They also
converted their cereal lands into orchards. The landless peasants received
considerably less than the average, because many local officials and National
Conference functionaries were given more and better land, sometimes even above
the maximum of 20 acres.” 43

Moreover, the implementation of the land reforms had been left to the
whims of the corrupt bureaucracy. It was a revolutionary programme, which had

38 Korbel, Danger in Kashmir, op. cit., p. 209.
40 Hindustan Times, 10 June 1953.
41 Mir Qasim, op. cit., p. 45.
43 Korbel, National Conference, op. cit., p. 284. This is also corroborated by Daniel Thorner who visited
Kashmir in 1953. He says, “It [Land Reforms] has distinctly benefited those individuals who, at the
village level, were already the more important and substantial people. It has done the least for petty
tenants and landless labourers, these two categories being the largest in the country side.” Daniel
Thorner, ‘The Kashmir Land Reforms: Some Personal Impression,’ The Economic Weekly,
September 12, 1953.
fallen a prey to large-scale corruption.\(^{44}\) No doubt, there were many shortcomings but nevertheless it was a revolutionary and progressive measure. Nowhere in India was the land reform enforcement so effective as it was in Kashmir.\(^ {45}\) Denial Thorner, an agrarian historian and economist, who visited Kashmir in 1953, has made a brief remark, which may be relevantly quoted: Despite “defects in implementation, many tillers have become landowners and some land has even gone to the landless. The peasantry of the Valley were not long ago fearful and submissive. No one who has spent time with Kashmiri villagers’ will say the same today.”\(^ {46}\) The transformation of rural Kashmir had far-reaching political consequences’ in Kashmir. Empowered peasant families regarded Shaikh Abdullah, the main agent of this transformation as a messiah.\(^ {47}\) He became popular as Bub (father), though not in Jammu, among the people who for first time after hundred years became owners of land. Even though Shaikh’s Government proved to be corrupt and autocratic, but his ‘personal stature’ remained largely undiminished and peasantry of Kashmir remained loyal to him.\(^ {48}\) But New Delhi was not happy with the land reforms, particularly Sardar Patel who never trusted Shaikh Abdullah. In one of his correspondence Patel feared the possibility of ‘discontentment’ among the minority community, since most of these jagirdars were non-Muslims.\(^ {49}\) During the Dgra rule the majority of landlords and moneylenders were Hindus, and axe naturally fell on them.\(^ {50}\) New Delhi tried its best to persuade Shaikh to ‘reconsider the decision on land reforms “or at least, to go slow with its implementation.” But Shaikh Abdullah tactically replied to New Delhi that “the tillers who had got land through...land reforms would vote for India (if a referendum was held) and also it was the commitment made by National Conference with the tillers during its struggle against the Dogra

\(^{44}\) Mir Qasim, op. cit., p. 45.
\(^{46}\) Daniel Thorner, The Agrarian Prospect In India, Bombay, 1976, p. 50.
\(^{47}\) Sumantra Bose, Kashmir Roots Of Conflict, Paths To Peace, New Delhi, 2003, p. 28.
\(^{49}\) Patel’s Correspondence, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 182.
Afzal Beg, the revenue minister warned, "those who create hindrances in application of these reforms---stand in the way of our accession to India."52

The Hindu organisations started anti land reform campaign, drawing sympathetic responses from across India. Abdullah was pressurised but he did not yield, "leading to the first of many conflicts over his imposition of what amounted to one man rule."53 The Hindu in its editorial wrote, "It should be clear that they (Kashmir government) have been influenced not by economic or social considerations, but by political factors, particularly the desire to impress the agricultural poor in the part of Kashmir which is under Pakistan."54

However, in the political field National Conference’s rule under Shaikh Abdullah proved to be the continuation of the autocratic Dogra rule and the "fortunes of Kashmir went into a regressive and conservative slide."55 When Shaikh Abdullah became the Chief Administrator, the other leaders of National Conference became administrators and emergence officers of different areas and zones. The administration was reduced to a handmaid of National Conference, and its office holders became virtually masters of public fate. This period was popularly known as "halqa president raj" (the rule of local presidents of National Conference),56 and no dissent voice was tolerated.57 Listening to Radio Pakistan was prohibited in Kashmir; and any person even doubted of listening to it was arrested along with the radio set.58 Khwaja Sannullah Bhatt, the eyewitness, laments the National Government, which was expected to be a democratic rule, thus: "Those who fought for twenty years against injustice, oppression and undemocratic style of administration imposed by Dogra Rule, the very people, after having gained power, did not hesitate in suppressing with heavy hand and voice that was raised against their misdeeds."59 Thus, the dictatorship of National

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51 Mir Qasim, op. cit., p. 44.
52 Struggle, Bombay, 29 July 1950.
53 Christopher Thomas, Faultline Kashmir, Middlesex, UK, 2000, p. 181.
54 The Hindu, March 29, 1952.
58 S. Bhatt, op. cit., p. 49, P.N. Bazaz, Freedom Struggle, op. cit., p. 418. There were two Government-owned radio stations in the State, the radio sets had been under the control of the local organization of the National Conference, all tuned to Radio Kashmir, fixed and sealed” Korbel, National Conference Administration, op. cit., p. 287.
59 S. Bhatt, op. cit., p. 49. The same view has been expressed by P. N. Bazaz regarding the Shaikh Abdullah’s rule, see P. N. Bazaz, Kashmir In Crucible, Srinagar, 2005, p. 63.
Conference was completely established.\textsuperscript{60} Shaikh Abdullah celebrated and hailed ‘azadi’ after four centuries of foreign rule. However, he did not bother about freedom of the people. Shaikh Abdullah started political revenge against his opponents who did not share the same view as that of Shaikh Abdullah and National Conference particularly regarding accession.\textsuperscript{61} They were picked up one by one, thrown in jails, and banished from Kashmir. Among these, Aga Showkat Ali, the General Secretary of the Muslim Conference, Maulana Mohammad Noorudin, Khawja Ghulam Nabi Gilkar, Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah Shopyani, Maulvi Abdul Rahim, Khawaja Abdul Gani, Pandit Prem Nanth Bazaz, and his colleagues, Khawja Abdul Salam Yatu- the President of Kissan Mazdoor Conference and his colleagues were arrested. Later on all these leaders, excepting Pandit Prem Nanth Bazaz and a few of his colleagues, were taken to Jammu wherefrom they were pushed into Pakistan through Suchetgarh border.\textsuperscript{62} An ordinance entitled ‘Enemy Agents Ordinance’ was promulgated to arrest and summary trial those suspected of pro-Pakistan leanings. The ‘Preventive Detention Act and Defence of India Rules “vehemently denounced as lawless laws by the National Conference Leaders” during the Dogra rule were promulgated “and freely used to indiscriminately imprison opponents on the charge of opposing the Government and not falling in line with the views of National Conference.”\textsuperscript{63} Ironically, the party that had demanded and fought for the social and political rights of the Kashmiri people “became their greatest repressor,”\textsuperscript{64} and subverted and retarded the democratic development in Kashmir.\textsuperscript{65} Shaikh Abdullah repeatedly asserted that his Government was committed to rule in accordance with the ‘New Kashmir Manifesto;’ but like many other “twentieth-century third world’ movements”, it was “clearly based on a Jacobin conception of popular sovereignty, augmented by a generous dollop of Bolshevism-ideas inspired by the Soviet Model- in the social economic parts of programme.”; this type of “conception tends to be in tension with liberal-

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\textsuperscript{60} S. Bhatt, op. cit., p. 47.

\textsuperscript{61} P. N. Bazaz, Kashmir In Crucible, op. cit., p. 64.

\textsuperscript{62} Due to the pressure from Delhi, Prem Nanth Bazaz and his colleagues, Jagan Nanth Sthu, Pitamberar Nath Dhar and Shyam La Lal Yecha, were released from jails, but were exiled from the State and as a result of this action they got settled in Delhi, Sannullah Bhat, op. cit., pp 47-8; Muhammad Yusuf Saraf, Kashmiris Fight For Freedom, Vol. 2, Lahore, 1978, p. 1189.

\textsuperscript{63} P. N. Bazaz, Kashmir in Crucible, op. cit., p. 64.

\textsuperscript{64} C. Zutshi, op. cit., p. 313.

\textsuperscript{65} S Bose, Roots, op. cit., p. 27.
democratic norms of political pluralism, accountability of those in power, and
tolerance of dissent and opposition." Sumantra Bose has summed up the reign
of Shaikh Abdullah between 1948 and 1953: "As head of this (NC) Government,
Abdullah—with Nehru and New Delhi's essential support—ran IJK as a party-state
fiefdom of the NC, and the Lion of Kashmir's founding contribution to the
entrenchment and perpetuation of anti-democratic politics in IJK is beyond
dispute." Josef Korbal who was a member of the United Nations Commission
for India and Pakistan observed, "The National Conference enjoys effective and
exclusive political control over every sector of life." 

In March 1949, the Statesman, a prominent Indian newspaper, which
supported Shaikh Abdullah's policy observed, "there are signs of establishment of
a police state—futile notices in restaurants forbidding political conversations when
everybody talks politics; more 'public safety' prisoners than are healthy." Sir
Owen Dixon, the United Nations representative, some eighteen months later
observed during his mission "the State Government was exercising wide powers
of arbitrary arrest." The Nationalist Government also suppressed the press and
muzzled the newspapers and periodicals that did not fall in line with the
Government policy. Even the Nationalist papers of India that were critical of the
Nationalist Government's policies were banned in the State. Shaikh was fully
backed by Nehru. Balraj Puri a Jammu based political activist recalls that he met
Nehru in Delhi and complained him against the NC atrocities. Nehru although
disapproved these practices but added, "our entire Kashmir policy revolves
around the personality of Shaikh Abdullah. We cannot afford to oppose him." 
Ironically Shaikh Abdullah claimed that the Government was building "new
Kashmir" according to the Naya Kashmir Manifesto; however, in practice it was
against the manifesto. For example, the Manifesto says in article 3 and 4 that
there will be "complete freedom of expression, freedom of press, freedom of

66 Ibid., pp. 26-7.
67 Ibid., p. 46.
68 J. Korbel, National Conference Administration, op. cit., P. 287.
69 The Statesman (Calcutta), March 1, 1949.
70 Sir Owen Dixon's Report to The Security Council, s/1791, September 15, 1950, p.24, cited in Korbel,
National Conference Administration of Kashmir. op. cit., 287.
72 Balraj Puri, 'Azadi, Autonomy, And Self-Rule vs Freedom,' Mainstream, Vol. VLI, No. 52, 2009,
12 December.
association and freedom of movement and travel” which was in nowhere.\textsuperscript{73} Because of the blockage of natural routes of trade,\textsuperscript{74} there was “acute shortage of basic commodities like kerosene and salt in the Valley. The entire distribution of these commodities was kept in the hands of National Conference office bearers.” who distributed it among their own kiths and kens. Consequently the common masses had to face hardships. The situation has been aptly recorded by the leading Kashmiri poet Mahjoor, in the following sarcastic composition:

\textit{“Noonas Gauos National Waanus}
\textit{Thoupham Gode Ral Hindustanus Seeth,}
\textit{Zoojan Wandha Hindustanus,}
\textit{Dil Chum Pakistanus Seeth”}\textsuperscript{75}

\textit{“I went to a National shop to purchase salt. The shopkeeper asked me that without pledging support for accession to India, I cannot get salt. I replied “I do not hate India, (I would sacrifice very being for India), but my heart goes to Pakistan.”}

Although Shaikh Abdullah’s strategy of ‘political mobilization ‘was populist but was undemocratic. The working of N.C. Government “belied its socialist and democratic ideology.”\textsuperscript{76} It was not that system envisaged in Naya Kashmir Manifesto and for which Kashmiri had fought and sacrificed their lives. Mahjoor who had supported Shaikh and NC against the Dogra rule through his poetry, became critical of his policies. In an out class sarcastic poem entitled ‘Azzadi” (Freedom) he laments thus:\textsuperscript{77}

\textit{Poverty and starvation,}
\textit{Repression and lawlessness,-}
\textit{It is with these happy blessings}
\textit{That she has come to us.}
\textit{Freedom, being of heavenly birth,}

\textsuperscript{73} P.N Bazaz, \textit{Freedom}, op. cit., p. 419.
\textsuperscript{74} Kashmir was linked with the rest of India and world through West Punjab. After the partition, these natural routes got closed.
\textsuperscript{75} Quoted in S. Bhait, op. cit., p. 48; \textit{Samarin}, op. cit., p. 1190.
\textsuperscript{77} \textit{The Best of Mahjoor}, J & K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages, Srinagar, translated by T. N. Raina, 1989, 107-08.
Can't move from door to door;
You'll find her camping in the homes
Of a chosen few alone......
There is morning in every house;
But in sequestered bowers
Our rulers, like bridegrooms,
Are in dalliance with freedom.
Nabir Shaikh knows what freedom means,
For his wife was whisked away.
He went on complaining until
She bore Freedom in a new home!
They searched her armpits seven times
To see if she was hiding rice;
In a basket covered with a shawl
The peasant's wife brought Freedom home.
There's restlessness in every heart,
But no one dare speak out-
Afraid that with their free expression
Freedom may be annoyed.

During this period, Shaikh Abdullah in his speeches and statements praised India and favoured accession and criticised Pakistan. In a press conference in New Delhi on 7 March 1948, Shaikh said: "We have decided to work and die for India. We made our decision not in October last, but in 1944, when we resisted the advances of Mr. Jinnah. Our refusal was categorical. Ever since the National Conference had attempted to keep the State clear of the pernicious Two-Nation Theory while fighting the world's worst autocracy (Pakistan)"78 Speaking at the annual session of the National Conference in Srinagar, in October 1948, Shaikh Abdullah while praising India and Nehru is reported to have recited the famous couplet of Ameer-i- Khusrao:

Mann Too Shudam, Too Mann Shudi-

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"I have merged myself in thee, and thou hast merged thyself in me, verily, I am thy body and thou art my soul, let no one sayeth henceforth, that we are two different beings."

The reason put forward by Shaikh in support of accession to India was 'ideological affinity of NC with Congress-'secularism.' "We the people of Jammu and Kashmir have thrown our lot with the Indian people not in the heat of passion or a moment of despair but by our deliberate choice. The union of our people has been fused by the community of ideals and common suffering in the cause of freedom. India is pledged to the principle of secular democracy and we are also in pursuit of the same objective."\(^{80}\) Speaking on May 2, 1950, on the anniversary of Radio Kashmir he said, "There is nothing common between the Pakistani ideology and our political faith."\(^{81}\) From 1947 to 1951 in his public statements, Shaikh harped on the accession with India and criticised the idea of an independent Kashmir.\(^{82}\) Now it was imperative for India to establish some kind of constitutional relations with Kashmir and to decide, after the accession to India the future position of Kashmir in the Indian Constitution.\(^{83}\) Two developments of crucial importance 'to the legal position of Kashmir in the Indian Union, took place in 1949. 'One was the admission of Kashmir's representatives to the Constituent Assembly. The other was the adoption of the Constitution, including its present article 370, by the Constituent Assembly with the participation of those representatives.'\(^{84}\) The Indian Constituent Assembly, on 27 May decided to fill up 'four seats allotted to Kashmir on the basis of nominations by the Head of the State in consultation with the Cabinet, and four Kashmiri representatives, including Shaikh Abdullah, took their seats in the Constitution


\(^{80}\) Ab. Jabbar, op. cit., p. 22

\(^{81}\) Ibid. p. 32

\(^{82}\) He also disapproved plebiscite and instead demanded that Pakistan might be punished because she was aggressor. For these statements see, Ab. Jabbar, op. cit., pp. 18-35.


\(^{84}\) A. G. Noorani, Kashmir Question, Bombay, 1964. p. 44.
Assembly on 16 June."\textsuperscript{85} As expected Pakistan protested against the Indian decision to admit Kashmir's four representatives to the Constituent Assembly. India in its reply held that, "while the constitution of India which \textit{inter alia} provided for the relation of acceding states to the Government of India was under consideration it would have been unfair to the Government of Jammu and Kashmir to deny them the opportunity of participating in the discussion of that constitution. Such participation was not intended to, and does not, in fact, alter the Government of India's determination to abide, in the matter of accession, by the freely declared will of the people of Jammu and Kashmir."\textsuperscript{86}

Thus, India made it clear to the world that the accession (although) "was legal and valid but was provisional and conditional on a free plebiscite being taken."\textsuperscript{87} Although the article 1 of the Indian constitution declared Kashmir, an integral part of Indian Union but it was given a special position (by means of "temporary provisions with respect to the State of Jammu and Kashmir") by article 370.\textsuperscript{88} The Indian Constituent Assembly adopted article 370 on 17\textsuperscript{th} October 1949. It was put forth in the Assembly as article 306A\textsuperscript{89} to arrange the constitutional relations between India and Kashmir.\textsuperscript{90} Through article 370, the powers of Parliament to make laws for Kashmir were limited to:-

(1) Those matters in the union list and the concurrent list which, in consultation with the Government of the State, are declared by the President to correspond to matters specified in the Instrument of Accession governing the accession of the State to the dominion of India as the matters with respect to which the dominion legislature may make laws for that State; and

(2) Such other matters in the said lists as, with the concurrence of the Government of the State, the President may by order specify.\textsuperscript{91}

\textsuperscript{85} Sisir Gupta, \textit{Kashmir, A Study In Indo-Pakistan Relations}. New Delhi, 1966; p. 365. The four members from Kashmir were, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, Maulana Mohammad Sayed Masoodi, and Shri Moti Ram Bagda.

\textsuperscript{86} A.G Noorani, \textit{Kashmir Question}, op. cit., p. 45.

\textsuperscript{87} Ibid., pp. 45-46.

\textsuperscript{88} Lamb, \textit{Disputed Legacy}, op. cit., p.190. Article 370 was drafted by Gopalaswami Ayyanger.

\textsuperscript{89} A.G. Noorani, \textit{Kashmir Question}, op. cit., p. 46.

\textsuperscript{90} The future relations of Kashmir with India were to be governed by article 370 which was clearly based on the Instrument of Accession A. S. Anand, op. cit., p. 100

In the response of a question (by Hasrat Mohani) regarding the necessity and compulsion of the art 370, Mr. Gopalaswami Ayyangar, in his detailed exposition of article 370 inter alia replied that “the discrimination is due to the special conditions of Kashmir. That particular State is not yet ripe for this kind of integration. It is the hope of everybody here that in due course even Jammu and Kashmir will become ripe for the same sort of integration as has taken place in the case of other states. At present, it is not possible to achieve that integration….. There are various reasons why this is not possible now. We are entangled with the United Nations in regard to Jammu and Kashmir and it is not possible to say now we shall be free from this entanglement. That can take place only when the Kashmir problem is satisfactorily settled. Again, the Government of India have committed themselves to the people of Kashmir in certain respects. They have committed themselves to the position that an opportunity would be given to the people of the State to decide for themselves whether they will remain with the republic or wish to go out of it. We are also committed to ascertaining this will of the people by means of a plebiscite provided that peaceful and normal conditions are restored and the impartiality of the plebiscite could be guaranteed. We have also agreed that the will of the people, through the instrument of a Constituent Assembly, will determine the constitution of the State as well as the sphere of Union jurisdiction over the State.”

Shaikh Abdullah was disillusioned for the article was being described as a ‘temporary provision’ to mollify the protagonists of integration and his “ironclad guarantees of autonomy” were not accepted.” Not satisfied with the move, Shaikh Abdullah wrote to Gopalaswami to put the article in order or to be rady for repercussions: “—I and my colleagues have been extremely pained by the manner in which the thing has been done, and, after careful consideration of the matter, we have arrived at the conclusion that it is not possible for us to let the matter rest here. As I am genuinely anxious that no unpleasant situation should arise, I would request you to see if even now something could be done to rectify the position. In case I fail to hear from you within a reasonable time, I regret to say that no course is left open for us but to render our

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92 Ibid., pp. 66-67, stress mine. A. G. Noorani affirms that ‘article 370 was not intended to and did not rule out a plebiscite, and also the constituent assembly, which Gopalaswami mentioned was meant only to give a representative government to Kashmir and was not intended, likewise, to be an alternative to plebiscite, A. G. Noorani, Kashmir Question, op. cit., p. 47.
resignation from the Constituent Assembly." Thus, article 370 from the very outset of its adoption, has been a matter of controversy. Shaikh Abdullah favoured accession but with autonomy. He demanded special status consonant with the act of accession, because he was afraid that the cultural glory of Kashmir would not be secure if they did not have the full freedom for their cultural prosperity in every respect. 

Kashmir being the only Muslim majority province in the Indian Union necessitated political-constitutional safeguards within the Indian political system. The Indian Constitution came into force from January 26, 1950 and on the same day, the President of India (according to art. 370) promulgated the constitution (applicable to Jammu and Kashmir) order, 1950, specifying in two different schedules the powers of the Union and the applicability of the constitution, which confirmed strictly to the Instrument of Accession.

After participating a number of times in the Security Council from Indian side Shaikh felt that "there was no resolution of Kashmir problem by the UNO," therefore he stated preparing ground to convene the Constituent Assembly. The General Council of National Conference in its resolution of October, 1950 recommended for "convening a Constituent Assembly based upon adult suffrage---for the purpose of determining the future shape and affiliation of the State of Jammu and Kashmir," and also to give the State "a Constitution worthy of the traditions of [its] 'freedom struggle and in accordance with the principles of 'New Kashmir.'" Predictably Pakistan raised "a protest with the Security Council against this policy, which according to Pakistan prejudiced the final determination of whether Kashmir would join India or Pakistan." The Security council passed a resolution on March, 30, 1951, "reminding the Governments and authorities concerned of the principle embodied in the Security Council Resolutions of 21 April 1948, 3 June 1948 and 14

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94 Shaikh Abdullah's letter to Gopalaswami Ayyangar (the main architect of the article 370) on 17 October 1949, Sardar Patel's correspondence 1945-50, op. cit., p. 306.
96 Prakash Chandra 'The National Question in Kashmir,' Social Scientist, Vol. 13, No. 6 (Jun., 1985), (pp. 35-56) p. 49.
98 S. Abdullah, op. cit., p. 533.
100 Korbel, Danger in Kashmir, op. cit., p. 219.
March 1950, and United Nations Commission For India And Pakistan Resolutions of 13 August 1948 and 5 January 1949, that the final disposition of the State of Jammu and Kashmir will be made in accordance with the will of the people, expressed through the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite conducted under the auspices of the United Nations.” The resolution further warned that “the convening of a Constituent Assembly as recommended by the General Council of the ‘All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference,’ and any action that Assembly might attempt to take to determine the future shape and affiliation of the entire State, or any part thereof, would not constitute a disposition of the State in accordance with the above principles.” Shaikh Abdullah was, nonetheless, not discouraged by the Security Council resolution. He was fully backed by Nehru. Addressing the political workers of National Conference, on April 2, 1951 at Srinagar, Nehru declared that the proposed Constituent Assembly would give a democratic basis to Jammu and Kashmir. He further added that it was an internal matter of Kashmir to decide for herself.

Karan Singh as the regent of the State issued a proclamation convoking a Constituent Assembly on the basis of free elections by all citizens of the State over 21 years of age by means of a direct and secret ballot. The proposed Constituent Assembly comprised of forty-three members from Kashmir Valley, thirty from Jammu region, and two from Ladakh. Twenty-five additional seats were reserved for Pakistan Administered Kashmir, (which were never filled), making a nominal total of one hundred. The elections were held in September. The manner in which, lashes out Sumantra Bose, “this election was conducted made a mockery of any pretence of a democratic process, and set a grim precedent for future “free and fair

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101 Dasgupta, op. cit., pp. 406-407; A. G. Noorani, Kashmir Question, op cit., pp. 52-3; P. L. Lakhnapal, Essential Notes and Documents On Kashmir, Delhi, 1958, pp. 230-31; Micheal Brecher, Struggle op. cit., p. 119. In response, Nehru assured the Security Council that “the Kashmir Constituent Assembly, so far as we are concerned, does not come in the way of a decision by the Security Council; that stands completely.” Lord Birdwood, Two Nations And Kashmir, op. cit., p.158. Later on in a press conference in New Delhi, on June 21, 1952, Nehru made it clear that “the Kashmir Government had every right to have a Constituent Assembly to frame the internal constitution but so far as we were concerned we would not be bound by their decision on the question before the Security Council.” Times of India, 22 June, 1952. Lord Birdwood believes that Nehru “wished to avoid a clash as between a Security Council decision and the will of the Kashmir Assembly.” Lord Birdwood, Two Nations, op. cit., p. 159.

102 Times of India, April 3, 1951.


elections" in IJK (Indian Administered Kashmir) in Kashmir Valley opposition parties were not allowed to organise an election campaign. The National Conference of Shaikh Abdullah ‘won’ all 75 seats uncontested. The slogan of Shaikh and his National Conference was –One Leader (Abdullah), One Party (NC) and One Programme (Naya Kashmir). Therefore, there was no question of any “opposing NC” particularly in Valley, which was the epicentre of Abdullah’s rule and where "Abdullah was running a virtual Party- State." According to Josef Korbel, “in Kashmir Valley and Ladakh the elections, if they can so called, were fairly simple-forty-three candidates were “elected unopposed” one week before the election date., the two independent candidates who had dared to contest the elections withdrew “under pressure” later. Thirteen candidates of the Praja Parishad, the main opposition in Jammu were arbitrarily ‘disqualified’ and their nomination papers were rejected on the ground that they were not properly presented. In protest, the Parishad announced a boycott of the elections, 3 days before the election in Jammu. The two other non N.C candidates dropped out also.

Thus, Shaikh’s NC got all 75 seats, before the polling began. The results naturally failed to carry conviction abroad. The London Times on September 7, 1951, in an editorial, entitled “No Fair Vote” and called its results as “farcical.” Pakistan severely criticised the elections a “fraud” and a “farce” Ironically Nehru again backed Shaikh Abdullah and stated that he was “sure that the way people had voted showed clearly that they were with the National Conference and with India.” The ‘massive victory’ of the NC made Nehru more optimistic than ever about the result of a plebiscite in the State, excluding Azad Kashmir. Although Nehru would disapprove this type of ‘democracy’ in India but in Kashmir, he had to approve it as he considered it a good sign for India. He saw a good opportunity in the Constituent

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105 Sumanta Bose, op. cit., p. 55.
108 Ibid., p. 31.
110 Parishad had decided to contest on 28 seats.
113 Sisir Gupta, op. cit., p. 366.
114 The Hindu (Madras), October 13, 1951.
Assembly (elections) which would reinforce the Indian argument that Shaikh Abdullah and his National Conference "really did represent the will of the people the State of Jammu and Kashmir" and "the elections ---could be presented to world opinion as a substitute for a plebiscite" in favour of India.\textsuperscript{116} Therefore, Nehru's role in the retardation and destruction of the democratic development in Jammu and Kashmir cannot be ruled out.\textsuperscript{117} Shaikh and his NC had their interests in convoking the Constituent Assembly. The circumstances in which the Constituent Assembly was formed revealed that "the NC elite wished to govern Kashmir as a Party-State, in which they have a monopoly on political power."\textsuperscript{118} As discussed earlier the political mantra envisaged in the 'Naya Kashmir Manifesto' of NC was, "One Leader, Abdullah, One Party (NC) and One Programme (Naya Kashmir), so there was no space for an opposing party. It is true that NC was the only party in the Valley\textsuperscript{119} but in Jammu and Ladakh the party had neither the "requisite organisational network nor the ideological equipment to represent their aspirations.\textsuperscript{120} If "free elections had been tolerated, Praja Parishad would have won few seats. But NC was not willing to risk to allow Parishad to function as "a small opposition group in the house."\textsuperscript{121} If Shaikh Abdullah had believed that by keeping away the Parishad, he would be able to strengthen his grip over the State including Jammu, he was soon to be disillusioned. The Parishad started a vigorous campaign (it will be discussed in detail shortly) against Shaikh and his rule and demanded full integration of the State with the Indian Union, in conform to other states. Consequently the Parishad agitation proved to be "extremely disruptive" for the fragile political order of Kashmir.\textsuperscript{122}

The Constituent Assembly met first on 31 October 195, (the task of constitution making was completed on 17 November 1956, the day which Shaikh Abdullah called a "day of destiny. A day which comes only once in the life of a nation."\textsuperscript{123} The

\textsuperscript{116} Alistair Lamb, op. cit., pp. 193-94.
\textsuperscript{117} As stated earlier Balraj Puri begged Nehru that some opposition might be allowed in Kashmir which was an important part of democracy. But Nehru refused. "Our entire Kashmir policy," said Nehru "revolves around the personality of Shaikh Abdullah. We cannot afford to oppose him," Balraj Puri, 'Azadi, Autonomy And Self Rule vs. Freedom, Mainstream, Vol. VI/VII, No. 52, December 12, 2009.
\textsuperscript{118} S. Bose, Roots, op. cit., p. 56.
\textsuperscript{119} No opposition was allowed to operate in the Valley. The opponents had either been imprisoned or sent to Pakistan. Those who remained had gone underground.
\textsuperscript{120} B. Puri, Kashmir Insurgency, op. cit., p. 48.
\textsuperscript{121} S. Bose, Roots, op. cit., p. 57.
\textsuperscript{122} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{123} M. J. Akbar, Kashmir Behind the Vale, p. 140.
Constituent Assembly also functioned as the Legislature of the State during this period. Shaikh Abdullah in his inaugural speech in the Constituent Assembly enumerated the tasks of the Constituent Assembly as fourfold:

(1) To devise a Constitution for the future governance of the country
(2) The future of the Royal Dynasty
(3) To deal with the problem of landowner’s demand for compensation.
(4) To declare its reasoned conclusion regarding accession.

