



Kashmiri Overseas Association

Kashmiri Overseas Association

Recordings of our US based KP community from 1976




The KOA organization has its origins in the early meetings of several Kashmiri Pandit families in the Washington D.C and Maryland areas. These families soon came to realize the importance of building a community structure which could include other families too in a bond for mutual preservation and growth. As more families and members joined the founding group, the organization evolved to become a national outfit with regional chapters, documented bye-laws, systems and procedures as well as a non-profit status to better seek donations and pursue community actions.

This is the beginning of the process to document and detail the history and origins of KOA. At the present time, this document is a simple chronological representation from materials available in various KOA publications. The eventual document will trace the past 30 years and list important milestones that have brought the organization to the present point. A lot of credit for this documentation effort belongs to Dr. Anupam Wali and Mrs. Neelam Wali who have lovingly and with a lot of care preserved newsletters, pictures and materials right from 1978 onwards. In case you have documents and materials that you would like to share so that these are made part of a wide KOA collage, and recorded KOA history, **please email me at ourkashmir@aol.com**

The documents that form the basis for this presentation will soon be scanned and placed on the web. I would also gladly introduce new facts and remove any errors that you detect.

Thanks and Warm Regards

Arun Koul

 Kashmiri Overseas Association

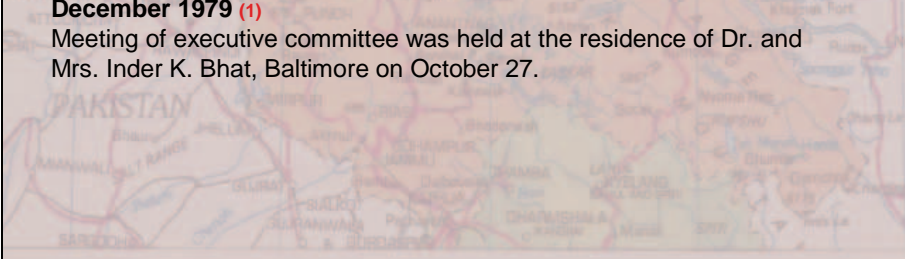

1976 - 79

Kashmiri Get-togethers were organized every year from 1976
It all started with meetings at Pradman and Ratna Qasba's house - Mohini Kaushik and Surendar Nath's house

Kashmir Bhavan of Kashmiri Samiti sought donations for 2nd floor in 1978
(Shows that the organization had already started to get international recognition)

Newsletter was started in Early 1979
(Very early the founding members realized the need for good communication tools to serve a spread out population)


December 1979 (1)
Meeting of executive committee was held at the residence of Dr. and Mrs. Inder K. Bhat, Baltimore on October 27.



December 1979

(1) "A meeting of executive committee was held at the residence of Dr. and Mrs. Inder K. Bhat, Baltimore on October 27. The following topics were discussed; (1) The venue for the Shivratri celebration. (2) Completion of the new directory. (3) Formation of the regional chapters of the association be established to make the association more effective and to provide means of better communication and understanding at regional and eventually at national and international levels. Members of the community are therefore advised and encouraged to take an active part in the formation of local chapters of the association in the various regions of this country and abroad."

1980



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March 1980
All India Kashmiri Samaj was formed at Allahabad under the leadership of Justice P.N. Bakshi. (AIKS sought the affiliation of KOA)




June 1980 (2)
A picnic was held at Neerwood Lake, Washington, D.C on Memorial day week end by the members of the Association, organized by Mrs. Qasba. (Such get-togethers have remained our glue)

September 1980;

- Justice Janki Nath Bhat's visit. (3)
- 6th issue of the News Letter since it was started one and a half years ago. Editor Dr. I.K. Bhat's concern (4)
- An Introduction to Spoken Kashmiri" (Part I) and a Glossary (Part II) by Brij Bihari Kachru of Urbana, Illinois

December 1980

- Scholarship announced Rs. 150 p/m by Dr. Mohini Kaushik. (Donor culture set in early)
- Annual Dues Received were \$983.40 in 1980-81

June 1980

(2) "A picnic was held at Neerwood Lake, Washington, D.C on Memorial day week end by the members of the Association. About 30 members attended the picnic. It was great fun and I am sure everybody present enjoyed it. Thanks to Mrs. Qasba who took pains to organize the whole thing by herself."


September 1980;

(3) Justice Janki Nath Bhat while visiting the country said, "I feel happy to pen down a few lines for the News Letter started by our young men living abroad as a medium of social and collective life and possibly collective planning.Independence of India has been a boon for all Indians but it has proved a blessing in disguise for our people, because having been wisely and steadily squeezed out of our beautiful state by the secular popular government thereof, the young men of the community have made a mark in scientific and intellectual fields in the whole world and thus proved their worth and saved themselves from ignominy, frustration, dejection and pessimism consequent upon unemployment and political victimization.....I would appeal to them to devise ways and means of having more social contacts gatherings and within permissible distances celebrate some important functions and festivals collectively to keep track of all our people whether in India or abroad; set up some media of expressing their matters and problems, keep abreast of the events happening in their motherland and try to help less affluent and fortunate young men. "

(ASIDE) "In the last issue of the News Letter we had mentioned about the celebration of a picnic at Neerwood lake in which about 30 members of the association had participated. Following that we received some letters indicating that only a few members were taking advantage of the association funds. The Association wants to make it clear that at no time since the Association has been formed have its funds been utilized for these social and cultural purposes.....They have all been managed by private contributions...."

