
Terrible Fate: 'Ethnic Cleansing' of Jammu's Muslims in 1947

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The inter-religious violence that occurred in Jammu and Kashmir against the backdrop of the 1947 Partition of India and its aftermaths included a possible 'ethnic cleansing' of Jammu's Muslims. One million Kashmiri Muslim refugees were uprooted and an estimated 2,500,00-300,000 were massacred in the Jammu region alone in August-October 1947. Violence was directed in the main by the Dogra Hindu state troopers aimed at driving them out from fear of death. Despite the growing concerns of the 'new history' of Partition, until recently it has been dominated by the Punjab experience of violence and mass migration. This has been to the detriment of other regions such as Jammu which experienced a similar pattern of disruption, one that was equally profound.

This paper attempts to explain that the crimes committed on Jammu's Muslim population were nothing less than ethnic cleansing. It reflects on the circumstances which led to the mass killings and the emptying of Jammu's Muslims in the region at the Partition of Indian subcontinent. It draws on original sources to explain the scope, motivation and purpose of the localized acts of violence. Use is also made of oral source material to shed light on the chief characteristic of violence, the processes of migration and the experiences of refugees. The article relates the West Punjab communal disturbances from March 1947 onwards to the subsequent development of Jammu violence in August-October that year. The Muslims of Jammu were geographically economically and ethnically linked with the West Punjab's cities and towns and this proximity proved significant as it enabled displaced persons to flow easily into and out of Jammu province at the outbreaks. By the end of 1947, over 300,000 Kashmiri refugees had arrived in Gujranwala and Sialkot.

The paper's overall aim is to move beyond high politics of 'unfinished business' of the Kashmir conflict to uncover 'human dimension' of the events. It will represent an important contribution to the existing literature by highlighting the relationship of the state in the development of violence and the production and expulsion of refugees. The place of state in mass violence is complex. Some critics argue that violence may be most required to break up populations that have long been living in some degree of harmony for generations.¹ Often though, the debate has been dominated by the histories of the Holocaust and the studies of other some examples of 'ethnic cleansing'.² Until recently, little has been written on the manifestation of genocide at the time of the division of India.³ For a long time, standard accounts of the 1947 communal violence observe this violence as 'bloodshed', 'slaughter', 'mass killings', 'massacres' and the like. Contemporary explanations of the violence both in India and Pakistan always portrayed the killing as erratic and spontaneous, many with the aim of 'blame displacement'. Each country floated the subsequent course of violence as a 'reaction' to the action and in many cases as 'self-defence'. Both sides, immediately after Partition, made available a few accounts of the horrors of 1947 blaming the 'other' and conspirer of mass killings and migration.

Recently, in a different way, historians of Partition of India are questioning the relationship between the state and violence. The accounts of Ian Copland and Shail Mayaram on the Princely States of Bharatpur and Alwar make clear the involvement of state administration in the production of violence and to break up populations, usually in order to further political interests.⁴ More recently, there is also an increasing awareness towards exploring differential issues of Kashmir-related violence and 'hidden story'⁵ of the refugees ranging from 'gender dimension'⁶ to '*hijarat to jihad*'.⁷ Despite such advances, the experience of Jammu's Muslims has largely been overlooked because of tendency of partition historians to concentrate on the longer term legacies of Partition with respect to the unfinished business of Kashmir conflict. A study of Jammu's experience at the Partition is long overdue. This article addresses this imbalance in scholarship by focusing on ignored 'subaltern dimension' of the 1947 events in the region. It draws some insights on the

relationship between violence and the state, examining Jammu and Kashmir State's complicity in the perpetration of organised acts of violence against Jammu Muslims. A brief discussion of the conceptual dimension of genocide, ethnic cleansing and the Holocaust is necessary here before any attempt is made to examine the processes and patterns of violence in the Jammu province.