Regarding the constitution Shaikh Abdullah wanted the Assembly to be guided by “the highest principles of democratic constitution of the world”; based on the “principles of equality, liberty and social justice, which are an integral feature of all progressive constitution”. He further added that the rule of law “as understood in the democratic countries of the world should be the cornerstone of our political structure.” it included all those rights and obligations, already embodied in New Kashmir Manifesto, to be precise. Concerning the future of the Royal Dynasty, Shaikh made it clear that “this dynasty can no longer exercise authority, on the basis of an old discredit treaty” and “in supreme fulfilment of the peoples’ aspirations, it follows that a constitutional Head of the State will have to be chosen to exercise the functions which this Assembly may choose to entrust him.” Shutting the door in the face of Hari Singh, he declared that Hari Singh was not competent to be the first constitutional Head of the State,” because “he was incapable to adjust himself to changed conditions and his antiquated views on vital problems constitute positive disqualifications for him to hold the high office of a democratic head of the State. With regard to landowners demand for compensation, Shaikh categorically declared, “the abolition of landlordism is —an accomplished fact and there is no going back on the decision already taken.”

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124 Sisar Gupta, op. cit., p. 366.
126 Later on Nehru in a press conference in Delhi told that it was the intention of the Constituent Assembly to pass a resolution whereby to confirm the accession. “We asked them not to do it so as not to be embarrassed before the UN.” Therefore, Nehru advised Kashmiri leaders not to pass that resolution. Hindustan Times. 21 June, 1952.
128 Ibid.
129 Ibid.
Regarding the most crucial and fragile issue of accession, which had [has] made Kashmir a world interest, Shaikh’s speech needs to be discussed in detail. Although Shaikh put before the Assembly three options, accession to India, accession to Pakistan and an independent Kashmir, but he himself favoured Kashmir’s accession with India; which he believed had safeguarded the autonomy of the State; “we are proud to have our bonds with India, the goodwill of whose people and Government is available to us in unstinted[ing] and abundant measure.” He added that in India “with the exception of the items grouped under defence, foreign affairs and communication---- we have complete freedom to frame our constitution in manner we like.” Defending his decision of approving the accession with India in 1947, Shaikh stated, “The real character of a state is revealed in its constitution. The Indian Constitution has set before the country the goal of secular democracy based upon justice freedom and equality for all without distinction. This is the bedrock of modern democracy. Further, “the Indian constitution has amply and finally repudiated the concept of a religious state which is a throwback to medievalism, by guaranteeing the equality of rights of all citizens irrespective of their religion, colour, caste and class.” The national movement in our State, naturally, gravitates towards these principles of secular democracy.” Economically too, he believed Kashmir’s future was bright in India. “India being more highly industrialized than Pakistan, can give us equipment, technical services and materials. She can help us too in marketing.” In addition, he justified accession with India, as Kashmir’s presence in India would help in stabilizing the “communal harmony of India” and thus was good for Indian Muslims.\textsuperscript{130}

He vehemently not only rejected accession with Pakistan but even the claim of Pakistan being a Muslim State. “This claim of being a Muslim State is of course only a camouflage. --- [it] is a feudal state.”\textsuperscript{131}

Regarding the independence option Shaikh, although did not reject it altogether but wanted “the good will of all—neighbours” and guarantee in protecting Kashmir in future from any invasion; without which it was a utopian idea.\textsuperscript{132}

\textsuperscript{130} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{131} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{132} Ibid.
From this, it becomes clear that Shaikh was more inclined towards India, because as he himself said, "There is no danger of a revival of feudalism and autocracy. Moreover, during last four years, the Government of India has never tried to interfere in our internal autonomy. This experience has strengthened our confidence in them as a democratic state." Thus, so long as India was there to maintain the status quo, Shaikh had no problem with India but when India tried (as the later events revealed) to intervene in Kashmir's internal autonomy Shaikh cried for third option independence and demanded plebiscite. Fissures started appearing when India tried to "sought closer federal integration of Kashmir, a position not acceptable" to Shaikh and his N.C. In fact, India viewed the terms of article 370 (which granted special status to Kashmir) as a temporary provision.

As discussed earlier Gopalaswamy while introducing the draft had expressed hope that "in due course, even Jammu and Kashmir will become ripe for the same sort of integration as has taken place in the case of other states." In the meantime Gopalaswami Ayyengar in order to bring financial integration of the State with the Union attempted to extend the jurisdiction of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India to Kashmir. Mir Qasim accuses India for her dual policy in regard to Kashmir, "on the one hand, it was trying to apply more and more provisions of the Indian Constitution to the State despite Shaikh's resentment, while on the other hand it took the stand that in spite of the Constituent Assembly's ratification, the question of accession would be finally decided by the UNO." The Union attitude persuaded Shaikh to go slow with this question. India had her own reservation about the Kashmir Constituent Assembly. India believed that the Instrument of Accession of state, National Flag, which needed to be clarified before the decision. Shaikh saw in these moves a hidden threat to the State autonomy. His attitude toward plebiscite softened. From 1949, he made many speeches and statements in which he "hinted at

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133 Ibid.
137 Mir Qasim, op. cit., p. 54.
138 S. Abdullah, Aatishi Chinra, op. cit., p. 539.
the advantages” of an independent Kashmir. These statements marked the divergence of approaches between Nehru and Shaikh and for the first time the two friends started drifting away since they had met first in 1930s. The situation was further compounded by the agitation of Praja Parishad demanding complete integration of the State with the Indian union. Praja Parishad was formed in November 1947, and was led by Prem Nath Dogra and Balraj Madhok. It had a substantial following in the Hindu-dominated areas of Jammu. They believed in ‘unitary form of government for the whole country ‘and did not like Kashmir to be treated ‘in a distinct and special manner.

The Parishad was whole heartedly supported by Bharatiya Jana Sangh, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Ram Rajaya Parishad. They demanded complete abrogation of article 370 and ek pradhan, ek nishan and ek vidhan (one flag, one premier and one constitution) “became the battle cry of the Parishad.” It was a direct attack on Shaikh Abdullah’s title of “Prime Minister”, on the State Flag [NC’s Party Flag was adopted in late 1949 as the State Flag], and above all, on the Constitution-making mandate of the Kashmir Constituent Assembly. Thus, the issue- Jammu and Kashmir’s complete integration with the Indian Union and the abrogation of article 370 became the “corner stone of the Parishad’s political platform.” Strangely enough, it was actually against the dangers and fears of such communalist forces that Kashmir was granted special status. Shaikh had endorsed accession to India “in the belief that Gandhian secularism, combined with Nehru’s socialism and the promise of special status, would satisfy the aspirations of his people.” Now, Gandhi was dead (he was killed by Hindu communists) and Indian secularism and Kashmir’s special statuses were under attack. This was the phase when, in against the rampant

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139 S. Gopal, op. cit., p. 118.
141 Summit Gaguly, op. cit., p. 95.
142 Balraj Puri, Kashmir, Triumph and Tragedy, op. cit., p. 97.
143 Ibid., p. 98.
144 S. Bose, Roots, op. cit., p.57.
146 Prakash Chandra, op. cit., p. 50.
147 Ajit bhattachajja, Tragic Hero of Kashmir, op. cit., p. 122. There was growing influence of Hindu communalists within the congress who had full support of Patel. They surrounded Nehru. It was because of the Hindu communalists influence that Rajendra Prasad became President, although Nehru’s choice was Rajagopalachari. Similarly, Purushottam Das Tendon, to whom Nehru had accused of being communal, was elected President of the Congress, with full assistance of Patel. In an unprecedented indictment Nehru released a statement on 12 September, 1951 saying, “communal
communalism within the congress, some of Nehru’s closest comrades like Rafi Ahmad Kidwai left the Congress.\textsuperscript{148} Moreover, the foundation of Bharatiya Jana Sangh in September 1951 “gave new life to the hindutva force” and increased the apprehensions of Shaikh Abdullah.\textsuperscript{149} In a letter to Nehru, Shaikh’s apprehensions are clear and message straightforward: “[T]here are powerful influences at work in India who do not see eye to eye with you regarding your ideal of making the Union a truly secular state and your Kashmir policy. …while I feel I can willingly go down and sacrifice myself for you, I am afraid as custodian of the destinies of 40lacs of Kashmiris, I cannot barter away their cherished rights and privileges. I have several times stated that we acceded to India because we saw there two bright stars of hope and aspiration, namely, Gandhiji and yourself, and despite our having so many affinities with Pakistan we did not join it, because we thought our programme will not fit with their policy. If, however, we are driven to the conclusion that we cannot build our State on our own lines, suited to our genius, what answer can I give to my people and how am I to face them.”\textsuperscript{150}

Shaikh began to ponder, “What will happen to Kashmir after Nehru.” Before that tragedy could come, Shaikh began to rethink.\textsuperscript{151} Shaikh’s frustration can be seen in the speeches he gave in which he criticised Indian communalism and proclaimed that the accession was limited and provisional and, he would relook the accession with India. The climax of his anger against India was seen in his “combative “speech which he gave at Ranbir Singhphura in Jammu only four miles away from Pakistan on 10 April, 1952. Lashing out at Hindu communalists, he described arguments in favour of full application of the Indian Constitution to Kashmir as “unrealistic, childish and savouring of lunacy”. Expressing his fears on behalf of Kashmiris regarding the growing communalism in India, Shaikh said, “Many Kashmiris are not sure what will happen to them and their position if, for instance, something happens to Mr Nehru—what will happen to Kashmir if there is a resurgence of communalism in India and how under that circumstance we are to convince the Muslims of Kashmir that India does not intend to swallow up Kashmir.” Warning those who demanded complete

\textsuperscript{148} M. J. Akbar, Kashmir, op. cit., p. 145.
\textsuperscript{149} Ajit Bhattacharjea, Tragic Hero, op. cit., pp. 160-161.
\textsuperscript{150} Shaikh Abdullah to Nehru, 10 July 1950, cited in S. Gopal, op. cit., p. 119.
integration Sheik said that they were "fanning the fires of conflict--- they may finally destroy the union of Kashmir with India." ---We have acceded to India in Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications and not in other subjects, because we wanted some kind of autonomy for ourselves in internal matters." In conclusion, of the speech he said, "Shaikh Abdullah does not fear anyone in this world. He will not bow down before India or Pakistan or the USA or any other nation." His provocative speech was reported widely not only in India but also in the USA and Pakistan. Indians were "disquieted by the firm assertions of sovereignty by Shaikh Abdullah, for Kashmir." However, the worrying factor for India was the prominence, which Pakistani press gave to Shaikh's provocative speech. Pakistan was jubilant over the changing attitude of Shaikh.

The speech in which Shaikh made no distinction between India and Pakistan and "encouraged criticism of India abroad at a time when the Security Council was considering the Kashmir problem", disheartened Nehru. Speaking at a mammoth Jallianwala Bagh Day meeting, Nehru said that he was not very happy over that speech and he did not like the tone and manner of that speech. "Shaikh Sahib would excuse me for saying so," he added. Nehru also expressed his unhappiness in a letter to Shaikh Abdullah on 23 April 1952, "I have not the wish or heart to argue about this or any other matter with you. I have felt deeply about Kashmir, because it represented to me many things and many principles. It always has been an axiom with me, quite apart from constitutional position and the like, that the people of Kashmir must decide their own fate. For me the people of Kashmir were basically represented by you. If you feel as you do, then the link that has bound us together necessarily weakens and I have little heart left to discuss these matters." Shaikh Abdullah realised that he had "crossed his limits." To assuage the disturbed feelings in India, Shaikh made amends using the press scapegoat that he had not been quoted.

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152 Hindustan Times, 12 April, 1952. His speech at Ranbir Singhpur showed the extent of gulf that had developed between him and his colleagues in Delhi. S Gopal, op. cit., p. 119.
154 Mohan Shaiah Mehta, Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan in his letter to R K Nehru, Commissioner Secretary Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, Ministry of External Affairs, (Kashmir Branch) 'India's attitude to Shaikh Abdullah's speech.' File no. M/52/1911/107/ NAI.
155 S. Gopal, op. cit., p. 120.
156 Hindustan Times, 14 April, 1952.
157 Nehru's letter to Shaikh Abdullah, 25 April 1952. Cited in S. Gopal, op. cit., p. 120.
accurately. Shaikh said that the views to which he had given expression and had been made to appear to be his own views while the fact was that he was merely referring to sentiments and feelings which enemies of the State had tried to exploit and which he was trying to fight.\(^{159}\) Also on 18th April 1952, addressing a mammoth gathering at Hazaratbal in Srinagar, he said that Pakistan should not be excessively happy over his Ranmirsinghpura speech because" they will ultimately have to face disappointment."\(^ {160}\)

Shaikh’s speech, which was given wide publicity in the West and Pakistan, was embarrassing India at international level. To overcome the deadlock and ambiguities in the constitutional relationship between India and Kashmir and to “calm the first crisis of Kashmir- India relations,” Nehru invited Shaikh Abdullah to Delhi.\(^ {161}\) Shaikh welcomed the invitation and sent a delegation headed by Mirza Afzal Beg and including D. P. Dhar and Mir Qasim. They arrived Delhi on 17 June and immediately started discussion with Jawaharial Nehru. After a month on 17 July, Shaikh along with Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, G. M. Sadiq and Maulana Masoodi also joined in the talks.\(^ {162}\) Jawaharial Nehru, Gopalaswami Ayyanger, and Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai represented Indian side.\(^ {163}\) The result of these negotiations was ‘Delhi Agreement ‘ signed on 24 July 1952, which Shaikh Abdullah in his memoirs describes as an ‘important milestone’ in Kashmir’s constitutional relations with the Indian Union.\(^ {164}\) The contents of the Agreement were reported to India’s Parliament by Nehru on 24 July 1952, and to Kashmir Constituent Assembly by Shaikh Abdullah on 11 August.

Delhi Agreement preserved the special status of Kashmir given under article 370. Shaikh seemed satisfied with the Agreement, as he made it clear that his aim had been to preserve ‘maximum autonomy for the local organs of State power, while discharging obligations as a unit of the [Indian] Union.”\(^ {165}\) The main features of Delhi Agreement, as reported by Nehru in the Parliament, were as under: \(^ {166}\)

\(^{159}\) Official Version of Shaikh’s Speech, which he sent to New Delhi, Hindustan Times, 14, April 1952.
\(^{160}\) Hindustan Times, 19 April 1952.
\(^{161}\) A. Lamb, op. cit., p. 194; S. Bose, Roots of Conflict, op. cit., p. 40.
\(^{162}\) Ibid.
\(^{163}\) S. Abdullah, op. cit., p. 541.
\(^{164}\) Ibid.
(1) **Residuary Powers.** Residuary powers would vest in the State in case of Kashmir, although in regard to all other states it would vest in the Union. More powers could be transferred to the Union by the people of Kashmir.

(2) **Citizenship.** The residents of the State would be the citizens of India. "It was further agreed that the State Legislature shall have power to define and regulate the rights and privileges of the permanent residents of the State, more especially in regard to acquisition of immovable property, appointments to services and like matters"

(3) **Fundamental Rights.** The decisions regarding land compensation would be protected and weather a chapter on separate Fundamental Rights should be included in the Kashmir constitution would be decided

(4) **Supreme Court.** The Supreme Court jurisdiction was recognised in regard to such Fundamental Rights as would be agreed to by the State, as also regarding disputes mentioned in article 131 of the Indian constitution. It would be the final court of appeal. But detailed examination of this would be necessary and it was agreed that we should have time to consider it further.

(5) **State Flag.** The new State Flag was no rival to the National Flag, but its continuance was necessary for historical and other reasons. The Union Flag would occupy the supremely distinctive place in the State.

(6) **President** of India powers to grant reprieve and commute death sentences would belong to the President of the Union.

(7) **Headship of State.** Following principles were agreed upon:

(a) The head of the State shall be the person recognised by the President of Union on the recommendations of the Legislature of the State.

(b) He shall hold office during the pleasure of the President;

(c) He may, by writing under his hand address to the President, resign his office;

(d) He shall hold office for five years; and

(e) He shall continue to hold office till his successor was elected.

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167 On 7 June 1952, the Constituent Assembly passed a resolution moved by the Prime Minister adopting as the National Flag of the State a 2:3 rectangular flag, "red in colour with three equidistant vertical stripes of equal width next to the staff and a white plough in the middle," after deleting the word "National" before Flag on the basis of an amendment by Mir Qasim. Sisir Gupta, op. cit., p. 372 fn.
(8) **Financial Integration.** The necessity of some financial arrangement was seen, but a detailed and objective examination was considered necessary.

(9) **Emergency Powers.** On the application of article 352 of the Indian constitution opinions differed but it was ultimately agreed upon that central intervention in regard to internal disturbances could come only at the request or with the concurrence of the Government of the State. The Government of India did not press of the application of article 365 or article 360.168

Superficially, “the Delhi Agreement appeared to be a victory” for Shaik Abdullah whose demand of autonomy was confirmed.169 In his speech to the Kashmir Constituent Assembly on 11 August 1952, Shaik on the one hand praised India-Kashmir relations and seemed satisfied with the Agreement; but in the same breath warned that "any suggestions of altering arbitrarily this basis of our relationship with India would not only constitute a breach of the spirit and letter of the constitution, but it may invite serious consequences for a harmonious association of our State with India.”170

The acceptance of NC’s demand for the end of the dynastic Dogra Rule was “a striking victory for the National Conference.”171 Early in June 1952, Shaik Abdullah as chairman of the Basic Principles Committee of the State Constituent Assembly, announced the intention to abolish the hereditary Dogra Rule.172 The Constituent Assembly of Kashmir on 12 November 1952 “formally adopted an amendment to the Constituent Assembly replacing the Maharaja Ruler-ship by the function of an ‘Elected Head of State, Sadar-i- Riyasat.” This act”, writes Josef Korbel, “brought to fulfilment the abolition of the hereditary rule of the hated Dogras, a tyranny which had cursed the State of Jammu and Kashmir since 1846.”173 But, Shaik had to accept a compromise. Nehru succeeded in persuading Shaik to agree the appointment of

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168 Article 356 of the Indian constitution empowers the President of India to assume the governance of a State and article 360 deals with financial emergencies.
169 Bose, Roots, op. cit., p. 62.
172 Lord Birdwood, op. cit., pp. 251-52.
twenty one year old son of Hari Singh, Yuvraj Karan Singh as the first Sadar-i-Riyasat of Jammu and Kashmir.\textsuperscript{174}

So, in that way the Dogra rule continued. P. N. Bazaz criticizes Nehru for violating the Delhi Agreement by nominating Karan Singh as the Head of the State without the consent of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.\textsuperscript{175} Karan Singh was reluctant to take over as the Head of the State.\textsuperscript{176} However, he was persuaded by Nehru to take over as the Head of the State. Karan Singh recalls that in a meeting in Delhi with Nehru, the latter "repeated some of the perplexity that he was beginning to feel in dealing with Shaikh Abdullah, and said that this made it all the more important that I should be on the scene to be able to help if some problems arose in the future."\textsuperscript{177} In a letter, Nehru wrote to Karan Singh that a "great responsibility" was upon him, "for you have not merely to follow an established convention but rather to help in making conventions for the future."\textsuperscript{178} Karan Singh was 'elected' the first Sadar-i-Riyasat of Jammu and Kashmir on 14 November 1952.\textsuperscript{179} Karan Singh, who was supposed to be the Head of State acting on Cabinet, took "an active interest in State Politics."\textsuperscript{180} Adhering to the advice of Nehru of making new conventions Karan Singh took full revenge of his father when he dismissed Shaikh Abdullah as Prime Minister within a year.

Although Delhi Agreement satisfied, for time being, Shaikh and his NC but it intensified the anger of those who wanted complete integration of the State with the Union. After the Delhi Agreement, the Praja Parishad agitation became aggressive. The Parishad leaders opposed the nomenclature, "Sadar-i-Riyasat and Prime Minister, State Flag, State Constitution (making in) criticised Shaikh and demanded complete

\textsuperscript{175} Bazaz, \textit{Freedom}, op. cit., p. 588.
\textsuperscript{176} His father Hari Singh and Dogras of Jammu were not in the favour of what they called as 'nominal head' while the power was in the hands of Shaikh. They pressured Karan Singh not to accept the post. See, Karan Singh, \textit{Autobiography}, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 2006, pp. 133, 34 and 137, \textit{New York Times}, reported that he was threatened with family disinheriance if he accepted Shaikh's offer. \textit{New York Times}, 19 August, 1952.
\textsuperscript{177} Karan Singh, op. cit., p. 145.
\textsuperscript{178} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{179} Karan Singh was not happy with the time limit as he considered that he had the hereditary right to be there. He personally met Nehru and later on wrote to him that he "would be very happier if no time limit is imposed." Karan Singh to Nehru, August 3, 1952. Cited in Noorani Frontline, Dec. 29 2006, p. 84.
\textsuperscript{180} A. G. Noorani, 'Kashmir: Blunders of the Past,' Frontline, Dec. 29, 2006, (pp. 81-88) p. 84; \textit{Times of India}, November 15, 1952.
merger of the State with the Indian Union. They proclaimed, “Our way is not with Kashmir. The Shaikh is not acceptable to us. We cannot tolerate Jammu and Ladakh going to the winds.” They coined a slogan:

*Ek Desh Mein Do Vidhan; Ek Desh Mein Do Pradhan; Nahin Challengay, Nahin Challengay*

(Two Constitutions in one country; Two Flags in one country, Two Heads of State in one country, are unacceptable.)

The Jammu Hindus feared that they henceforth would be subjected to the same ‘imperialistic treatment’ which they had meted out to Kashmiri Muslims up to 1947. They therefore demanded the complete merger of the State with the Indian Union. They paraded the streets of Jammu with the portraits of Rajendra Prasad (President of India), and with tri-colour Flag of India and replaced the State Flag with Indian Flag “when and where possible.” The Parishad in its eight point programme in September, 1952, demanded, the abrogation of article 370, full integration of the State into Indian Union, full application of Indian Constitution, complete jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, removal of custom barriers between Kashmir and India, fresh elections to the Constituent Assembly, investigation by an imperial tribunal into the charges of corruption of the State administration and integration of Jammu and Ladakh with the Indian Union, if not of the whole State.” Economically they represented Maharaja’s loyal group of landlords who suffered greatly due to Land Reforms Act. They feared that they would not be secure in Muslim majority State with autonomous position and least Central interference. The Hindu communalists

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182 Balraj Puri, *Jammu: A Clue to Kashmir Tangle*, Delhi, 1966, p. 93. The Parishad also received support from the “spiritual and political leader of Ladakh’s Tibetan Buddhists, who disliked the meteoric ascendency of the new Kashmiri Muslim ruling elite and practically feared the implications of its land reform policies for the Buddhist clergy’s immense private landholdings in Ladakh.” S. Bose, *Roots*, op. cit., p. 57. Mr. Chhewang Rinzin, President, Buddhist Association Ladakh in a memorandum submitted to Prime Minister criticised “the administrators from Kashmir” and demanded separation of Buddhist area of Ladakh from Kashmir. B. Puri, *Triumph*, op. cit., pp. 96-97. Head Lama, Koshak Bakula challenged “legality of State Government’s jurisdiction over his region” and threatened that “longings for a political union with Tibet would become pronounced if Ladakh’s entity within India was not respected.” *Amrit Bazaar Patrika*, Calcutta, 18 March, 1952.
185 Lord Birdwood, op. cit., p. 255.
from India actively supported the Praja Parishad. Jan Sangh, the Akali Dal, the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS joined hands with Praja Parishad to spread an agitation from Jammu into the Punjab and up to Delhi and beyond, on three issues of Kashmir, refugees from East Bengal and the banning of cow-slaughter.”

All that they had in common was hatred against Muslims and Nehru. Besides the demand of the abrogation of the article 370, they also desired to change the demography of Jammu and Kashmir. Master Tara Singh, top Akali leader from Punjab in league with the Praja Parishad Movement, pleaded that “the population in the Kashmir Valley be balanced by settling the Pak (Hindu) refugees.” Speaking at Lucknow, Tara Singh said, “Kashmir belonged to Pakistan. It is a Muslim State. But I claim it in lieu of the property that the refugees have left in West Pakistan.” So according to him the Muslims of Kashmir should be driven to their home country Pakistan, “to which (they) really belong.” Shyam Prasad Mukharjee, in a letter to Shaikh Abdullah on February 13, 1953 wrote, “Consciously or unconsciously you are creating a new sovereignty for Jammu and Kashmir State. India has been torn into two by the two-nation theory. You are now developing a three-nation theory, the third being Kashmiri nation. These are dangerous symptoms....” Forgetting that it was the Praja Parishad agitation supported by Hindu communalists of India, which actually created a political situation whereby the Muslims of Kashmir began to feel that their entity was in danger; and began to think in “isolating Kashmir Valley from the rest of India.”

The Praja Parishad agitation supported by Indian communalists proved thesis of Two Nation Theory of Mr Jinnah and an “anti-thesis of what the freedom struggle in the State had “animated and stood for between 1939 and 1947.” The response of the State Government to the Parishad agitation was not different from the earliest

188 S Gopal, op. cit., p. 122. Sikh Akali and even some members of the Indian Parliament also supported them. J Korbel, Danger, op. cit., p. 225.
189 M. J. Akbar, op. cit., p. 143.
190 P S Verma, op. cit., p. 41.
191 Nehru- Mukharjee-Abdullah Correspondence, Nehru Memorial Library, Tinnitus, New Delhi, pp. 65 and 47.
192 He launched the Jana Sangh in 1951. Its programme included no special privileges to minorities and full integration of Kashmir into the Indian Union. M J Akbar, op. cit., pp. 142-43.
Dogra regime (before 1947). The State Government came heavily on the agitators-suppressed by police action and mass arrest of organizers. However, Shaikh was surprised 'when the imprisoned agitators were released through interventions by some Central Ministers.' Gopalaswamy Ayyengar was sent to Jammu by the Union Government "to put pressure on "Shaikh to release the Parishad agitators. Ironically there were hundreds of Kashmiri Muslims in jails at that time but neither the Indian press raised any voice for their release nor did the Indian Government advised the Kashmir Government for that." Unexpectedly, even socialist Jayaprakash Narayan and Acharya Kriplani supported the agitation. These events and developments shook the basis of nationalist traits in Kashmir and forced Shaikh to rethink about accession to India. Nehru was deeply concerned with the new communal wave, which had exposed the secular character of India. On 7 August 1952, he in a speech stressed on mutually-accommodative relationship with Kashmir, "Our strongest bonds with Kashmir are not those that are retained by our army or even by our constitution, to which so much reference has been made, but those of love and affection and understanding, and they are stronger than the constitution or laws or armies."

To make aware the nation about the real picture and the impending threat of communalism, Nehru wrote regularly to state Chief Ministers. In December 1952, he wrote, "The people at the back of these agitations belong to communal organizations like the Hindu Mahasabha, the Jana Sangh, the RSS and the Ram Rajya Parishad. Appropriately, Master Tara Singh and his Akali Dal have lined up them." Nehru was quick to realise that Kashmir was only a cloak and the real objectives much broader. On 27 January 1953, he wrote, "it is clear that the objective of these organizations is not confined to Jammu and that they are aiming at bigger quarry. Their dislike of the Government of India and the secular policy that it pursues is so great that, in order to injure it, they are prepared even to harm our relationship with Jammu and Kashmir State." Sadar-i- Riyasat, needless to say, was having pro-Parishad bearings. He

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196 S. Bose, op. cit., p. 58.
197 P. S. Verma, op. cit., p. 43.
198 Bazaz, Kashmir In Crucible, op. cit., p. 67.
199 Prakash Chandra, 'National Question In Kashmir,' pp. 35-56, p. 50,
noted (his inner feelings) that the abolition of Dogra Rule "has upset them (Jammu Hindus) immensely... they feel that this step will break the only link which bound them to Kashmir, and that unless it is followed by complete accession to India their position will be even more precarious than it has been for the last five years." Nehru was also in favour of merger of the State with the Union, but he considered the course of action of the communalists dangerous. "In the name of close association with India, they are acting in a manner which might imperil that very association." But Nehru failed to provide effective support to Shaikh at this critical juncture. All he did was advice to Shaikh not to be confused. S. Gopal, the biographer of Nehru laments that a man who "could face Pakistan and the United Nations and even the prospect of war" was "trapped" between Shaikh and communalists. S Gopal believes that "the best approach in these circumstances seemed to be to suppress firmly the activities of the Hindu communalists which were little short of treason, thereby giving Abdullah time to recover his nerve." Nehru indeed "ordered the prompt arrest of all those who participated in the agitation in Delhi and Punjab, directed Pant to prevent the movement of volunteers from the up into these areas, and asked Katju to consider the banning of Jan Sangh. Nehru's hand, however, was weakened by the persistent inefficiency of the Home Ministry. Katju was unwilling to act on his Prime Minister's Suggestion." "Nehru (also) failed," writes S. Gopal "in his major thrust of seeking to isolate the communal nucleus of the agitation by establishing that Shaikh Abdullah's administration was secular, broad-minded and national."