(4) "With this issue it will be the 6th issue of the News Letter in your hands since it was started one and a half years ago. While I am immensely pleased to see the improvement that we have made since the first issue, it is very discouraging and disheartening to see a cold response and lack of enthusiasm on the part of our members. Except for Miss Neelam Khushu who has done a beautiful work of designing, art work and printing of the News Letters and Mrs. Ratna Qasba who has been doing the work of dispatching, Imust say that the response from the members has been absolutely none." Editor Dr. I.K. Bhat

"There are about 200 Kashmiri families in the United States. Out of these one third do not want to have any concern with the other members of the community.....The other one third probably do not want to get involved with anything but however do send their dues just as a formality and do not want to do any thing more than that. The remaining third however seems to be more eager and enthusiastic to have an association and more and more cultural functions and get-togethers and are really interested in doing something worthwhile for the community." Dr. I.K. Bhat



Kashmiri Overseas Association


1981

March 1981

- Editor Dr. I.K. Bhat's note on News Letter entering its third year of publication (5)
- Shivratri Function at the home of Ratna & Dr. Girdhari Lal Hanjura of Reading PA on 7th (6)
- Secretary Dr. Inder Bhat's proposal (7)
- President of the time: Dr. Mohini Kaushik (The 2nd KOA President was a Woman, US is yet to get a woman President)
- Pran and Raj Tiku also volunteer to contribute Rs. 150 per month to meet educational expenses of needy and deserving Kashmiri student. (Educational assistance has remained the key form of support besides medical and other emergency help)
- Autar Mattoo's NAVREH Greetings (8) (We continue to celebrate the Shivratri/ Navreh festivals in each Zone/ Chapter)

September 1981

- Dr. Shiban Warikoo of PA elected President (9) (The text of his letter shows the visionary nature of the founding members)
- The new Directory of the Association presented (9B) (Connects national and international members with each other)



March 1981

(5) "With this issue the News Letter has entered its third year of publication. The mere fact that we have come along this far explains our determination to continue our efforts to keep the flame of the Association glowing.....To all those who have helped me in this endeavour during these two years I am ever grateful." Editor Dr. I.K. Bhat

(6) Shivratri Function at the home of Ratna & Dr. Girdhari Lal Hanjura of Reading PA on 7th March 1981 had 40 families and 110 – 120 people present. Many people drove 7-8 hours to attend the function. This was till then the largest gathering of KPs in one place.

(7) Dr. Inder Bhat as Secretary proposed that the Association do more than create meeting points for its members. (Aside; At the meeting it was raised that some people may have a vested interest in starting such an association but the concerns were duly and respectfully answered)


(8) "This is the time for me to wish all our community members a happy and healthy NAVREH. I suggest that we Kashmiris should exchange greetings with all our fellow Kashmiri friends and relatives all over the world on this New year day of ours to maintain our Kashmiri culture." Autar Mattoo Md.

September 1981

(9) Dr. Shiban Warikoo of PA elected President.

" I am well aware of the fact that geographic location of all of us will be somewhat of a hindrance in making it a success. Therefore it is all the more essential to keep publishing the KOA News Letter. This news letter will be a link amongst us keeping us informed of what is going on in this society. That brings me to the concept of regional chapters. It is essential that we try to form regional chapters in metropolitan areas to which members from surrounding areas could gravitate.....Highlight of the year will of course be our annual Shivratri get together.In the coming year we plan to go ahead with getting our Association registered.After we have gained foothold and enough funds we aim to secure non profit status from the IRS for which we will require legal help.....Let us help these needy families on one on one basis. Even a little bit of help that is 10 or 20 dollars a month will go a long way in fulfilling their immediate needs.....At a later date our Association can take over this function when we are organized enough to do that..... At the

end I would like to remind all of you that it is your own Association and not of some vested group in northeast corner of USA.....Please encourage your children to write...”
(9B) “The new Directory of the Association members is here and it is being sent to you along with this issue.”






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1982

April 1982

- Editorial responsibility changed hands and the Newsletter office has actually moved, from Virginia to Maryland! (10) (Dr. I.K. Bhat's perseverance in continuing the newsletter despite adverse conditions pays off and many more people eventually become positively involved)
- Legal papers for registering the KOA as a non-profit Organization have finally been filed, due to personal efforts of Ratna Qasba (Such diligence has paid off and ensured the longevity of KOA and in fact helped it in gaining strength with every passing year)
- Voluntary Committee selected to campaign for raising funds for KOA
- Shivratri was celebrated in New Jersey on the night of February 27, 1982 at the residence of Nancy and Roop K. Wakhlu (11)
- Dr. Chand K. Bhan, Ware, MA gives kudos to Mr. B.L. Bhat for his forthright article ("Honestly Speaking", see December 1981 KOA Newsletter, ed). (12) (An example of positive thinking from community members that continue to drive KOA forward)


April 1982

(10) "This new year the KOA Newsletter enters another chapter, that from foundation to consolidation. Not only has the editorial responsibility changed hands, the Newsletter office has actually moved, from Virginia to Maryland! We owe the present status and growth of this publication to conscientious, strenuous and single handed efforts of the former editor, Dr. Inder K. Bhat....."

Legal papers for registering the KOA as a non-profit Organization have finally been filed, due to personal efforts of Ratna Qasba. In that hope, a campaign for raising funds for KOA has been made, initially by selecting a voluntary Committee comprising of Priti Khoshoo, NJ (Coordinator.....) Arun Dhar, PA; Yog Ganju, NY; Bansi Pandit, ILL; and Anupam Wali, MD. Suggestions are welcome for this fund-raising drive."

