

**PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU AND THE KASHMIR****Dr. Jiji Paul S***Assistant Professor in Political Science, Mar Dionysious College, Pazhanji, Kunnankulam, Thrissur Dist.***Abstract**

*Anxious Indian leaders, in Delhi, used all the political tactics to make Kashmir a part of India. The policy of India has always been to dislodge the anti-India elements in the valley. Pandit Ram Kak, Maharaja's Prime Minister, was expelled in 1947 owing to his policy of non-Indian future for the state. Even the Indian loyalist Sheikh Abdullah was not spared. Sheikh was put behind bars for his constant demand for the 'promised' autonomy. Augmentation of Pro-Indian elements in the administration supplemented the interest of Maharaja Hari Singh to accede to India. However, before he could have realized his ambition, Indian leaders were quick enough to grab the opportunity of 'invading' Kashmir. Jawaharlal Nehru played a part in the Pathan invasion in 1947. The purpose of sending the forces to Kashmir, as Nehru himself declared in the telegram to British Prime Minister, Attlee on 25 th October, was only to encounter the advancing Pathan forces and not something designed to influence the state to accede to India. Although Nehru and Mountbatten had declared that the decision of accession must be decided according to the wishes of the people, but pragmatically that was not to be the case. There is no escaping the fact that the decision of accession to India was taken against the will and wishes of the majority of the population of the state. Indian historians indicate that Nehru's ambition was to merge Kashmir with India. Including Mountbatten forced Pandit's friends to declare about Plebiscite. Thus Nov 02 he used the contradictory word Plebiscite. This word creates so much of pains and wounds on Kashmiris hearts and minds. Of course he was a champion of implementing Secularism and Democracy. Last Sixty Five years have proved so painful for the Kashmiris. There is no escaping the fact that it is the common masses that have to undergo stiff trials and tribulations every now and then. The queries that frequently strike the mind of every common Kashmiri in general and particularly the wretched new generation of the valley, which has never witnessed peace in their native land, are that why are they being treated as slaves? Why don't they don't have the right to speak for themselves? And many more. Much has been written over Kashmir, particularly in the last Twenty Five years. Nobody is interested to heal the wound created by the plebiscite. Till now militancy had taken nearly 60000 innocent men, woman and children lives. Kashmiris want peace and security. But sponsored militancy is destroying the beauty of paradise. Kashmiriyath is an identity of all Kashmiris.*

**Introduction**

Jawaharlal Nehru was born in Allahabad, the son of a lawyer whose family was originally from Kashmir. He was educated in England, at Harrow School, and then at Trinity College, Cambridge. He studied law at the Inner Temple in London. He returned to India in 1912 and practised law for some years. In 1916, he married Kamala Kaul and the following year they had a daughter, Indira. In 1919, Nehru joined the Indian National Congress which was fighting for greater autonomy from the British. He was heavily influenced by the organisation's leader Mohandas Gandhi. During the 1920s and 1930s Nehru was repeatedly imprisoned by the British for civil disobedience. In 1928, he was elected president of the Congress. By the end of World War Two, Nehru was recognised as Gandhi's successor. He played a central role in the negotiations over Indian independence. He opposed the Muslim League's insistence on the division of India on the basis of religion. On 15 August 1947, Nehru became the first prime minister of independent India. He held the post until his death in 1964. He implemented moderate socialist economic reforms and committed India to a policy of industrialisation (Chandra Prakash, 1985: 64).

**'Jawaharlal, do you want Kashmir, or do you want to give it away?'**

*Sam Manekshaw, the first field marshal in the Indian army, was at the ringside of events when Independent India was being formed. Then a colonel, he was chosen to accompany V P Menon on his historic mission to Kashmir. This is his version of that journey and its aftermath, as recorded in an interview with Prem Shankar Jha.*