The clamour of the Hindu communists and the explicit weak position of Nehru "justified Abdullah's fears." According to Shaikh, "it was a gradual victory of right-wingers, reactionaries and petty men, the reactionary elements had ample access to Delhi not to Nehru's court but certainly elsewhere. Sardar Patel and several others had no faith in me. Nehru first resisted the campaign of vilification against me, but

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203 See Correspondence Between Nehru and Karan Singh. He also proposed Trifurcation State. - Jammu to be merged with Himachal Pradesh; Ladakh to become Union territory. His interview with the Times (London) 14 November 1965, cited in Noorani, Frontier Dec. 29 2006, pp. 84-5.
205 See for example Nehru's letters to Abdullah, 1 & 30 January 1953. Also his letter to Azad, 1 March 1953.
206 S. Gopal, op. cit., p. 125.
208 S. Gopal, op. cit., p. 123.
ultimately he succumbed." Shaikh was confused and disillusioned. Nehru in a letter to Maulana Azad wrote, "I fear that Shaikh Sahib's mind is so utterly confused that he does not know what to do. All kinds of pressures are being brought to bear on him and he is getting more and more into a tangle. There is nobody with him who can really help him very much, because he does not trust anyone fully, and yet every one influences him ... my fear is that Shaikh Sahib, in his present state of mind, is likely to do something or take some step, which might make things worse. The fact is that he has so many pulls in different directions that he just cannot make up his mind." By April 1952, Shaikh appeared to be looking for a compromise solution to the crisis. On April 17 1952, in a broadcast from Radio Kashmir, Srinagar, Shaikh Abdullah said, "We have decided to give autonomy to the different cultural units of the State as will be provided in the constitution that is being drawn up. This will remove all the fears of domination of one unit over the other and will make for the voluntary union and consolidation of the people of the State." A plan was prepared to establish five autonomous regions: the Valley, Jammu, Gilgit, Ladakh and a region consisting of the districts of Mirpur, Rajaouri, Poonch, and Muzaffarabad. (Gilgit, Mirpur and Muzaffarabad formed part of Pakistan Administered Kashmir). The Valley and Jammu would each have a separate legislature and a council of ministers for local affairs. Ladakh would be ruled centrally with an elected advisory district council.

However, the "Jammu integrationists" were not reconciled and the "proposed reform" failed. They were rather 'encouraged by the happenings in indie.' The Hindu communalist parties started a 'nation-wide campaign of satyagraha' for the complete merger of the State with the Union. The leaders of Jan Sangh even appealed to their followers 'to organise militant groups, jathas, and to'

211 S. Bose, Roots, op. cit., p. 62.
213 The Hindu (Madras), April 27, 1953. The States' name would be "Autonomous Federated Unit of the Republic of India. Idea taken from the Soviet Union Federalism, Das Gupta, op. cit., p. 204.
214 V. Bushan, op. cit., p.186.
215 Korbel, Danger, op. cit., p. 232. The Muslim majority areas of Jammu, -Doda, Kishawar and Bhaderwah of mainly Kashmiri -speakers refused to 'be part of an autonomous Hindu-majority Jammu region and declared their "unbreakable identity with the Valley. S. Bose, Roots, op. cit., p. 64.
216 Ibid.
March to Jammu". Nehru also admitted that the apprehensions of Kashmiris were genuine. In a letter to B. C. Roy, he wrote; "The inhabitants of Kashmir, and they are 90% Muslims, saw the communal face of India and were frightened by it. Their desire for remaining with India weakened and in fact, many thought that they would be suppressed in many ways if they were completely merged with India. It was difficult to face this growing feeling in minds and hearts of people." Shaikh Abdullah became disillusioned due to the Hindu agitation politics. Provoked by the agitation politics of Parishad, who wanted 'total elimination' of autonomy of Kashmir, Shaikh publicly "resurrected the idea of full independence as one possible option, among several, for the future of Jammu and Kashmir." Not only Shaikh but most of the Kashmiri leaders started emphasizing that they had acceded to India in respect of defence, foreign affairs and communications' and nothing else. As noted earlier Shaikh was more annoyed when with the central interference Jammu agitators were released. Consequently, by May 1953, Shaikh switched 'from compromise to confrontation.'

In May 1953, he issued an ordinance forbidding, under imprisonment, any person to enter the State without special permit and issued a ban on public meetings. Under this strained political situation, a special session of the Working Committee of the National Conference was called at Srinagar in May 1953 under the president-ship of Shaikh Abdullah. The working committee after a prolonged discussion came to the conclusion that it was impossible to have internal stability in the State so long as its future was uncertain. It accordingly appointed a committee consisting of eight members to explore avenues of an honourable settlement of the

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217 Ibid.
220 P. S. Verma, op. cit., p. 43. To counter the propaganda of the Hindu communalists, in the Valley 'an opposition group, Kashmir Awami Conference, was allowed to come into existence within the ranks of the National Conference. Workers stricken by unemployment and hunger and pro Pakistani elements became active and 'for a short while to demonstrate in large numbers' -- Korbel, Danger, op. cit., p. 233.
222 P. S. Verma, op. cit., p. 43.
223 S. Bose, Roots, op. cit., p. 64.
issue.\textsuperscript{226} The Subcommittee, at its final session, held on 9 June 1953 adopted the following proposals as possible alternatives for an honourable and peaceful solution of the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan;\textsuperscript{227}

(a) Overall plebiscite with conditions as detailed in the minutes of the meeting dated 4\textsuperscript{th} June 1953 (plebiscite for the whole State to decide whether the State would join to India or Pakistan or remain independent)

(b) Independence of the whole State.

(c) Independence of the whole State with joint control of foreign affairs.

(d) Dixon plan with independence for the plebiscite area. (Shaikh had rejected it at that time)

The existence of the Working Committee had alarmed the Indians.\textsuperscript{228} Sensing the drifting attitude of Shaikh, Nehru in order to patch up the differences flew to Srinagar in May 1953.\textsuperscript{229} Shaikh in his memoirs recalls that he was surprised by ‘Nehru’s U-turn’ when he “suggested me to summon the Constituent Assembly to ratify the accession.”\textsuperscript{230} It was difficult for Shaikh to accept Nehru’s suggestion “given the Kashmiris’ growing disenchantment with Shaikh as well as with Nehru.”\textsuperscript{231}

Nehru who was in ashmir from may 23 to 25, was fully informed about the deliberations.\textsuperscript{222} Nehru was not happy with these proceedings. In his letter to Azad, dated June 11, 1953 he wrote, “I am afraid Shaikh Abdullah will give us a good deal of trouble. He is acting very irresponsibly. I hope your visit will check him.”\textsuperscript{233} Maulana Azad who visited Kashmir in June 1953 was apprised of the proceedings. These visits of Nehru and Azad, failed to convince Shaikh to come to Delhi for

\textsuperscript{226} Eight members were Shaikh Abdullah, Maulana Masoodi, Mirza Afzal Beg, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, G. M. Sadiq, Sardar Budhisingh, Pandit Girdarilal Dogra and Pandit Shamlal Saraf, Shaikh Sadiq Correspondence, op. cit.

\textsuperscript{227} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{228} A. Lamb, Kashmir a Disputed, op. cit., p. 199.

\textsuperscript{229} J. Korbel, Danger, op. cit., p. 234.

\textsuperscript{230} S. Abdullah, op. cit., p. 545.

\textsuperscript{231} SWJN, VOL. 19. PP. 322-330. Shaikh sensed well that finalization of accession would be followed by the end of autonomy, which was proved later on. In an interview with Shalibistan Urdu magazine he feared that Kashmiri Muslims would be ‘lost in the vastness of India ‘Shaikh Abdullah Speaks’, The Shama Group, ‘The Testament of Shaikh Abdullah’, op. cit., p. 40.


\textsuperscript{233} SWJN, Vol. 22. P. 191.
Meanwhile S. M. Mukharjee, on 8 May, 1953 decided to go to Jammu without a permit to "see things for himself behind the iron curtain."

Instead of preventing Mukharjee to take this action, which was due to intensify the agitation, the Government of India "placed the onus on Abdullah's Government." Incredibly, the local officials in the Punjab travelled with Mukharjee and facilitated his crossing of the State frontier. On 11th May when he crossed the State frontier, he was arrested and was placed in confinement "in a comfortable bungalow" in Srinagar. His sudden death on 23 June due to heart attack plunged in the whole of north India into anger against Nehru and Shaikh Abdullah.

The demand of complete merger of the State and the removal of Shaikh Abdullah gained momentum. This only widened the gap between Shaikh and New Delhi. Addressing the National Conference workers in Srinagar on 10 July, Shaikh Abdullah said that Kashmir would have to guard its internal autonomy at all costs; justice had not been done to the Muslim majority in Kashmir and he himself was not trusted, "a time will, therefore, come when I will bid them good-bye." Shaikh was disillusioned with not only the growing influence of communists in India but also the ambiguous attitude of the Indian Government regarding autonomy. In a long letter to Maulana Azad on July 16, 1953, Shaikh complained, "even after the Delhi Agreement responsible spokesmen of the Government of India declared that their ultimate objective was to secure the complete merger of the State with India and that they waited for appropriate time and conditions to bring that about. These statements reveal that the Delhi Agreement could not provide a basis to finalise the relationship between India and Kashmir, but that it [Delhi Agreement] provided temporary arrangements to finalise accession. The only difference between the Government of

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234 Shaikh refused to come to Delhi on the ground that "he was too busy to come to Delhi to discuss the question of Kashmir; though he respected Nehru personally, there were occasions in human affairs when the interests of the country had to take precedence over personal relationship." B. N. Kaul, The Untold Story, p. 139. While as Nehru wanted clarification of the relationship of Kashmir with India before the finalisation of Kashmir constitution, Shaikh wanted finalisation of constitutional relation and ironclad assurance of autonomy. A. G. Noorani, 'How and Why Neuru and Abdullah Fell Out', Economic and Politically Weekly, Vol. 34, No. 5, (Jan. 30-Feb. 5, 1999), pp. 268-72.

235 Lord Birdwood op. cit., p. 255. Nobody could enter Kashmir without a permit, a restriction imposed by Union Ministry of Defence after 1947 'tribal invasion' as Kashmir had been described a "war zone" Mir Qasim op. cit., p. 63


237 Lord Birdwood, op. cit., p. 256.

238 V. Bushan, op. cit., p. 188, S. Gopal, op. cit., p. 129.

239 SWJN, Vol.23 p. 294 fn.
India and different elements in the country [read Jan Sangh] on the issue is whether to bring about the merger of the State with India now or after some time.\textsuperscript{240} Maulana Azad in his reply gave explicit assurance to Shaikh that Kashmir’s special position would be safeguarded. “What I am telling you now is as a personal friend. There is only one-way of safeguarding the future well-being of the people of Kashmir and that is the way we laid down in 1949 and which you had then accepted. Hold steadfastly to this way and be assured that you will never have to regret it.”\textsuperscript{241}

But in the given political situation and past promises by India (and also the position of Azad in India when even Nehru was not able to hold) Shaikh realised that these “assurances came with a good deal of mental reservation.”\textsuperscript{242} Shaikh had come to the conclusion that there could be no solution of Kashmir “without an India-Pakistan accord.”\textsuperscript{243} Shaikh Abdullah, on July 30, told a crowd of peasants that the future of Kashmir was dependent upon the goodwill of both neighbours India and Pakistan and therefore Kashmir should not “merge” with either country.\textsuperscript{244}

The mention of Pakistan by Shaikh pained Nehru\textsuperscript{245} and he asked Shaikh to come to Delhi ‘to sort out the mutual difference’ but he refused and instead sent Bakshi and Beg to Delhi. Shaikh’s refusal to come Delhi angered Nehru and he started giving importance and preference to Bakshi. It was here that Bakshi played the game. While as Beg returned to Srinagar, Bakshi stayed in Delhi to “work out modus operandi for the removal of Shaikh Abdullah from power and his arrest.”\textsuperscript{246} New Delhi succeeded in winning Bakshi and encouraging dissension within NC.\textsuperscript{247} Many of the colleagues of Shaikh within the National Conference “showed more pro-Indian inclinations than Abdullah” and did not approve the changing attitude of

\textsuperscript{241} Azad to Abdullah, 9 July 1953 cited in S. Gopal, op. cit., p.131.
\textsuperscript{242} Abdullah to Nehru see Noorani, ‘How and Why Nehru and Abdullah Fell Out,’ Economic And Political Weekly, January 30, 1999, pp.268-72, p.271, Shaikh Abdullah declined Nehru’s invitations to come Delhi and even stated “it will not serve any useful purpose to carry on a long correspondence.” Nehru to Bakshi, July, 24, 1953, SWJN, Vol. 23, pp. 293-95.
\textsuperscript{243} Noorani, Kashmir: Blunders of The Past, op. cit, p. 87.
\textsuperscript{245} Nehru had ruled out parleys with Pakistan on anything except the status quo. A. G. Noorani, Kashmir: Blunder of the Past, p. 87.
\textsuperscript{246} Balraj Puri, in ‘Kashmir and Rest of India, First Emotional Rupture,’ Economic And Political Weekly, Vol. 38, No. 49 (Dec. 6-12, 2003), pp. 5143-5145. Bakshi was “motivated primarily by personal ambition” to gain power. Bose, Roots, p. 65.
Shaikh.\textsuperscript{248} The result was a major rift within the top NC leadership. Consequently, the Cabinet got divided into two factions—Shaikh Abdullah and Afzal Beg ‘pro-Independent group,’ and Bakshi, Shyamlal Sara and Giridarilal Dogra ‘pro-Indian group’. G M. Sadiq and D. P. Dhar the communists joined the Bakshi group. Out of the three dissident ministers two were Hindus and their “allegiance to India appears to have been the deciding factor.”\textsuperscript{249}

The two factions openly clashed with each other and criticized each other in public meetings. In a speech at Ganderbal on 31 July, Shaikh declared that the accession to India had been forced upon Kashmir because India refused to assist against ‘invaders’ without the accession.\textsuperscript{250} But Bakshi quickly responded that “Kashmiris would defend at the cost of their lives the State’s accession to India and a special position to Jammu and Kashmir in the Indian constitution.”\textsuperscript{251} Bakshi also tried to show his loyalty to India through his correspondence to Nehru by criticizing Shaikh’s confrontation at a time when Sheik’s relations with Nehru were strained. He also asked for central support. In a letter to Nehru on 17 July, 1953 Bakshi alleged that Shaikh’s activities had led to factionalism in the NC and the State Government and administration had collapsed on all levels.” Then he asked what he really wanted, “this development has got to be arrested somewhere and that too very quickly.”\textsuperscript{252}

Consequently, on July 31, Nehru took the fateful step. “On 31 July,” recalls, B. N. Mullik, “Mehra [D. W. Mehra, Mullik’s deputy] and I met Prime Minister.... He came to the point that there was no other alternative but to remove Shaikh Abdullah and install Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed in his place... he warned that we must be prepare for the worst, because the Shaikh undoubtedly had a large following in the Valley.” \textsuperscript{253}

\textsuperscript{248} Korbel, op. cit., p. 234.
\textsuperscript{249} Bose, Roots, op. cit., p. 65. Sadar-i-Reyasat also was sympathetic to Bakshi Group. Earlier on June 10, 1953, he had sent a message to Nehru which read: “I was shocked and astounded to gather from a private meeting with Shaikh Abdullah last week that he seems to have decided to go back upon the solemn agreements which he has concluded with India and upon his clear commitments. This cannot be allowed, as it will make our position absolutely impossible and be a grave blow to our national interests and naturally to our international position also... I have requested Dr Katju to arrange for the Government of India intelligence service here to keep in close touch with me, as that will greatly help me in correctly appraising this unstable and most unpredictable situation.” Noorani, Frontline, 29 Dec, 2006, p. 86.
\textsuperscript{250} \textit{SWJN}, Vol. 23, op. cit., p. 304.
\textsuperscript{251} The Hindu\textit{ian} Times, July 27, 1953.
\textsuperscript{252} \textit{SWJN}, Vol.23, op. cit., p. 300.
\textsuperscript{253} B. N. Mullik, \textit{My Years With Nehru}, Delhi, 1971, p. 42.
Meanwhile in early August 1953 Shaikh Abdullah decided to call a meeting of the Working Committee of the General Council of the National Conference on 24 August and 26 August, 1953 to “endorse his new line” and also to apprise the public about the whole situation on 21 August, 1953 on the Id Day. On 7 August, three members of the cabinet led by Bakshi submitted a memorandum to Sadar-i- Riyasat, in which they accused Abdullah “of making arbitrary decisions, of being responsible for deterioration in the administration, despotism, inefficiency and wanton wastage of public resources. In the conclusion of the memorandum, he was informed that the cabinet had lost the confidence of the people. The same day Shaikh had told the members of the NC that the accession to India in 1947 had been due to “force of circumstances” and the communalist demand of merger of the State had “shaken the foundations of Indo-Kashmir relations.” Thus Shaikh’s position, politically, had become untenable which “precipitated a political crisis in the State.” Sadar-i Riyasat suggested an emergency meeting of the cabinet. However, Shaikh “sure of his unshakable leadership” did not heed his suggestion and went to Gulmarg. On 9 August in a “Shakespearean styled drama” the Sadar-i- Riyasat, took full revenge of his father. He dismissed Shaikh Abdullah and nominated Bakshi as Prime Minister. Shaikh was arrested under the ‘Public Security Act’, a law, which Shaikh had frequently used against his opponents. He would spend next twenty-two years in prison until 1975’ barring brief spells of release. On 9-10 August, Shaikh’s most trusted lieutenant Mirza Afzal Beg along with 33 other National Conference leaders was arrested under the Public Security Act. The news of Shaikh’s dismissal and arrest spread like wild fire. Massive protests swept the whole Valley including Doda in Jammu Division. At all district headquarters, police force had been deployed and they had to open fire against the demonstrators at several places resulting the death of

254 V. Bushan, op. cit., p.190.
255 Times of India, Bombay, August 10, 1953.
257 Korbet, op. cit., p. 239.
258 He was charged with indulging in acts of disruption, corruption, nepotism, maladministration and establishing foreign contacts of a kind dangerous to the peace and prosperity of the state, SHJN, Vol. 23, p. 310, fn.
259 Bose, Roots, op. cit., p. 66.
260 Saraf, op. cit., p. 1214.
scores of people. Supporters of Shaiikh Abdullah including top officers, legislators and ministers were detained. Complete hartal was observed in Valley for eleven days.261

In Pakistan, surprisingly, demonstrations were held against the arrest of Shaiikh. Shaiikh was no longer Pakistan’s quisling but was now India’s.262 Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad the new Prime Minister in his first statement said that ‘Kashmir had indissoluble links with India and charged Shaiikh Abdullah and some of his colleagues with working for an independent State with the “connivance and support of interested foreign powers.”263 Nehru on 10 August 1953 justified Shaiikh’s arrest, although in moderate extreme, that Shaiikh’s activities had created “a serious situation----and there was a progressive tendency towards disruption. The Government of India were naturally gravely concerned at these developments... it is a matter of deep regret to me that Shaiikh Abdullah, an old comrade of 20 years, should have come into conflict with our other comrades in Kashmir and that it should have been considered necessary by the ‘Kashmir Government’ to place him in detention for the time being.”264 Indira Gandhī was not happy with Shaiikh’s dismissal and arrest. In a letter to her father, Nehru, she wrote, “I was dreading such a thing since your letter265 .... I am filled with a terrible and deeply penetrating sadness. I suppose one has to do some things for the greater good but it is like cutting a part of one-self.”266

Now the question arises why Shaiikh, who had all praise for accession with India and Indian secular democratic setup in his inaugural speech in the Constituent Assembly in 1951, started drifting away from India and his trusted friend Nehru. The root of the differences between Shaiikh and Nehru was their differences on ‘long-term perspective of the Kashmir autonomy. Nehru considered the autonomy ‘as a

261 S. Bhat, op. cit., pp. 54-55; for detailed account see Mir Qasim, op. cit., pp.68-70; and Saraf, op.cit., pp.113-115.
262 C. Thomas, op. cit., p. 219.
265 Nehru had written to Indira Gandhī on August 2, “Tomorrow parliament begins at eight a.m...But my real headache is Kashmir where Shaiikh Sahib has turned many somersaults and is bitter against India and me. The situation there is explosive and anything may happen.” SWJN, VOL. 23, P. 311.
266 Ibid.
temporary arrangement intended to smoothing the regions transition from independent country to province.\textsuperscript{267}

On August 28, 1952, in Sonamarg (Kashmir) Nehru asked Shaikh to finalise the accession, as according to Nehru both Pakistan and UN were impotent to prevent that.\textsuperscript{268} Shaikh, however, regarded the special status permanent ‘not open to revision with the passage of time’.\textsuperscript{269} In a conversation with Norman D Palmer, in September 1952, Shaikh said, “Kashmir could not hope to be independent and escape outside pressures. Therefore, it had to identify itself with a more powerful political unit.” Shaikh however, insisted that the accession with India was provisional as there in 1947 was no other practicable alternative and it (the accession to India) had been an act of necessity. The eventual future of the State was therefore to be determined by its people.\textsuperscript{270} Y. D. Gundevia argues that “it was an about face on the part of the Government of India, with the Home Ministry winning all along line- and Jawaharlal Nehru gradually succumbing to “right wing pressures” that Shaikh started rethinking about accession.”\textsuperscript{271} Shaikh was never trusted by Home Ministry of India (Patel) and from the very beginning intelligence officers had been posted in Srinagar “nominally to watch out for Pakistani activities in the State, but actually to spy on Shaikh Abdullah.”\textsuperscript{272}

\textsuperscript{267} Nehru being the protagonist of Indian secularism ‘could not afford to make a permanent exception of Jammu and Kashmir from the process of national integration, purely on religious grounds’. Prem Mahadevan, REAS, August 2009, p. 10, see also B. N. Mullick, p. 29-30.

\textsuperscript{268} SWJN, Vol. 19, p. 322.

\textsuperscript{269} Shaikh Abdullah considered the accession as “provisional” and limited. Ayesha Jalal, Kashmir Scars: A Terrible Beauty Is Torn, The New Republic, July 23, 1990, pp. 17-20. Although Shaikh Continuously justified accession “in the ringing rhetoric of ideological and programmatic affinity” but he privately nourished the idea of a sovereign Kashmir; considering association with India “in far more contingent terms, as a strategic necessity given the circumstances and the alignment of political forces in 1947.” Bose, Roots, op. cit., pp. 59-60. The Constituent Assembly, Shaikh believed, would “guarantee that the State of Jammu and Kashmir would never become just another Indian state. A suitable constitution would ensure that the “temporary” special status indicated in article 370, of the Indian Constitution would, in fact, be permanent; and it would not preclude the possibility of, one day, full independence. This is what he understood by the word “accession”}; and it explains many of the apparent contradictions in his public statements over the years.” A Lamb, Kashmir a Disputed, op. cit., p. 193.


\textsuperscript{271} Y. D. Gundevia, op. cit., p. 110.

\textsuperscript{272} Ibid., p. 111. The Intelligence Bureau under B. N. Mullik had been active in Kashmir immediately after the accession. B N Mullik who headed the IB in Kashmir, records that Patel did not trust Shaikh Abdullah and favoured Maharaja. He records that Patel apprehended that Shaikh Abdullah would ultimately let down India and Jawaharlal Nehru and would come out in his real colours; his antipathy to the Maharaja was not really an antipathy to a ruler as such, but to the Dogras in general and with the Dogras he identified the rest of the majority community (Hindus) in India.” B. N
In his capacity Shaikh did everything to win over the people to ‘his way of thinking-accession to India; but he failed. He failed because Maharaja and his friends in Delhi, Sardar Patel, B. N. Mullik and the communalists did everything to weaken his hands; their opposition the autonomy ‘strengthened separatism.’ Needless to say the Praja Parishad Agitation made Shaikh Abdullah jittery. Conversely, the more the Parishad intensified its agitation, the more strident Abdullah’s position became on accession to India.” Shaikh found the ground slipping away from under his feet. His popularity was at stake and anti-Shaikh and anti-India feeling among the Valley people increased rapidly. Shaikh was not unaware of it. In order the regain the popularity, he revived the idea of an independent Kashmir. A report in London’s Sunday Observer in May 1949 attracted notice in New Delhi. Shaikh was quoted to have said: “Accession to either side cannot bring peace. We want to live in friendship with both dominions [India and Pakistan]. Perhaps a middle path between them with economic cooperation with each other will be the only way to do it. However, an independent Kashmir must be guaranteed not only by India and Pakistan, but also by Great Britain, the US and the UN. He met world leaders and tried to sell the idea of independence and “enlist their support.”

On 29 September 1950, Shaikh met US ambassador to India, Loy Henderson, who cabled the State Department on his two secret meetings. Inter alia it added: “in discussion [of the] future of Kashmir, Abdullah was vigorous in restating that in his opinion it should be independent; that an overwhelming majority of the population desired their independence; that he had reason to believe that some Azad Kashmir leaders desired independence and would be willing to cooperate with leaders of National Conference if there was reasonable chance such cooperation would lead to independence. Kashmir people could not understand why UN consistently ignored

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Mullick because of his anti-Shaikh approach and activities was promoted as the Director of IB by Patel “over the heads of nearly thirty of [his] seniors in the cadre.” B. N. Mullik, op. cit., p. 16

A. G. Noorani, ‘Brought To Heel,’ op. cit.

N. A. Naqsh, op. cit., p. 101. As Shaikh Abdullah himself confessed, “the Parishad agitation literally poured cold water on the efforts of the National Conference to rally Muslim support for India all these years.” The draft of Abdullah’s undelivered speech scheduled for 21 August 1953. Mrudula Sarabhai released the draft in 1956. For the draft see Ab Jabbar, op. cit., pp. 288-96.

Ghulam Ahmad, M Y Years With Shaikh Abdullah, Srinagar, 2008, p.112. Also, see Rajender Prasad’s letter to Nehru on 14 July, 1953. As discussed earlier. Dr Rajendra Prasad: Correspondence and Selected Documents, Volume 16, p. 90. Ghulam Mohiuddin Karra an important leader of NC left NC and openly came out in favour of Pakistan. B. N. Mullik, op. cit., p. 39.

Cited in A Bhattacharjea, Tragic, op. cit., p. 150.