(11) Shivratri was celebrated in New Jersey on the night of February 27, 1982 at the residence of Nancy and Roop K. Wakhlu. Members came from Connecticut, New York, Washington D.C, Maryland and Pennsylvania. The ceremony started with a Puja. A story about Shivratri was recited to the children.....After a hearty dinner, a General Body meeting was held.....An idea to hold such largely attended functions, in future in a public place was floated. Mr. Arun Dhar of Philadelphia, PA has kindly agreed to make such an arrangement for a Summer Meet."

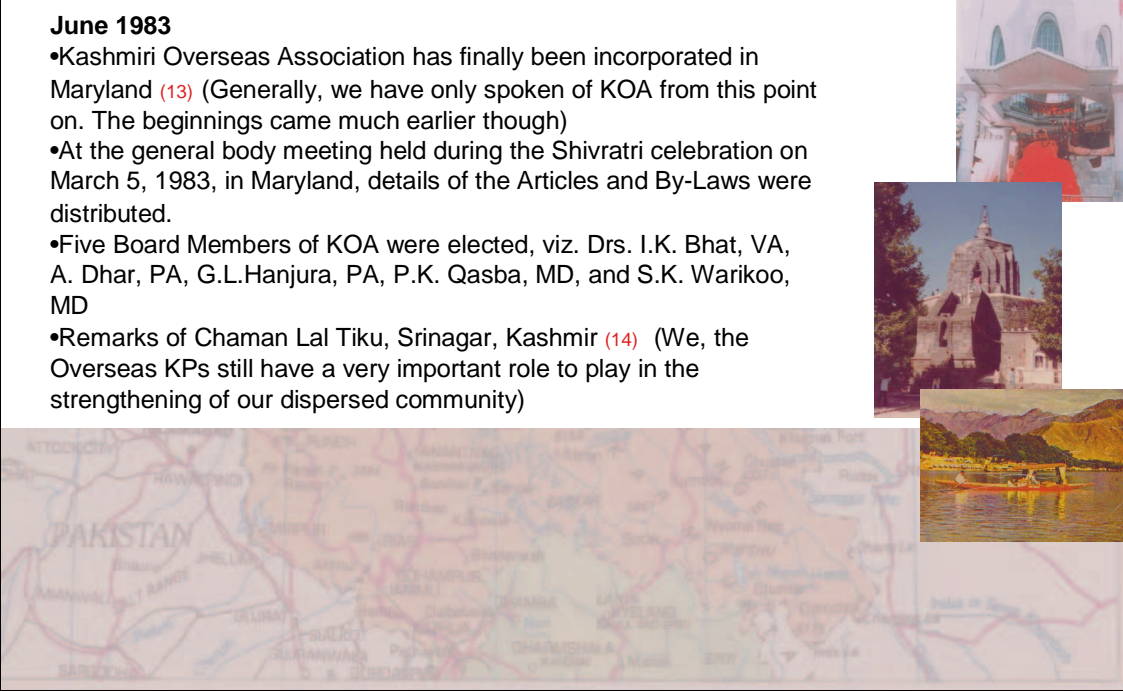
(12) Dr. Chand K. Bhan, Ware, MA: "Kudos to Mr. B.L. Bhat for his forthright article ("Honestly Speaking", see December 1981 KOA Newsletter, ed). I think he gave a solid representation of our actions, behavior and other traits. We must forget our deeper, personal problems and develop newer, brighter outlook to life. Let us wave off our insecurity and jealousy, become more integrated and less showy, and emulate good features of American attitudes. We need to form a joint front and KOA offers such a forum. Let us show our concern by strengthening our Association through our active participation."

 Kashmiri Overseas Association

1983

June 1983

- Kashmiri Overseas Association has finally been incorporated in Maryland (13) (Generally, we have only spoken of KOA from this point on. The beginnings came much earlier though)
- At the general body meeting held during the Shivratri celebration on March 5, 1983, in Maryland, details of the Articles and By-Laws were distributed.
- Five Board Members of KOA were elected, viz. Drs. I.K. Bhat, VA, A. Dhar, PA, G.L.Hanjura, PA, P.K. Qasba, MD, and S.K. Warikoo, MD
- Remarks of Chaman Lal Tiku, Srinagar, Kashmir (14) (We, the Overseas KPs still have a very important role to play in the strengthening of our dispersed community)




June 1983

(13) "Kashmiri Overseas Association has finally been incorporated in Maryland. The preparation of legal papers for tax exempt status required the formulation of new Articles and By-Laws as the KOA constitution. At the general body meeting held during the Shivratri celebration on March 5, 1983, in Maryland, details of the Articles and By-Laws were distributed. Copies of the same are available upon request from the KOA office. Five Board Members of KOA were elected, viz. Drs. I.K. Bhat, VA, A. Dhar, PA, G.L.Hanjura, PA, P.K. Qasba, MD, and S.K. Warikoo, MD....."

(14) Chaman Lal Tiku, Srinagar, Kashmir " I got a chance to go through the KOA Newsletter.....Only issuance of a Newsletter is not enough, unless everybody takes a lively interest in the future of its community and their successors. I think that after the Overseas Association becomes strong and organized it can be instrumental in bringing cohesion amongst the Kashmiri society, which has disintegrated because of various factors. Whenever Kashmiris had to face onslaughts, the rejuvenating and restoring force came from outside. When Pathans annihilated the Kashmiri culture Shri Birdar had to seek outside help and when our immediate neighbor sent Kabalis who brutally massacred people India came as a savior. Since our society has become cankerous because of its socio-economic and geo-political problems and their dispersion has become inevitable, it is some of our own society members from the outside who can become the fore-runners of a New Revival.

