

Dear Qurban Bhai,

Thank you very much for refreshing my memory by sending a copy of the Report on Kashmir by two leaders of the PSP, Sadiq Ali and Madhu Limaye, in January 1954. It was the kind of a letter to have forwarded it to a large number of friends including me, else I might have been deprived of getting an opportunity to recall the tumultuous developments in Kashmir in 1953. I hope you will not mind my making some observations.

When we called on Sadiq Bhai towards the end of 1998 to request him to accept the presidency of the Society for Communal Harmony, which he graciously did, following the demise of our second President, Sri PN Haksar, at least I had forgotten that he had joined the KMPP and the PSP along with Acharya JB Kripalani in 1951. It was a gap of 45 years or more. We remembered him only as the President of the 'Syndicate' Congress in 1969 and as former Governor of Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. Later I used to visit him often at his residence in the Batukeshwar Datt colony (a part of Lodhi Colony, New Delhi) and I reminded him that as a young Congress Socialist worker at Allahabad in 1946 I had interactions with him while he held the post of Office Secretary of AICC for many years and for a brief while Sri Ram Sumer Shukla, the then President of the All India Students' Congress, made me the Office Secretary of the AISC which also had its office in Swaraj Bhawan. I took over from Sri Narayan Datt Tiwari. There are several happy memories of Sadiq Bhai and his elegant wife, Smt. Sadiq Ali, daughter of Sir JP Srivastava, Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council.

We are indebted to you for digging out this important report at this juncture. I would request that you may forward a copy of this valuable report to the present Prime Minister and the Home Minister and the Governor of J&K for their info and benefit. It is a model political report.

- 1) Many young people of the present generation may not know that the original Constitution of J&K provided for a Prime Minister and that is how Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was called. Therefore, where the PSP team refers to the Prime Minister a footnote may be given accordingly. The name of the Deputy Prime Minister, Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad, may also be given. The names of the communist leaders in the National Conference like DP Dhar and GM Sadiq should be mentioned in a footnote. Where Sri Saraf of Jammu is mentioned his full name (Om Prakash Saraf) may be mentioned. I distinctly remember all these leaders. At Jammu I used to meet Sri Om Prakash Saraf, Sri DD Thakur and Sri Khajuria, PSP MLA. (I cherish the memory of Sri DD Thakur who was my contemporary at Lucknow University in early 1950s and with whom I maintained a life-long friendship. He was Deputy Chief Minister of J&K when Sheikh Sahab became the Chief Minister in late 1970s, and later Governor of Assam. It was extremely edifying to see his son, Tirath Singh Thakur, occupying the very high position of the Chief Justice of India. Not many people know that late Justice Adarsh Sein Anand, former CJI, was also from Jammu. A few years junior to us at Lucknow University he was Secretary of the Chandigarh unit of the PSP, took up the case for release of Sheikh Sahab from Kodaikanal jail, became a High Court Judge and Chief Justice of High Courts and finally rose to be the CJI. When he was studying at London for his Bar-at-Law degree he wrote a thesis on the constitutional questions relating to J&K. In early 1960s when I was posted at Chandigarh as Assistant/Deputy Commissioner for SC&ST another socialist stalwart was Rajinder Sachar who was Secretary of the Chandigarh unit of the SSP and rose to be the Chief Justice of Delhi High Court. He earned national fame and recognition for the Sachar Report on the minorities, specially Muslims.)
- 2) The years of the resolution of the National Executive of the PSP (1953) and the date of the Sadiq Ali-Madhu Limaye Report (1954) may be mentioned in a footnote.

- 3) There is a reference to the 'Lama of Ladakh'. It is an erroneous statement. Every Buddhist monastery in Ladakh and elsewhere has several Lamas. The reference here is to Ven. Kushak Bakula known as the Head Lama of Ladakh. He was a highly respected figure in the Buddhist world, a Minister in J&K, on the floor of the State Assembly in 1954 warned the Government of India about the military preparations of China on our borders (his speech was reportedly blacked out), he established the Ladakh Bauddha Vihara around 1960, became an MP and for a long time our Ambassador to Mongolia. All this info could possibly be given in a footnote.
- 4) A delegation of three leaders of the CPI comprising P. Ramamurthy, Dr. A. Ahmad and SV Ghate visited Kashmir in the wake of the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah on 8 August 1953. If it is Dr. ZA Ahmad, his full name should have been mentioned in the report. The report of the two PSP leaders appears to be too concerned with the strategy of the communist leaders and their policies of duplicity.
- 5) There is no mention of the role of Sri Rafi Ahmad Kidwai. There was a popular feeling that Rafi Sahab, who had earned a reputation of travelling *in cognito* to feel the pulse of the people, had recommended immediate arrest of Sheikh Sahab. The report should have thrown light on this fact of history. Sheikh Sahab's hobnobbing with Adlai Stevenson and his later frequent advocacy of independent Kashmir is well known. But it is not well known that in later years, before his arrest, he was even willing to give up Jammu, if need be, and have an independent Kashmir. Before being compelled to sign the Instrument of Accession even Maharaja Hari Singh had toyed with the idea of declaring J&K an independent State. It is also not well known that at a certain stage Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the then Deputy Prime Minister of India, was willing to give up Kashmir and retain Jammu and Ladakh as integral parts of India.
- 6) A few typos in such an important report appear to be incongruous.

The history of J&K is fascinating. Every Indian including resident of J&K should be fully aware of the same and view the current political developments in the light of its history. This report by two important leaders of the PSP forms an important documentation of that period. Once again, I thank you, Qurban Bhai, for bringing to light this important report before the readers.

With regards and best wishes,
CB Tripathi