Ghulam Ahmad, op. cit., p. 112.
independence as possible solution for Kashmir. Kashmir people had language and
cultural background of their own”. 278 It is said that Shaikh had assured Loy
Henderson that not to bother about the communists around him, “they are mere show
boys whom I can kick out any time I like.” 279 But the most controversial meeting of
Shaikh was with Adlai Stevenson, the US Democrat Party President candidate in
Srinagar in 1953. Shaikh had meeting with him from May 1 to 3. In an interview to
the Manchester Guardian, he said, “the best status for Kashmir could be independence
from both India and Pakistan.” His visit was followed by the visit of Dulles, the US
Secretary of State to India and Pakistan on May 3 1953. He also talked of Kashmir’s
independence. 280 Shaikh was accused of intriguing with US for independence. Shaikh
in his memoirs denies any charges of intrigue but admits meeting and discussion on
Kashmir issue. As he puts it, “I invited him on lunch--- and apprised him about the
Kashmir issue. ---when he reached Delhi somebody (correspondent) asked him if he
had met (Shaikh). In his garrulous manner, he said, of course three times. This was
enough for the press, and particularly for the left to raise hell.” 281

India began to suspect that Shaikh with the help of America wanted an
independent Kashmir. This was a bad news for Nehru and was embarrassing India at
international level. The demand for the removal of Shaikh rose as the rumours of
conspiracies spread. 282 It became politically difficult for Nehru to support his old
friend Abdullah when the latter started talking of independence, which embarrassed
India. 283 Thus Shaikh Abdullah who was considered by India as ‘indispensable at the
time of accession’ in 1947; was replaced with a more pliable leader’ Bakshi of N.C.
in 1953 by using its military and other resources. 284

How could India justify the dismissal ant arrest of Shaikh? There was no
‘convincing “democratic” justification for the dismissal and arrest of Shaikh
Abdullah. Nehru himself had time and again assured world that the future of Kashmir

Bhattacharjee, Tragic hero of Kashmir, op. cit., p. 155.
282 Christopher Thomas, op. cit., p. 216.
283 Philip Deano, The Scotsman, Edinburgh, 5 March, 1954, International Press Cutting Bureau,
London.[Press cutting in the Information Department Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir, Srinagar.]
284 Nirvika Singh, ‘Cultural Conflict In India: Punjab And Kashmir’ Global, Area And International
would be determined by its people through plebiscite. Ironically in the same month i.e. August (1953), when Shaikh was removed for raising plebiscite demand, Nehru had agreed with the Pakistan Government "to set up a joint India-Pakistani committee of civilian and military experts to hold preliminary discussions on organizing a Kashmir plebiscite."\textsuperscript{285} Although removal of Shaikh 'brought the Government of India a few years of relative calm in its relations with Kashmir but at the same time it shook 'the basic structure of the Indian position in the State of Jammu and Kashmir from which it would never fully recover.'\textsuperscript{286} The dismissal and arrest of Shaikh was both a personal blow and a setback to national and international policy 'of Nehru.'\textsuperscript{287}

Shaikh Abdullah took over as the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir at a time when there were many forces pulling in different directions and the future of Kashmir was unsettled and uncertain.\textsuperscript{288} Nevertheless, he did commendable work in the socio-economic field of the State. His land to tiller reform without the compensation to the landlords was no less than a miracle. The simple village people could now afford to drink the milk from their own cows and eggs of their fowls. Mr Eric Tyndale Biscoe who was closely associated with Kashmir since 1931 sums up that "nowhere else in the world has one man made such a peaceful revolution during this generation."\textsuperscript{289} For the first time, a Prime Minister was seen touring villages on foot or horseback; moving among the people, speaking to them in their language.\textsuperscript{290} Under Shaikh Abdullah, the State got its first university;\textsuperscript{291} 35 per cent of the budget was allocated for education.\textsuperscript{292} He got abolished the hereditary ruler-ship of the Dogras and made the office elective. However, in the political field Shaikh's period

\textsuperscript{285} Bose, Roots, op. cit., pp. 66-7
\textsuperscript{286} Lamb, Kashmir a disputed legacy, op. cit., p. 199.
\textsuperscript{287} S. Gopal, op. cit., p. 133. As we have seen that to Nehru, Shaikh was the representative of the people of the State and it was because of his endorsement to the accession that India considered accession legal; but Shaikh's deposition and arrest put a question mark on that. "If Shaikh Abdullah were a false prophet, as the coup of 8-9 August 1953 suggested, then it could well be that Nehru had seriously misinterpreted the will of the inhabitants of Jammu, Ladakh and the Vale of Kashmir." Lamb, Kashmir a disputed legacy op. cit., pp. 199-200.
\textsuperscript{288} Saraf, op. cit., p. 1216.
\textsuperscript{290} Saraf, op. cit., p.1216.
\textsuperscript{291} on November 1, 1948, the State got its first university in the form of Jammu and Kashmir University, M. Brecher, Struggle, op. cit., p. 154.
\textsuperscript{292} Shaikh Abdullah showed special interest in education and he himself took over the portfolio of education. Thus for the first time in the history of Kashmir, a separate ministry of education came into being. Shaikh Abdullah is said to have told the reorganization committee in his inaugural address that "land to the tillers and education for everyone were two basic needs which brooked no delay for fulfilment." M. Brecher, op. cit., pp. 153-55.
proved to be the continuation of the autocratic Dogra rule. He ruled as a dictator and did not allow democracy to flourish in the State for which he was fully backed by Nehru.
Chapter Five

Injured Lion:
From Plebiscite Movement to Accord (1955-75)

After the dismissal and arrest of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah on 9 August 1953, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad was made the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. The accession of Bakshi marked the “beginning of Kashmir’s alienation” from India. Since Bakshi lacked the kind of popular support which the Shaikh enjoyed, he had no alternative but to rely on India and consequently he was forced to strengthen the constitutional ties between Srinagar and New Delhi. India too had no option but to support Bakshi fully. The Central Government fully cooperated with Kashmir Government and sent heavy financial aid to Bakshi, so that he could succeed in building public opinion in favour of India.

The State Government took welfare measures and the people of Kashmir witnessed the overall growth and development during this period. Even Shaikh Abdullah accepted that there was development during Bakshi’s reign. However, India did not succeed in diverting the attention of the people from its demands for “political concessions by emphasising on economic growth and welfare,” because the people in the absence of the Shaikh were not ready to cooperate with the Bakshi to whom they considered as “Delhi’s man” in Kashmir. At the same time Bakshi tried to “purchase the colleagues of Shaikh and other influential people by offering them money and positions.” it is worth to quote Sanna-ullah Bhat: “Whoever was to be purchased with money was won over, whoever was to be won over by suitable posts,

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3 The arrest of Shaikh Abdullah had put a question mark over the Kashmir’s accession to India, because India had claimed that accession was final as it had the support of Shaikh Abdullah, the popular leader of Kashmir.
4 Education was made free up to university level, subsidy was given on rice, roads were constructed; Banihal tunnel was constructed to improve the road links between the Valley and Jammu and the rest of India; work on power projects was started etc. See Ajit Bhattarajee, *Kashmir The Wounded Valley*, New Delhi, 1994, p. 207. Also, Mir Qasim, *My Life and Times*, New Delhi, 1992, pp. 70-1.
8 Mir Qasim, op. cit., p. 71.
9 N.C. Behera, op cit., p. 114.
they were offered to them and those who rejected both money and posts were imprisoned."\textsuperscript{10} The motive was to isolate Shaikh Abdullah from his political following.\textsuperscript{11} It was under this consideration that Mirza Afzal Beg was released in November, 1954. As is evident from the letter of Jawaharlal Nehru which he wrote to Bakshi; "I am glad that he (Afzal Beg) is no longer with Shaikh Sahib. I do not particularly like Shaikh Sahib being surrounded by some people who must have influenced him all the time in a wrong "direction".\textsuperscript{12} However, Beg remained loyal to Shaikh and acted as the representative of Shaikh among the people during his absence.

Since the National Conference had come under the control of the Bakshi group, the Shaikh group thought in terms of founding a new organisation\textsuperscript{13} and the new organisation they founded came to be known as "Plebiscite Front".\textsuperscript{14} The Plebiscite Front or Plebiscite Movement or Tahrik-i-Rai-Shumari was launched on 9 August, 1955\textsuperscript{15} by Mirza Afzal Beg, the lieutenant of Shaikh, with the main objective to struggle for the attainment of the "right of self-determination to decide the future of Jammu and Kashmir."\textsuperscript{16} The era of Plebiscite Front politics (1955-1975) "signalled phase of withdrawal from Indian system and the emergence of a formidable challenge to the accession of the state of Jammu and Kashmir with the Indian union."\textsuperscript{17} Although Shaikh Abdullah was in prison he fully supported the Plebiscite Movement. In fact from his memoir it becomes clear that the Plebiscite Front was formed after a

\textsuperscript{10} S. Bhatt, op.cit. pp. 66-67.
\textsuperscript{11} D.E. Lockwood., op.cit. p. 384.
\textsuperscript{12} Nehru to Bakshi, dated 5 December, 1954, cited in Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru (SWJN) (second series) vol. 27, Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, New Delhi, 2000, p. 247.
\textsuperscript{13} Shaikh Abdullah, op. cit., p. 662.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{15} Exactly after two years of Shaikh Abdullah’s arrest and dismissal. From here 9\textsuperscript{th} August came to be observed as a black day. Ironically they demanded plebiscite and said that accession was not permanent, but observed 9\textsuperscript{th} August as black day and not 27\textsuperscript{th} October when the accession took place. According to B.N. Mullik, they were "frustrated with the loss of power and their main aim was to get power and raised the slogan of plebiscite to gain the support of the people." B.N. Mullik, My Years With Nehru, New Delhi, 1971, p. 76.
\textsuperscript{17} The Plebiscite Front declared that the accession was conditional and temporary and Kashmir was a disputed territory and its future could be decided by its people through the right of self-determination. Gul Mohammad Wani, Kashmir Politics: Problems and Prospects, New Delhi, (1993), p. 66.
consultation with Shaikh. However, it remains a mystery that Shaikh never joined the Plebiscite Front. The branches of the Plebiscite Front were opened all over the Valley. Thus a good platform was provided to the followers of the Shaikh and the pro-Pakistan elements, who fully used this platform in making people conscious about the right of self-determination and created an anti-India feeling among them.

In no time the Plebiscite Movement became the mass movement and "a symbol of the people's opposition to the Bakshi Government." At this juncture, the State and the Central Governments reached to an understanding—Bakshi was allowed by Delhi to run "unrepresentative, unaccountable government in Srinagar in return for facilitating IJK's (East Kashmir's) integration with India on New Delhi's terms." In consequence of this a number of Indian laws were extended and made applicable to Jammu and Kashmir. The first came in the form of the President of India Proclamation Order 1954 by which besides other things, the emergency powers of the President of India and Provisions of the Constitution of India regarding Citizenship, and Fundamental Rights (with restrictions) were made applicable to Jammu and Kashmir. The others included the extension to the State of the jurisdiction of the 'Comptroller and Auditorial General (vide Presidential Order of 1958), of the appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court including its power to grant special leave to appeal against the decisions of Jammu and Kashmir High Court, appointment and conditions of the judges of the State High Court and review election petitions (vide Presidential Order of 1960). In 1958 the State Legislative Assembly gave its "concurrence after due consultation with New Delhi, to the deployment of Indian staff from outside IJK (East Kashmir) in IJK's (East Kashmir's) administration." Three decades later, in 1989, when the militancy started; "out of 22 senior level officers in

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18 Shaikh Abdullah, op. cit., p. 662.
19 B.N. Mullik, op. cit., p.198. The main reason behind this, says Ajit Bhattacharjea, was that it was Shaikh who had supported the accession to India in 1947. Ajit Bhattacharjea, Kashmir the Wounded Valley UBSPD, (1994), p. 208. If he headed the Front, "he would lose all support he had in India" and also he did not want that others could exploit his name. Times of India, Sep. 28, 1955.
20 For its organisational structure see Asifa Jan, op. cit., pp. 96-8.
23 M.Y. Saraf, op. cit., p. 1228.
24 Mir Qasim, op. cit., p. 90.
27 B. Puri op. cit., p. 152.
the IJK (East Kashmir) branch of India’s professional civil service, only 5 were Kashmiri-speaking Muslims, and were mostly filled by Pandits, although Muslims constitute 65 per cent (70 per cent) of the population.”

Bakshi had no problem in bringing Kashmir more closer to India, if he could get “maximum financial assistance for the State with a (good) percentage for family.” These developments suggest that Shaikh was arrested to bring Kashmir in total integration with the Indian union. “Abdullah for part,” affirms Peer Giyas-ud-Din, “was always zealous of this special status so long as he continued to be at the helm of affairs in the State. As a matter of fact, it was after the dismissal that many of the privileges which the State enjoyed under the constitution were taken away.” Thus, with these developments, the beginning of the end of special status of Jammu and Kashmir started in February 1954, the “Kashmir Constituent Assembly” declared the accession to India “final and legal”.

On November 17, 1956, the “one-party Kashmir Constituent Assembly” approved and adopted a new constitution, which declared the State of Jammu and Kashmir as an “integral part of India.” Shaikh Abdullah from the prison protested against these developments. In a letter to Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, Shaikh Abdullah questioned the competence of the Constituent Assembly to finalise the State’s Constitution, since after his removal from office in 1953, the Assembly had “completely forfeited the confidence of the electorate.” The Constituent Assembly was “extremely dubious body and could not claim to represent the will of the people.” Shaikh Abdullah considered the Constituent Assembly illegal and that the existing government had no “legal or constitutional status” after his undemocratic dismissal. Pakistan took a strong notice of these developments inside Kashmir and

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29 Aijit Bhattacharjea, op. cit., p. 205.
31 A. Bhattacharjea op. cit., p. 205.
35 Shaikh Abdullah to Sadiq, 16 August, 1956, Times Of India, October 30, 1956.
36 Christopher Thomas, Faultline Kashmir, Middlesex, UK, 2000, p. 208.
requested the Security Council to convene a meeting on the Kashmir Issue. Pakistan also released a letter ‘purportedly’ written by the imprisoned Shaikh alleging repression in the disputed State. The Security Council adopted a resolution (S/3779) at its 76th meeting on January 24, 1957, and, *inter alia*, affirmed its stand by plebiscite, that the Kashmir issue would be decided by its people through “the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite, and any action by the Kashmir’s Assembly and its support by the parties would not constitute disposition of the State in keeping with that (above) principle.” However, nothing could stop India from bringing Kashmir closer with the Indian Union. And in fact it got the support of Soviet Union when in 1955 the Soviet Prime Minister, Khrushchev and another leader Bulgamin visited India and also Kashmir. At Srinagar, Khrushchev declared Kashmir an integral part of India.

In Kashmir, India fully backed up Bakshi for his undemocratic and authoritarian rule, fully supported by Nehru. Balraj Puri recalls how Nehru turned down his request for allowing him to form a pro-Indian democratic opposition in Kashmir: The politics of Kashmir,” Nehru replied, “revolved around personalities. There was no material for democracy in Kashmir.” Similarly in a reply to P.N. Bazaz, while Nehru accepted that there was no respect of political rights in Kashmir as he wrote “it is true that political liberty does not exist there in the same measure as in the rest of India” but in the same breath claimed that “there is much more of it than there used to be” (under the Dogra Rule). It was “a very poor excuse” on part of Nehru and he was “conscious of it.” Meanwhile the communists who had gained some powers under Bakshi tried to oust Bakshi from the office. Bakshi was aware of

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39 *Times of India*, January 17, 1957.
42 Bose as referred earlier,p.68. No political opposition was allowed and there was like Shaikh’s reign one party’s rule,B. Puri, *Kashmir Insurgency And After*, New Delhi, 2008 Edition, p. 51
43 B. Puri, *Kashmir Insurgency*, op. cit., p. 51
the growing activities of the communists that they were plotting against him.\(^{48}\) He took for himself the key positions and dismissed Sadiq, Mir Qasim, G.L. Dogra and D.P. Dhar from the Government.\(^{49}\) The communist group lead by G.M. Sadiq left National Conference and formed Democratic National Conference on October 20, 1957.\(^{50}\) To gain the support of the people, the DNC demanded the release of Shaikh Abdullah.\(^{51}\) In the meantime the Plebiscite Front, because of the patronage of Shaikh Abdullah, had got enormous support of the people and succeeded in creating secessionist and anti-India feelings among them\(^{52}\) and it became very difficult for a pro-Indian party to function and get the support of the people.\(^{53}\) Even the “secular elements in Kashmir became weak as their ‘secularism’ was disproved by the arrest of Shaikh and became secessionists by joining the Plebiscite Movement.\(^{54}\) The dismissal and detention of Shaikh Abdullah not only deteriorated the relations between India and Kashmir, but also between India and Pakistan\(^{55}\) and put a question mark over the accession of the state to the Indian union.\(^{56}\) In 1957, Nehru for the first time, after the arrest of Shaikh, visited Kashmir. He was in reconciliation mood and stressed on narrowing the gap between India and Shaikh Abdullah.\(^{57}\) In fact Nehru was “consistently apologetic about detaining Abdullah.”\(^{58}\) He said at Srinagar that he had not come to Kashmir for the last four years because he had been pained by the arrest and detention of Shaikh Abdullah.\(^{59}\) Speaking at the Congress Parliamentary Party meeting at Delhi, after his return from Srinagar, Nehru said that he would be happy about the release of Shaikh.\(^{60}\) Nehru had realised that Kashmir issue could not be settled without the support of Shaikh Abdullah, the undisputed leader of Kashmir. In a

\(^{48}\) Mir Qasim, op. cit., pp. 81-2.

\(^{49}\) Josef Korbal, op. cit., p. 318.

\(^{50}\) Mir Qasim op. cit., p. 84.

\(^{51}\) Ibid, p. 86.

\(^{52}\) Ibid, p. 90.

\(^{53}\) Ibid, p. 89.

\(^{54}\) Peer Giyas-ud-Din, op. cit., p.26.

\(^{55}\) Ibid.

\(^{56}\) “If Shaikh Abdullah”, asks Alastair Lamb, “were a false prophet, as the coup of 8-9 august, 1953 suggested then it could well be that Nehru had seriously misinterpreted the will of the inhabitants of Jammu, Ladakh and Vale of Kashmir(in 1947).” Alastair Lamb, Kashmir A Disputed Legacy, op. cit., pp.199-200. India claimed that the accession was final because it was ratified by the popular leader, Shaikh Abdullah, who was the true leader and representative of the people of Kashmir. B.N Mullik, op. cit., pp.177-92 and pp.197-98.

\(^{57}\) S.Bhatt, op. cit., p. 71.

\(^{58}\) Ajit Bhattacharjea, op. cit., p.211. Also, Satish Vashistha, Shaikh Abdullah Then And Now, Delhi, 1968, p. 104.

\(^{59}\) Times of India, Sep. 12, 1957.

\(^{60}\) Ibid, Sep. 18, 1957.
letter to Karan Singh, Sadr-i- Riyasat, Nehru wrote: "In fact so long as Shaikh Abdullah is in prison, the dispute will not be finally closed. It is only when he has been released that it will be possible towards a final end". India was embarrassed at the international level by the continuous detention of the Shaikh. In the same letter to Karan Singh, Sadr-i-Riyasat, he tried to persuade the latter that the Shaikh should be released. "I have no doubt that internationally speaking; the release would have powerful effect in our favour. I have a very uncomfortable feeling that our position is constantly undermined by Shaikh Abdullah's detention both internally and abroad." Pakistan time and again demanded the release of Shaikh Abdullah, who had now become "an official Pakistani public hero, and soon it would be the Indians who were calling him a Quisling." Mr. Suhrwardi, the Pakistan Prime Minister, said at Tokyo on April 24, 1957 that if Nehru wanted "to retrieve his lost reputation...he should begin by releasing Shaikh Abdullah."  

The Intelligence Bureau which had a free hand in Kashmir and was duly assisted by the State Government could not "cook up to place any case before a court of law against the Shaikh in the four and a half years following his arrest in 1953." Nehru was disappointed with the detention of Shaikh without trial and pressed the State Government "either to place the Shaikh on trial or release him." As a result of this Shaikh was released on 8 January, 1958. Balraj Puri believes that Shaikh was released in 1958 by Bakshi to undermine political support of the Praja Socialist Party and Democratic National Conference, as both demanded the release of Shaikh Abdullah and end of Bakshi rule. Pakistan welcomed the release of the Shaikh. "It is a very welcome item of news that any person be released after four and a half years of

62 Ibid.
64 Times of India, April 25, 1957.
65 The Testament of Shaikh Abdullah with a Monograph by Y.D. Gundavia, New Delhi, 1974, pp. 116-17. In 1957 an F.I.R. was launched against eleven leaders of Plebiscite Front on a charge of conspiring with Pakistan to overthrow the government. But the Shaikh was not included in the eleven. According to B.N. Mullik, there was no strong evidence till then against Shaikh. B.N. Mullik, op. cit., p. 70.
66 B.N. Mullik, op.cit. p. 77.
67 Times of India, Jan 9, 1958. Interestingly the release of Shaikh Abdullah coincided with the visit of Dr. Frank Graham, the U.N representative to Indian Subcontinent. It was believed in Pakistan that in its decision to release Shaikh Abdullah, India was more "tactical than sincere". Times of India, Jan. 9, 1958.
imprisonment without trial”, an official in the Foreign Affairs Ministry (Pakistan) said. Shaikh was given a rousing reception in Srinagar and was “lionised” by the masses who came out in large numbers to greet the Shaikh despite “police pressure.” After his release efforts were made both at Delhi and at Srinagar to persuade the Shaikh for a dialogue and to return to power. At Srinagar, Mr. Sadiq sent Motilal Misri to Soura (residence of Shaikh) to convince him to join DNC and shun the slogan of plebiscite. From Delhi was sent Vijayalakshmi Pandit by Nehru. But the long detention and “betrayal of Nehru” which was still fresh in his mind and the gala welcome reception he was given after his release from Kud to Srinagar enhanced his popularity and his stance for self-determination. In Srinagar the Shaikh refused to recognise the State Government and criticized Nehru for betrayal and India’s secular policy. His attitude towards Pakistan had changed and for the first time he said that the tribal invasion in 1947 was the reaction of the oppression of the Muslims in Jammu. The main reason behind this change in the Shaikh was the growing anti-India and pro-Pakistan feeling among the people after the 1953 event. As is evident from Bazaz’s letter to Nehru, “it is no exaggeration to say that, by and large, the Kashmir Muslims are pro-Pakistan. This statement might annoy you but it would not be honest to conceal it.” Speaking at Hazratbal, Shaikh declared that the accession with India was conditional and temporary and Kashmir was a disputed territory. “The accession of Kashmir”, Shaikh declared, “is not to be decided by the perorations of Mr Krisna Menon or by guns and bullets. Kashmir does not belong to Krishna Menon or Nehru, Abdullah or Bakshi; it cannot be disposed of by India or Pakistan, America or Russia. The only people who can decide are the people of Kashmir -four million men, women and children, Muslims and Hindus who inhabit

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69 Times of India, Jan. 9, 1958.
70 B.N. Mullik, op. cit., p. 78
71 S Bhatt, op. cit., p. 72.
73 Mir Qasim, op. cit., p. 87.
75 S. Vashisth, op. cit., p. 106.
77 S. Vashisth, op. cit., p. 106. Interestingly the same was said by Sir Zafarullah Khan, the then Foreign Minister of Pakistan in the Security Council in 1948 when Shaikh was a member of Indian delegation in the Security Council.
78 See Bazaz, Kashmir In Crucible, op. cit., pp. 193-96.
this land.” Shaikh Abdullah, who had shown no enthusiasm for UN’s sponsored plebiscite when he was in power, now saw this particular form of reference to the people as essential on grounds of both justice and democracy. In a letter to Nehru, Shaikh asked Nehru to concede the demands of Kashmiris and he was determined to secure the “right of self-determination for the Kashmiri people through all means, whatever the cost.” Shaikh also declared that those countries which did not ‘support Kashmiri’s demand of self-determination were enemies of Kashmir and those which did were friends of Kashmir. It was clear indication that ‘India’ which did not support Kashmiri’s self-determination was ‘enemy’ and ‘Pakistan’ which did was ‘friend’ of Kashmiris.

Advocating the need for the immediate resolve of Kashmir issue, Shaikh made a “model declaration” with three main features:

1. The future of Kashmir had not been decided and it was because of that there was “political uncertainty’, economic distress and mental torture” for the people of Kashmir which had to be remedied.

2. The relations between India and Pakistan were a source of danger not only to Asia particularly, but for Kashmir and these unfriendly relations were a great threat to the people of Kashmir.

3. The future of Kashmir should be decided by its people through a plebiscite held under international auspices, or any other similar method mutually agreed by all parties concerned.

As already mentioned Shaikh refused to recognise the Bakshi Government as it had no “legal or constitutional status.” He also refused to recognise the new Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir. He exclaimed that he was against a Constitution which was passed by the Assembly, “the majority of whose members had lost the

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80 Ibid.
82 Shaikh to Nehru, 12th April, 1958, cited in *Times of India*, 14th April, 1958.
83 Friday speech at Hazratbal on January 30, 1958, cited in S. Vashishth, op. cit., p.110.
84 Ibid.
confidence of the people after August 9, 1953." These 'outspoken' demands for a plebiscite and sharp criticism of the Central and State Governments were deemed by Bakshi, and his advisers B.N Mullik and D.P Dhar as 'proof of Pakistani intrigue.' It gave them ample ground to re-arrest Shaikh Abdullah. On April 30, 1958, Shaikh Abdullah was re-arrested on the charges of intriguing with Pakistan against India and engineering riots, to break the ties with India and to merge the State with Pakistan and receiving money (through Begam Abdullah) and bombs from Pakistan. "The charges", writes, Ramachandra Guha "were absurd because, although he challenged the accession to India but he never advocated accession to Pakistan." This view is substantiated by Dawn newspaper from Karachi which wrote that in his trial Abdullah had never expressed a desire for Kashmir's accession to Pakistan, India or Independence were the only two options he had ever countenanced. According to Mir Qasim the 'riots' (a NC. worker was killed in the 'riots' on the occasion of Miiraj-un-Nabi at Hazaratbal) were engineered by Bakshi to provide justification for the re-arrest of Shaikh Abdullah. During his free air Shaikh had shown respect to Section 144 and had not violated any law, he was rearrested because the State Government considered him "as a potential threat to the State's security." If Mir Qasim is to be believed, Nehru who was in Hyderabad at the time of Shaikh's re-arrest was not happy with the incident and told Mir Qasim that he (Nehru) did not 'like any of the actions of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad.'

Shaikh Abdullah, Mirza Afzal Beg and other twenty five accused were made to face the alleged "Kashmir conspiracy case" as it came to be known as, which lingered on for six long years. Mridula Sarabhai, a wealthy lady of Gujarat (once Secretary to Gandhi), was friend of Shaikh and well aware about the Shaikh. She

87 S. Vashisht, op. cit., p.111.
88 Alastair Lamb, Disputed Legacy, op. cit., p.203.
89 Bakshi considered free Shaikh threat to his power and Mullik was not in favour of release of Shaikh in 1958 and at the time of his (Shaikh's) release had observed that Shaikh's release jolted his investigation and had hoped that his release would provide them more evidence to re-arrest him, B.N Mullik, op. cit., p.86.
90 B. N. Mullik, op. cit., p.85., Also Bakshi's statement at Delhi, Times of India, May 12, 1958. Interestingly B.N Mullik contradicts his own view. In the same book on p.52, he writes that Shaikh was not in favour of acceding to Pakistan 'even though he had become hostile to India-- he preferred a semi-independent status (autonomy i.e., within India.) B.N Mullik, op. cit., p.52.
93 Mir Qasim, op. cit., p.87, see also S.Bhatt, op. cit., pp.73-74.
95 Mir Qasim, op. cit., p. 88.
criticized Delhi for labelling Shaikh as pro- Pakistani and wrote innumerable letters to people far and near, on “his virtue and his statesmanship”. She ran a campaign for the release of Shaikh and handing over “power to him.” She also associated herself with the arrangement for the legal defence of a number of Plebiscite Front leaders who were being tried on charges of ‘conspiring to overthrow the Kashmir government’. She was dubbed as anti-national, expelled from congress and arrested for her alleged ‘anti-State’ activities on 6 Aug., 1958.

The first complaint was filed in the court of the Special Magistrate, Jammu, on May 21, 1958 against twenty-five “conspirants”, including Mirza Afzal Beg, Pir Maqbool Gilani, Pir Maqbool Vilgami and others. But Shaikh was not included in it, he, however, was featured in another complaint that was filed five months later, on October 23, 1958. Interestingly Begum Abdullah, who was charged by B.N Mullik as the main ‘accused’ receiving money from Pakistan, was never charged and never brought to book. In total two hundred and twenty-nine witnesses were examined and three hundred documents exhibited and the prosecution took eleven months, till on January 25, 1962 all accused were committed to the court of sessions. Shaikh did not give much importance to the prosecution because he was confident that it was based on falsehood. He made it clear that he did not believe in violence and conspiracy, but in the same breath made it clear that “getting help for freedom was not a conspiracy.” He further added that he was not conspirator but was entrapped under a conspiracy hatched by Bakshi. Nothing could be proved in the Sessions Court and the case went even slower, so much so that Nehru lost patience and in April 1962, made the first move to get the case withdrawn. But Bakshi, Mullik and Krishna Menon opposed this move.