We have not to accept our cultural heritage blindly. We have to change with the times and after logical and reasonable discussions evolve a new code that grants: needed vigor, and a cementing force, free from the evil traditions and practices. Our community should be like a wet nurse that can nurture its members and not only be a source of protection for the living but a consolidated Community that leaves behind a positive philosophy and culture for the future generations to inherit.



Kashmiri Overseas Association

1984 - 85




First KOA Summer Camp, July 4-7, 1984 at Lackawana State Park, Pennsylvania. (Now an every year feature)
 Excerpt from Martand in KOA Newsletter, August 1984 (14B) (Portents of the times to come)

March 1985
 Membership earnings from March 1984 to Feb 1985 \$2086.03

April 1985

- An era is ending and a new one, hopefully more inspiring and revitalizing one, is entering for the KOA and its official organ, the KOA Newsletter. (15)
- Presentation of plaques to Pradman and Ratna Qasba, and Surender and Mohini Nath Kaushak, both families of Maryland, for their meritorious and honorary services rendered towards establishing and incorporating the Kashmiri Overseas Association. (15B)
- Observations on latest happenings in Kashmir by visiting from India, Mr. Janki Nath Bhat (16)

Second KOA Summer Camp July 4-7, 1985 at Brookhill Park, Wellsburg, West Virginia

March 1985

(14B) "The attempted arson at Drabiyar and Kathlishwar temples on the Jhelum bank in the heart of the city on the night between August 23 and 24, 1984, follows almost immediately the release of the Press statement, detailing such happenings during the past three months, by All State Kashmiri Pandit Conference.

The unfortunate happening is sufficient proof, if any needed at all, tht a sinister design is on to harass the minority community in Kashmir out of its wits on the one hand.....It seems the miscreants aided by anti-social, anti-national and secessionist forces and others working against the established order are ganging up and have chosen to make the minority community their target of attack.....If the miscreants succeed in creating a scare resulting in migrations, the phenomenon may have wider ramifications. ..."


April 1985

(15) Well the time to say good bye and thank you is here. Another era is ending and a new one, hopefully more inspiring and revitalizing one, is entering for the KOA and its official organ, the KOA Newsletter. The Newsletter idea originated in Maryland, in the shape and form that Inder K. Bhat gave it and who continued with it for several years, as a yeoman's service to KOA. Last few years we have done all that we possibly could to carry on the torch that Inder Bhat lighted. We nurtured it, improved it in our own way and attempted to make the KOA Newsletter more international. We have enjoyed every minute of it. We now pass on the torch to Michigan where Suman Hukku, the new editor resides and who will provide the new nucleus for the Newsletter....."

(15B) "One of the attractive events was the presentation of plaques to Pradman and Ratna Qasba, and Surender and Mohini Nath Kaushak, both families of Maryland, for their meritorious and honorary services rendered towards establishing and incorporating the Kashmiri Overseas Association."

(16) Visiting from India, Mr. Janki Nath Bhat; " It was a chance meeting that I had one evening last month with about 20 Kashmiri Pandit families in Washington D.C.....After I was introduced to the guests I had known some of them in my New Yearly days-they wanted to know all about the latest happenings in Kashmir. Some of them had received disturbing letters of the August incidents when some of the KP homes in Srinagar had been stoned and were anxious to know about the welfare of the community members in Kashmir. Having been a witness to these happenings myself and having expressed myself strongly against

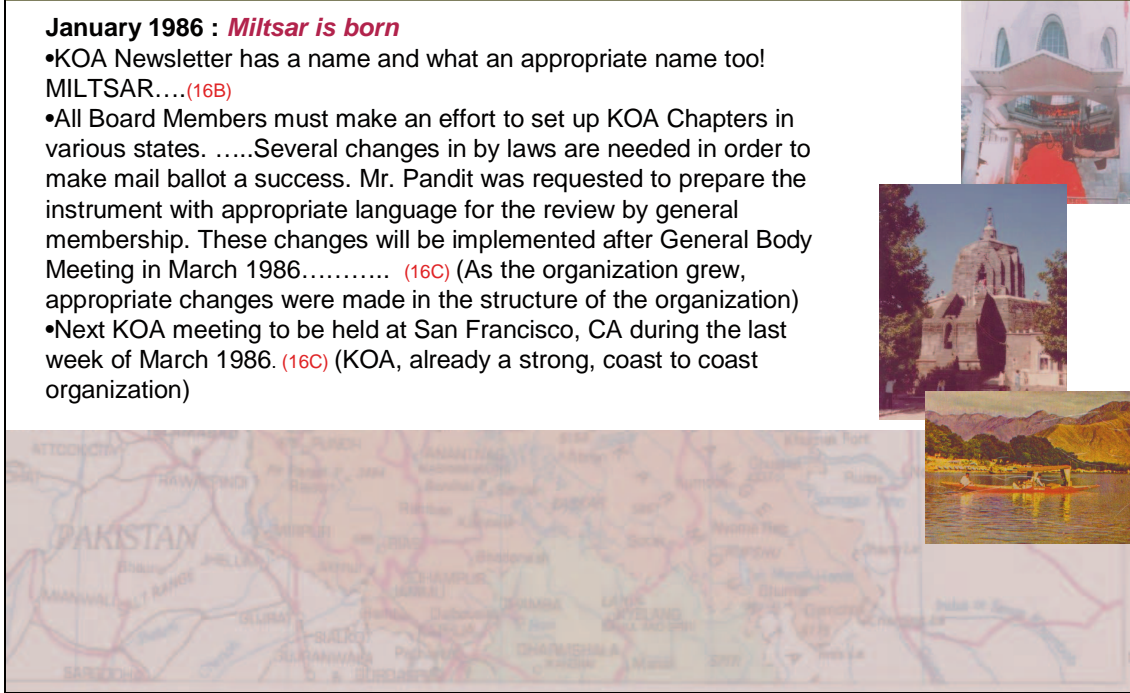
the break down of law and order in Kashmir I was able to brief them suitably and at the same time allay their fears. There was a general discussion on the future of this community especially the opportunities or lack of these for young educated KPs who are getting frustrated because of the discrimination suffered by them in jobs, admission to professional colleges and grant of licenses for new business. Some of the friends present who had been away from home for many years and understandably worried about the patent injustice done to the community by the successive Governments in power in Kashmir came out, if I may say so, with American remedies to the situation.....”