Can the 1947 Partition-related violence fall in the broader applicability of the concepts of ethnic cleansing and genocide? There are a number of inherited problems associated with the study of violence. These concern the extent to which this was spontaneous or calculated, the degree to which a focus on localised violence can form part of a broader historical narrative, and the extent to which it differs from 'traditional' communal violence and conflict. This raises the clarity and question of the applicability of the concepts of 'genocide' and 'ethnic cleansing' to the events in the Jammu region in 1947. The UN Convention of 1948 defines genocide as, '...acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group'. The term ethnic cleansing seems to have originated with the wars in the former Yugoslavia. For many writers, ethnic cleansing has become conterminous with genocide and the two terms are used almost interchangeably. The UN Commission of Experts itself defined 'ethnic cleansing' quite specifically, as 'rendering an area ethnically homogenous by using force or intimidation to remove from a given area persons of another ethnic or religious group'.⁸ Genocide gains its moral force, and conceptual horror, precisely because of the exterminated nature of the Holocaust. Hitler wanted the Jews utterly exterminated, not simply driven from particular places. At the outset, the dictator's aim is seen to be the 'Final Solution' of his political policy.⁹ Ethnic cleansing, on the other hand, involves removals rather than extermination and is not exceptional but rather common in particular circumstances. Further, ethnic cleansing may be sponsored by the very powers that profess horror at genocide. The Holocaust remains a special case because of the utterly extermination of a particular group. Before proceeding to examine the state's role in patronising violence against Jammu's Muslim population and the applicability of the concept of 'ethnic cleansing' in any details,

first it is important to discuss briefly the background of the violence and mass migration.

The Background of Jammu Violence

The origins of Kashmir dispute are commonly maintained that Kashmir's Maharaja, a Hindu ruling a largely Muslim populace, signed up with India, not only ignoring Pakistan's argument based on religion, cultural affinity, geographical setting and commercial importance but also hardly consulting with his subjects. Thus within weeks of the British pull-out, the violence sparked off a mass migration.¹⁰ In reality, a rounded understating of the violence requires an analysis both of happenings in Jammu and Kashmir in September-October 1947 and of the first outbreak in March that saw the Rawalpindi massacres of Hindus and Sikhs. The March 1947 violence in the Punjab followed on from growing tensions that had accompanied the previous year's provincial elections. On the second March 1947, the 'precipitating event' for the outbreak of widespread violence in the Punjab was the fall of the Khizr Hayat Tiwana coalition Unionist government which was formed without the Muslim League's participation were accompanied by mass agitation that turned violent the leading cities of Punjab. The disturbances began in Lahore but spread rapidly Rawalpindi, Attock and Multan.¹¹

The worst violence occurred in Rawalpindi division where serious rioting began during the first week of March. The raiders, some of whom were from the North West Frontier Province, but also included local Punjabis not only burned and looted many non-Muslim villages in the region but also looted and gutted 'Murree hill stations' which were used by British troops during the hot weather.¹² A particular feature of the March violence was 'the genocidal aspect' of violence. There was a general agreement that these attacks on Hindus and Sikhs were 'carefully planned and carried out' and reportedly led by some retired Muslim army officers.¹³ According to an official estimate, by mid-March more than five thousand Hindus and Sikhs were killed in these raids, and more than fifty thousand took shelter in the hurriedly established camps of Wah Attock and Kala Rawalpindi. The gravity of growing tension can be gauged by a

fact that the special armoured trucks and tanks were sent to Rawalpindi and Attock to defuse the situation. In the aftermath of the Rawalpindi killings, Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab demanded the division of the province along with the division of India.

In such a climate of fear and uncertainty, by April 1947, non-Muslims from the violence in the Rawalpindi division were arriving in other parts of the Punjab and the Kashmir region, expecting to return after the violence ceased. Within a week of the killings, 'a large flock' of the Hindus and Sikhs from Rawalpindi division started migrating to neighbouring Kashmir region.¹⁴ The embittered Sikh and Hindu refugees' tales of violence raised animosities wherever they settled. They planned revenge and produced and circulated wildly inflammatory pamphlets and brochures. Their horrified tales of the Muslim perpetration circulated widespread and served as an occasion to launch a reign of terror on the Jammu Muslim population. Shortly flight and violence went hand in hand. Violence in Jammu was increasingly locked into an all-India pattern, as killings in one part of the country were justified as retribution for violence in another part. Jammu's Muslims were to pay a heavy price in September-October 1947 for the early disturbances in the West Punjab.