95 M.Y. Saraf, op. cit., p. 1215.
97 Down, 8 August, 1958, Karachi.
98 B.N. Mullik, op. cit., p. 91.
100 B.N. Mullik, op. cit., p. 85.
101 Y.D. Gundevia, op. cit., p. 117.
102 N. Koul, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah A Political Phoenix, Delhi, 1985, pp. 80-81.
103 Shaikh Abdullah, op. cit., p. 716.
104 Shaikh’s statement in the court of Special Magistrate., Ibid. p. 715.
105 Oral statement of Shaikh in the court of the Special Magistrate, Mr. N.K Hale, on 13 August, 1960., Times of India, August 14, 1960.
107 B.N. Mullik, op. cit., p. 97.
In the meanwhile the situation in Kashmir had worsened following the re-arrest of Shaik. In the name of national interests, drastic curbs were put on fundamental liberties, press, speech and association.\(^{109}\) In a letter to Nehru, Bazaz informed him about this: “I can state without fear of contradiction that the Srinagar press has deteriorated since 1947.”\(^{110}\) Even Nehru accepted this though reluctantly. In his reply to Bazaz, he admitted that political liberty did not exist there in Kashmir “in the same measure as in the rest of India.”\(^{111}\) The people of Kashmir had grown restless\(^{112}\) and their long, a decade of, “pent-up resentment” finally exploded in Kashmir in late December.\(^{113}\) The ‘spark’ was provided by the theft of the Holy Relic or *Moe-e-Moquddas* (a hair of Prophet SAW) on 27\(^{th}\) December, 1963, from the shrine of Hazratbal.\(^{114}\) Although the Relic was found on 3 January, 1964, but both its disappearance and appearance remained mysterious.\(^{115}\) The news spread like the wild fire and people from all over Kashmir moved towards Hazratbal. A spontaneous hartal was observed and violent processions taken out demanding the recovery of the Relic and punishment for the offender.\(^{116}\) The people held Bakshi responsible for its theft and they attacked and set ablaze a hotel and a cinema, owned by his brother.\(^{117}\) An “Action Committee” was formed by Maulvi Sayyid Masoodi, with Maulvi Farooq as chairman for the recovery of the Holy Relic.\(^{118}\) The ‘Relic Movement’ united the Kashmiris. To put it in the words of P. N. Bazaz: “For the first time since 1932 when the Kashmiris had unitedly challenged the Dogra Raj, the Kashmiris were united under one banner against the government and made its functioning static and also gave a message to New Delhi to see the reading on the wall.”\(^{119}\) Bakshi had fled to Jammu and the State administration had virtually come to a standstill,\(^{120}\) and there was a parallel government ran by Action Committee; prices of essential commodities were fixed and enforced by the committee.\(^{121}\) The ministers were virtual prisoners

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109 N.C. Behera op. cit., p. 112.
112 Josef Korbel, op. cit., p. 318.
113 S. Bose, op. cit., p. 78.
114 B.N. Mullik, op. cit., p. 120.
115 B.N. Mullik who was investigating the matter, has dedicated two chapters of his book to the Relic Issue, but fails to inform about the perpetrators. See Mullik pp.115-166.
116 Ibid, p. 120.
117 Ibid. p. 121; Also, Ajit Bhattacharjea, *Wounded Valley*, op. cit., p. 214.
118 S. Bhatt, op. cit., p. 90. All pro-plebiscite leaders were its members.
confined to their houses with police guards protecting them. The Relic Movement (religious movement) turned into a political movement demanding not only the return of the relic, but also an international intervention for investigating the matter, the release of Shaikh Abdullah and holding of the plebiscite. Slogans in favour of Pakistan were also raised. However, Maulvi Masoodi dissuaded those who wanted to press for the release of Shaikh and plebiscite and hoisting of green flags. The Holy Relic Agitation had far-reaching consequences on the Indian subcontinent. There were riots in East Pakistan against Hindus which caused a ‘chain reaction’ in Calcutta of India where Muslims were victims. The Holy Relic Agitation on the one hand made it clear that ‘the Islamic religion remained the most powerful stimulus for political activity in the valley’ on the other hand, it showed that India had failed to win the hearts and minds of the people of Kashmir who severely destabilized the Indian sponsored regime in IJK (East Kashmir). The whole episode finally convinced Nehru that they were doing wrong in Kashmir and India sponsored regimes had no locus-standi in Kashmir, and thus he began clearing the path for Shaikh’s release. Shamsuddin, the Prime Minister was replaced by G.M. Sadiq, Delhi’s favourite candidate, as new Prime Minister of the State. Pandit Nehru called a meeting at his residence on April 5, 1964, to devise a new Kashmir policy. He was dejected by the Relic Agitation in Kashmir and exclaimed that “even after fifteen years of association, if Kashmir still remained in such an unstable state that even a simple issue like the Moe-e-Moquuddas the people could be so provoked as to rise in defiance of the Government, then, in his opinion a new approach had to be made and

123 Ibid, p. 133.
125 M.Y. Saraf, op. cit., p. 1239.
126 Piyaray Lal Koul, Kashmir Kay Shab Wa Roze (Urdu), Srinagar, 1972, pp. 115-116.
127 Times of India, January 28, 1964.
128 S. Bose, op. cit., p. 79.
129 Alastair Lamb, Disputed Legacy, op. cit., p. 207. Religion is basic to the people of the subcontinent and it is religion which lays out a comprehensive framework of life for the people’, Patricia Colway Symson, The Kashmir Dispute In World Politics, An unpublished Ph.D., thesis, 1968, (Department of Political Science) at St. John’s University, New York, (ProQuest Information and Learning Company), pp.78-79.
132 In Oct. 1963, Shamsuddin replaced Bakshi as Prime Ministe. Bakshi had resigned under the Kamraj Plan, to strengthen the Congress party. See Mir Qasim, op. cit., p. 91.
133 Sadiq was considered liberal and was demanding Shaikh’s release and was in favour of total integration of the State with India and merger of National Conference with National Congress, Times of India, 20 January, 1964.
a radical change in thinking about Kashmir was called for." Moreover after the failure of Bhutto –Sawaran Sing talks, Nehru thought in terms of direct talks over Kashmir with the Kashmiris. Besides this, on the international scene, India was worried about a growing isolation from African and Asian nations because of Kashmir problem. Also, the Chinese Debacle gave Nehru a fresh incentive to seek a ‘final resolution of the Kashmir question.’ Nehru knew that no political settlement could be thought without Shaikh Abdullah, who had a “strong hold on the people of Kashmir.” He strongly advocated for the withdrawal of the case against Shaikh. In a meeting, recalls Y. D Gundevia (he was also present in the meeting) ‘Nehru in a fighting mood,---- banged the table, and said,” if a damned thing cannot be proved in four years and in six years, then there is obviously nothing to be proved.” It was owing to these factors that Shaikh was released “unconditionally” on 8 April, 1964. Again Shaikh was given a rousing reception and was lionised; even his avowed enemies like Praja Parishad welcomed him. Nehru invited him to Delhi for talks to restore friendly relations with the “friend turn hostile” Shaikh Abdullah but Shaikh insisted that he would first like to see the people and know their view point.

After his release Shaikh Abdullah stressed on the friendly relations between India and Pakistan and asked them to resolve the Kashmir issue in a way that none of its parties (India, Pakistan and Kashmir should feel ‘sense of defeat’. He also criticized those people who demanded accession with Pakistan and said that Pakistan could not annex Kashmir by force or in the name of religion. However, he did not give up his demand for self-determination. Speaking at Anatnag he said, “The sun rise

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135 There were six rounds of Ministerial level talks between the two countries but again to no avail. For details see Alastair Lamb, Disputed Legacy, op. cit., p. 239.
137 Rama Chandra Guha, op. cit., p. 82.
140 Ibid. p.122. Again Shaikh was released when Kashmir was due to be discussed in the Security Council. Mr Chagla stated that Abdullah’s release suggested that there was normalcy and peace in Kashmir. Hindustan Times, 5 may, 1964.
141 Ibid. April 9, 1964.
143 Hindustan Times, April 9, 1964.
145 Hindustan Times, April 11, 1964.
in the west and set in the east, but I will not trade Kashmir's right for any price."\(^{146}\)

This was the time when communalism was again hovering in the subcontinent. The Muslims of India believed that the future of Muslims of India was associated with the Kashmir issue. Mr Badru-Din Tyabji, the then Vice Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University, in a press statement made it clear to Shaikh that "the future of millions of Muslims of India was involved in the Kashmir issue, not merely of the Kashmiris."\(^{147}\) Shaikh Abdullah was convinced by this statement and in a prayer meeting at Srinagar; he said that a solution to the Kashmir dispute must take account its likely consequences for the fifty million Muslims in India and ten million Hindus in 'East Pakistan'.\(^{148}\) However, it must be bear in mind that Shaikh was invited to Delhi by (only) Nehru for talks, the Indian Home Ministry and some other leaders were not happy with the release of Shaikh not to say of talks with Shaikh.\(^{149}\) Nehru might had been convinced by the changing circumstances that a fresh approach was needed towards Kashmir but he was no longer "Nehru of 1950's, having a supportive Parliament, now his own cabinet was against him" regarding Kashmir.\(^{150}\) So, when Nehru invited Shaikh to Delhi; they began to shout that the accession was final and Kashmir was an integral part of India and that the "fundamentals of the Kashmir question would not be discussed with the Shaikh."\(^{151}\) Shaikh was disappointed by this rigidness on part of India and he too reiterated his demand for self-determination and reminded India their commitments. Speaking at Hazratbal, he declared that "I would remind the Indian leaders of their commitment about ascertaining the wishes of the people and try to convince them that the people had the right of self-determination."\(^{152}\) He also declared that his talks with Nehru would be on the basis of self-determination for Kashmiris.\(^{153}\) The changing political environment of India had forced Shaikh to seek the solution of Kashmir in the life of Nehru and "there was no


\(^{147}\) Mr. Badru-Din Tyabji's statement to press, as appeared in Hindustan Times, April 14, 1964.


\(^{149}\) B.N. Mullik who also opposed the release of Shaikh informs us that G.L. Nanda, A.K. Sen and others strongly protested against the release of Shaikh. B.N Mullik, op. cit., p. 172.

\(^{150}\) Ajit Bhattacharjea, Wounded Valley, op. cit., pp. 222-23.


\(^{152}\) Speech at Hazratbal 24 April, 1964. Ibid. p. 41.

time to lose for Jawaharlal's health was failing.”\(^{154}\) It was amid this uproar that Shaikh left for Delhi to talk with Nehru on Kashmir. On 29 April, 1964, Shaikh along with Afzal Beg disembarked at Palam airport where they were received by Mrs Indira Gandhi, J.P. Narayan and others.\(^{155}\) They went to Teen Murti House, where two friends, turned hostiles (Nehru and Shaikh) met after eleven years.\(^{156}\) A special committee of three diplomats consisting of Y.D. Gundevia, G Parathrasarsthi and Badruddin Tyabji (Parsi, Hindu and Muslim respectively) was made to brief Abdullah about the previous talks between two countries (India and Pakistan) and the future proposals for the solution of Kashmir issue.\(^{157}\) The contents of talks at Teen Murti House were kept secret, the press being told only that the two had discussed “the background to the Kashmir problem” as well as the communal problem and its effects on India (subcontinent).\(^{158}\) Both the leaders (Nehru and Abdullah) therefore reached to a consensus that it was necessary to resolve Kashmir issue by making an accord with Pakistan.\(^{159}\) Nehru realised that so long as the relations between the two countries were not good, the communal tension would remain there. As he lamented; “there were again a good deal of madness and blood thirsty ideas about and the atrocities committed in India suggested an organisation behind them. One result was weakening of the governments hand in dealing with Pakistan.”\(^{160}\) In order to get the opinion regarding Kashmir from his well-wishers, Shaikh went to Wardha where he met Acharya Vinoba and Jayaprakash Narayan and then to Madras where he met Rajgopalacharya.\(^{161}\) After returning from South India, writes, Gundevia “Shaikh Abdullah forward before the Prime Minister the idea of a possible ‘confederation’ - a confederation of India, Pakistan and Kashmir which it was obvious, Rajaji had

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\(^{154}\) M. J Akbar, op. cit., p166, also S. Gopal, op. cit., p. 263.
\(^{155}\) Ramachandra Guha, op. cit., pp.86, also Gundevia, op. cit., p. 126.
\(^{156}\) Gundevia passes a witty statement in the Testament Of Shaikh Abdullah, “Yesterday's criminal conspirator, the same Sheikh Abdullah came to Delhi and stayed in the Prime Minister's house, as the Prime Minister's very welcome guest.” Y.D Gundevia, op. cit., p. 123.
\(^{157}\) Ibid. p. 126.
\(^{158}\) Ram Chandra Guha, op. cit., p. 86.
\(^{159}\) S Gopal, op. cit., Vol. 3, p. 263.
\(^{160}\) Letters of Nehru to J.P Jyotishi, Mrs Habibullah, Suresh Ram and S.B Ahmad, on 5 April, 7 April, 22 April and 2 May respectively. Ibid. p. 265.
\(^{161}\) S. Abdullah, *Aatishi Chinar*, op. cit., p.775. They had opposed the dismissal of Shaikh and were in favour of the right of self-determination. For example Rajaji said that accession was conditional and revocable and was up to Kashmiris to decide their future, see Gunjo, op. cit., pp. 124-25. J.P Narayan publicly said that accession was not final. J. P Narayan, “Our great opportunity in Kashmir,” *Hindustan Times*, 20 April, 1964.
suggested.\textsuperscript{162} Y. D Gundevia strongly opposed the plan because he was firm that Ayub Khan would never accept it, which if accepted would disintegrate Pakistan.\textsuperscript{163} Ironically this was the only thing for which Shaikh later on visited Pakistan to discuss with Pakistan\textsuperscript{164} even if India had firm belief of its failure.\textsuperscript{165} Nehru’s real objective was to “let Shaikh talk to Ayub Khan and return disillusioned as he would not accept confederation and to give Shaikh a chance to retrace his steps.”\textsuperscript{166} There was a change in Shaikh’s tone after his meeting with Nehru. His emphasis shifted from self-determination to Indo-Pak reconciliation\textsuperscript{167} and regarded accession a minor issue. He told newsmen that accession was a minor issue and the real problem was one of creating harmonious relations between India and Pakistan.\textsuperscript{168}

While Shaikh was still in Delhi, he received a telegram from Ayub Khan, reminding him that Pakistan was also party to the Kashmir problem and also invited Shaikh to Pakistan.\textsuperscript{169} Nehru supported the idea of his visit to Pakistan.\textsuperscript{170} Speaking at the AICC session at Bombay on 15\textsuperscript{th} may 1964, Nehru said; “if Shaikh Abdullah could help the two countries to improve their relations, he will have done a great service to both countries. We have to help him in his attempt; but in doing so we must adhere to our principles as well as to our basic attitude in regard to Kashmir.”\textsuperscript{171} Nehru was ready to new ideas provided “they did not compromise Indian secularism and nationalism.”\textsuperscript{172} A. G Noorani believes that Shaikh had no particular solution in mind but sought alternatives from India to offer to Ayub Khan and all that he got was “confederation”.\textsuperscript{173} Thus Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah for the first and last time visited Pakistan on 24 may, 1964.\textsuperscript{174} Shaikh was given a tumultuous welcome on

\textsuperscript{162} Gundevia op. cit., p. 127. According to R.N Koul, it was the brain child of Nehru –R.N Koul, op. cit., p.92. A. G. Noorani believes that Aacharya Vinobha Bhave had suggested a confederation between India, Pakistan and Kashmir. A.G. Noorani, ‘Myths And Reality, Front Line Feb. 12, 2010. Nehru was happy with the plan but had little hope of its acceptance by Pakistan, M.J Akbar, op. cit., p. 167.
\textsuperscript{163} Y.D. Gundevia, op. cit., p.127.
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid.,
\textsuperscript{165} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{166} Eastern Times, Cuttack, 23 April, 1965.
\textsuperscript{167} Karan Singh, op. cit., p.277.
\textsuperscript{168} Hindustan Times, May 4, 1964.
\textsuperscript{169} S. Abdullah, Aatishi Chinr, op. cit., p. 774, also S. Bhatt, op. cit., p. 102.
\textsuperscript{170} Saraf, op. cit., p.1244.
\textsuperscript{172} N. C. Behera, Demystifying Kashmir, (Pearson) Delhi, 2007, p. 42.
\textsuperscript{174} S. Bhatt, op. cit., p. 102., Karan Sing laments in his memoir; “only a few weeks earlier Shaikh Abdullah was in the dock, being accused of conspiring with a foreign power to overthrow the
arrival to Pindi that surpassed in depth and intensity given to Chinese Prime Minister, Chou-en-Lai in February,\textsuperscript{175} thanks to the propaganda created by India that Shaikh was a pro-Pakistani conspirator, after his dismissal in 1953.\textsuperscript{176} Shaikh was hopeful of success of his mission-Pakistan, as he said, that he had come with faith and there was no question of his failing because India had realised that the time had come to solve the problem.\textsuperscript{177} Shaikh had two round meetings with Ayub Khan. Ayub Khan, as expected, rejected the proposal of confederation. He plainly told Shaikh that Pakistan had nothing to do with an idea, which if pursued, would “lead to the enslavement of Pakistan.”\textsuperscript{178} Further, he considered the idea very opposite to the two nation theory, “Indian nationalism is based on Hinduism and Pakistan’s nationalism is based on Islam. The two philosophies are fundamentally different from each other. These two nationalisms cannot combine, but it should be possible for them to live side by side in peace and understanding.”\textsuperscript{179} However, Shaikh succeeded in convincing Ayub Khan to visit Delhi to have a meeting with Nehru regarding the solution of Kashmir.\textsuperscript{180} Abdullah told a crowded news conference that “the president of Pakistan said that he would be glad to meet Mr Nehru to discuss ways and means of finding a satisfactory solution to the Kashmir problem.”\textsuperscript{181} A unique opportunity of solving the Kashmir issue, “which had three statesmen –Nehru in Delhi, Ayub in Pakistan and Abdullah in Kashmir was lost with the death of Nehru on 27\textsuperscript{th} May 1964.”\textsuperscript{182} The news came as a great shock to Abdullah and in a condolence meeting at Muzzafarabad he said that the death of Nehru had made his mission more difficult.\textsuperscript{183} Cutting short his visit, Abdullah left for Delhi on 28\textsuperscript{th} May 1964, to attend the funeral, along with Mr Bhutto.\textsuperscript{184} According to Stanely Wolport, Shaikh was so disillusioned with the death of Nehru that he told Mr Bhutto, “Partition below the Chenab river might be a

\textsuperscript{175} Hindustan Times, 25 May, 1964.
\textsuperscript{176} Y.D. Gundevia, op. cit., p. 129.
\textsuperscript{179} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{180} According to Gundevia this was not discussed at Delhi when Shaikh held meeting with Nehru. He did it of his own. Y.D. Gundevia, op. cit., p. 129.
\textsuperscript{181} Hindustan Times, 27 May, 1964.
\textsuperscript{182} H.C. Behera, State Identity and Violence, op. cit., p.117.
\textsuperscript{183} R.C. Guha. op. cit., p. 90.
\textsuperscript{184} M.Y. Saraf, op. cit., p. 1247.
realistic solution. Bhutto was apparently elated by the Shaikh's flexibility, since during his talks with Ayub Abdullah had insisted that partition was not possible.\textsuperscript{185}

The successor of Nehru showed no sincere effort to continue the peace process started by Nehru.\textsuperscript{186} Thus with the death of Nehru, the chance of peaceful solution to the Kashmir problem also died.\textsuperscript{187} The new Indian government saw integration as the only solution to the Kashmir problem.\textsuperscript{188} The Indian government could no longer accept the special status of Kashmir under the article 370. Article 370, though remained there on the "statute book, [yet] its substance was diluted consequently."\textsuperscript{189} Speaking in the Parliament, G.L. Nanda, the Home Minister of India, assured the Indian Parliament that the Government was in the process of full integration of the State of Jammu and Kashmir with the Indian union and article 370 was not a hindrance in that process. He added that Article 370 was a tunnel through which "a good deal of traffic has already passed and more will."\textsuperscript{190} And the first vehicle of this new traffic came in the form of Presidential Order of 1964, issued on 21st December, 1964, making applicable Articles 356 and 357 of the Indian Constitution to Jammu and Kashmir. Article 356 empowers the President to assume functions of the Government of a state in case of failure of constitutional machinery, and Article 357 empowers the Parliament to exercise legislative powers of such a state.\textsuperscript{191} The 'constitutional integration' was followed by 'political integration' of the State with the Indian Union.\textsuperscript{192} The National Conference ('the name and identity of Kashmir's historic political movement') was dissolved and merged into Congress in January 1965.\textsuperscript{193} Mir Qasim who was the chief architect of this move says that the people had lost their faith in NC and were inclined to Shaikh's Plebiscite Front, so they (NC leaders) joined Congress.\textsuperscript{194} After Shaikh, behind whom the masses rallied, was isolated from NC, (1953) the later lost its "distinct character and faced contestation of

\textsuperscript{185} As quoted by Victoria Schofield, 'Kashmir In The Crossfire', New Delhi, 1997, p. 199.
\textsuperscript{186} Mohammad Abdullah, 'Kashmir India and Pakistan', Foreign Affairs, Vol. 43, No. 3 (April, 1965), pp. 528-235), p. 533. See also S Bhatt, op. cit., p.103 and J. Korbel, op. cit., p. 324.
\textsuperscript{187} M.J Akbar, op. cit., p. 168.
\textsuperscript{188} P.N. Bazaz, Kashmir in Crucible, op. cit., p.83.
\textsuperscript{189} N.C. Behera, State Identity and Violence op. cit., p.112.
\textsuperscript{192} Puri, Ibid, p.156.
\textsuperscript{193} On 3rd January the Working Committee of National Conference made announcement of NC's dissolution and was ratified by the All India Congress Working Committee on 10th January. See S. Bosc, op. cit., p.82.
\textsuperscript{194} Mir Qasim, op. cit., p. 106.
its legitimacy and became increasingly vulnerable to the intrusive politics of the Centre," the result was its merger with congress. By the ‘Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir (sixth amendment) Act, 1965 drafted on 10th April, 1965, the State Assembly not only changed the nomenclature of the Sadar-i-Riyasat and Prime Minister to Governor and Chief Minister respectively but also provided that the Governor would be appointed by the President of India instead of being elected by the State Assembly.” The change in nomenclature from Prime Minister to Chief Minister was a ‘semantic change’ because he had not much more powers than other Chief Ministers of India. Thus by these developments the State of Jammu and Kashmir was brought into ‘alignment and conformity with the other states of the Indian Union.” These developments were bitterly resented by the people of Kashmir, who saw them as a threat to their identity, and to save their identity they had no option but to join Shaikh Abdullah’s demand for self-determination and an independent Kashmir. People became so curious about plebiscite that “Raishumari or Plebiscite” was whispered into the ear of a new-born after uttering Kalmia. Shaikh Abdullah who was becoming increasingly despondent about the way things were going, these developments created apprehension in his mind that India was trying to grab Kashmir and not to settle it. He further exclaimed that it was now useless to expect from India to settle this issue on the grounds of ‘justice, humanity or morality.” Describing the merging of the NC into Congress a threat to the very survival of the Muslims of Kashmir, Shaikh gave a call for ‘Tarqui Mawalat’ or

199 Nur Sadiq nor his successor Mir Qasim was of the calibre ‘to oppose New Delhi, whatever their objections’. Ajit Bhattacharajya, Wounded Valley, op. cit., p.216.
Complete Social Boycott of the Kashmir Congress Muslims, who were described as 'traitors.' Announcing the 'Social Boycott Movement' at Hazaratbal on January 15, 1965, the Shaikh said that the "aim of the movement was to observe social boycott against those who opposed people's right of self-determination." He also asked the people to get ready to face India effectively. People responded vigorously and boycotted the marriages, religious functions and funerals of Muslim Congressmen.

The political integration had a great impact on the 'ideology' of Shaikh, who had now lost his faith in Indian 'secularism' and 'Gandhism' and 'socialism'. For the first time the photos of Gandhi, Azad and Abdul Ghaffar Khan were removed and were replaced by the photos of Jinnah at Mujahid Manzil, the headquarter of Plebiscite Front, in Srinagar. The socialist slogan of 'Naya Kashmir and socialist red banner were substituted by religious slogans and green flag.' "The clock," writes N. C. Behera, "had turned full circle. In the 1940's the Shaikh had joined hands with Indian nationalism in order to challenge Muslim nationalism, and now he joined forces which stood for the Muslim identity in order to challenge the Indian identity." Shaikh Abdullah's demand for self-determination and his anti-India campaign reached also outside India when in 1965, he went to perform Hajj Pilgrimage, which proved to be a world tour to 'pray for deliverance of suffering Kashmiris at Makah,' and to plead Kashmir's "case before other sympathetic nations." Besides performing Hajj at Makah in Saudi Arabia, Shaikh also visited France, Britain, Egypt and Algeria. Speaking at Paris in an interview with 'Le Monde', Shaikh said that he was touring to these countries to put forward his point of

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206 S. Bhatt, op. cit., pp.104-05.
209 B. Puri, ibid, p.160.
212 Gundevia, op. cit., p. 132. It is interesting to note that Shaikh had described his nationality as 'Kashmiri Muslim' in the application for passport. Times of India, March 17, 1965 and 30 March 1965.
214 J.Korbel, op. cit., p. 324.
view on the Kashmir problem.216 In Egypt, Shaikh Abdullah was treated as a state guest and was extended the courtesies due to a state guest. This was done without reference to the Government of India or the Indian Embassy in Cairo.217 He appealed to President Nasser of Egypt to help in solving the Kashmir problem.218 His visit to Algeria infuriated India. He met Chinese Premier, Chou-en-Lai, who was visiting Algeria.219 Both exchanged their views on Kashmir and the Chinese Premier invited Shaikh to China. Shaikh while thanking Cho’s invitation told a press conference at Algeria that Chinese Premier had reiterated China’s support for Kashmiris right of self-determination,220 for which Shaikh thanked him.221 Shaikh’s meeting with Chou-en Lai created a great uproar in India. India considered China her arch enemy, after China invaded India in 1962 and memories of India’s humiliating defeat were still fresh and it was quite understandable that their meeting would inflame “both the establishment and the public opinion.”222 Indian Prime Minister Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri took a “most serious view” of their meeting, which, according to him implied that Shaikh had “condoned Chinese aggression” against India in 1962.223 There was extreme pressure on the Indian Government particularly from communal elements to punish Shaikh for his ‘anti India activities’ in abroad.224 Shaikh was asked to return immediately and the validity of his passport was limited up to 30 April, 1965 and all endorsements, except for Hajj Pilgrimage on his passport were cancelled.225 In India Shaikh was dubbed as a “tool of Rawalpindi Peking conspiracy against India.”226 In order to clear his position Shaikh wrote to Mr Shastri in which he complained that he had been judged wrongly and had been misunderstood.227 He further added that he had not committed any crime and he had not said anything which he had not said

216 Times of India, April 1, 1965.
219 S Bhatt, op. cit., pp. 105-06.
221 Patriot, 2 April, 1965 Cited by B.L. Sharma, Kashmir Awakes, Delhi, 1971, p. 151.
222 P. Swami, op. cit., p.67. D. Devidas feels that the uproar served Abdullah’s purpose. “he was playing to the gallery again showing Kashmir he could take on India, cocking a snook at integration”. D. Devidas, op. cit., p.104. J.J Sing blames Indian Government for not using Shaikh’s services which forced him to seek foreign help to get Kashmir issue settled. J.J Sing, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah, What Has He Done, Oxford New Delhi, 1967, April 3rd, p. 2.
224 Times of India, March, 10, 17 and 30, 1965.
225 B.L. Sharma, op. cit., p.152.
227 Hindustan Times, 24 April, 1965.
before in India. 228 Ending the worries of India Shaikh returned on 8th May, 1965 and was arrested at New Delhi airport along with Afzal Beg and detained at Ootacamund, a hill resort in South India and his wife was served an order of no entry into the State. 229 Again Kashmiris protested against the Shaikh’s detention. A Civil Disobedience Movement was started on June 6, 1965 by Maulvi Masoodi against Shaikh’s detention and was followed by court arrest by a large number of people. 230 The State Government under Sadiq gave up its ‘liberalization policy’ and forcibly crushed the voice of the people. Even the leaders like G.M Kara, Maulvi Masoodi were beaten. 231 Press was gagged and restrictions were imposed on political freedom by the State Government backed fully by the Centre. 232 It only aggravated the situation and disappointed the people with India. 233 It was during this situation, Pakistan for the second time tried to ‘liberate’ Kashmiris from India 234 by a guerrilla campaign, known as ‘Operation Gibraltar’. 235 Thus in 1965 India and Pakistan fought second war on (and for) Kashmir. The war ended in a draw with the signing of Tashkent Declaration on 10th January 1966, by which both agreed to create good neighbourly relations in accordance with the UN Charter. 236

After the war of 1965, because of some developments, it became important for India to ‘settle the internal crisis of Kashmir’ and for that the release of Shaikh had become imperative. 237 Although the State Government had succeeded in enforcing law and order, 238 for time being but the anger of the people towards India and its men in Kashmir was very high. Writing in 1966, Bazaz affirms that ‘by and large state Muslims are not very friendly towards India; an overwhelming majority of them are not happy under the present political setup, they desire to have done with it.’ 239 This

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228 Hindu, Madras, 26 April, 1965.
229 B. Puri, Jammu and Kashmir, op. cit., p.158. The decision of Shaikh to return has been cited by many as proof of his innocence. P. Swami, op. cit., p. 68.
232 P. Swami, op. cit., p. 188.
234 B. Puri, Kashmir Insurgency and After, op. cit., p. 34.
236 In Kashmir there emerged student movements for independence during the war. The Government closed the Hazratbal shrine and took severe measures to suppress the demonstrations. All educational institutions were closed in Srinagar. P. C Sympong, op. cit., p. 80.
237 For the war of 1965 see Alastair Lamb, Kashmir a Disputed Legacy, pp. 247-271, and for Tashkent Declaration, see Sumit Ganguly, Crisis In Kashmir, pp. 163-165.
238 Mushafragh Rahman, op. cit., p. 112.
239 A police state usually manages to keep law and order, J.J Sing, op. cit., p. 6.
was the time when politically conscious, "the students of universities and colleges began to take an active part in political demonstrations." They received the support of Mir Waiz Farooq and the 'Jama Masjid once again became one of the main centres of student agitation." They were not satisfied with the methods of moderates and believed in the violent methods rather than Shaikh's non-violent protests, to gain the right of self-determination. There emerged new organisations like Student and Youth League and Al- Fatah and new leaders like Fazl-ul Haq Quraishi, Azam Inqilabi and Maqbool Bhatt. However the Plebiscite Front 'apprehended these youth organizations as a threat to its survival and 'started feeling jittery and conspiracies were hatched against the new emerging youth leaders.' But more serious and worrying for India was that a new threat of communalism in Kashmir was now looming on the horizon. Permeshwari Handoo, a Pandit girl fell in love with a Muslim boy, embraced Islam and eloped with him. Kashmiri Pandits formed a Hindu Action Committee and started agitation against the State Government and also against the Muslims, thus 'disturbing' the age old communal harmony. For the first time open clashes took place between Muslims and Hindus creating tension and chaos in Kashmir. The Indian Government knew that it was only Shaikh Abdullah who possessed the stature and influence to revive political "moderation and communal harmony in the state." Because the Plebiscite Movement led by Shaikh Abdullah was non communal and a secular organization. More over the demand for Shaikh's release to settle Kashmir issue internally was growing extremely. In a letter to Mrs Indira Gandhi, The Prime Minister of India, J.P. Narayan, inter-alia, wrote—"whatever be solution, it has to be found within the limitations of accession. It is here that Shaikh’s role may become decisive—why do I plead for Shaikh’s release? Because that may give us the only chance we have of solving the Kashmir

242 V. Schofield, Kashmir in the Crossfire, op. cit., pp.208-09.
249 Indira Gandhi in a speech at Srinagar on 20 June 1971, said that India had never said that PF was a non-secular and communal organisation., Statesman, 21 June,1971.
250 L.B Shastri had died mysteriously after signing the Tashkent Declaration, and was succeeded by Mrs Gandhi.
problem. In 1967, a group of 240 members of Indian Parliament, including legislators from the ruling Congress party, signed a petition urging the Government to release him. Shaikh was finally released on January 2, 1968, by Mrs Indira Gandhi, to improve relations with her country's "most famous political prisoner." Pakistan welcomed the release of Shaikh Abdullah and hoped that he would continue the struggle of self-determination. The Dawn newspaper from Karachi, very well judged the situation—"the release of the lion of Kashmir presents both an opportunity and a challenge to Indian statesmanship."