 Kashmiri Overseas Association

1986

January 1986 : *Miltsar is born*

- KOA Newsletter has a name and what an appropriate name too! MILTSAR.....(16B)
- All Board Members must make an effort to set up KOA Chapters in various states.Several changes in by laws are needed in order to make mail ballot a success. Mr. Pandit was requested to prepare the instrument with appropriate language for the review by general membership. These changes will be implemented after General Body Meeting in March 1986..... (16C) (As the organization grew, appropriate changes were made in the structure of the organization)
- Next KOA meeting to be held at San Francisco, CA during the last week of March 1986. (16C) (KOA, already a strong, coast to coast organization)




January 1986

(16B) "Now that you have tasted our first cup of Kahwa it is time to get to business at hand. Congratulations; Our KOA Newsletter has a name and what an appropriate name too! MILTSAR...."

(16C) "All Board Members must make an effort to set up KOA Chapters in various states.Several changes in by laws are needed in order to make mail ballot a success. Mr. Pandit was requested to prepare the instrument with appropriate language for the review by general membership. These changes will be implemented after General Body Meeting in March 1986.....Before adjournment, it was decided to have the next KOA meeting at San Francisco, CA during the last week of March 1986."

1990




Kashmiri
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July 25, 1990 - Tragedy in Kashmir. Community gets into overdrive (Note how the community gathers as one)

- Adopt a Family (Sponsor a Child), Adopt a Student programs (Education Fund) launched by KOA. President Sh. Kanhya L. Kaul commits financial and other support to India based community organizations.
- Martyrs Families Recognition and Clothing Collection Drive
- A thought for a Kashmiri Pandit. (17)
- Kanhya L. Kaul informs of List #1 of Biradari (18)
- Pandit Mohan Lal Kaul, Teacher, Harwan writes (19)
- Ashok Raina, Washington D.C gives update of rally in Washington, D.C to create an awareness about Kashmiri Hindus' cause, the other side of the Kashmir problem. \
- Kanhya Lal Kaul urges members to participate in the political process and correspond with their representatives on issues which concern them. (20)

November 1990

- Site Visit by Dr. Shiban K. Warikoo: (21)
- K.L. Kaul motivates us to get along with each other. (22)
- Pat Fotedar on Clothing Drive (23)



(17) "Please stop, Spare a thought for him. He is a Kashmiri Pandit. He is on his way to extinction. You may hear of him and about him in fairy tales only.....-Tulmulla (Kheer Bhavani), Sharika temple and Chakreshwar (Hari Parbat), Loke Bhavan, Nagabal, Mattan and Uma Nagri (Anantnag), the famous Amar Nath ji cave tucked deep in the Himalayas, Alkh Devi and Rishi Peer shrines, Bhadrakali Teerath (Kupwara) and many many more. All his Gods are now locked and there is none to look after them. No bells ring in Ganpatyar temple."

(18) Kanhya L. Kaul "We have published a list of Biradari donors in the enclosed issue of KOA update. It is our List #1. Many more people have sent in their donations since this list was compiled. Then there are those who have sent their donation the second time. Some members are sending smaller checks but on an on-going basis. More lists have to follow. Therefore, we shall compile a cumulative and complete list of all Biradari Donations received as of August 31 (Cut off date) and publish the same in the forthcoming issue of Miltsar."

(19) Pandit Mohan Lal Kaul, Teacher, Harwan writes..

"As a teacher I have been teaching the students of various classes. I lost my identity while teaching and I had become a part of the students. There was not a single house in Illaqua Phag , Srinagar where I did not force the students to move forward for a better future. My students gave me a lot of love for which I shall remain thankful throughout my life.

With this thing in view I and my family members did not migrate. On May 26 at about midnight, there was a knock at our door. We opened the window and came to know that there were two young men with weapons. They swore in the name of God and Prophet that we will not be touched. We opened the door and after many questions and answers, we thought ourselves to be safe. They also told us to leave for Jammu for some time. On their way out, they rewarded me for my dedication and unselfish work of life with a bullet!.. Now I am helplessly struggling with my wound and fractured leg. Where are my students who are in thousands? Where are the people whom I loved? My eyes are full of tears when I think what I have done and what I got. The young men also swore that I was not a C.I.D. Then, why they shot at me? I want an answer."

"Young Muslim boys move about in the streets of Srinagar where Hindus live, hanging empty tin containers around their necks. They beat these as drums whenever they see a Kashmiri Hindu moving about. Wonder why they do it?"

Ashok Raina, Washington D.C "A rally of about 1300 people was held on Thursday, June 21 in Washington, D.C to create an awareness about Kashmiri Hindus' cause, the other side of the Kashmir problem. The rally was organized by people of Indian origin under the auspices of People for United India, with support from 25 other organizations. There was a strong showing of Kashmiri Pandits from metropolitan Washington area (over 70%) inspite of it being a working day. Most of the participants came from New York, New Jersey area."

