



GLOBAL KASHMIRI PANDIT DIASPORA

AN INITIATIVE TO RECOGNIZE KP GENOCIDE AND ETHNIC CLEANSING

October 22, 2020

Chairman
Dr. K.L.Chowdhury

GKPD – India
Mr. Utpal Kaul

GKPD – USA
Dr. Rabinder Kaul

GKPD – Canada
Mr. Vidya Bushan Dhar

GKPD – Australia
Mr. Ash Raina

GKPD – Europe
Mr. Veer Kaul

GKPD – New Zealand
Mr. Veer Khar

GKPD – Germany
Mr. Ajay Chowdhary

GKPD – UK
Dr. Shafalica Bhan Kotwal

GKPD – Thailand
Mr. D.K. Bakshi

Treasurer
Mr. Suneel Kaul (NZ)

Shri Amit Shah
Honorable Home Minister
Government of India

Sub: Memorandum on issues regarding management of temples in Kashmir Valley

Respected Shri Amit Shah ji,

Namaskar!

I am writing to you on behalf of Global Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora (GKPD). At the outset please accept our greetings and good wishes for the ongoing Navratri festival. May the Goddess bring peace and happiness to all and lead our country to even greater heights under the leadership of our Prime Minister Modiji.

The Government of Jammu Kashmir has recently started the commendable work of renovation of a few temples in Kashmir valley. Our request is that this noble initiative needs to be scaled up and made sustainable under a proper legal framework.

As you are aware, out of the hundreds of temples in Kashmir valley that existed prior to 1990 a vast majority have been burnt, destroyed and damaged by terrorists and their supporters. Those temples that have survived have done so because either they are under the management of the few hundred Kashmiri Pandits still living in the valley and/ or are under the protection of the security forces. Some prominent temples are also managed by the Jammu Kashmir Dharmarth Trust which was set up by Maharaja Hari Singh and presently chaired by Dr. Karan Singh.

Over the past three decades, hundreds of temples and their land have been stealthily and systematically taken over by illegal means, especially those in the far-flung areas of the Kashmir valley.

TALK TO US

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In the past, deliberate hurdles have been created to block the passage of a proposed law to protect the temples of Kashmir. These temples are a prized *dharohar* of Hindu religion and spirituality for the entire world. This law has been pending passage for nearly two decades now which is a matter of grave concern for the global, one billion strong Hindu community. We strongly feel that parochial concerns have to be set aside in favor of the larger good

We humbly request you to ensure that the matter is revisited and a new Bill that takes as a starting point, the earlier: “Hindu Shrines and Religious Places of Kashmir (Management and Regulation) Bill, 2020” and improves upon it is piloted by your ministry.

This bill should ensure that an elected Shrine Board (on the lines of the Mata Vaishno Devi and Shri Amarnath Shrine Board) is set up with adequate representation from the Kashmiri Hindu community to manage their age-old temples and shrines in the Kashmir Valley.

This measure will also go a long way in building up confidence of the lakhs of Hindus who have been forced to leave Kashmir valley. These energy centers will act as a nucleus to revive community activities among those who are returning back as part of the Prime Minister package. It will also be the starting point for religious tourism in the Valley and will revive Kashmir’s 5,000-year-old history and cultural and spiritual traditions which shape the Dharmic world.

On behalf of Global Kashmiri Pandits Diaspora, a 10-year-old civil society movement with volunteers across the globe from the U.S.A, U.K. Europe, New Zealand, Canada, Singapore, Dubai, Mauritius, South Africa besides India, we request you to kindly consider this request at the earliest.

Furthermore, we would also request you to kindly provide us an opportunity to interact with you and explain the modalities involved in greater detail as well.

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I look forward to hearing back from you.

Thanking you,

With profound regards,

Chairman

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Honorable Lt. Governor Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir

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