After his release it seemed that Shaikh Abdullah was not the Shaikh Abdullah of earlier 60's. "The earlier fire and zeal were missing" and he stressed the need for accommodation. There was the factor of age and health of which the better part he had spent as a political prisoner. He was broaching the idea of a 'special status' for Kashmir, 'more or less on the pattern of Bhutan.' In an interview with the 'Shabistan Urdu Digest,' Shaikh said, "I say for God's sake, give me more freedom and trust me. I will be the last man to jeopardise the honour and self-respect of India." He further added that 'the people of Kashmir did not ask for anything impossible, “they want only protection (autonomy) from their elder brother, India.” Before returning to Kashmir, at Delhi Shaikh had his talks with Mrs Gandhi, Rajgopalacharya, J. P Narayan and other leaders and he also began to take interest in Indian national issues, like communalism and poverty. After returning to Kashmir he addressed a number of public meetings. He advised the young (who

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253 After a long period of incarceration of 15 years, 1953-68, with some intervals, Ajit Bhattacharjea, Tragic Hero, op. cit., p.227.
254 D.E Lockwood, op. cit.,
255 Cited in S.R Baksht, Shaikh M Abdullah, p.220.
256 Ajit Bhattacharjea, who met him after his release found him an aged man and pensive and confused. See A. Bhattacharjea Kashmir the Wounded Valley, pp.228-29.
257 He was in his sixties and was suffering from diabetes and high blood pressure.
258 D.E. Devadas, op. cit., He was increasingly becoming aware of his failing health and old age. Tribune, Chandigarh, 22 Nov., 1972.
261 Shaikh asked Mrs Gandhi to complete the mission of Kashmir started by her father, but she wanted to leave Shaikh ‘high and dry form some time.’ Restive Kashmir, G.N. Aali, p. 28.
262 S Bhart, op. cit., p. 130.
263 He along with J. P Narayan addressed a number of meetings in U.P. and Bihar. M. J Akbar, op. cit., p.183.
would raise slogans of “we want self-determination”) that mere slogans were not sufficient, ‘they should follow reason and cultivate discipline and be fully organised.’\textsuperscript{264} Shaikh Abdullah now turned for support to parties outside Jammu and Kashmir, to discuss various prospects of Kashmir problem and to get a solution.\textsuperscript{265} Consequently two conventions, called; Jammu and Kashmir State People’s Convention’ were held in 1968 and 1970 to ascertain people’s views on Kashmir.\textsuperscript{266} In his inaugural speech, J.P Narayan made it clear that self-determination was not the solution of Kashmir problem, because of the changing circumstances and whatever the solution might be it was to be found within the frame work of the Indian Constitution\textsuperscript{267}. The convention unanimously adopted a resolution, “reaffirming the principle that a solution of the problem, acceptable to the people of the State, keeping in view the interests of all regions, can alone resolve the dispute.”\textsuperscript{268} The shift in Shaikh’s thinking was ‘sound strategic but historically ironic. For when the mind of Kashmiris were highly filled with the dreams of freedom—‘Abdullah’s own mind was churning by the end of the 1960’s with the idea of returning to power under India’s aegis.\textsuperscript{269} Although Shaikh still reiterated the demand of self-determination but he phrased it generally: it was “an inherent right of all people (not only of Kashmiris).\textsuperscript{270} Moreover he could not ignore the demands of Muslims of Kashmir who were disappointed with India and demanded self-determination.\textsuperscript{271} There was a shift in the strategy of Plebiscite Front when in December 1970; it decided to participate in the India’s Parliament elections due in 1971 and Assembly elections of Jammu and Kashmir in 1972.\textsuperscript{272} The decision of the Plebiscite Front alarmed both the Indian Government at Delhi and State Government, because a ‘victorious Plebiscite Front from elections would talk from the position of strength.’ Mir Qasim , who became Chief Minister after G. M Sadiq, accepts in his memoir that, “if elections were free

\textsuperscript{265} P. Swami, op. cit., p.88.
\textsuperscript{267} For full speech see Manzoor Fazli, Kashmir Predilection, Srinagar, 1988, pp. 77-87.
\textsuperscript{268} P. N Bazaz, Democracy, op. cit., p.19. Ajit Bhattacharjea, Wounded Valley, op. cit., p. 229
\textsuperscript{269} D. Devadas, Kashmir In Search Of Future, op. cit., p. 116.
\textsuperscript{270} A. Bhattacharjea, wounded valley, op. cit., p. 229
\textsuperscript{271} S. Bose, op. cit., p. 86.
and fair the victory of the front was a foregone conclusion. To prevent the front from contesting elections, the Plebiscite Front was declared an unlawful organisation, under the prevention of the Unlawful Activities Act, and was banned for the first time since its inception in 1955. Moreover “on the morning of January 9, 1971, Shaikh Abdullah, Mirza Afzal Beg and G. M Shah, (who were in Delhi,) were debarred from entering Jammu and Kashmir and nearly 500 members of the front were arrested under the “Prevention Detention Act.” Not allowing the Plebiscite Front to contest elections exposed India at international level as it had claimed that ‘free and fair’ elections would be held.

By an unfortunate coincidence when these developments were taking place in Kashmir, India and Pakistan were engaged in another war, this time though not on Kashmir but had its repercussions on Kashmir. India emerged victorious and Pakistan got divided and a new country Bangladesh emerged on the world map. The Pakistan’s claim on Kashmir was ‘weakened’. Pakistan wanted to put Kashmir issue into cold storage for some time, because she was more “concerned with the issue of release of war prisoners and the occupied areas.” The breakdown of Pakistan in 1971 “demoralised a section of the people including the leadership of the Plebiscite Front (Shaikh, Beg) in Kashmir. They felt that Pakistan was now not in a position to help and ‘liberate Kashmir.’ Knowing that Shaikh Abdullah was disappointed with the outcome of the war, Mrs Gandhi “capitalized on India’s decisive victory to negotiate a

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273 The elections held in Kashmir prior and after the new constitution were highly manipulated and fraud was done at high level. Hindustan Times, 26 Feb., 1971; and Thought Weekly, 16 January, 1971. No opposition was tolerated. A number of members would come as un-opposed. The nomination forms of opposed candidates would be rejected. And the ruling party would come as a sheer majority party. The well-known political commentator, Mr B Shiva Rao, writes about these elections, “Such massive majorities are not known in truly democratic countries.” Quoted by A.G Noorani, Kashmir Question, Bombay, 1964, p.13. For example in the first elections held in 1951, National Conference won all 75 seats. The elections of 1962 were so rigged that even Nehru wrote to Bakshi that “it would strengthen your position much more if you lost a few seats to bonafide opponents”. S. Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography, Vol. 3, 1956-64, Delhi, (Oxford), 1985, p. 262.

274 Mir Qasim op. cit., p.132.


278 S. Ganguly, op. cit., p. 60.


political settlement with Shaikh Abdullah.” 281 A significant change was seen in Shaikh and Afzal Beg when they started saying that their real dispute with India was on ‘autonomy’ and not ‘accession.’ 282 After the Simla Agreement, 283 in which it was agreed by both India and Pakistan to settle all the issues bilaterally, India believed that ‘Kashmir issue was settled’ 284 and now internal problem (of Kashmir) was to be settled. But for this the support of Shaikh was necessary, because being the popular leader, he was still out of the ‘mainstream.’ 285 In an interview with Peter Hezlhurst, correspondent of the Times London on 10th March 1972, Shaikh said, “Our quarrel with the Government of India is not about accession but is about the quantum of autonomy. Do not forget we brought Kashmir into India, otherwise it would never have been part of India.” 286 This was a volte face in view of what Shaikh had been holding during two decades. 287 He took a U-turn regarding Pakistan when he declared that Pakistan was not a party to Kashmir issue. 288 Shaikh did not want to see before his eyes that “India would again proceed with incursions of Indian laws in Jammu and Kashmir State for total erosion of Article 370, whereby the Muslim majority State of Jammu and Kashmir would be submerged into the Indian sea. It was a ‘change in tactics’ in order to checkmate the erosion of article 370.” 289 In an interview with Milap Shaikh said that with the emergence of Bangladesh, the political scenario of the sub-continent had changed and the Kashmiris should also change. All we want while remaining with India is political freedom in Kashmir.” 290 Regarding this shift, Shaikh assured that they had only changed their strategy not the objective—“he and his colleagues do not hanker after power, but power is a means of achieving the objectives for which the people have been struggling so far.” He further added that he was trying to “secure a place of honour (izzat and abroo) for the people of Kashmir.” 291 The Plebiscite Front also decided not to observe 9th August as ‘black

281 P. Swami, op. cit., p. 102.
282 The Plebiscite Front realized that the “situation in Kashmir will not improve on any front whatsoever Shaikh Sahib and all his loyal followers who spent most of period from 1953 to 1975 in prison didn’t become part of the national ‘mainstream.’ Report of the State Autonomy Committee, Srinagar, July 2000, p. 63.
283 For Simla Agreement see Sumit Ganguly, The Crisis In Kashmir, pp. 166-68.
284 M. Rahman, op. cit., p. 132.
287 Bazaq, Democracy Through Intimidate and Terror, op. cit., p. 23.
288 Tribune, Chandigarh, 8th July, 1972.
day’ from 1974. This move was deemed by many that Shaikh had fought for personal power. Mrs Gandhi welcomed the change in the thinking of Plebiscite Front leaders and showed her willingness to negotiate with them, because it provided an opportunity to India to ‘de-internationalize’ the Kashmir question.

Thus negotiations started between the ‘Plebiscite Front’ and the Centre on two fronts—one was between Afzal Beg, the representative of Shaikh and G. Parthasarathi, the representative of Indira Gandhi; the second was between Shaikh and Indira Gandhi and other leaders. The ‘peace talks’ formally started on June 12, 1972, when Shaikh Abdullah called on Mrs Indira Gandhi and Mr Afzal Beg started formal discussions with G Parthasarathi at Delhi and these talks continued for more than two years. There was a great resentment particularly in youth in Kashmir against the changing attitude of Shaikh and they started violent protests against the Indira Abdullah talks. This was for the first time since 1953 that the youth had risen against the Shaikh and took out processions and criticised him for ‘hankering after power.’ Slogans like “azadi ya moth”—freedom or death, “we want independence”, freedom is our birth right” were painted on walls. Mir Waiz Faoroq blamed Shaikh for “selling out to India in general and Indira Gandhi in particular.” He also criticised Shaikh’s oft-changing stance on basic issues. The Jamait -i- Islami (of Kashmir) also questioned the wisdom of the Plebiscite Front, wasting two decades to affirm the reality of Kashmir accession. “If Mr Beg had asserted his view on accession 25 years ago, the people of the State could have been spared years of privation, bloodshed and continuous restless,” Azan the official organ of the Jamat wrote. There was tension in Kashmir and rift emerged in the Plebiscite Front, which led to the birth of Jammu and Kashmir People’s League on October 13, 1974, with Fazal Haq Qureshi as its

292 As it had been observing the day since 1953 when Shaikh was removed from power, Patriot, 9 August, 1974.
293 See for example Bazaz, Democracy Through Intimidation and Terror, op. cit., p. 24.
294 Mir Qasim, op. cit., p. 136.
295 On 28 February, 1972, the American President, Mr Nixon and his Chinese counterpart in a joint statement stressed the need for resolving the Kashmir issue on the basis of the UN resolutions. S Bhatti, op. cit., pp. 163-64.
296 Alastair Lamb, Disputed Legacy, op., cit., p. 306.
297 Mir Qasim, op. cit., p. 136.
299 Current, 16 Dec, 1972.
301 Indian Express, 2 Sep., 1974.
chairman. Inside Pakistan Shaikh Abdullah and his colleagues, who were previously referred as “great freedom fighters” came to be derided as “traitors” and “opportunists.” Shaikh Abdullah in order to clear his stand made a whirlwind tour of Kashmir valley. During his valley tour Shaikh reiterated that nothing would be done behind the Kashmiris back without consulting them and the outcome of his talks with Mrs Gandhi would be placed before the people for their approval. He also assured people that he would never betray the trust-reposed the people in him and that he would continue to struggle even for a ‘hundred lives to achieve a place of honour and self- respect’ for his people. Shaikh Abdullah also convened a meeting in August 1974 of representatives of all the regions, Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh to ‘pave the way for a consensus within the State and thus the stage for a settlement between the Shaikh and the Centre. Shaikh Abdullah disclosed in the convention that he was facing difficulties in carrying the Muslims of the valley with him.

Meanwhile the talks between the Centre and the Shaikh continued. But Shaikh declared that the talks between him and the Central Government would be useless unless the India was prepared to restore the 1953 position in the State. In a letter to Mrs Gandhi, Shaikh declared, “I can only start from the point where I left off” in August, 1953. For me to take even this position is not going to be without difficulties. But Mrs Gandhi made it clear to him that he (Shaikh) would not be different from any other Chief Ministers of other states of India. She replied to Shaikh, “I have already explained to you that the clock cannot be put back and we have to take note of the realities of the situation.” Shaikh insisted on pre 1953

309 Times of India, 11 August, 1974.
311 Hindustan Times, 19 Oct., 1974. Shaikh Abdullah stressed on the restoration of pre-1953 position when he was Prime Minister, “as a good face saving to retain his stock with the people” Tribune Chandigarh, 18th December, 1972.
312 Shaikh to Mrs Gandhi 29 December, 1974, Kashmir Accord Documents Law Department, Govt. of Jammu and Kashmir, (R.R Sec.) Deptt. Of Information Srinagar, pp.11-13. Shaikh as aware of the opposition of the people for if took over power and was unable to carry the majority with him as people would be justified in asking him why he had made them undergo so many hardships for 21 years if he wanted power. Times of India 14 Aug, 1974.
313 Mrs Gandhi to Shaikh Feb 12, 1975 Ibid. p. 16.
position so that he could sell to his people and carry them with him. But Delhi too had to sell it to her people. It was neither 'possible nor desirable' for Mrs Gandhi to restore the status quo ante. For, any attempt on her part to do so would compel her to "heed a similar demand for enlarged autonomy by the DMK Government in Tamil Nadu, unleashing disruptive forces all over the country." Besides, restoration of pre-1953 position would "mean a tacit admission that the administration of the State since 1953 (when Shaikh was dismissed) was illegal and that the elections held in the State were not fair, and the Assembly, was not the true 'representative body of the people.' Consequently, every action of the Assembly after 1953 including the 'ratification of the accession in 1956' was invalid." And at the international level accepting these demands would, "—weaken India's position in the United Nations and give a handle to Pakistan to raise the Kashmir issue." The extreme stands taken by both Shaikh and Mrs Gandhi had cast doubts about the success of the talks.

Behind the scene, however, there were others at work like Governor, L.K. Jha, Karan Singh, Mir Qasim and D.P Dhar who shook the mixture of Abdullah – Beg well, before they agreed to the minimum of Indian requirements. At the same time Shaikh came under tremendous pressure from the family to accept the power again. He liked family life which had suffered hardships during the 20 years struggle and his family liked the good things of life. Mir Qasim persuaded Shaikh to sign a statement which said, 'he (Shaikh) would not insist on the pre-1953 position.' And also, 'on her part, Mrs Gandhi did not insist that the condition of the pre-1953 was out of question.' Consequently an agreement was signed on 13 November, 1974, between Afzal Beg (the representative of Shaikh) and G. Parthasarathi (the representative of Mrs Gandhi), which came to be known as 'Kashmir Accord'

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314 His speech at Srinagar on 7 July 1974, Blitz, 31 July, 1974.
315 Ibid.
316 Times of India, 12 June, 1974.
319 Alastair Lamb, Disputed Legacy, op. cit., p. 306.
320 Ibid.
321 Mother Land (carton) 16 Sep., 1974.
322 Ghulam Ahmad, My Years With Shaikh Abdullah, Srinagar, 2008, p. 41.
324 Ajitt Bhattacharjea, Wounded Valley, op. cit., p. 236.
325 Mir Qasim, op. cit., p. 138.
which Shaikh Abdullah resumed power and took over as the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. Thus the Accord of November 1974 was concluded between "two individuals with no constitutional or domestic legitimacy."

The first clause of the six point Accord says this; "the State of Jammu and Kashmir, which is a constituent unit of the Union of India, shall in its relations with the Union continue to be governed by Article 370 (eroded one) of Constitution of India." By this Shaikh accepted the finality of 'accession' and also the erosion of Kashmir's autonomy, process of which had started immediately after his arrest in 1953. In fact it was made clear to Shaikh that "Article 370 could not be restored to its original form." The Accord ratified the power of Indian Parliament to "make laws relating to the prevention of activities, directed towards disclaiming, questioning or disrupting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India or bringing about cession a part of territory of India or secession of a part of the territory of India from the union or causing insult to the Indian national flag, the Indian anthem and the constitution."

However, the State was given right to review laws extended to the State after 1953 from concurrent list or to have its own legislation relating to the matters less important, like welfare measures, cultural matters, social security, personal law and procedural laws. But that too needed the consent of President of India. In fact a committee was established to examine the matter, but its 'recommendations were never made public. Even the nomenclature of Prime Minister and Sadr-i-Reyasat in place of Chief Minister and Governor were not accepted. There was a sharp reaction in Pakistan against the Accord and Mr Bhutto denounced it as a "sell-out". He appealed to the people of Pakistan and Kashmir to observe hartal on 28th February 1975 against the Accord. Complete hartal was observed in Pakistan; and Pakistanis

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327 The Hindu, Sep. 25, 2010. Dr Mustafa Kamal son of Shaikh Abdullah in an interview with 'Rising Kashmir' refused to call this deal as accord. "I mean to say this accord has never taken place. Has this accord passed in the assembly? No so where from comes the term 1975 Accord?" Rising Kashmir, Srinagar, 5 December, 2009.

328 Thus he also condemned his dismissal in 1953. Greater Kashmir, Srinagar, 5 December, 2008.

329 N.C Behera, State Identity and Violence, op. cit., p.134. From 1954 to 1977 twenty eight Constitutional Orders had been issued by the President of India to integrate Kashmir with Indian Union; and also 262 laws had been made applicable to Kashmir by the Indian Parliament up to 1973, B.Puri, Jammu and Kashmir, op. cit., p.151.

330 S Bose, op. cit., p. 88.

331 6th Clause of the Accord.

332 S Bhatt, op. cit., p. 191.
and Kashmiris in the United Kingdom and elsewhere held demonstrations. Pakistan also protested to United Nations, supported by China, that the Accord was against the Simla Agreement and the United Nations requirements for a Kashmir Plebiscite.

"This was not a settlement, writes Sumantra Bose, "Abdullah would have accepted- or even considered- twenty, ten or even five years earlier." Thus the twenty years of struggle for restoration of self- respect (izzat and abraoo) ended in a compromise. Shaikh Abdullah made a deal without taking his people into confidence and accepted the limited powers of Chief Ministerial ship. The Accord was “in reality humiliation of Kashmir patriots…….” For return to power, Shaikh had to pay a proportionate loss of support among the Muslims. The people were disappointed with the Accord, because it was Shaikh who had taught them during long twenty years that they should accept nothing short to self- determination. His followers felt disgusted for their ‘self- respect was damaged.’ Abdul Qayoom Zargar, an NC veteran, who was personal secretary of Afzal Beg in 1975, told in an interview to Sumantra Bose that “its (accord75) terms were deeply unpopular among NC-PF’s activists and mass following, and swallowed as a bitter pill only because Abdullah had accepted the accord.” However, some of his veteran comrades like (Munshi Ishaq), Mr Abdul Rashid Shah, secretary of Plebiscite Front and Soft Mohammad Akbar could not swallow it and retired from the active politics.

"The protracted negotiations were carried on secretly and the Kashmiris were not taken into confidence until the deal was struck early in 1975." While as Shaikh was trying to persuade people that there were many things for them in the Accord, but Mrs Gandhi in her speech in the Parliament made it clear that Shaikh had proved to be a weak man on the negotiation table and had surrendered almost all his demands in lieu of Chief Ministerial ship. On February 24, Mrs Indira Gandhi made a long
statement in the Parliament on the Kashmir Accord. She said that the results had been achieved within the framework of the Indian constitution. “Shaikh Abdullah was very anxious that to start with, the constitutional relationship between the State and the Centre should be as it was in 1953 when he was in power. It was explained to him that the clock could not be put back in this matter. Mr Afzal Beg pressed for the transfer of provisions relating to Fundamental Rights to the State Constitution, the removal of the supervision and control of the Election Commission of India over elections to the State Legislature and the modification of Article 356 to require the State Government’s concurrence before imposing President’s rule to the State. It was not found possible to agree any of these demands. I must say to the credit of Shaikh Abdullah that despite his strong views on these issues, he has accepted the agreed conclusions.”

This statement created sharp reaction in Kashmir, where demonstrations were held and slogans like “Shaikh-Indira Samjota Murdabad” (Down with Shaikh Indira Agreement). Even Shaikh was taken aback by this statement. He felt the statement projected him as a man who ‘bargained everything for position’. “You have made a statement as if I have sold out Kashmir for the chair of Chief Minister,” Shaikh told Mir Qasim.

Thus Shaikh Abdullah did not succeed in achieving his ambition of resuming the power from where he had left, when he was dismissed in 1953. The position he accepted was ‘quite below his stature.’ With the signing of the Accord, the Shaikh lost his popularity, because his popularity since his dismissal in 1953 had been based on his anti-India propaganda. However, ‘it did not bother him in his lifetime till 1982 because of his immense tall stature and unrivalled popularity.’ And also because the people considered him more as a religious leader than seeing him in ‘political terms’.

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345 Mir Qasim op. cit., p. 143.
Chapter Six

Tamed Lion: Sheikh Abdullah’s Return to Power

By the Accord of 1975, Indira Gandhi brought back Sheikh Abdullah in the mainstream politics and Sheikh Abdullah without any “moral scruples put the slogan of right of self-determination of Kashmiris in dustbin in history.” However, the accord did not last long. Mrs Gandhi believed in dictatorship and keeping herself and the Congress Party in power in the face of growing strength of regional political parties. She therefore sought total submergence of regional and sub-national identities. Sheikh Abdullah, like Mrs Gandhi, believed in dictatorship and in keeping himself and Kashmir away from the influence of the centre. For the next decade and a half, the National Conference and Congress remained in conflict, which has been described as a clash between Kashmir and India.

In totalling up the overall gains and losses of the Accord of 1975, the gains were obviously in favour of Delhi. Sheikh Abdullah acknowledged that the accession was final and irrevocable; he also dropped his demand for dissolution of the State Legislative Assembly and his insistence on a return to the constitutional position, as it existed prior to his arrest in August 1953. His demand for fresh elections was not accepted by Mrs Gandhi; instead he was assured full cooperation of the Congress party. Consequently, on 24 February 1975, Sheikh Abdullah was elected by the ruling Congress party as its leader paving the way for his return to power after nearly 22 years in politics of opposition and confrontation. His election as leader of the Congress party created a precedence in Indian legislative history. It was for the first time that a party with an absolute majority in the legislature had elected a non-party-man as its leader. A unique type of arrangement was provided in the accord of 1975. Mir Qasim the Chief Minister was to step down along with his ministry and to allow

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2 N.C. Behera, Demystifying Kashmir, pp. 44-5.
3 He justified his stand in the Presidential address to the annual session of the revived National Conference on 24 April 1976: “I concede that this accord did not satisfy all our demands nor did it conform entirely to our stand and the only consideration which led us to accept the offer of Central leadership and the invitation of the Prime Minister was the fast deteriorating conditions in the State.” Statesman, 25 April 1976.
Sheikh Abdullah along with his ministers to assume the power with the congress support in the legislature.\textsuperscript{5} In doing so Delhi acknowledged that a government without Sheikh lacked popular sanction.\textsuperscript{6} The Congress legislature party unanimously adopted a resolution pledging its support to Sheikh Abdullah and his Ministers in “consolidating secular and democratic forces in the state and in toning up the State administration to make it a more effective instrument for the progress and welfare of the people in all the three regions of the State—Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh.”\textsuperscript{7} Sheikh Abdullah was sworn in as the Chief Minister of the State on 25 February 1975 at Raj Bhavan in Jammu.\textsuperscript{8} Jan Sang and some other opposition parties observed the day as “black day” to protest against the “undemocratic manner” of Sheikh Abdullah’s induction as the new head of Government in Jammu and Kashmir.\textsuperscript{9} In the beginning, Sheikh chose a three member Cabinet namely Mirza Afzal Beg, his lifelong colleague, Devi Dass Thakur a judge of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court, and Sonam Nurbu, then Indian Ambassador in outer Mongolia, an engineer by profession.\textsuperscript{10} None of these three ministers belonged to Congress Party nor were they elected members of the State legislature. The cabinet held continuous sessions. “Meetings were held even in the car; all the three members travelled in one car.”\textsuperscript{11} With no party majority in the Legislative Assembly Sheikh Abdullah relied on his own resources. He made extensive use of his family and gave them great responsibilities. He employed his wife, Begum Akbar Jahan, two sons, Tariq and Farooq, daughter-in-law, Mrs. Farooq, son-in-law, G.M. Shah and many among his kith and kin to government or semi government posts on fat salaries.\textsuperscript{12} He supported and promoted those officials whom he considered had been “of any service to him during the period of his political wilderness; some of them were known for their

\textsuperscript{6} *India Today*, December 1-15, 1977, p. 51.
\textsuperscript{7} *Statesman*, 23 February 1975.
\textsuperscript{8} *Hindustan Times*, 26 February 1975.
\textsuperscript{9} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{10} M.K. Dhar, ‘Trust Begets Trust’, *Hindustan Times*, 24 February 1975. Dr. Karan Singh had demanded that in order to remove the apprehensions of the Jammu people, a deputy Chief Minister from Jammu might be included in the cabinet. Similarly, the head lama of Ladakh and Congress MP Kushak Bakula threatened to resign because, in his view, the choice of the representative from Ladakh in the ministry would not satisfy the Ladakhi people.
corrupt practices." On the other hand, he disengaged, dismissed and prematurely retired from services those officials who he considered had been unfriendly with him even if they were known for their honesty and efficiency. To the dismay of Kashmiris, he even tried to make an Act by which land could be given to outside capitalists. Once again, like his tenure as Prime Minister (1947-53), Sheikh Abdullah ruled like a dictator. P.N. Bazaz, once a close friend of Sheikh, has written a book on this period under the title, Democracy through Intimidation and Terror.