(20) Kanhya Lal Kaul "The KOA being a tax exempt charitable organization does not directly participate in political lobbying. However, members as citizens have a right and a duty to participate in the political process and correspond with their representatives on issues which concern them. KOA supports educational activities and dissemination of information among the US citizens and residents on any issue that concerns the Community."

November 1990


(21) Site Visit by Dr. Shiban K. Warikoo: As we know, there has been mass exodus of KPs from Kashmir valley during the past ten months.KPs have come out, settled in Jammu, Delhi and other cities. Majority of them especially those from Srinagar city are staying with relatives or in rented rooms in Jammu and Delhi. Remaining ones, mostly from villages are staying in camps, commonly called "Migrant Camps." They have been deliberately designated as "migrants by the State Government. The conditions in the camps varies. Some are almost half decent but the living conditions in most of them are deplorable. There are tents in Nagrota, Udhampur, Talab Tillo (Jammu)and Houz Rani in Delhi to name a few. One can easily imagine the plight of these people in summer heat and in biting cold of incoming winter. Morale of the people, naturally is at its lowest as the future looks bleak to them."

(22) K.L. Kaul "Let us get along with each other and the best way to do so is to go along at times. All of us are capable of having excellent ideas, but not all of them can be put to practice at the same time. Being such a small community, it is so easy for us to find common friends and relations in our contacts with each other. That leads to both a quick recovery of mutual short comings and faults, and also spontaneous warmth and mutual respect. To emphasize and manifest the latter in our dealings with each other is being a true KP. Let us be positive and practice it, and spread a little more LOL amongst us."

K.L. Kaul " The KOA came into being essentially to help KPs in US to stay in touch with each other and to provide a no-host environment for socializing as KPs.....Our roots were safe and well preserved by our people in the Valley for us to run to. We had no fear of extinction. However, the situation has drastically changed now, and if allowed to prevail, it is fraught with great danger to our survival as KPs not only in North America but in India as well.

(23) Pat Fotedar on Clothing Drive "Since the beginning of this drive in August, we have been working with Air India, the Consul General in Chicago and the Indian Embassy in Washington to find a way to transport and distribute these clothes to the refugees.I am overwhelmed by the positive response from the community and the number of supportive phone calls I have received....."




1991



Kashmiri
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April 1991

- **Indian American Kashmir Forum created**
- K.L. Kaul on formation of Indo-American Kashmir Forum (24)
- “Northern California; “Chapter President Ravindra Kaw and other members got busy soliciting donations from Fremont families” (Excerpted)
- “Jeevan Zutshi (CA) and Subash Razdan (GA) have been appointed by Mr. Inder Singh President NFIA to head the national effort of campaigning against Rep. Dan Burton’s house resolution 87 which asks for a plebiscite as a solution to Kashmir crises.” (Excerpted)
- Southern California “ Maharaj Wanchoo, chapter President along with Amrit Nehru and Suraj Bhat took and opportunity of meeting Swami Parmananda Bharati of Shingari Peet who was in LA.....The Chapter is doing a great job...” (Excerpted)

July 1991

- Dr. Vijay Sazawal shares his thoughts from his unscheduled trip to Delhi during the last weeks of July 1991 (25)
- Kanhya Kal Kaul gives his opinion on IAK Forum (26)
- Pat Fotedar on Clothing Drive (27)

April 1991

(24) K.L. Kaul “ A number of former Kashmiris and their American and Indian friends have decided to form Indo-American Kashmir Forum with a view to pursue a vigorous campaign to help the Kashmiri Refugees.....to return back to the Valley to their ancestral homes under safe and honorable conditions free from the onslaughts and attacks of the secessionists and terrorists in the Valley...”


July 1991

(25) Dr. Vijay Sazawal “ During the last weeks of July 1991, I made an unscheduled trip to Delhi in connection with a family matter.....The entire race has been uprooted and a way of life is on a fast track to annihilation.....The situation in Kashmir is most dreadful and getting worse with every passing day....Indian Government has not only been callous but outright criminal in its treatment of Kashmiri minorities...Indian public is generally supportive but not motivated.....KPs have numerous well established and active groups like Kashmir Hindu Samiti, Panun Kashmir, etc., who have done an excellent job to highlight the plight of Kashmiri displaced people. However, their activities are fragmented and their uncoordinated visits to the senior government officials confused and give them an excuse for doing nothing.....negativism has been a major distraction to the KP cause....KOA is perceived as helpful to KPs. In this context I was pleasantly surprised to hear only accolades for the KOA efforts to date....Today the choices for the community appear to be between a big rock and a deep sea.....The agenda for the community must focus on four key issues. Kps must work together as a team with a common agenda. Indian government must recognize the concerns of the community and make it a party to any settlement of the Kashmir problem. KPs who decide to settle in India must be given fair compensation for their losses and provided resettlement assistance. Kps who wish to return to the valley must be able to do so with dignity and safety.”

(26) Kanhya Kal Kaul “In my opinion, here in US, IAK Forum should be directing its efforts against Pakistan and with the help of US politicians, administration and other fellow Indians and American friends compelling it to stop arming and training the terrorists. In India, our “fight” is against the government (Congress) for its inaction to save Hindu/Sikh community of Kashmir from destruction. We should work in unison with other KP/ Indian organizations in India, Indian politicians and through the Indian media. We should not involve US politicians in our ‘fight’ with Indian Government; that is our internal matter.”

