



GLOBAL KASHMIRI PANDIT DIASPORA

AN INITIATIVE TO RECOGNIZE KP GENOCIDE AND ETHNIC CLEANSING

February 16, 2021

Shri. Amit Shah

Honorable Minister of Home Affairs

Government of India

Subject; Your speech in Parliament on 13th February 2021 on the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization (Amendment) bill 2021

Respected Amit Shah ji,

Namaskar,

At the outset, we would like to express our deep appreciation for the strong leadership provided to our country by Honorable Prime Minister Modi ji. As Indians, we are particularly grateful for the historic abrogation of article 370 on 5th August 2019, the advantages of which you very eloquently mentioned in your speech. The Union Territory of Jammu Kashmir is surging ahead on the road to development. As the original inhabitants of Kashmir, the land of our ancestors, we look forward to being a part of this historic change as we continue on our quest to return to our homeland.

We are grateful that in your speech you mentioned our plight and the lack of will on the part of previous governments and in particular the incumbent State governments to address our human rights. The tragedy of having been made refugees in our own country also found mention.

The fact however remains that 31 years later, we continue to remain in forced exile with little tangible efforts being made for our return and rehabilitation. Meanwhile, the last remnants of our culture, our temples and shrines continue to be desecrated, encroached upon and outright taken over under the watch of the previous and present government.

Honorable Home minister, we are not migrants but internally displaced people who were forced out of our homes almost overnight because of genocide committed against us by Pakistan sponsored terrorists with tactical local support.

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

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It is of the utmost importance that Justice be done for the Kashmiri Pandits. That there be an acceptance of a collective failure by all stakeholders that we rise above the partisan divides that either exploits or reduces us to political theatre. That we all now put the recriminations behind us.

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We request all Parliamentarians from across the party lines to come together and move a bill in this session that addresses our longstanding demands that were submitted to Honorable Prime Minister Modi ji in the form of a memorandum in September 2018 and lay out a time bound plan for our return and rehabilitation. This is GKPD's *sankalp* and we would request you to make it yours. We are encouraged that now voices within the BJP leadership and even in the opposition are rising for such a consideration. The Kashmiri Pandit community generally and GKPD specifically has formally sought engagement with the Government and the Home Ministry where a collective, partnership effort can end up with an outcome which is good for the community, for Kashmiri Society, for India's national interest and its civilizational continuity.

We would also like to take this opportunity to bring to your attention some of the figures mentioned in your speech. These may be kindly amended for the official records.

1. You mentioned a figure of 44,000 families that have been displaced. The Home affairs standing committee Rajya Sabha 179th report in 2014 on the action taken by the government on the recommendations contained in the 137th report quotes an official figure of 59,442 (at present the figure stands at 62,000 approximately). Our own numbers are much larger since many spread out in different parts of the country and others left the country. The same report mentions a figure of families drawing relief at 20,633 with 17,248 in Jammu and 3385 in Delhi. Relief is also being drawn in Udhampur, Reasi etc. This number has declined further as per our community estimates.

2. The relief money was started in 1990, Till 2009 it was Rs. 1250 per person with a ceiling of Rs. 5000 per family. It was increased to Rs. 1650 per person in 2012 with a ceiling of Rs.6600/family. It was further raised by BJP to Rs. 2500 per person (approx.Rs.13k per family of four). The recommendation by the Rajya Sabha report to provide 7.5 lacs per family for properties fully or partially damaged and Rs.2 lakhs for dilapidated houses was never acted upon by the Government. The hostile erstwhile State governments have always maintained that there was no separate budget for relief and rehabilitation and used the funds from the Prime minister fund for this thereby depriving our community further of much needed rehabilitation money.

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3. The Prime Minister package of 2008 was meant to provide 15,000 employment opportunities with 6000 state government jobs. 10 years later the same figures are mentioned for providing houses and employment in the valley for Kashmiri Pandits by 2022.

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The humiliation, pain and genocide suffered by us cannot be counted in sums of money. Our genocide cannot be diminished or trivialized through selective and reductive facts. Any discussion about our community should begin with a *shraddanjali* for the over 1,600 innocent Kashmiri Pandits who were butchered and lost their lives. Our loss is immeasurable and as our Home Minister, we look up to you for support to rectify it.

Honorable minister, India has a truly effective and strong leadership and we are confident that the historic wrongs done to our community will finally be redressed. We await your next steps.

Thank you.

Utpal Kaul

International Coordinator

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