



GLOBAL KASHMIRI PANDIT DIASPORA

AN INITIATIVE TO RECOGNIZE KP GENOCIDE AND ETHNIC CLEANSING

February 25, 2019

Press Release: **Global Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora (GKPD) 2019 Conclave**

Member of Parliament Mr. Muzzafar Hussain Baig states emphatically, 'Kashmiri Pandits are victims of Genocide.' Joins Ex Finance Minister Mr. Abdul Rahim Rather to working with Apex Body of Kashmiri Pandits for Justice and Return to Kashmir.

The Kashmiri Pandits - Right the Wrong in Kashmir - 2019

Conclave was attended by eminent panelists Jb Abdul Rahim Rather, former finance minister and senior member of National Conference and Jb Muzaffar Hussain Baig, former Member Parliament and senior leader of J&K Peoples Democratic Party.

Introducing GKPD to the panelists, Dr Shafalica Bhan Kotwal said, "GKPD is committed to hold accountable those who are guilty of genocide and terrorism. GKPD will invoke international recourse to supplement what Indians will do inside India and we will be submitting our petition to United Nations and affiliated bodies in the summer of 2019 followed by similar exercises at the European Economic Community and other international venues."

Chairman

Dr. K. L. Chowdhury

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Prof. Renuka Dhar

GKPD - USA

Dr. Rabinder Kaul

GKPD - Canada

Mr. Vidya Bushan Dhar

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Mr. Ash Raina

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Dr. Shafalica Bhan Kotwal

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Dr Shafalica Bhan gave reference to the joint memorandum submitted by GKPD with its 30 affiliate organizations and nearly 15,000 individuals of the community reflecting the common demand of the community. Addressing the the two panelists she said, “The global audience listening to this conclave will look with interest whether you recognize the KP genocide and would be a natural partner of GKPD to end the scourge of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir.

In his introductory remarks Chairman GKPD UN Initiative Dr. K. L. Chowdhary stated, “Kashmir once a place of saints and sages has turned into the breeding ground of terrorists and paradise on earth and been transformed into hell.” He addressed the panelists, “Both of you have to take a call before we are all left irrelevant in Kashmir; you are both aware of the atrocities and violence unleashed on our community that led to our exodus.” He further said, “GKPD is hosting this conclave ‘Right the Wrong’ and let me make this clear that GKPD is not another organization but the resolve of the community to fight the trauma and to convert the collective conscience of genocide and ethnic cleansing perpetrated on us.” Dr Chowdhary added, “GKPD has invited you to this conclave in the hope that with your vast experience in governance and policy circles you can share your views in correcting the wrongs that have been done to KP community.” “This conclave,” he said, “Is an opportunity for us to hear your perspective on various aspects and the questions we have sent in advance.”

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Addressing the audience, Mr Abdul Rahim Rather said, “I have immense love and respect for the KP community and KPs are an important and integral part of our society and culture.”

Applauding the manner in which the exiled community was facing all vagaries of exile and carried itself he said, “The best thing I like about this community lies in the fact that despite living in most difficult conditions this community never compromised on the education of its children.”

Mr. Rather added, “The issues being faced by KP community is not their issue alone, it is our composite issue considering this community is an inalienable part of the larger self of composite society and this community has immensely contributed for the entire society of Kashmir.”

Mr Rather acknowledged that events unfurled at an unanticipated pace and many issues of the community could not be addressed and continue to remain unaddressed. He assured the community that with composite efforts the pending issues of the community will be gradually addressed.

Mr Muzaffar Hussain Baig while addressing the audience said, “1990 will go down in the history of Kashmir and perhaps the rest of India as the one of the darkest days of our history,” adding, “it was in this year that the mass exodus of the KP community who were the original inhabitants of Kashmir took place in the wake of

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mass uprising, millions of people marched and the community was made to feel so insecure that some of them left only with the clothes that they were wearing.” He added, “This reminds us of the atrocities that were committed on Jews in 20th century.”

Mr Baig while expressing apprehension stated, “As individuals they will flourish wherever they go but I am afraid in a decade or two or three there will be no KP race as such” claiming, “the discontinuation of a civilization and a race which is distinct, and a race which cannot be repeated is the loss of history, is the loss of mankind and particularly the loss of Kashmiri Muslims.”

While replying to the questions of host Dr K L Chowdhary, Mr Baig said, “So far as the minority status is concerned, they (KPs) have a right to be declared as Minority, just like Muslims are a minority in the rest of country, KPs are entitled to be declared minorities in the state of J&K.”

Replying to another question from the host, Mr Baig acknowledged that growing Wahabism – the radical form of Islam is the threat to civil order in contemporary world; he sought cooperation of all major countries of the world including the United Nations to wage a war against this extremism before it consumes the whole world.

While addressing a direct question by Dr Surinder Kaul about his opinion regarding genocide and ethnic cleansing of the community and if it comes under the purview of genocide and if KP community qualifies for genocide as per Rome statute, Mr Baig very

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empathetically said, “It does, you certainly qualify, I think there should not be any questions about that.”

Dr Surinder Kaul lamented the lip service offered by leaders of J&K State over the past 30 years and expressed deep sorrow and resentment over continuous inaction on matters of grave importance for the community. He questioned the panelists as to why the three parts of the State had become so estranged that they were ready to split apart. This was followed by a close examination and discussion of issues such as setting up of a Genocide tribunal, IDP status, West Pakistan refugees permanency status, Rohingya refugees and article 35A and 370.

Mr. Rakesh Kaul concluded the Conclave reiterating that Kashmiri Pandits want Justice for their Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing. They want a Homeland inside the Valley which is secure and sustainable where they can lead their way of life freely. He asserted, “These are our inalienable rights and we will never concede them.” He requested the panelists to support the GKPD UN petition and coopt the GKPD MOU within their party platform. He encouraged them to work with the Apex Body of the Kashmiri Pandits to Right the Wrong expeditiously.

Mr. Anil Kachroo moderated the entire Conclave efficiently and effectively. He led a minute’s silence in honor of the brave CRPF jawans martyred in Pulwama attack. The audience was also informed that representatives of other political parties, Mr. Manish Tiwari from Congress, Ravinder Raina from BJP and Mr. Sajjad Lone from Peoples conference had offered a written consent to be part of this

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historic conclave, however a few hours before the start they sent their regrets. The entire proceedings can be heard here

https://www.startmeeting.com/wall/recorded_audio?audioRecordingUrl=https://rs0001.freeconferencecall.com/storage/sgetSM/DKFZ9/fwXT&subscriptionId=10638947

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