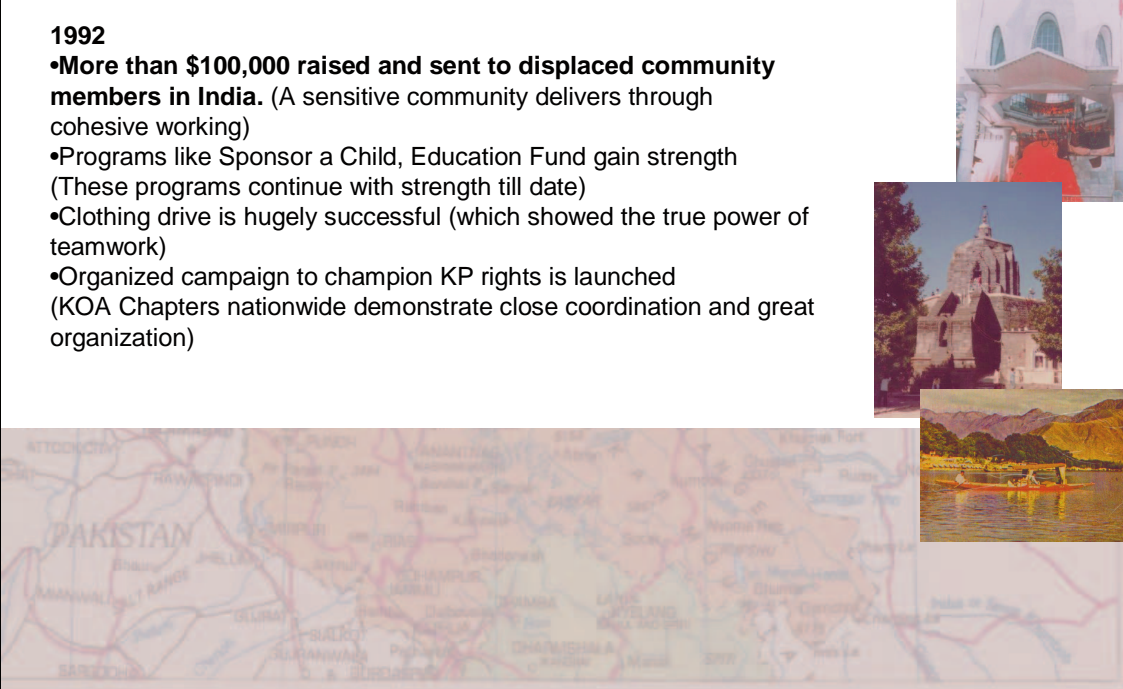
(27) Pat Fotedar on Clothing Drive “ I am happy to report to you that as a result of your efforts and cooperation we were able to ship 235 boxes of clothing weighing a total of 3000 kg....is now in the hands of Kashmiri Samiti. They plan to distribute the clothes in refugee camps in Jammu just as soon as possible....This clothing drive was a tremendous undertaking and could not have been successful without the help of.....Neelam Wali of MA, Vijaya Chowdury of California....., Ramesh Qasba....., Hiralal Nakhasi and Lalit Wanchoo..., Bal and Sarita Kaul.....all Chapter Presidents.....National Federation of Indo-American Association....Mr. Janaki Ganju...Mr. A.K. Fotedar and Mr. C.L. Gadoo in India....KOA President Mr. K.L. Kaul... Air India... all of you who donated....

1992

 Kashmiri Overseas Association

1992

- **More than \$100,000 raised and sent to displaced community members in India.** (A sensitive community delivers through cohesive working)
- Programs like Sponsor a Child, Education Fund gain strength (These programs continue with strength till date)
- Clothing drive is hugely successful (which showed the true power of teamwork)
- Organized campaign to champion KP rights is launched (KOA Chapters nationwide demonstrate close coordination and great organization)




The sad and unfortunate events of 1992 brought the entire community together like never before. From providing immediate succor to the internally displaced families to launching a grassroots campaign for championing KP rights, the KOA member community answered the diverse needs of the times. May we get together similarly in aid of important missions such as the Shriya Bhat Mission Hospital in Jammu and to protect the ownership interests of KPs on Kashmir!