At the time also the Dogra Hindu Maharaja Hari Singh's own preference was that the State should remain independent or accede to India, knowing that majority of the State's populace was inclined to link its future with Pakistan. In order to maintain his stranglehold, the Maharaja had initiated systematic tyrannical campaign against the 'dissenters' as early as the outset of May.¹⁵ By the mid-August, the state administration had not only demobilised a large number of Muslim soldiers serving in the state army but also the Muslim police officers, whose loyalty was suspected, had also been sent home. The State's Muslim majority contagious to the Punjab, particularly in Poonch, started organizing resistance forces in the border districts, There were regular reports of 'persecutions' and 'mass murders of Muslims in Poonch'.¹⁶ The violence sparked off an exodus and Muslim refugees flowed in the opposite direction. A large number of Kashmiri Muslim families from Poonch started pouring into the border districts of Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Gujrat and Sialkot. The

refugees related harrowing tales of massacres by the state Dogra troopers. This image of Kashmir inflamed the Punjabi Muslims and, in particular stirred up the movement of tribes of North-West Frontier Province.

The Muslim Pukhtoon tribes of North-West Frontier Province stirred up the movement and declared a 'jihad'. The raiders who numbered about 20,000 crossed the border and smuggled arms into Kashmir. They, along with the Muslim army deserters from the state forces and retired army men, came to help rouse the peasantry of Poonch. Indeed around 60,000 Poonchis and other 'hill men' had served in the British Indian Army during the Second World War. There were also rumours of the Pakistan Army's assisting to the 'Provisional Government' of North Frontier Province in such raids.¹⁷ Their activities grew into a full-scale revolt against the Dogra rule and culminated in the form of the 'liberation' of an area in western Jammu and Kashmir and proclaimed the independent 'Azad' Kashmir on 24 October 1947. On 26 October the Maharaja fled from Srinagar to Jammu as the threat of 'liberation' armed activists poised to capture the city. In the backdrop of the revolt, the 'hill men' (raiders) besieged Kotli for nearly a month and Poonch for half month, killing many non-Muslims ruthlessly. They particularly made 'a practice of killing the leading *banias* (shopkeepers) and then inviting local villagers to join in looting their property'.¹⁸ They also specifically targeted the state officials to drive them out of the areas. Krishna Metha provides a rambling account of her days in and around Muzaffarabad at the time of tribes' raids in the Kashmir province. She writes her husband was escorted by the tribesmen who 'drew their guns at him and shouted, You *kafir*, [infidel] go on your knees and prostrate before us, we represent Pakistan. He stood motionless. Tell us if you are a Hindu or a Mussalman? they demanded. When he said he was a Hindu, they all fired at him one after the other'.¹⁹

In less than two months, a large stream of Hindus and Sikhs was forced to migrate to the 'other' part of Kashmir. Many thousands took refuge in the state garrisons which had not received food from outside since the attacks began. Because of the difficult terrain, worse than in the North-West Frontier- and the poor conditions of the roads, the movement of refugees was very slow. Many who strangled in the mountains were killed and

fortune ones took shelter in the army state run Yol Camp, where they had to wait years for their departure to India. The last batch of 900 Hindu and Sikh Kashmiri refugees and over 250 former employees of the Dogra state administration, were 'repatriated' to Amritsar in January 1951.²⁰ A survivor Sardar Inderjit Singh recalls of his family's migration from Kashmir to Amritsar: 'Father had put me on his shoulders while crossing the river. He dropped me, saying now you run up the mountain and I will come after you. There was gun fire...my father could not be found'.²¹ At the same time, the Muslim raiders also targeted a small number of Europeans, notably Colonel DO Dykes and his wife at the Saint Joseph's College.