“At about 2.30 in the afternoon, General Sir Roy Bucher walked into my room and said, 'Eh, you, go and pick up your toothbrush. You are going to Srinagar with V P Menon. The flight will take off at about 4 o'clock'. I said, 'why me, sir?' 'Because we are worried about the military situation. V P Menon is going there to get the accession from the Maharaja and Mahajan.' I flew in with V P Menon in a Dakota. Wing Commander Dewan, who was then squadron leader Dewan, was also there. But his job did not have anything to do with assessing the military situation. He was sent by the Air Force because it was the Air Force which was flying us in.' Since I was in the Directorate of Military Operations, and was responsible for current operations all over India, West Frontier, the Punjab, and elsewhere, I knew what the situation in Kashmir was. I knew that the tribesmen had come in - initially only the tribesmen - supported by the Pakistanis. Fortunately for us, and for Kashmir, they were busy raiding, raping all along. In Baramulla they killed Colonel D O T Dykes. Dykes and I were of the same seniority. We did our first year's attachment with the Royal Scots in Lahore, way back in 1934-5. Tom went to the Sikh regiment. I went to the Frontier Force regiment. We'd lost contact with each other. He'd become a lieutenant colonel. I'd become a full colonel. Tom and his wife were holidaying in Baramulla when the tribesmen killed them. The Maharaja's forces were 50 per cent Muslim and 50 per cent Dogra.

The Muslim elements had revolted and joined the Pakistani forces. This was the broad military situation. The tribesmen were believed to be about 7 to 9 kilometers from Srinagar. I was sent into get the precise military situation. The army knew that if we had to send soldiers, we would have to fly them in. Therefore, a few days before, we had made arrangements for aircraft and for soldiers to be ready. But we couldn't fly them in until the state of Kashmir had acceded to India. From the political side, Sardar Patel and V P Menon had been dealing with Mahajan and the Maharaja, and the idea was that V.P Menon would get the Accession, I would bring back the military appreciation and report to the government. The troops were already at the airport, ready to be flown in. Air Chief Marshall Elmhurst was the air chief and he had made arrangements for the aircraft from civil and military sources.

Anyway, we were flown in. We went to Srinagar. We went to the palace. I have never seen such disorganisation in my life. The Maharaja was running about from one room to the other. I have never seen so much jewellery in my life --- pearl necklaces, ruby things, lying in one room; packing here, there, everywhere. There was a convoy of vehicles. The Maharaja was coming out of one room, and going into another saying, 'Alright, if India doesn't help, I will go and join my troops and fight (*it*) out'. I couldn't restrain myself, and said, 'That will raise their morale sir'. Eventually, I also got the military situation from everybody around us, asking what the hell was happening, and discovered that the tribesmen were about seven or nine kilometres from what was then that horrible little airfield.

V P Menon was in the meantime discussing with Mahajan and the Maharaja. Eventually the Maharaja signed the accession papers and we flew back in the Dakota late at night. There were no night facilities, and the people who were helping us to fly back, to light the airfield, were Sheikh Abdullah, Kasimsahib, Sadiqsahib, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, D P Dhar with pine torches, and we flew back to Delhi. I can't remember the exact time. It must have been 3 o'clock or 4 o'clock in the morning. (*On arriving at Delhi*) the first thing I did was to go and report to Sir Roy Bucher. He said, 'Eh, you, go and shave and clean up. There is a cabinet meeting at 9 o'clock. I will pick you up and take you there.' So I went home, shaved, dressed, etc. and Roy Bucher picked me up, and we went to the cabinet meeting. The cabinet meeting was presided by Mountbatten. There was Jawaharlal Nehru, there was Sardar Patel, there was Sardar Baldev Singh. There were other ministers whom I did not know and did not want to know, because I had nothing to do with them. Sardar Baldev Singh I knew because he was the minister for

defence, and I knew Sardar Patel, because Patel would insist that V P Menon take me with him to the various states.

Almost every morning the Sardar would sent for V P, H M Patel and myself. While Maniben (*Patel's daughter and de facto secretary*) would sit cross-legged with a Parker fountain pen taking notes, Patel would say, 'V P, I want Baroda. Take him with you.' I was the bogeyman. So I got to know the Sardar very well. At the morning meeting he handed over the (*Accession*) thing. Mountbatten turned around and said, 'come on Manekji (*He called me Manekji instead of Manekshaw*), what is the military situation?' I gave him the military situation, and told him that unless we flew in troops immediately, we would have lost Srinagar, because going by road would take days, and once the tribesmen got to the airport and Srinagar, we couldn't fly troops in. Everything was ready at the airport.