With the conclusion of the Accord and the assumption of power by Sheikh Abdullah, it was felt by him that the Plebiscite Front had lost its relevance and there was need of a new party. He tried to bring together the Congress and the Plebiscite Front under one flag, despite their cool reaction to his proposal for merger in a resurrected National Conference. Mrs Gandhi had rejected Sheikh's demand for fresh election in the hope that taking over as the Chief Minister, he would dissolve Plebiscite Front and would fight elections under the banner of the Congress. Mir Qasim made an effort to bring Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues in the Congress after he was elected as the leader of the congress in the legislature. It seems that Sheikh had reconciled to join the Congress. But the congress leaders in the State were not ready to bring him in Congress. They had not reconciled themselves to the voluntary loss of power and began a policy of confrontation with Sheikh. M. J. Akbar on the basis of his own knowledge and sources says that the congress leaders including Mir Qasim and Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, actually sabotaged the idea of the N.C.-Congress alliance because of their personal rivalries. Sheikh Abdullah who was upset with the congress confrontation, therefore, strived for the revival of National Conference that had good relations with the Indian National Congress since

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14 Ibid. The axe fell by and large on Muslim officers. One of them was Peerzada Ghulam Nabi, one of the authorities on irrigation system and flood control. He was later appointed by Central Water and Power Commission on a very senior position.
15 In 1927 by the definition of the State Subject, the Maharaja disallowed any outsider from purchasing land in the State. Later on, the Delhi Agreement of 1952 concluded between Nehru and Sheikh ratified it. P.N. Bazaz, op. cit., p. 26.
16 Hindustan Times, 5 June 1975; Pratap, 5 July 1975.
17 G. Ahmad, op. cit., p. 55.
19 Hind Samachar, 18 February 1975; See also M.J. Akbar, Kashmir Behind the Vale, New Delhi, 2005, p. 189.
21 But he has no documentary proof for it. See M.J. Akbar, op. cit., p. 189.
its foundation. By reviving the National Conference, which he headed at the time of his dismissal in 1953, he presumably sought to reassure his people that their autonomy could best be protected by a State level party with a glorious record of service and not by an all-India organization by whose discipline its members would be bound. He also wanted to ensure that his style was not cramped by his dependence on another party.22

Just before the accord was signed on 6 February 1975, Afzal Beg said in a statement that at an appropriate time he would recommend to the party’s delegates a change in its name and objectives in keeping with the new developments.23 On 9 May he, as the president of the Plebiscite Front, announced the dissolution of the Front and the formation of a new party. However, because of the role played by the National Conference after 1953, he was hesitant in reviving it.24 Sheikh in a letter to Mirza Afzal Beg on 23 May, 1975 explained his ideas regarding the revival of the National Conference: “While drawing the contours of our new party, we have to be careful not to lose sight of our basic aims, the history of our struggle to achieve them, the importance of our distinctive role, and the compulsions of the present day circumstances. At no cost should we forget that we are the inheritors of a great past; and it should be our anxiety not to take a false step that might disturb the historical continuity, which, in turn, forms a base for the edifice of our pride. If we break away from our past, we will have no foundation to erect our future upon. I do not think we should wash our hands completely from our past heritage only because some usurpers succeeded in sabotaging us at a very important juncture of our struggle.”25 For this purposes a valedictory session of the Plebiscite Front was organised at Mujahid Mamzil in Srinagar on 4th and 5th July 1975. There were many Plebiscite Front leaders who were disappointed with the about face of Sheikh and they criticized the dissolution of the Front and rejected his proposal for resurrection of the National Conference.26 On the eve of this session two important Plebiscite Front leaders Mohammad Akbar Sofi, senior vice-president of the Front and Mr. Abdul Rashid

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23 Statesman, 7 February 1975; Hindustan Times, 6 July 1975.
24 Ibid., 10 May 1975.
26 Tribune, 3 June 1975.
Shah, the secretary, resigned from the party. In his letter to Afzal Beg, the president of the Front, Abdul Rashid stated that the Plebiscite Front was "a political fort of the aspirations" of the Kashmiri people and it would be a "great national tragedy" to wind it up without ascertaining the people's opinion on the accord reached between Sheikh Abdullah and the Indian Government. He added that he would "prefer to be out of politics rather than be a witness to political self-immolation." 27

On the suggestion of Sheikh Abdullah the 'delegates' session of the Jammu and Kashmir Plebiscite Front decided to dissolve the Front and revive the National Conference. The delegates approved a resolution to this effect by show of hands. The resolution reads as: "Today, 5th July 1975, the All Jammu and Kashmir Plebiscite Front in a special session, after due deliberations for about thirteen hours amongst the delegates from all parts of the State, giving due cognition and serious thought to prevailing political situations, decided to change the name of the Plebiscite Front into the National Conference." 28 The controversial issue of dissolution had generated considerable heat within the Front although observers did not expect it to be settled in any different fashion because Sheikh Abdullah backed up the National Conference's revival. 29 Afzal Beg argued that the name "National Conference" alone could have equal appeal for people living in three different regions of the State. 30 With minutes of decision, flags of the Plebiscite Front were replaced by those of the National Conference atop Mujahid Manzil, which had remained the headquarter of the Front for twenty years. 31 Thus, the Plebiscite Front, which was founded to fight for the right of self-determination of the people of Kashmir, was winded up without getting its basic objective fulfilled. Sheikh wanted to revive the situation of pre-1953 situation when he ruled under the slogan of one party, one ruler and one programme. He realised that he was functioning on an ad hoc basis and was handicapped by the fact that he had no party of his own, and no house of his choice. 32 He also urged Congress leaders to forget "individual differences, personal preferences, past bitterness and imaginary apprehensions and join the National Conference in order to

27 Times of India, 3 July 1975; Indian Express, 3 July 1975.
28 All J & K Plebiscite Front Special Delegates Session, 4, 5 July 1975, Mujahid Manzil, Publication and Information Division.
29 Hindustan Times, 6 July, 1975.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
32 Indian Express, 5 June 1975.
become inheritors of this great heritage. In a letter to Mir Qasim, Sheikh wrote, “you will agree with me, that no political organization can become live, purposive and strong, unless it has the resolute popular backing. This is possible only when this political organization has behind it the rich asset of a movement, a history and a struggle, whereby people have a sense of association. According to this standard, National Conference is the only organization in our state with which the history of our dreams and aspirations is linked. Every soldier and commander of our freedom movement will bear testimony to this fact that under the banner of National Conference alone we fought decisive and invigorating battles against despotic and feudalistic regime....Thus, this organization became the valuable heritage of our movement and history.”

Sheikh Abdullah therefore invited Mir Qasim and his colleagues to join the National Conference. He also wrote to Mrs. Gandhi and sought her help for the revival of National Conference as an alternative both to the Congress and the Plebiscite Front in Jammu and Kashmir. Mrs Gandhi was not happy with the revival of National Conference and the relations between him and Sheikh deteriorated. Indira Gandhi, who visited Kashmir in October 1975, publicly rejected Sheikh Abdullah’s plea for merger of the Congress with the National Conference. Speaking in Srinagar on 11 October 1975, she decried the demand for the winding up the Congress and said that it had been made clear to Sheikh Abdullah during the negotiations, which preceded the Kashmir accord that the Pradesh Congress would remain in Kashmir. She affirmed, “It is not in the hands of the people of Kashmir to allow or disallow Congress to exist in the State. If all the people of Kashmir want the Congress to wind up its organization it will not happen. It was the Congress which gave power to Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah.” Immediately after the return of Mrs. Gandhi to New Delhi from Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah made up his mind and formally joined the National Conference. The National Conference resorted to total

33 Statesman, 23 September, 1975.
36 Indian Express 5 June 1975; Tribune, 1 June 1975.
37 Times of India, 12 October 1975; Economic Times, 12 Oct. 1975; See also Sheikh Abdullah, op. cit., p. 854.
38 S. Bhat, op. cit., p. 211.
mobilization to assert that there was, in the words of G.N. Kochak, minister of state, "only one leader" (Sheikh Abdullah) and "only one party" (National Conference) in Kashmir.\textsuperscript{39} Addressing a mammoth gathering at the historic Lal Chowk on October 19, 1975, Sheikh declared the time had come for him to formally become a member of the National Conference. In taking this decision, he said he was motivated by the prime consideration of strengthening the "foundations of Kashmir's relationship with India." He added that if this objective could be achieved only through the instrument of National Conference "there should be no objection to the Prime Minister or to the Congressmen in the state."\textsuperscript{40} Thus, fissures began to emerge from the very beginning of the accord. Consequently, this strange coalition in the legislature did not function.

The politics of the state from 1975 to 1977 was "mainly devoted to the rift politics of the Congress and the National Conference; the Congress demanding representation in the ministry and the National Conference demanding unconditional support in the legislature from the Congress under the Accord."\textsuperscript{41} The Congress leaders were upset that in spite of being the ruling party it had no representation in the government although Sheikh ruled on their support. Surprisingly the Congress nonetheless continued its support to Sheikh in the legislature because Mrs Gandhi did not want to allow the forces to antagonise Sheikh Abdullah who had been brought into the mainstream politics after "enough political and pressure tactics."\textsuperscript{42} One positive development of the revival of the N.C. was the phase of "competitive politics in the State for the first time since 1947."\textsuperscript{43}

Sheikh Abdullah although, reluctantly, had accepted the finality of accession but he was not prepared to forget his commitment to preserve the separate identity of Kashmiris.\textsuperscript{44} Therefore, he began to interpret the accord in his own terms, which did not tally with that of Mrs Gandhi. While according to Mrs. Gandhi the accord provided scope for further application of the Indian Constitution to the State, Sheikh Abdullah considered the accord as the first step towards restoration of pre-1953

\textsuperscript{39} Economic Times, 25 October 1975.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{41} Abdul Jabbar Ganai, op. cit., p. 72.
\textsuperscript{42} Bashir Ahmad, "Kashmir Leaders Bury the Hatchet," New Wave, 16 April 1976; Abdul Jabbar Ganai, op. cit., p. 72.
\textsuperscript{43} S. Bose, op. cit., p. 89.
\textsuperscript{44} Ajit Bhattacharjea, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Tragic Hero of Kashmir, p. 232.
constitutional position of the State.\textsuperscript{45} Also while as the Centre stressed that nothing had been conceded, Sheikh insisted that everything was open for discussion.\textsuperscript{46} Sheikh retrieved to his old views that owing to the peculiar conditions prevailing in the state it was the utmost duty of the National Conference to preserve and safeguard the autonomy guaranteed to the state.\textsuperscript{47} He also criticized the Congress and accused New Delhi of playing with the honour of Kashmiris and threatened that he would not tolerate it.\textsuperscript{48} Gul Mohd. Wani, a noted political commentator of Kashmir, believes that Sheikh “did not reconcile while working as a Chief Minister. He demanded the pre-1953 position, in which he had enjoyed the position of a Prime Minister.”\textsuperscript{49} In addition, the differences in the interpretation of the events that took place in the State between 1953 and 1975 “became a source of constant irritation between the Centre and the State.”\textsuperscript{50}

In the valley, the accord did not satisfy the people. The charges by Moulvi Farooq and others that Sheikh Abdullah had sold out Kashmir for the sake of power “provoked him to distance himself from the Centre.”\textsuperscript{51} Only a few weeks after assuming power, Sheikh Abdullah started drifting away from the spirit of the Accord. He also in April 1975 raised the possibility of merging the Kashmir valley with Azad Kashmir (Pak Administered Kashmir) over which, he declared, Pakistan had no rights.\textsuperscript{52} In order to divert the attention of the people he began to focus on the economic development of the State. On 16 February 1976, he suggested in the Assembly session that there should be a “holiday for politicking for some years [and] we should devote all our attention” for economic development of the State.\textsuperscript{53} After assuming power, the first measure he took was “designed to demonstrate that Kashmiris could resist New Delhi’s bribes.”\textsuperscript{54} He took the bold but unpopular step of abolishing the subsidy on rice provided by the Centre since his arrest to win over the people of Kashmir. In consequence, the price of rice, the stable food of Kashmiris,

\textsuperscript{45} Statesman, 5 March 1975.
\textsuperscript{46} Hindustan Times, 24 February 1975.
\textsuperscript{47} Bashir Ahmad, ‘Congress Bounces Back in Kashmir after Heated Campaign,’ New Wave, 7 December 1875.
\textsuperscript{48} S. Bhat, op. cit., p. 211.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{51} Ajit Bhattacharjea, op. cit., p. 233.
\textsuperscript{53} Bashir Ahmad, ‘Kashmir Leaders Bury the Hatchet,’ New Wave, 16 April 1976; S. Bhat. op. cit., p. 213
\textsuperscript{54} Ajit Bhattacharjea, op. cit., p. 233.
rose. But describing the subsidy as "immoral and apolitical and a huge burden on exchequer, he asked the people to bear it and not to be dependent on New Delhi."^{55} Mir Qasim in his memoirs lauds Sheikh’s bold step and admits that "only a leader of the Sheikh’s stature could perform that feat."^{56} It saved the state exchequer about Rs. five crores annually^{57} and the amount was diverted for economic development.^{58} Ironically, the Congress criticized the abolition of the subsidy and tried to incite the people against Sheikh and make capital out of the public resentment against the withdrawal of subsidy on food.^{59}

Immediately after assuming power, Sheikh had stressed on the clean and fair administrative setup. He frequently bemoaned the mess left by the predecessor regimes and felt it necessary to clean the administration.^{60} Speaking after the sworn-in ceremony Sheikh said that he would try to cleanse the administration and rebuild a society based on the principles of socialism, secularism, and democracy.^{61} Consequently, vigilance commission agency and anti-corruption tribunals were reorganised and the Tribunal powers and jurisdiction were increased and enhanced.^{62} An English daily commenting on the Sheikh’s anti-corruption drive wrote, "The Sheikh’s repeated stress on his intention to rid public life of corruption and other evils has had a salutary effect both in the official and non official spheres. Officialdom is showing a ready and surprising adaptability to the changing conditions while those outside the administration have displayed a similar awareness of social and civil obligations."^{63} Many of the high rank officers allegedly involved in corruption were removed from their important positions and many others of doubtful integrity were transferred.^{64} But the Congress accused Sheikh Abdullah of pursuing a policy of political witch-hunting and victimisation of Congress supporters and sympathisers.^{65} For the economic development of the State, the government appointed an “Economic

^{55} By this Sheikh Abdullah wanted to demonstrate his independence from the dictates of the Centre. S. Abdullah, op. cit., pp. 848-9; Ajit Bhattacharjea, _Kashmir: the Wounded Valley_, p. 237.
^{56} G.M. Sadiq and Mir Qasim during their tenure did not dare to take this step. Mir Qasim, op. cit., p. 150
^{57} _Tribune_, Chandigarh, 3 April 1977
^{59} G.N. Aali, op. cit., p. 39; S. Abdullah, op. cit., p. 856
^{60} Ghulam Ahmad, op. cit., p. 45.
^{61} _Hindustan Times_, 26 February 1975.
^{62} A.J. Gana, op. cit., p. 74
^{63} _Patriot_, 3 April 1975.
^{65} G.N. Aali, op. cit., p. 39.
Review Committee," under the chairman-ship of L. K. Jha, the Governor of the state who was an economist of international repute. The terms of reference were: (a) Plans for economic development, (b) operation of plans, (c) to bring the State on the industrial map of India, (d) opening of Detergent Factory at Jammu, and reorganize and improve Cement Factory at Wuyan, Pampore, in Kashmir.66

Sheikh Abdullah showed great enthusiasm regarding the reforms in the education field. Like during his Prime Ministership, he kept the portfolio of education in himself. The government appointed many commissions and in the light of their recommendations, new changes were introduced. Funds were utilised over the construction of school buildings and libraries and repairs and reconstruction of older ones were initiated.67 He himself went on inspections to various institutions and ordered disciplinary action against the students.68 Sheikh also tried to remove the flaws in the Big Landed Estate Abolition Act, which he had introduced in 1952 when he was Prime Minister and had made him popular among the peasantry.

Meanwhile at the national level an important event took place. Mrs. Gandhi imposed emergency in the country on 26 June 1975. Fundamental rights were suspended and most key opposition politicians were imprisoned. However, Sheikh chose to remain distant from this "pan-India crisis" and his government did not go "whole hog with the central Government directives." It did not impose strict censorship on the press and did not condemn the national opposition nor uttered a word for or against emergency.69 But in dealing with Jamaat-e-Islami, Sheikh came into line with Mrs. Gandhi. In the 1975 by-election, Sheikh was expecting that he would win the election unopposed. To his surprise, the Jamaat fielded its candidate Ashraf Sahraie against him. Although Sheikh won the election, he could never forgive Jamaat for this act. The Jamaat-e-Islami used to call him a traitor for selling Kashmir in lieu of power. Mrs. Gandhi's crackdown on the Jamaat-e-Islami had Sheikh Abdullah's enthusiastic endorsement; in one speech, he had said that, "I am fighting an in-depth battle. The Jamaat has to be resisted politically and fought back socially." In 1975, he ordered the closure of Jamaat schools (darasgaahs), which he described

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67 Numayan Karnama, op. cit., p. 5.
68 Ibid., p. 2.
69 G. Ahmad, op. cit., p. 60; G. N. Aali, op. cit., p. 41.
“the real source for spreading communal poison.”

Some 125 Jamaat-run schools, with over 550 teachers and 25,000 students were affected. So were another 1,000 evening schools run by the Jamaat, which reached out to an estimated 50,000 boys and girls. In 1980, he also banned the World Islamic Youth Council planned by the Jamiat-ul-Tulba, the youth wing of the Jamaat.

However, the confrontation policy of the Congress belied Sheikh Abdullah’s hopes and works. He failed to get their confidence in these decisions even though they continued supporting him in the legislature. The Congress leaders in the state with the blessings of the Centre came into the open and started to challenge Sheikh’s authority. In January 1976, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, the president of the Congress in the state in an interview with Daily Aftab said that “if Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah refused to give us full representation in the Ministry, we will move vote of no-confidence against him in the Assembly.”

Seeing his thrown in danger Sheikh feared that like 1953 he would be again thrown into wilderness if something was not done to placate the rebellious Congress party. He therefore offered to expand the Cabinet and induct some Congress members into it to make it an equal partner. A meeting to consider this matter was convened at Congress President D.K. Barooah’s house in New Delhi on October 17, 1976. The meeting decided that Sheikh’s cabinet would have four members each from the Congress and the National Conference. Consequently, Sheikh decided to have the swearing-in-ceremony on 25 October 1976. But the fear that the inclusion of Abdul Gani Lone (who had deserted the Congress to join the National Conference) in the cabinet would have a demoralising effect on the Congress in the State convinced the Congress to boycott the swearing-in-ceremony. Sheikh Abdullah waited for the four Congressmen for one hour on the appointed day for the swearing-in-ceremony in the Raj Bhavan. Finally, a heartbroken man, he got up and read out a statement in which he announced that on the advice of the Governor the oath taking ceremony was being cancelled for the sake of maintaining accord with the

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72 N.C. Behera, State Identity, op. cit., p. 143.
73 S. Bhat, op. cit., p. 212
74 G. Ahmad, op. cit., p. 57
75 Mir Qasim, op. cit., p. 151.
The National Conference leadership had become helpless because of the role of Congress, which in spite of being the ruling party was playing the role of opposition party. In this state of helplessness, Sheikh tried to divert the attention of people towards economic development but the people did not like his yes man attitude towards Delhi. Meanwhile Mrs Gandhi declared the dissolution of the Lok Sabha and fresh elections to be held in March 1977. The state of Jammu and Kashmir shares six seats in the Lok Sabha. By an agreement, these were equally divided between the Congress and the National Conference. The N.C. wanted to secure their two seats in Srinagar and Baramulla uncontested and if it was not possible at least the seat of Srinagar where from Begam Abdullah was contesting. But to their dismay, Molvi Ifikhar Hussain Ansari as an independent candidate and Syed Ali Shah Geelani, a Jamaat-e Islami candidate, filed their nomination papers for Srinagar and Baramulla seats respectively. For the first time in 45 years Sheikh’s integrity was publicly questioned and was charged with nepotism and favouritism. Although not even the ardent admirers of Ifikhar Hussain expected him to win, even then the N.C. “resorted to hooliganism, capture of polling booths, and rigging of the elections in general.” Begum Abdullah won by a majority of votes but Maulvi Ifikhar too secured no fewer than nearly eighty thousand votes. The election results at the national level were revolting in character. Big leaders of Congress including Mrs Gandhi lost their seats and the 30 years of Congress rule came to an end and power transferred to Janta Party with Morarji Desai as the Prime Minister. Losing their power in the centre the Congress thought of regaining their power in the state of Jammu and Kashmir where they had majority in the legislative Assembly. On March 26, Mufi Mohammad Sayeed, President of the Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress, withdrew support of the party to Sheikh Abdullah government. Thus, just in two years the accord was ‘guillotined.’ A dejected Sheikh who was again dismissed from the power by the

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76 Ibid.; S. Bhat, op. cit., p. 216-17.
77 Ibid., pp. 217-18.
79 Bhat, op. cit., p. 220. Syed Ali Geelani had been imprisoned by Sheikh Abdullah and was not released until the eve of the election. Despite the intimidation and physical assault on the opponents by the N.C. they remained firm on their decision, Bazaz, op. cit., pp. 29-30.
81 Bazaz, op. cit., p. 30.
82 Ibid., pp. 30-31.
83 The state Congress leaders had objected the surrender [voluntarily] of power to Sheikh in 1975.
84 Bazaz, op. cit., p. 32.
Congress reacted philosophically that since Congress had withdrawn its support, therefore, the accord reached between him and Mrs Gandhi should be considered annulled.85 Sheikh belied the hopes of the Congress of resuming power when he intelligently advised the Governor to dissolve the Assembly and order fresh elections. Thus, the Governor, on 27 March 1977 dissolved the Assembly and imposed Governor's rule. The Janta Government in New Delhi gave its approval to these measures and the elections were held between 30 June and 3 July 1977.86

The elections of 1977 in Jammu and Kashmir were different from the earlier ones in many ways. With marked exceptions, virtually all political observers are of the opinion that in the history of Kashmir from 1947, the 1977 elections were free and fair thanks to the Janta rule in New Delhi.87 Second positive development was that for the first time opposition was tolerated in the State. There were three big parties in the fray—Congress, Janta Party and the National Conference. The Janta party had a strange mixture of pro-plebiscite and anti-autonomy leaders. At the time when Sheikh was bed-ridden, the Janta leaders criticized Sheikh and advised him to resign from politics. The people were agitated over these statements and rallied round Sheikh. Sheikh condemned the Janta Party as an outside party which would threaten the distinct identity of Kashmir.88 The Congress, which had liquidated itself everywhere in the country had the reputation of being an instrument of the centre's dominance, stood little chances in the valley, although, for precisely those reasons, it was popular in Jammu and Ladakh.89

The election campaign in the State was fought with great energy. N.C. raised the issue of autonomy of the State and made emotive appeals on very sensitive subjects. On May 23, 1977 Sheikh Abdullah said at a rally of the National Conference at Mujahid Manzil that although he considered Kashmir a part of India but “if we do not secure a place of honour in India, we shall not hesitate to secede.” The election was referred to as the referendum for Kashmir's future.90 Religion and Pakistan

86 Alastair Lamb, op. cit., p. 313.
87 P. N. Bazaz in his book *Democracy Through Intimidation* accuses Sheikh and his National Conference of hooliganism and dividing the people on religious issues.
90 S. Bhat, op. cit., p. 234.
Conference won thirty-nine. Sheikh's appeal to the people that Indian parties would repeal article 370 proved quite helpful for the victory of his party in the Valley. Congress failed to win any seat in the Valley.\textsuperscript{96} Molvi Farooq's Awami Action Committee, and Jamat-e-Islami, both of which had consistently adopted pro-Pakistani stance lost credibility amongst their traditional sympathisers, by campaigning for the Janata Party.\textsuperscript{97} For the first time, the Congress party contested elections in the Jammu and Kashmir state, opposing the National Conference. Predictably, it received substantial support from the Jammu region. Not only did the Congress party under Mrs Gandhi emerge as the principal channel for expressing Jammu's discontent against the State Government, it came as well to be identified as a Jammu/Hindu party due to its exclusive support from the Jammu region. A polarisation of assembly seats between the two regions on a Hindu-Muslim basis emerged.\textsuperscript{98}

Thus with a thumping majority, a confident but weak and aged Sheikh returned to power on 9 July 1977. The popular mandate that Sheikh Abdullah received was expected to usher in a new era in the 'governance of the state and in the centre-state relations. But unfortunately neither happened. Sheikh Abdullah, who was never a staunch democrat, used "democratic procedures for more parochial ends."\textsuperscript{99} Though Janata Party fought a bitter fight against Sheikh, it did show decency to let Sheikh remain in peace after he won his convincing victory. On his part, Sheikh reciprocated. Sheikh knew from the past practices that any anti-centre policies might result him in losing his power. He, therefore, felt obliged to resort to curbing anti-Indian feelings in the state.\textsuperscript{100} Barely four months after assuming the power, in November 1977 Sheikh's government passed the 'Jammu and Kashmir Safety Ordinance,' which placed severe restrictions on newspapers and other publications within the state in the interest of the security and public order; and enabled the government to detain any person for two years without communicating the grounds of detention, ostensibly to tackle Pakistani sponsored subversive activity in the state.\textsuperscript{101} The promulgation of the ordinance raised uproar not only in the state but outside also.

\textsuperscript{96} P. S. Verma, op. cit., p. 128.
\textsuperscript{97} Victoria Schofield, Kashmir in Conflict: India, Pakistan and the Unending War, London/New York, 2003 125.
\textsuperscript{100} N.A. Naqash, op. cit., p. 125.
\textsuperscript{101} P.N. Bazaz, op. cit., pp. 151-55.
It shocked the press fraternity and common people who had recently emerged from the harrowing experience of the eighteen-month State of Emergency of Mrs Gandhi. Newspapers from every nook and cranny vehemently protested against it. Although, after facing opposition, Sheikh removed some of the more objectionable features of the ordinance but he refused to abandon it altogether. Worse still, legislation was moved in the state assembly to make the ordinance a legal stature. In spite of the huge criticism from the press and the opposition, Sheikh Abdullah was not deterred and with the numerical majority, the ruling party got passed the bill. It hurt the people most because of the fact that Sheikh Abdullah, whom they trusted most, had enacted a law behind their backs. The passage of this law effectively closed yet another avenue for the airing of political grievances at the local level. Sumit Ganguly argues that “in 1978 Sheikh Abdullah no longer had an adequate appreciation of the changes in the political culture of the state. A new generation of educated, politicized, and more articulate Kashmiris had begun to emerge during his long years of political exile.” They wanted to be in the limelight and fight for the cause of Kashmiris. It is pertinent to quote P. N. Bazaz: “Tremendous changes had taken place in and outside Jammu and Kashmir. The educated Muslim youth whose number multiplied several times in 30 years realised that Sheikh Abdullah’s inconsistent behaviour had done immense harm to the interests of Kashmiris; it had thwarted their progress and deprived them of several political and human rights enjoyed by all the other Indians.”