The Massacres on Jammu's Muslims

The situation was much the same in Jammu. The danger for Muslims multiplied 'every hour' as hordes of Hindu and Sikh refugees started pouring into Jammu from areas that were going to become Pakistan. In April, the first trickle of refugees had already arrived in Jammu followed the March 1947 violence in Punjab Rawalpindi, Attock, Murree, Bannu and Hazara. The daily flood peaked in late 1947 when an estimated 160,000 population of Hindus and Sikhs migrated from the western districts of Pakistan.²² By that time, majority of the non-Muslim population of Sialkot had fled to Jammu during the partition-related disturbances. Sialkot and Jammu were nothing less than twin cities. The north-eastern part of Sialkot was principally inhabited by the Dogras inhabitants. They were closely linked culturally and linguistically with the Hindu Dogras of Gurdaspur on the one side and Jammu on the other. As the Punjab boundary award was announced and the disturbances worsened, about 100,000 Hindu and Sikh refugees from Sialkot migrated to Jammu.²³

In Jammu city alone, by mid- September, they numbered 65,000. Their arrival brought the communal tension to 'the breaking point'. They carried with them harrowing stories of Muslim atrocity, which were retold in the press and given official sanction by the state media. For example, a Jammu based Hindu paper boasted that 'a Dogra can kill at least two hundred Muslims' which illustrated the communal level to which the

media and parties had sunk.²⁴ This further intensified the Muslim killings and exodus. Almost immediately, the disgruntled Dogra refugees backed by their relatives from Jammu started a general clearing of the Muslim population. They were provided arms and ammunition by the state officials. Sikh deserters of the Sialkot Unit, who migrated in Jammu and also had taken away with themselves rifles and ammunition now utilised them.²⁵ The daily Telegraph of London journalist reported on 12 January 1948: 'Yet another element in the situation is provided by Sikh refugees from the West Punjab who have sized Muslim lands in Jammu... they originated the massacres there last October to clear for themselves new Sikh territory to compensate for their losses in Pakistan and to provide part of the nucleus of a future Sikhistan'.²⁶

To make an explicit assessment of Jammu's Muslim massacre by the State-sponsored bid to change demographics in 1947, it is necessary to look at the composition of the population in the region at time. According to the Census of 1941, the eastern half the Jammu province, cutting across small strip of Punjab plain was inhabited by 619,000 non-Muslims, including 10,000 Sikhs and 305,000 martial Dogras Rajputs and Brahmins, and 411,000 Muslims. Forming 40 per cent of the population of this whole area, to the north and astride the Chenab Muslims were in a majority in the Riasi, Ramban, and Kishtwar areas and nearly attained parity in Bhadrawah. Within the province, the position of the majority of Muslims and Hindus in part explains their differing aspirations for the future of the state. At the same time, it contained elements of segmented and precarious society, theorized by Leo Kuper, which were likely to explode into 'genocidal violence' during a crisis.²⁷

Composition of Population in Jammu Province

District/	1941 Population	Hindu %	Muslim %
Jammu	431,362	57.53	37
Kathua	177,672	74.31	n/a
Udhampur	294,217	56.02	n/a
Reasi	257,903		67

Mirpur	386,655	80.41
Pooch Jagir	421,828	9

Source: 'Elimination of Muslims from Jammu', Part II, *The Times*, (London), 10 August 1948, p. 5

It is important to point out here that the Muslim population of Jammu province largely consisted of the Punjabi speaking. The Muslims of western Jammu had well-established geographic, historic, economic ethnic and cultural connections with the West Punjab's cities and towns. They had strongly favoured joining Pakistan. Unlike the Kashmiri speaking Muslims of the Valley supported the secular leadership of Sheikh Abdullah. Within Jammu province, the location of the majority of Muslims and Hindus partially explains their differing aspirations for Jammu and Kashmir. Overall, the Dogra Hindus formed a narrow minority in Jammu province, though they formed a majority in its eastern districts such as Udhampur, Kathua and the Chenani Jagir. Seventy-five per cent of Jammu's Hindus lived in these four districts which were contiguous to Hindu-majority districts of Punjab such as Gurdaspur, which was incorporated into India in 1947. The majority of Muslims in Jammu province lived in the western districts of Mirpur, Reasi and Poonch Jagir and they were contiguous to the towns and cities of the Punjab. Their proximity to Punjab proved significant as they enabled refugees to flow approachably into and out of Jammu province at partition. Communal division was much stronger in these areas. Both the RSS and Jammu Muslim Conference of Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas dominated here. Almost all the communal violence took place in Jammu province. Hundred of thousands were killed and fled to the border cities of Sialkot, Gujrat and Jhelum.