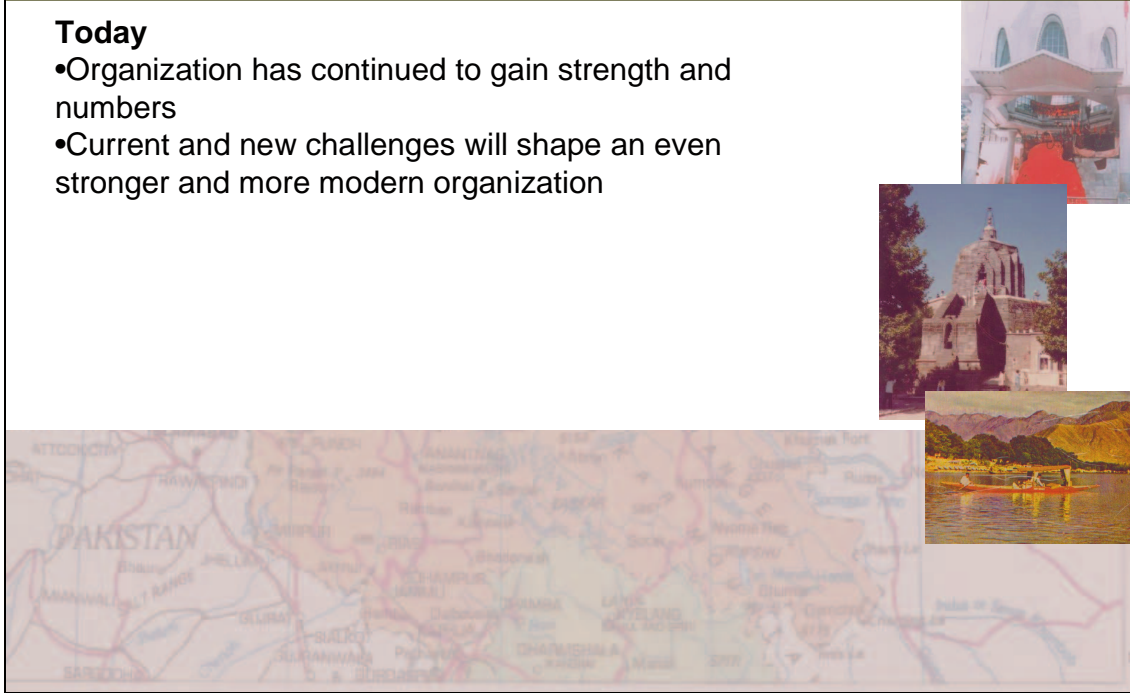
2005

Today

- Organization has continued to gain strength and numbers
- Current and new challenges will shape an even stronger and more modern organization



Kashmiri Overseas Association



Initiatives for bye-law and election process reform will help the organization stay its course and on a unity path.

Setting up of the new e-tapestry organization management tool for member and donor services and the use of real-time, online accounting software on a regular basis are the new initiatives for making KOA an organization for tomorrow as well.

Organization Summary & “2004” Works



Kashmiri
Overseas
Association

- **Year Setup:** 1983
- **Democratic** Constitution and Bye-Laws with elected office bearers
- **No. of families** = 1500
- **No. of Zones** = 10 Chapters to provide comprehensive local coverage
- **Festivals Celebrated:** Shivratri-Navreh, Diwali, Picnic, Balidan Diwas (Martyr's day) Optional: Hawan, Zang Trei, Gada Batta, New Year
- **Camp Events:** Annual Camp once a year 500 plus people with about 75 Youth. Regional Camps: Texas Biradri Camp 20-25 families, Chicago Camp: 15-20 families: Washington State Camp - 5-10 families: Northern California 15-25 families, Southern California 15-25 families
- **Special Events:** Cultural Programs for visiting artists. In the last 4 years Neerja Pandit, Kailash Mehra, Bhajan Sopori, Asha Kaul
- **Visiting Cultural Activists:** Virendra Qazi Shaivism, Agnishekhar, R.K. Mattoo (Karnataka Samiti Bangalore), B.K Moza (Calcutta Samiti), Krishna Bhan of Europe, Moti Kaul of PK
- **Book Releases:** Poozai Posh, Destruction and Injustice (Book on the trials and tribulations of Kashmiri Pandits),



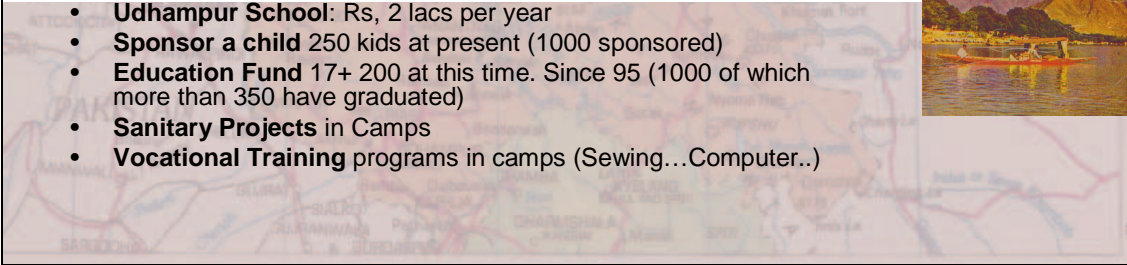
The facts speak for themselves.

Organization Summary & “2004” Works



Kashmiri
Overseas
Association

- **Music:** Poozai Posh Vol.1, Vol.2 , Maani Kamna,
- **Kashmiri Institute** for youth, Washington D.C, Boston, Chicago, LA (4 years from beg 2001)
- **Essay competition** for Kids since 2003
- **Language and Cultural Schools** for children in Boston, Bay Area and Irvine
- **Scholarships** for KP Children (Last year)
- **Visiting Leaders:** Sh. L.K.Advani, Gov. S.K. Sinha, Mr. J.N.Dixit
- Coordinate with **Indian organizations** in US
- Presented to **New Hampshire Senators and Congressmen**
- **Screenings** of Sheen
- **Seminars** at NJ, Camps in CT and PA, DC
- Presentations on **Kashmir**
- **Udhampur School:** Rs, 2 lacs per year
- **Sponsor a child** 250 kids at present (1000 sponsored)
- **Education Fund** 17+ 200 at this time. Since 95 (1000 of which more than 350 have graduated)
- **Sanitary Projects** in Camps
- **Vocational Training** programs in camps (Sewing...Computer..)



2004: Organization Summary & Works



Kashmiri
Overseas
Association

- **Ambulance** for camps
- **Medical Fund** 100s supported, 40 people in 2004
- **Francois Gautier**: Rs. 2 lacs for the **FACT** mission
- **Gujarat Earthquake**: \$10000
- **Temple reconstruction**
- **Sein Kashir cultural show** in Jammu with Krishan Langoo-Harmukh, **Seminar** for all KP organization heads
- **Board Exam fee** paid for 50 kids, school fee 50 kids (orphans..)
- **Muthi aqua guard** at Rs.25k to save children from jaundice
- **Wedding assistance**
- **Social condition** support to 4 people, 4 this year
- **Women support** to 2 families, 1 in Jammu