As usual Nehru talked about the United Nations, Russia, Africa, God almighty, everybody, until Sardar Patel lost his temper. He said, '**Jawaharlal, do you want Kashmir, or do you want to give it away'. He (Nehru) said, 'Of course, I want Kashmir (emphasis in original). Then he (Patel) said 'Please give your orders'.** And before he could say anything Sardar Patel turned to me and said, 'You have got your orders'. I walked out, and we started flying in troops at about 11 o'clock or 12 o'clock. I think it was the Sikh regiment under Ranjit Rai that was the first lot to be flown in. And then we continued flying troops in. That is all I know about what happened. Then all the fighting took place. I became a brigadier, and became director of military operations and also if you will see the first signal to be signed ordering the cease-fire on 1 January (1949) had been signed by Colonel Manekshaw on behalf of C-in-C India, General Sir Roy Bucher. That must be lying in the Military Operations Directorate" (Dadas are collected from Manekshaws Interview with Pream Shankar Jha).

### **Instrument of Accession**

The last Viceroy of British India, Sir Lord Mountbatten's rather friendly relationship with Jawaharlal Nehru and the latter's sympathetic attitude towards Sheikh Abdullah and strong affection to what after all was his ancestral home, Kashmir was the root of all crisis. Around this emotional 'triangle' revolves the history of the Kashmir dispute. Nevertheless, many other famous personalities of the past too played their part, but these three men ultimately were to decide the future of Kashmir and its people. The brutal and anti-Muslim regime of the Dogras, particularly the reign of Maharaja Hari Singh, who was instrumental to slay thousands of Muslims in the Poonch uprising facilitated by the Armed bands of extremist militant Hindu party in India, the Rashtrya Sevak Sang (RSS), was responsible for the splitting up of public opinion with regard to the choosing of country and the exodus of over one lakh Muslims from Poonch. In 1946, majority of the Kashmir people wanted an independent state. The two major political parties at that time, National Conference headed by Sheikh M. Abdullah and the Muslim Conference, however, had kept other options open in case the dream of independent Kashmir was not realized. Sheikh's National Conference had opened its doors for Indian accession (Sheikh Abdullah's decision might have been triggered out of his indifference towards M.A. Jinnah), while Muslim Conference, owing to its links to the Muslim League in British India, was ready with accession to Pakistan. One of the prominent writers of the contemporary world, Alastair Lamb writes, " It is to be regretted that during the crucial weeks prior to the Transfer of Power Sheikh Abdullah remained in prison and was unable either to keep in touch with the march of events or to make his own views widely clear " ( Brecher Micheal, 1953: 47).

To Sheikh Abdullah, the idea of independence to Kashmir appealed above all. Sheikh was virtually 'worshipped' by the people of the valley. Although, the main objectives behind Sheikh Abdullah's "Quit Kashmir" movement was the removal of Dogra rule and its replacement by an independent Kashmir, but later on he had developed strong affection towards India, or to be more specific, towards Jawaharlal Nehru, who was after all responsible for his release from the Maharaja's prison. When Jawaharlal Nehru realized the special position of Sheikh Abdullah in the state, he accordingly used Sheikh's influence as a tool in his policy of Jammu and Kashmir. This was indeed the reason why Nehru urged the release of Sheikh Abdullah and the latter's radical change from his policy of

Independent Kashmir. Nevertheless, If Sheikh Abdullah would not have been in prison at the time of the Transfer of Power, even then there would not have been any change in his stand over the accession to India, since he strongly disliked M.A. Jinnah and his uslimLeague. Sheikh Abdullah, nonetheless, proved to be a profitable investment for India in the long run (Akbar MJ, 1985: 12).