The level of destruction was worst in Jammu city where Muslims were in minority. Their concentration was in Ustad da *Mohalla*, Pthanan da *Mohalla* and Khalka *Mohalla*. The latter was much larger than the other two combined. These Muslim localities presented a picture of destruction by mid-September 1947. Hundreds of Gujars were massacred in *mohalla* Ram Nagar. Village Raipur, within Jammu cantonment area was burnt down. The killings and dispersal of the Muslims from Jammu

city were a clear example of the ethnic cleansing of a locality. By mid September, Jammu city's Muslim population was halved.²⁸ By late November, hundred of thousands Kashmiri refugees had arrived in the border towns of Sialkot, Gujrat and Jhelum.²⁹

The Dogra state troops were at the forefront of attacks on Muslims. The state authorities were also reported to be issuing arms not only to local volunteer organizations such as RSS, but to those in surrounding East Punjab districts such as Gurdaspur. G. K. Reddy, a Hindu editor of the *Kashmir Times* said in a statement published in the daily *Nawa-i-Waqt*, 'I saw the armed mob with the complicity of Dogra troops was killing the Muslims ruthlessly. The state officials were openly giving out weapons to the mob'.³⁰ The state administration had not only demobilised a large number of Muslim soldiers serving in the state army, but Muslim police officers, whose loyalty was suspected, had also been sent home. In Jammu city, the Muslim military were disarmed and the Jammu cantonment Brigadier Khoda Box replaced by a Hindu Dogra officer. There were also reports that the Maharaja of Patiala was not only supplying weapons, but also a Sikh Brigade of Patiala State troops were also operating in Jammu and Kashmir. The state authorities intended to create a Hindu majority in the Jammu region. The Dogra troopers ejected the entire population of Muslims of Dulat Chak on 28 November, claiming it was a part of the state. The troops of a Sikh Brigade raided the bordering villages and forced the Muslims there to evacuate and go beyond the old Ujh river bed.³¹ The daily *Times* of London reported the events in Jammu with such a front page headings: 'Elimination of Muslims from Jammu' and pointed out that the Maharaja Hari Singh was 'in person commanding all the forces' which were ethnically cleansing the Muslims.³²

After the closure of Sialkot-Jammu railway line, the Muslims started concentrating in a camp from isolated pockets to the large enclaves within the Jammu Police Lines. They sought assistance from the Pakistan government to take immediate steps to ensure their safety.³³ In the first week of November, the Pakistan government despatched many buses to Jammu city to transport the refugees into Sialkot. When the convoy arrived at Jammu-Sialkot road, Dogra troopers, RSS men and many armed

Sikhs attacked the caravan and killed most of the passengers and abducted their women. The fortunate ones managed to escape to reach Sialkot. According to a statement of a well-educated Muslim refugee who had fled from Jammu to Sialkot, 'Thirty lorries carrying Muslim evacuees out of Kashmir State were attacked by Dogra troops at Satwari in Jammu. Most of the male members were massacred, while the women abducted. He concluded that the official proclaimed there that 'there was no place for Muslims in Kashmir State and that they should all clear out'.³⁴