Sheikh Abdullah also became suspicious of his own colleagues and party men. He therefore ordered all his cabinet to swear a personal oath of loyalty to him. In order to clear the way for his son to succeed him, he got expelled Mirza Afzal Beg, close associate of Sheikh for four decades, from the National Conference. He was charged of intriguing with the Congress (I), to throw out Sheikh Abdullah and replace him as the Chief Minister, causing groupism in the party and working against the

102 Ibid.
103 On April 1, 1978, Deputy Chief Minister Afzal Beg moved the most hated Bill in the State Assembly, ironically on the same day when Union Home Minister Charan Singh was seeking the permission of the Lok Sabha to withdraw the Bill. Mr. Abdul Gani Lone, the leader of the opposition, called it a black law and lawless law. P.N. Bazaz, op. cit., pp. 186-87.
105 S. Ganguly, op. cit., p. 72.
party interests for the sake of his son-in-law, Yaqub Beg.\textsuperscript{108} Afzal Beg founded a new party, the Inquilabi (Revolutionary) National Conference; but it never really got off the ground and was wounded up by the end of 1981.\textsuperscript{109} Further, to guard himself from any untoward political development, Sheikh Abdullah introduced a Bill, which became known as Anti-Defection Act when it became law on 29 September 1979. It decreed that any party member who resigned his party whip or abstained from voting according to his party whip would automatically lose his seat in the assembly. The act was aptly “seen as a measure leading towards the permanent establishment of a one-party regime in the State of Jammu and Kashmir.”\textsuperscript{110} Within Kashmir Sheikh exhibited the same traits of authoritarianism as Mrs Gandhi did in India.\textsuperscript{111} Sheikh’s authoritarian approach had brought almost all his fragmented opponents together to build a kind of coalition to oppose him.\textsuperscript{112}

However, Sheikh’s authoritarian rule was severely challenged by the Hindus of Jammu and Buddhists of Ladakh. Jammu and Ladakh were increasingly resentful about the political domination of the Valley, and supported greater autonomy from it.\textsuperscript{113} There was the growing regional tension in the State. There had been violent agitations on and off in several districts in the Jammu region, including the sensitive border district of Poonch, over what were termed blatant acts of discrimination deliberately practised by the Sheikh Abdullah Government.\textsuperscript{114} Actually, trouble arose over the irregularities in the recruitment of teachers. The police firing on students demonstrating against the irregularities in Poonch on 2 December 1978 “provided the flashpoint of mass regional upsurge.”\textsuperscript{115} A committee of 21 members, All Party Jammu Committee was formed in Jammu to express its solidarity with the demands of the Poonch agitation. Later it enlarged its scope to struggle for the regional autonomy for Jammu. The Committee on 26 December 1978 unanimously adopted a resolution

\textsuperscript{108} *Tribune*, 11 October 1978; *Times of India* and *Statesman*, 12 October 1978.
\textsuperscript{109} Thus, his political career came to an end. He died on 11 June 1982 at the age of 74, A. Lamb, op. cit., p. 315 and 321 fn.
\textsuperscript{110} A. Lamb, op. cit., p. 316.
\textsuperscript{111} The way Sheikh treated Afzal Beg who had suffered the privations of jail because of Sheikh did not behave a personality like Sheikh. Kuldip Nayar, ‘Between the Lines: Mrs Gandhi and Sheikh Abdullah,’ *Indian Express*, 12 November 1980.
\textsuperscript{112} In June 1979 the Awami Action Committee, the Congress, the Janata Party and Inquilabi National Conference made an alliance against Sheikh’s policies.
\textsuperscript{114} *The Hindu*, Madras, June 1, 1979.
demanding statutory, political and democratic set up at regional, district, block and
panchayat levels—maintaining identity of the three regions of the state.\(^{116}\) Sheikh
Abdullah had branded the entire agitation as politically motivated and spearheaded by
his adversary, Karan Singh, for his political purpose.\(^{117}\) There was a bitter
confrontation between Sheikh Abdullah and Karan Singh. Sheikh was accused of
adopting discriminative policy towards Jammu.\(^{118}\) Karan Singh, claiming himself to
be a “fighter” for the justice of the people of Jammu (his homeland) demanded the
separation of Jammu from the State and to be made a part of Himachal Pradesh.\(^{119}\)
Karan Singh, anxious to make a political niche for himself, threatened that if the State
Government did not tackle Jammu problems, it would lead to “separation of the
Jammu region from the Kashmir Valley.”\(^{120}\) In his rejoinder, Sheikh retorted, “If the
majority of people in Jammu region believed that they could progress by carving out a
separate State of Jammu, then there was nothing to stop them and we must part as
friends.”\(^{121}\) But Sheikh warned that its consequences would be far reaching.\(^{122}\)
Encouraged by the Jammu agitation, the people of Ladakh also started an agitation for
regional autonomy in 1981. Sheikh’s response was that of a Kashmiri Nationalist
rather than of the Chief Minister of the State. He said, the Ladakhis were sovereign
and they could take any decision about their future. “I cannot keep the Ladakhis with
us by force.”\(^{123}\) Facing challenges from all sides, Sheikh Abdullah reverted to his old
stand. Speaking at a prayer congregation on 16 March 1979 in Srinagar, he said that
Kashmir was a disputed issue and needed a political solution to it. He also asked India
and Pakistan to come to a settlement over Kashmir because the ceasefire of 1949 had
not brought about a political solution.\(^{124}\) However, in retrospect, Sheikh Abdullah saw
in these agitations threat for the future of the State and his power. He agreed to
appoint a commission headed by retired Chief Justice of India, S.M. Sikri.\(^{125}\) Its
recommendations were almost the same as that of the Gajendragadakar Commission

\(^{116}\) For details see Ibid.
\(^{117}\) The Hindu Madras, June 1 1979.
\(^{118}\) Tribune, Chandigarh, 24 March 1979
\(^{120}\) The Statesman, 10 December, 1978.
\(^{121}\) Ibid., December 11, 1978.
\(^{122}\) Tribune, Chandigarh, March 24 1979.
\(^{123}\) Ibid., 13 March, 1981
\(^{124}\) Ibid., 17 March 1979; Indian Express, 18 March 1979
\(^{125}\) The Hindu, Madras June 1 1979.
set up by G.M. Sadiq a decade earlier.\textsuperscript{126} It put its major stress on the establishment of a State Development Board chaired by the Chief Minister, “that is to say Sheikh Abdullah.”\textsuperscript{127} About the Ladakh problem, the State Government agreed to declare some Ladakhis as the members of “scheduled tribes” which entitled them special assistance from New Delhi. All this in one way or the other implied an attack on Article 370.\textsuperscript{128}

With the return of Mrs Gandhi to power in the 1980 General Elections, the pressure on Sheikh Abdullah from New Delhi increased. A vehement campaign was started by the Congress party in the State maligning Sheikh’s Government for corruption and price hike. Income tax raids were organised on April 21, 1981, against businessmen close to him. “The victim was myself,” Sheikh Abdullah told \textit{India Today} describing the people raided as just instruments.\textsuperscript{129} Mrs Gandhi, during a tour of the State attacked Sheikh Abdullah by name and declared that “without the Centre’s help, his government could not last half an hour.”\textsuperscript{130} Subsequently, in her campaign for the elections of 1980, Mrs Gandhi played the communal card by publicly announcing in Jammu that Hindus were insecure in Muslim Kashmir, despite the fact that, till then, there had been no serious communal violence in the Valley, unlike in the rest of India.\textsuperscript{131} Furious Sheikh reacted to these events predictably—by exploiting the sensitive nature of his state to the worst his opponents.\textsuperscript{132} Speaking on Martyr’s Day, 13 July 1980, he declared that “no one would be allowed to enslave us again, and interfere in our affairs whether it is India or Pakistan.”\textsuperscript{133} Mrs Gandhi was extremely annoyed with this speech. Sheikh went to Delhi to convince Mrs Gandhi that his speech had been wrongly interpreted.\textsuperscript{134} Mrs Gandhi, however, was not convinced. Consequently, she appointed B.K. Nehru as the next Governor of the State, who she considered would be more loyal to the interests of India than L.K. Jha

\textsuperscript{126} The Gajendragadakar Commission had recommended that if the Chief Minister belonged to one region there should be a Deputy Chief Minister belonging to other region, the number of ministers in the two regions should be equal, etc. \textit{The Hindu}, Madras, June 1, 1979.
\textsuperscript{127} A. Lamb, op. cit., p. 318.
\textsuperscript{128} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{129} \textit{India Today}, 16 May 1981, p. 86.
\textsuperscript{130} \textit{Times of India}, June 3, 1982
\textsuperscript{132} \textit{The Indiana Express}, New Delhi, May 21, 1981
\textsuperscript{133} \textit{Indian Express}, 14 July 1980.
\textsuperscript{134} \textit{Statesman}, 24 July 1980.
had proved to be. The estranged relations between Sheikh and New Delhi reached to a high water mark when the issue of the status of refugees arose. Sheikh Abdullah was asked to grant State Subject to Hindu refugees who had come to the State from the West Punjab. Sheikh Abdullah was reluctant to grant them the State Subject because that would "upset the ratio of Muslim population in the State." He made it clear to New Delhi that it was within the jurisdiction of the State to decide who was or not the State Subject. Sheikh Abdullah, on his part, in order to "give a jolt to the Centre" raised the issue of those Kashmiri refugees who were living in Pakistan Administered Kashmir. For this purpose, Sheikh Abdullah in March 1982 introduced in the State Legislative Assembly 'the Jammu and Kashmir Grant of Permit for Resettlement in (or permanent Return to) the State Bill,' shortly known as 'the Resettlement Bill,' the "populist measure" of Sheikh Abdullah as the Chief Minister. The legislation gave any person who was a State Subject before 14 May, 1954, (had migrated after 1 March 1947) or a descendent (wife or widow) of the subject, the right to return Kashmir provided the person swore allegiance to the Constitution of India and the Constitution of Kashmir. Alastair Lamb describes the Bill as an attempt by Sheikh Abdullah "near to a formal declaration of the virtual independence of the state of Jammu and Kashmir." The Bill evoked mixed response. In the Valley it received the popular support for it was seen as an attempt to "undo the wrong and reunite disrupted families." New Delhi regarded it threat for the national security for anti-Indian elements could be sent across the border. Moreover, in Jammu the Hindu and Sikh refugees who had resettled on the property of the Muslims, who had been expelled from Jammu to Pakistan in 1947, felt threatened and sharply criticized the Bill. Sheikh Abdullah denounced its critics as the "Hindu communalists of North India" who wanted "to upset the communal

135 A. Lamb, op. cit., p. 319.
137 A. Lamb, op. cit., p. 319.
138 Ghulam Ahmad who was the Principal Secretary of Sheikh Abdullah recalls that Sheikh was assured by the expert that the State Legislature was fully competent to enact this law. Sheikh was very happy and said, "let us give a jolt to the centre." G. Ahmad, op. cit., p. 127.
139 The bill was ostensibly designed to facilitate the return of those Kashmiri residents who had fled the State during the upheaval of 1947. Sheikh Abdullah by this bill wanted to quiet those critics who had chastised him for Kashmir's full accession to India. S. Ganguly, op. cit., p. 78.
142 A. Bhattacharjea, Tragic Hero, p. 233.
143 M.J. Akbar, op. cit., p. 198; S. Ganguly, op. cit p. 79.
configuration of Kashmir's population, presumably with a view to reducing the Muslim majority into a minority.144 Sheikh Abdullah, however, insisted that there would be proper screening of the individual applicants and got passed the bill in the State legislature.145 B.K. Nehru, the governor whose assent was necessary for it to become law delayed assent to the Bill in view of "its sensitive nature". He returned the Bill to the legislature for reconsideration on the plea that the Bill "makes it possible for spies, saboteurs and foreign agents to come and settle in the state as a matter of legal right."146

Towards the end of 1970s, Sheikh Abdullah, who was in the twilight of his life, had lost his grip over the party and the administration.147 Sheikh Abdullah, who had acquired power after so many years of hardship wanted to keep it in the family: "after all he was doing nothing more than emulate India's ruling dynasty."148 The war of succession had already started between his son Farooq Abdullah and son-in-law Gul Shah. However, Sheikh had made an overt display of affection towards his son Farooq. As discussed earlier, Afzal Beg who was next to Sheikh had been expelled from the party. Sensing that his days were numbered, Sheikh lost no time in imposing Farooq on the National Conference as its president. On 23 March 1981 at a prayer gathering at Hazaratbal, Sheikh Abdullah declared, "I appoint Dr. Farooq Abdullah as my successor".149 Later on, he inducted him in the cabinet as health minister. Sheikh Abdullah also did not conceal his plans of installing his son as the next Chief Minister of the State.150 The man who had fought against the dynastic rule of the Dogras himself became responsible for its revival by establishing his dynastic rule (of Abdullah's) in Kashmir. Sheikh Abdullah, the Lion of Kashmir, died on 8 September 1982 at the age of 77. When his death was announced, thousands of people from the

144 Times of India, June 3, 1982.
145 S. Ganguly, Ibid. Alaistar Lamb believes that "in its way it was near to a formal declaration of the virtual independence of the state of Jammu and Kashmir as Sheikh Abdullah ever got since maharaja Hari Singh let him out of prison in late September 1947", A. Lamb, op. cit., p. 320.
146 Cited in M.N. Ghatate, 'The Resettlement Act, 1982: An Invitation to Pakistan to Settle in the Valley,' pp. 515-17. The Bill was referred to the Supreme Court of India by the President of India. But the Apex Court "respectfully returned" it unanswered to the President in November 2001. It was later on challenged in the Apex Court and hence was stayed by it.
147 Patriot, 3 April, 1980.
150 He wanted to hold fresh elections to the State Assembly as soon as possible to get his son elected as leader of the State National Conference Legislative Party. Statesman, 1 September, 1981.
city and villages thronged the polo ground where the body was laid out for the last glance. All the opponents of Sheikh across the border praised him and paid homage to his conviction. The presence of the Indian Prime Minister and the President at his funeral procession made it clear that he was not an ordinary Chief Minister of a state but much more. The India Today magazine which covered the funeral procession wrote, "The grief, as the cortege passed, burst out like an uncontrollable wave. The salutation, sanye shero ("our lion") was on everyone's lips. People wept, they chanted dirges and mouthed melancholy slogans beat their breasts in rhythmic frenzy." For that day the man Kashmiri remembered was not the Sheikh who had been chief minister for five years but the man who for nearly thirty years had symbolized Kashmir's identity. Sheikh Abdullah in the last years of his life made unsuccessful attempts to persuade New Delhi to get autonomy of the State restored. His accord with Mrs Gandhi did not solve Kashmir's future affiliation in any satisfactory manner. The most worrying thing for Sheikh was that even after making huge concessions in his deal with Mrs Gandhi, Delhi was not satisfied with him. He even failed to get those central laws repealed which had been applied to the state after his arrest in 1953, and of which he had been assured. His obsession with secularism had fewer takers. In fact the idiom of political mobilization had crept towards the communal politics and like in the rest of the subcontinent, secular politics in the region was on the defensive. According to some persons who were close to Sheikh Abdullah that towards the last days of his life he was very sad and worried. He admitted that he had trusted Indian leadership but they did not keep up their promises. Sheikh would admit that he had failed in his mission to carve out a place where izzat wa aabro (honour and dignity) of Kashmiris could be protected. Akhtar Murtaza, a state bureaucrat at

151 India Today, September 30, 1982.
153 In Kashmir, it was said that Sheikh had put a tilak on his forehead but even then that did not satisfy Delhi. Tavleen Singh, op. cit., p. 20.
154 After assuming power in 1975, he had appointed a committee to study the prospect of reviewing the parliamentary laws extended to the state in the post-1953 period. Nothing much came out of it because the committee failed to evolve a consensus. The issue, however, continued to be voiced by the National Conference in the subsequent period. Soon forming its government in 1996, the N.C. government constituted the State Autonomy Committee to "examine and recommend measures for the restoration of the autonomy of the state. The report was made public in 1999 and passed in the state legislature as 'Autonomy Resolution'. But the NDA government at the centre rejected the Report.
155 In the beginning of 1980 the sense of communalism and regionalism was more visible than ever, Ashwini K. Ray. Op.cit.
that time, records that during a visit to the grave of Yaqub Shah Chak in 1980, Sheikh lamented, “I failed to bring back your period. Perhaps the Creator did not destine me to achieve. He will someday empower anyone else to achieve my mission.” He was regretting his decisions but knew that damage had been done and “things were beyond redemption.” Ghulam Ahmad who was Principal Secretary of Sheikh records that one day when Sheikh was in a very dejected mood, he summoned him and suddenly blurted out “Look here, they (Indians) have gulped us but don’t allow them to swallow and digest you. Let us get stuck in their throat.” He was worried about the future of Kashmiris because of the growing threat of Hindu communalists. In 1982 he got published a booklet which stated that extremist Hindus wanted to convert the Muslim majority into a minority and the people should prepare themselves to “face the daunting challenges of future.” Mohammad Yusuf Teng, the biographer of Sheikh Abdullah, records that one day reflecting on his political career Sheikh Saheb regretted that if Bakshi had remained loyal in 1953, “be dimha Dili meche noon (I would have taught New Delhi a hard lesson.)” However, his advancing age and the changed political scenario did not make it possible and his hope remained a pipe dream. He died an unhappy man because he felt that his mission was not completed.

Legacy of Sheikh Abdullah

By the Accord of 1975, Sheikh accepted a position, which was much below his stature. During 22 years of his political wilderness, people had extended their unflinching support to him not for his return to power but for the right of self-determination. He had taught them not to accept anything short to plebiscite. In an interview with Shabistan Urdu Digest between 6 and 14 January 1968, Sheikh Abdullah had said, “If we can fight Pakistan with whom we have religious and ethnic ties, why cannot we fight other forces? A true Muslim has no fear of death. The best death is that death which one meets on the battlefield. Problems cannot be solved by

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156 The last independent ruler of Kashmir who had valiantly fought against the Mughals.
158 G. Ahmad, op. cit., p. 73.
159 Ibid., pp. 74.
160 Sheeraza, Bakshi Number, Vol. 44, Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art and Culture, pp. 9-10
accepting positions (Chief Ministership or Prime Ministership) but by executing them.”

His acceptance of power from India which he had castigated as the suppressor of democracy on his dismissal in 1953 did not go well with the people of Kashmir for whom “every word of Sheikh mattered like heavenly commandments.”

Sheikh Abdullah had patronized a two-decade long movement under the banner of Plebiscite Front employing all the techniques of mobilization. The Plebiscite Movement highly influenced the mass psyche and created a strong public memory, which its creator failed to eradicate in the end. Kashmiris felt betrayed by his choice of political power than to the plebiscite ideology. Particularly, the educated youth of Kashmir, who were being drawn into the political arena, were visibly upset with him as they saw it as “selling the self-esteem of Kashmiri people.” They regretted why Sheikh Abdullah, the “Lion of Kashmir” could not prove to be like Omar Mukhtar, the “Lion of the Desert” of Libya. Many of the youth in disgust formed a new organization called the Peoples League “to keep the quest for self-determination alive.” Peoples League emerged as the main anti-Accord youth organization. It held number of demonstrations against the accord and its members played an active role in making the bandh call given by then Pakistan Prime Minister, Z.A. Bhutto, against the accord a great success. Sofi Mohammad Akbar, a close associate of Sheikh Abdullah formed Mahaz-e-Azadi (Freedom Front) on 30th May, 1977, for seeking the right of self-determination for the people of Kashmir in order to settle the Kashmir issue.

One of its important leader, Azam Inqalib told in a press conference in Srinagar that they were “carrying the torch halfway left by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah.” Many of the educated youth were attracted towards Jamaat-e-Islami, an Islamic organization that favoured accession with Pakistan. The student wing of the Jammat, called Jamiat-e-Tulaba, which was formed in 1977, inspired by the role of

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162 The Test of Sheikh Abdullah, pp. 40 and 88.
163 Ibid., p. 30.
164 Ibid., p. 29.
165 A significant event took place in a local cinema hall in Srinagar when an English movie Omar Mukhtar of Libya was shown. In this movie, Omar Mukhtar a petty schoolteacher in alliance with local people was giving a heroic resistance to the French colonialists and preferred death than accepting any concessions for himself. This heroic deed of Omar Mukhtar had such an electrifying effect on the audience sitting in the cinema hall that they started raising slogans against the Abdullah government and some of them in anguish tore the cushion seats on which they were sitting. Sheikh Abdullah was panicked so much that he ordered to withdraw this movie for subsequent screening, M.M. Gupta, op. cit., pp. 29-30.
167 S. Bhatt, op. cit., p. 236.
168 Zafar Mehraj, op. cit.
students in Iranian revolution, threatened to launch an "Iranian-type" movement to liberate Kashmir from India. The State Government did not take this threat lightly. On 7 August 1980, the state police arrested some twenty-four leaders of Jammat.  

Abdullah government also banned the World Islamic Youth Council planned by the youth wing scheduled to hold in August 1980. Under the surface, however, disaffection was present. Sheikh Abdullah who was never popular in Jammu and in Ladakh, was also becoming unpopular in the Valley and the Islamic groups, which had opposed the accord, were gaining support.

Re-establishment of trust as expected from the accord of 1975 could not work and the state plunged into a worse turmoil in 1989. There is no gainsaying the fact that the outbreak of armed rebellion in late 1989 was thus an attempt to alter the status quo accepted by Sheikh Abdullah. Small wonder then that the grave of Sheikh became a prime target of attack in the beginning of 1990s. It is strange to see in present day that his marble tomb at Hazratbal is protected by Indian soldiers from the very people he had so loved and who virtually worshiped him.

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169 S. Ganguly, op. cit., p. 78
171 V. Schofield, op. cit., p. 127.
Conclusion

The year 1947 is important year for India and Pakistan. It was in this year that India got independence from British, though with partition. Pakistan emerged on the world map as a new nation. They got, for which they had fought. But for Kashmir the long years of slavery was renewed and recharged for unlimited time to come. Kashmiris also went to welcome freedom, but they were told:

"Freedom, being of heavenly birth,

Cannot move from door to door."

This study with ample sources affirms that that the movement that was launched against the Dogra State was not communal. The Muslims, who constituted the sheer majority of the total population of the State, were lagging behind in every field and were governed like dumb driven cattle. They were discriminated by the Dogra Maharajas for a simple reason that they were followers of a religion different to the Dogras. It is therefore not surprising that the political movement Kashmiris launched in 1930’s under Shaikh Abdullah would take the religious colour and mosques and shrines were used as platforms. Initially started for the uplift of the Muslims of the State, the movement, under Shaikh Abdullah, broadened its outlook and accommodated the Non Muslims, and fought for the ‘Responsible Government. This continuity and change marks the progressive march of the ‘national movement’ in Kashmir.

The origins of the present tragic struggle can, in a sense, be traced back to 1939. Up to that time the Muslims had been united through the Muslim Conference. In 1939 this unity was broken. Responsible for this tragic schism was none other than the popular lion of Kashmir, Shaikh Abdullah. As the previous chapters have shown, the conversion of the Muslim Conference into National Conference was a blunder on part of Shaikh Abdullah. He transformed the Muslim Conference to accommodate non-Muslims, i.e. elite section. From the first chapter it becomes clear that the non-Muslim elites had associated themselves with the Dogra rule which had protected their religious and economic rights. As was expected, the non-Muslims did not join the National Conference which they knew, being part of the state, was against their
interests. But worst was that Shaikh lost his close friends and comrades who were not in favour of conversion.

It was this division of the Muslims that in 1947, Kashmir could not decide its fate. Shaikh Abdullah being the most popular leader of Kashmiris never tried to come to terms with his erstwhile colleagues, to save Kashmir from another foreign domination. Shaikh failed to maintain equal-distance between the Congress and the Muslim League. At the time of partition an initiative was taken by Shaikh Abdullah and Ghulam Abbas to form a joint front. But it was beyond their reach to control the blowing political storm following the withdrawal of the British.

In the given surcharged political situation, Shaikh Abdullah’s slogan of “freedom before accession” lost its relevance. Having complete faith in the ‘socialist and secularist’ Nehru, who assured the world that the future of the State would be decided by a plebiscite, Shaikh attested the limited accession in his utterances. The presence of Shaikh Abdullah in Delhi on 26th October made the accession conditional and limited. In the absence of Shaikh it would have not been different as those signed with Junagarh and Hyderabad. Although Shaikh Abdullah had no official status at that time, but being close to Congress and the stand of Congress that accession should be decided by the people not by the ruler; made Shaikh an indispensable part of the of accession. Although it was because of Shaikh’s pro Congress attitude that Kashmir got plunged into another slavery, but he got something [autonomy and promised plebiscite] to show his people the results of their twenty year’s hard struggle. However, when India [read Nehru] retreated from its pledge of protecting the autonomy of the State and conducting of plebiscite, Shaikh also developed other thoughts- in which an independent Kashmir was not excluded. This led to the arrest of Shaikh in 1953 by his old friend Nehru.

Kashmir was projected as a show window of Indian secularism. But the Indian democracy and secularism could not satisfy the Kashmiris who found subtle difference between the Dogra State and the Indian sponsored NC’s rule. Really Indian democracy failed in its test in Kashmir. The selected politicians and unrepresentative leaders received generous grants in lieu of their endorsement to accession. The farce and rigged elections [except of 1977] were deemed as equal to plebiscite. The shame
of ‘Indian democracy’s’ shame in Kashmir was so ashamed that it stopped at Pathankot.

Like all personalities of history Shaikh Abdullah too is many persons, much opinion. His achievements and failure are not his alone. They have impacted history and people of Kashmir. Being undisputed leader of Kashmir, his fate became the fate of Kashmir and his decisions right or wrong were taken as the decisions of Kashmir. For 20 years he had stressed on the people to accept nothing short to self determination. In 1947 his decision was forced by circumstances; but in 1975 by signing the accord [the accord had no constitutional or democratic legitimacy] which was sooner discarded, Shaikh made the worst blunder. Nehru, who was as tall leader as Shaikh in their respective spheres and regions, had only betrayed and imprisoned him, but Indra Gandhi who was no math to him, humiliated and totally destroyed him. From a tall leader of Kashmir he was reduced to a small politician hankering after the loves of office. But it was impossible for educated youth, whom Shaikh had trained and politicized to accept the status quo. In fact Shaikh had gone so deep and far in inducting among the youth the desire of freedom, from where to get out was too difficult.

Nevertheless, ‘it did not bother Shaikh in his life time till 1982 because of his immense tall stature and unrivalled popularity.’ And also because the people considered him more as a religious leader than seeing him in ‘political terms.’ However, within a decade following the death of Sheik, an armed struggle was started by Kashmiris for their legitimate rights. Thus the present movement that started in 1989 was not all of a sudden but the continuation of the movement launched in 1930 for political rights. Shaikh was accused of treachery. Small wonder, then that the grave of Shaikh Abdullah became one of the main targets of attack in the beginning of 1990s. There is certain irony in present day that his grave near Dal Lake at Haazratbal is protected by Indian soldiers from the very people he had so loved and who virtually worshiped him. There is no gainsaying the fact that the outbreak of armed rebellion in late 1989 was thus an attempt to alter the status quo accepted by Shaikh Abdullah.

This study questions the validity of the Treaty of Amritsar of 1846, after the independence and partition of India. The formation of Jammu and Kashmir State [by the Amritsar treaty] by joining three different regions that differ in their geography,
culture and history, itself was and is a problem. So the solution, though not final, lies in this that they may be separated as they were before 1846. Legally also, after the lapse of the British rule, all treaties as per the Indian Independence Act, lost their relevance and hence became obsolete, so why to continue that out dated Treaty of Amritsar?

Moreover, Shaikh had no following in Jammu and Ladakh. Just as the Dogra rulers were foisted upon Kashmiris, so was Shaikh foisted upon the people of Jammu and Ladakh. They never accepted him as the sole spokes man of Jammu and Kashmir. Like then, as now, the people of Jammu and Ladakh have, time and again, voiced against what they call “rule of Valley,” Or“hegemony of Kashmir Valley.”

India and Pakistan should give away their stereotypes of ‘integral part’ and ‘jugularvein’ and start peaceful but result oriented talks not only between them but also with Kashmiris. What is needed is sincerity and commitment to world peace; so that the flames of Kashmir are extinguished.

“Don’t tell my father I have died,” he says, and I follow him through blood on the road and hundreds of pairs of shoes the mourners left behind, as they ran from the funeral, victims of the firing. From windows we hear grieving mothers, and snow begins to fall on us, like ash. Black on edges of flames, it cannot extinguish the neighbourhoods, the homes set ablaze by midnight soldiers.

Kashmir is burning:

___Agha Shahid Ali^1

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Appendix - I


I have to inform your Excellency that a grave emergency has arisen in my State and request immediate assistance of your Government.

As Your Excellency is aware the State of Jammu and Kashmir has not acceded to either the dominion of India or to Pakistan. Geographically my State is contiguous to both the Dominions. It has vital economic and cultural links with both of them. Besides my State has common boundary with the Soviet Republic and China. In their external relations the Dominion of India and Pakistan cannot ignore this fact.

I wanted to take time to decide to which Dominion I should accede or whether it is not in the best interest of both the Dominions and my State to stand independent-of course with friendly and cordial relations with both.

I accordingly approached the Dominions of India and Pakistan to enter into a standstill agreement with my State. The Pakistan Government accepted this arrangement. The dominion of India desired further discussion with representatives of my Government. I could not arrange this in view of the developments indicated below. In fact the Pakistan Government under the standstill agreement are operating Post and Telegraph system inside the State.

Though we have got a standstill agreement with the Pakistan Government, that Government permitted steady and increasing strangulation of supplies like food, salt and petrol to my State.

Afvids, soldiers in plain clothes, and desperadoes, with modern weapons, have been allowed to infiltrate into the State at first in Poonch area, then in Sialkot and finally in mass in the area adjoining Hazara district on the Ramkote side. The result has been that the limited number of troops at the disposal of the State had to be dispersed and thus had to face the enemy at several points simultaneously, so that it has become difficult to stop the wanton destruction of life and property and looting. The Mahora Power house which supplies the electric current to the whole of Srinagar has been burnt. The number of women who have been kidnapped and raped makes my heart
bleed. The wild forces thus let loose on the State are marching on with the aim of capturing Srinagar, the Summer Capital of my Government as a first step to overrunning the whole State.

The mass infiltration of tribesmen drawn from the distant areas of the North West Frontier Province coming regularly in motor trucks using Mansehra-Muzafferabad road and fully armed with up-to-date weapons cannot possibly be done without the knowledge of the Provincial Government of the North West Frontier Province and the government of Pakistan. In spite of repeated appeals made by my Government no attempt has been made to check these riders or stop them from coming to my State. In fact both the Pakistan Radio and Press have reported these occurrences. The Pakistan Radio even put out a story that a provisional Government has been set up in Kashmir. The people of my State both the Muslims and non-Muslims generally have taken no part at all.

With the conditions obtaining at present in my State and the great emergency of the situation as it exists I have no option but to ask for help from the Indian Dominion. Naturally they cannot send the help asked for by me without my State acceding to the Dominion of India. I have accordingly decided to do so and I attach the Instrument of Accession for acceptance by your Government. The other alternative is to leave my State and my people to freebooters. On this basis no civilized government can exist or be maintained. This alternative I will never allow to happen so long as I am the Ruler of the State and I have life to defend my country.

I may also inform Your Excellency’s Government that it is my intention at once to set up an interim Government and asked Sheikh Abdulla to carry the responsibilities in this emergency with my Prime Minister.

If my State has to be saved immediate assistance must be available at Srinagar. Mr. Menon is fully aware of the gravity of the situation and he will explain to you if further explanation is needed.

    In haste and with kindest regards,

    Yours sincerely

    (Signed) HARI SINGH
Appendix - II

DEM-OFFICIAL LETTER FROM H.E. THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HIS HIGHERNESS MAHARAJA SIR HARI SINGH
INDAR MAHINDAR BAHADUR, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O., A.D.C.,

Your Highness's letter (Serial No. 4), dated the 26th October has been delivered to me by Mr. V. P. Menon. In the special circumstances mentioned by your Highness, my Government have decided to accept the accession of Kashmir State to the Dominion of India. Consistently with their policy that, in the case of any State where the issue of accession has been the subject of dispute, the question of accession should be decided in accordance with the wishes of the people of the State, it is my Government's wish that, as soon as law and order have been restored in Kashmir and her soil cleared of the invader. The question of the State's accession should be settled by a reference to the people. Meanwhile, in response to your Highness's appeal for military aid, action has been taken today to send troops of the Indian Army to Kashmir to help your own forces to defend your territory and to protect the lives, property and honour of your people.

My Government and I note with satisfaction that your Highness has decided to invite Sheikh Abdullah to form an Interim Government to work with your Prime Minister.

(Signed) MOUNTBATTEN

Of Burma
KASHMIR ACCEDES TO INDIA
Shaikh and Nehru at Lal Chowk November 1947
Shaikh ploughing the field to give the peasant its ownership
SHEIKH ABDULLAH ARRESTED

CHARGES OF CORRUPTION AND MALADMINISTRATION

Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, "Sworn In As Prime Minister"

POLICE OPEN FIRE ON VIOLENT DEMONSTRATORS

SOBER SATISFACTION IN DELHI

"Timely Action By The Sadar-e-Riyasat"
Army men round up pro Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah demonstrators, making them rub out statements they had written on the streets of Srinagar, after Sheikh's arrest in August 1953. Sheikh was replaced with Baigish Ghulam Mohammad (inset) as Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir.
A Group of Militants in early 1990's
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