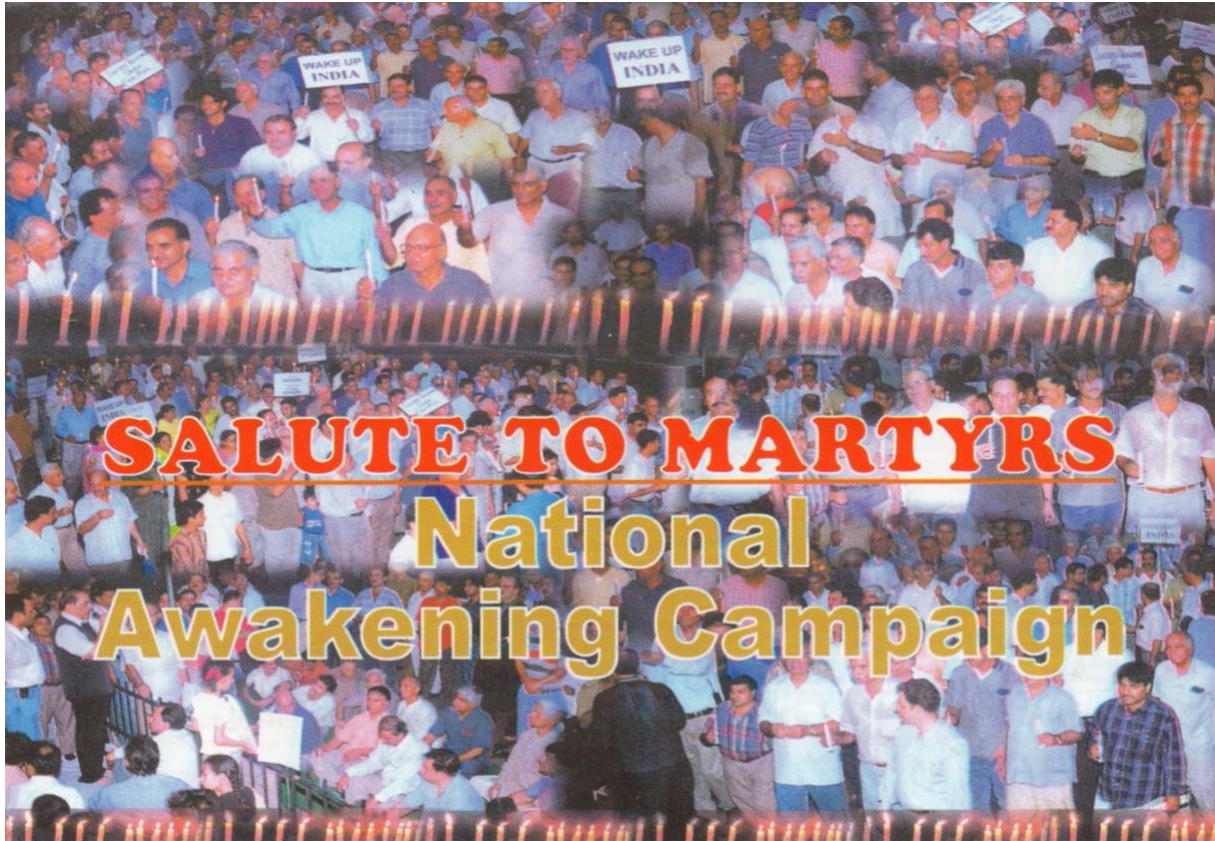


SHRADHANJALI TO KASHMIRI PANDIT MARTYRS ON BALIDAN DIVAS



Terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir motivated by ideological commitments to a Muslim crusade is a violation of human rights. The terrorist violence in Kashmir has involved mass massacre of the Hindus of the State, destruction of their property, temples, and their exodus from Kashmir. The Hindus of Kashmir, among them mainly the Kashmiri Pandits, have been killed in large numbers irrespective of their age, profession and political commitments. The death and destruction of innocent people, genocide of minority, led to the ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Pandits from the valley.

On September 14, 1989, Pandit Tika Lal Taploo, noted lawyer, social worker and Vice President of J&K state unit of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), was gunned down by terrorists outside his own house in Srinagar. He was the first victim of the terrorism in Kashmir. Among those killed, were people from all sections of the society, lawyers, political activists, mediamen, intellectuals, shopkeepers, and even men of small means. Apart from Pandit Tika Lal Taploo, other prominent Pandits who were killed were Kashmiri poet and writer Pandit Sarwanand Koul Premi along with his son, Justice Neel Kanth Ganjoo, Advocate Prem Nath Bhat, Pandit Lassa Koul, Director, Doordarshan Kendra Srinagar, and endless list of men, women and even children of the Kashmiri Pandit community.

The Kashmiri Pandits have always supported accession of the state to India. They have, undeniably, formed the most powerful support base for India in Kashmir. September 14, 1989 reminds us of the failure of the mighty Indian State in protecting the Hindu minority of Kashmir. Human Rights organizations, the world community, failed to notice the mayhem against the Hindus in Kashmir.

The mass attack on the Hindus began in January, 1990, and by the onset of August, 1990 more than eight hundred of them had been murdered in cold blood. Most of the victims were innocent people who lived in poverty and persecution under the Muslim dominated constitutional organization of the State.

The terrorist killings have been accompanied by torture unheard of in the annals of human history. Sarla Bhat, a nurse working in Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences - Soura, was tortured, gang-raped and then killed by terrorists of Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF). Girija Tickoo, resident of Bandipora, was gang-raped by terrorists and then cut into pieces by mechanical saw. Brij Nath Shah was kidnapped on 27th April, 1990 from his home at Sadhu Ganga, Kupwara in Kashmir. Two days later his body was found hanging by a tree. His lips had been stitched. Pran Nath of Uttarsu in Anantnag District was kidnapped on 27th May, 1990. His body was found impaled; his chest and feet nailed, and there were many more rapes and tortures in the name of Muslim Jihad.

We in Kashmiri Samiti, Delhi, decided to observe September 14, 1989, a gory reminder when terrorism began to take its toll of Kashmiri Pandits, as Martyrs Day and remember our unsung martyrs and pay our respectful homage to all those who lost their lives during those troublent days. Since then, Kashmiri Pandits commemorate September 14 as *Balidan Divas* (Martyr's Day), all over the globe.

A HUMBLE REQUEST

Untold Story of Kashmiri Pandits, Volume I and Volume II 'The Saga of Survival' depicting our struggle during 1990 to 2003, 14 years of our VAN VAAS in 352 pages, is being circulated on *Balidan Divas* 2020. The book is being sent to all those, who have raised their voice against Genocide, Human Rights Violations and Ethnic Cleansing of Kashmiri Pandits during last thirty years. The book is also being mailed to all those interested persons, free of any charge, with a request, please do go through the contents and circulate to friends for wider readership and awareness of struggle for survival of Kashmiri Pandits away from homeland.

The book has been compiled with the *Ahee & Ashirwad* of all well wishers. Thanks

The book is also available on WhatsApp.

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