Oral sources collected from Sialkot provide a clear picture of the ethnic cleansing of Jammu's Muslims. Zafar Butt, who reached in Sialkot from Jammu in late 1947, stated that his entire family was killed by the Dogra troopers in Nawa Kot.³⁵ Khalid Ali Gujar's two brothers and a sister were murdered in Ram Pura *mohalla* in Jammu city.³⁶ Kawaja Tahir, who now resides Sialkot's Askari colony, lost his parents and brother in Jammu.³⁷ A leading Muslim Conference leader Hameed Ullah's young daughter was abducted in Jammu.³⁸ Sarmad Mahmud, who now resides in Askari colony, recalls that his family escaped from violence in Nawa Kot and reached in Sialkot and spent many years in the camp.³⁹ Similarity, Zarar Hussian, now a central government employee, lives in Sialkot cantonment. He came from Jammu city in the late 1947 and recalls the horrors in Jammu at time. 'The state troops of Maharaja were at the forefront killings ruthlessly the Muslims in Jammu city. My father was a well-known lawyer in Jammu city court. We were forced to quit Jammu for Sialkot'.⁴⁰

One of the most compelling interviews conducted in Sialkot district was with Hussein Gujrar, who migrated from Nawakot to Sialkot in October 1947. He was 18 at time and now is a resident of Tarowali *mohalla*. He still remembers the events of that period vividly when his all members of family was massacred. 'I was about 18 years old at time. One night, the Dogra troopers attacked our home and killed my parents, sister and two younger brothers. Luckily, I was not at home that night so remained safe from death. The next morning when I reached home I saw that they were all killed and blood was everywhere', Hussein concluded, 'The army of Maharajah looted everything from the home. I walked from Nawakot to Sialkot with a hand bag'.⁴¹

The Hindu Dogra Princely State's main aim was to change the demographic composition of the region by compelling the Muslim population. The depopulation of the Muslim population in the Jammu region is evidenced clearly in the data of the 1961 Census of India. In Jammu province, for example, about 123 villages were 'completely depopulated', while the decrease in the number of Muslims in Jammu district alone was over 100,000. The Muslims numbered 158,630 and comprised 37 per cent of the total population of 428,719 in the year 1941, and in the year 1961, they numbered only 51,690 and comprised only 10 per cent of the total population of 516,932. Kathua district 'lost' almost fifty per cent its Muslim population.⁴² There was a design to change the demographics is evidenced by another well-reported incident. Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Mehr Chand Mahajan told a delegation of Hindus who met him in the place when he arrived in Jammu that now when the power was being transferred to the people they should better demand parity. When one of them associated with the National Conference asked how they could demand parity when there was no much differences in population ratio. Pointing to the Ramnagar natural reserve below, where some bodies of Muslims were still lying, he said, 'the population ratio too can change'.⁴³

It is possible here to point out that the inter-religious violence that occurred in Jammu included a possible 'genocide' of Muslims in September-October 1947. The Maharaja of the Dogra Hindu state was complicit in the targeted violence against Kashmiri Muslims. Out of a total of 8 *lakhs* who tried to migrate, more than '237,000 Muslims were systematically exterminated by all the forces of the Dogra State, headed by the Maharaja in person and aided by Hindus and Sikhs'.⁴⁴ Ian Copland's⁴⁵ and Shail Mayaram's⁴⁶ accounts about the 'ethnic cleaning' and 'Clearing Up campaign' (*safaya*) of the Muslim minority in the princely states of Bharatpur and Alwar have similarities with the events in Jammu.

Such writers as Christopher Snedden find it 'impossible to determine if a massacre of Muslim took place in Jammu Province in 1947'. Christopher is 'unable' to retrieve 'the elusive *Times* reports' [10 August 1948], which claimed 'widespread murders- up to two hundred thousands people'. He has based some of his arguments to point out that there 'there was no

edition of *the Times* of London on this day, which was a Sunday'.⁴⁷ Christopher's useful insights aside, the evidence of the availability of the paper on 10 August 1948 contradicts this assertion. I retrieved the reproduced copy of the *Times* in the Digital Archives of Warwick University. Moreover, this well-circulated newspaper clipping was not only flagged with official records of the United Nations Security Council, Meeting No. 534- March 6, 1951, but also republished in Lahore based daily *Civil and Military Gazette*, in its issue of 10 September 1951, with a heading: 'Maharaja verses the People: Genesis of the Kashmiri Dispute'. In fact, this was the topic of the annual meeting of East India Association London on 29 June 1948. Last Viceroy of the British India Mountbatten was among the participants. In his address, he expressed concern over the 'unwise policy of the state' and asserted that 'Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir took a clue from Kapurthala State and decided to follow same suit. In Kapurthala where Muslims formed 63 per cent of the total population, not a single left within a few weeks'.⁴⁸