There is a big controversy with regard to the 'Instrument of Accession' and it has not been clearly stated by several biased Indian narrators. The conspiracy of V.P. Menon, who drafted the letter offering Accession (which was almost certainly drafted in New Delhi without the prior consent of the Maharaja) as well as the letter of Acceptance and who along with M.C. Mahajan actually gave birth to the Accession Crisis, is hardly paid attention to. Menon and Mahajan were supposed to fly to Jammu in the afternoon of 26th October 1947 and bring the Instrument of Accession duly signed by the Maharaja to enable Indian troops to be flown to Kashmir. However, neither Menon nor Mahajan had left Delhi for Jammu on 26th October. In the words of Alastair Lamb " Menon certainly contributed to the widely held conviction that the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir had indeed signed up with India some hours before the first Indian regular soldiers set foot on Kashmir soil." (Incomplete Partition). It may be noted here that the then Governor-General of India, Lord Mountbatten had made Accession a prior condition to any sort of Indian intervention in the state. However, the fact is that, Indian troops were flown to Srinagar well before the state of Jammu and Kashmir formally acceded to the Indian union. It now becomes apparent that India was determined to manipulate the state of Jammu & Kashmir even at the cost of the wishes of its natives. Many Indian narrators have not considered this act of extreme treachery by some egocentric Indian bureaucrats and their mentors. Nonetheless, no evidence is to be found whatsoever in the history about Maharaja's signing of the 'alleged' instrument of Accession (at least prior to 27th of October 1947, which is claimed) ( Khan Sarar, 2003: 116).

### **Forgetting the promises of Pandit Nehru and Mountbatten**

All the efforts made by the United Nation Security Council (UNSC) in holding the plebiscite in the state of Jammu and Kashmir proved futile. Although, India had repeatedly pledged that the question of Kashmir's accession would be decided in accordance with the wishes of the Kashmiris, but the pledge is still to be honored. India has denied the right of self-determination to the people of Kashmir. The question is what it is in the resolution that irks the Indian side. Omkar Razdan writes "The will of the people of Kashmir has been held supreme in these resolutions. If this "will" is with the state of India, as the Indian media would want Indians to believe, then why do we fritter our energy in fighting a bloody proxy war in the state. " Despite the fact that Kashmir was never a property of either India or Pakistan and there can be no question of deciding the fate of Kashmiris without their consent, Kashmiris were, ironically, ignored in the dialogue between New Delhi and Islamabad to resolve the Kashmir dispute. However, it is a good gesture that both the countries have realized the importance of Kashmiris representation in the dialogue process (Nelson Thomas, 200: 124-125).

However, with the passage of time, India has transformed Kashmir into a military camp and all the promises made to the Kashmiri people by Nehru and Mountbatten have been forgone by the successive regimes of Indian politics. More has been said than done for Kashmiris. Kashmir has, particularly in the last more than a decade, witnessed scores of soul-deadening incidents. All methods of human rights violation have been adopted by the Indian troops and the militant outfits. Ruthless interrogations, illegal use of forces, disappearance, rape, and custodial killings have become regular phenomena in Kashmir. Meanwhile, death of thousands of young men is upsetting the sex ratio, economy is in depression, education has gone down, child labor has become rampant, and many other social evils have cropped up. The paradise of Kashmir has not just been lost but ruined and peace in

the vale has been broken into 'pieces' ( Wani Gul Mohammed, 1999: 169). Ironically, the electronic media of a democratic Indian state portrays the situation in Kashmir as 'normal'.

On the contrary they are treated merely as slaves who have been deprived of their fundamental rights. The concern of the army and militant outfits is to keep Kashmir; the means are not their concern. The militants lob grenades at security personals and in the bargain the blood of innocent Kashmiris is spilled over the green valley. Kashmiris are, as Arundhati Roy once said, "sandwiched between security forces and militants." It is a high time for all the Kashmiris, particularly the new generation to wake up and think about the prospect of Kashmir and Kashmiris. What Kashmir requires today is a leader who has no attachment with money or the lure for power; a leader, who would be committed to bring peace to the grief-stricken valley. This is the place of Pandit Nehru. But, now this place is empty. Unfortunately, at present there is hardly any leader worth the name and that has added to the miseries of Kashmiris.

### **Conclusion**

Jawaharlal Nehru is one of the greatest Indians of the twentieth century. He has been variously described as a democrat, socialist, humanist and visionary that he was all these and more. Any assessment of his role in the making of independent India would need to Take cognizance of his immense stature and extraordinary personality and would therefore invariably be complex and somewhat controversial. Historians think that the presence of Panditji can create peace and security in Kashmir. Because he also son of that soil. Indian people achieved under his leadership, so many values including dedication, Sacrifice, Kindness and love.

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