Both documentary and oral sources suggest that the crime committed on the Kashmiri refugees was nothing less than ethnic cleaning. The story of Jammu Muslims' killings and emptying out of the region was either overshadowed by the communal killings in neighbouring Punjab around same time or incorporated with Kashmir wars between Pakistan and India. Violence in the Punjab had many parallels with Jammu in terms of a cycle of revenge killings and assaults on the minorities to driving them out of the region and occupying their property. Refugees in the Punjab received some protection and assistance in migration through the Punjab Boundary Force and the Military Evacuation Organisation. No such mechanisms were in place for the Jammu Muslims. The episode of 'retributive genocide',⁴⁹ in the Punjab was not comparable to the massacres of Jammu's Muslims. What gives the Jammu massacres a special character from the Punjab partition is that they were mainly undertaken by the Hindu Dogra state of Jammu and Kashmir and involved the political motives to ethnically cleanse the Muslim population into an exodus to Pakistan so that the demographic hurdle of the state's Muslim majority could be removed in Jammu region. Indeed, by the

Census of 1951, Jammu province had made Hindu majority province.⁵⁰

Number of Jammu and Kashmir Refugees in the Punjab Towns, 1950

<u>Towns</u>	<u>Number</u>
Sialkot	11, 0,143
Gujrat	37,474
Gujranwala	4,625
Rawalpindi	5,384
Lahore	1,101
<u>Total</u>	<u>161,966</u>

Maintenance and Resettlement of Jammu and Kashmir Refugees, File No. B132, 169/CF/ 53, NDC, Islamabad, p. 4

By late November more than three *lakh* Kashmiri refugees had arrived in the border towns of Sialkot, Gujrat and Jhelum. Over 200,000 Jammu refugees had arrived in Sialkot because of its geographical proximity with Jammu region. The city with a road and railway connection from Jammu was a logical destination for the refugees. Many Kashmiris drew on their because of their pre-existing business and kinship ties.⁵¹ Majority had far less choice except to escape from violence. The Kashmiri refugee population not surprisingly became the most visible community in the city. The most fortunate occupied properties abandoned by the Hindus and Sikhs. Many others thronged camps, schools and military barracks platforms for many years. They squatted on railway platforms, footpaths and every conceivable space. The least fortunate were accommodated in the 'most appalling', 'de-humanised' and 'like cattle' condition in the evacuee factories. Water and sewerage arrangements were usually non-existent and unhygienic conditions caused health problems. Almost all 20000 Kashmir refugees in Sialkot's Ghanda Singh School caught small-pox.

Refugees recounted gruesome tales of brutal massacres by the state's own troops and the burning of their homes and crops to a party of Englishmen who visited the city on 21 November. The harrowing images and stories of Muslim atrocities were retold in the press as well as in the sermons of Friday *Juma*

prayer. The refugee's frustrations in trying to find suitable accommodation and livelihood were exploited by radical groups such as the Ahrars and the newly established Anjuman-i-Jammu Muhajirian. They used the refugees' frustration as a fertile recruiting ground for their brand of politics. There were calls for revenge and jihad.⁵² The radical Urdu newspaper *Zamindar* was at the forefront in encouraging such action. Paper's daily repeated provocations led to its being banned for a fortnight.⁵³ Many Kashmiri refugees offered their services as *razakars* (volunteer) fighters. The Anjuman -i- Naujawan-an- Kashmir Sialkot was at the forefront in supplying thousands of *razakars* to the Kashmiri Liberation Movement.

Earlier there were reports that around a hundred trucks loaded with 'tribesmen' equipped with modern weapons and signalling system had entered the Kashmir.⁵⁴ With the controversial accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India and the arrival of Indian troops, 'the complexion of events' changed in the region. In such a warlike situation, 'a state of panic' prevailed at the newly developed Sialkot-Jammu border. Now there were regular attacks 'with automatic weapons' on Sialkot-Jammu and Gujrat-Jammu borders, leaving behind several casualties on daily basis. This included over 17,000 Muslim corpses by the end of October 1947.⁵⁵ Being a now border town, Sialkot saw a number of incursions from Jammu region in the early weeks and months of independence. In one such raid on a Sialkot border village, the Dogra troops killed about 60 Muslims and injured 12, and carried away 11 Muslim girls. They also burned and destroyed the crops of peasants in the border villages.⁵⁶ On a few occasions, the state troopers encountered the local police and the newly created West Punjab Home Guard, while the former with their 'automatic weapons' outnumbered the latter' who lacked the resources of arms and ammunitions. Such aftermath of Partition rarely finds its way in the standard texts, although the accounts on the territorial claims over the Kashmir region between India and Pakistan are well-documented. By the turn of 1948, both India and Pakistan was heading for a war over the territorial claims of the Kashmir region. On January 12 that year, the Indian District Liaison Officers who wished to recover 'pocket clearance' of abducted women and converts were banned from entering Sialkot,

although their work continued in Gujranwala and other cities of the West Punjab. While the official activities could be controlled, the border between Sialkot and Jammu remained porous and free movement between both regions was possible.

Refugees who had managed to escape from violence to reach West Punjab cities and towns, their plight continued many years after their arrival. Even, the transitory period for the processing and settlement of Kashmiri refugees was sharply different from their counterparts from East Punjab and was much tedious and a lot longer. The delay was rooted in government policy. At the beginning, the West Punjab government preferred the 'agreed areas' refugees from East Punjab over the Kashmiri refugees in allocating evacuee properties. The government representatives pointed out that there were not enough evacuee properties to allocate the Kashmiri refugees and therefore a decision to prefer the Jammu and Kashmir refugees over their Muslim counterparts from East Punjab would 'lead to great discontentment'.⁵⁷ The continuing plight of Kashmiri refugees is brought home by the fact that even at the end of 1950 over 250,000 refugees were still subsisting on government rations in the various government-run camps, when almost all the camps of Muslim refugees from East Punjab had been cleared. Moreover, despite the Central government's consideration that the Muslims of Jammu province had suffered 'proportionally violence more than any other class of refugees' and that they were targets of 'real genocide',⁵⁸ Pakistan's claims over the disputed territory of Kashmir meant however that refugees from there were excluded from 'permanent' resettlement scheme. In fact UN Security Council Resolutions of 1948 and 1949 established that all refugees who have left the State Jammu and Kashmir for 'Azad' Kashmir or Pakistan since 1947 are in fact citizens of the State and have 'the right to turn to the State'.⁵⁹ To represent this fact they were only allotted property in Pakistan on a 'purely temporary basis'.

The refugees' uncertain legal status and the state's attitude towards them were by no means unique to Pakistan. In the Indian Kashmir, until recently over three *lakhs* 'West Pakistan Refugees' (WPR) -one-third of them Sialkoties- were not granted the Permanent Resident Certificate (PRC). Legally, the migrants were categorized into two sets of migrants: (i) who

migrated from Pakistan Kashmir and (ii) who came from areas that are now part of Pakistan. The former are called Displaced Persons (DPs) and the latter are 'Sharnartihis' (refugees). While the DPs are state subjects, the Sharnartihis have not yet been granted this status. As the WPR had come from outside Jammu and Kashmir territory, they were not given the PRC. Permanent residentship was given to those whose ancestors have been living in J&K for at least 10 years before May 14, 1954. In principle, only those with PRC can buy property, get employment in the State, vote in the J&K Legislative Assembly and are entitled to other privileges.⁶⁰ For many the Partition of India was a process rather than an event confined to 1947. Such aftermath of the partition little finds its way in the standard texts.

Notes and References

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