

Fatima Jinnah and Kashmir

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Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah, the youngest sister of Founder of Pakistan Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, was basically a dental surgeon who practised in Bombay in her own dental clinic. After the sad demise of her sister-in-law i.e., Mrs. Rati Jinnah, wife of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah in 1929, she devoted herself to the care and assistance of her great brother. At that time Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was considered one of the top most leaders of the subcontinent.

Madar-i Millat Mohtarama Fatima Jinnah, throughout her life played an active role in the Pakistan Movement, along with his brother. After the death of her illustrious brother she continued to lead and educate the people of Pakistan enabling them to understand the ideals of Pakistan, for which this Islamic and Welfare State was created.

Madar-i Millat besides the national and international issues, always gave due importance to Kashmir problem. Since the beginning of Kashmir problem she very ably guided the people about this dispute. In her speech on Iqbal Day in Gol Bagh, Lahore, in 1949 she said:

All this loose talk of division of Kashmir can never be accepted either by the people of Kashmir or Pakistan. I hope those who are at the helm of affairs in Azad Kashmir will remain vigilant so that what happened in Pakistan may not be repeated here.

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In May 1949, she went to Muzaffarabad, Azad Kashmir and addressed a public meeting in which she said:

The one thought that was nearest to the heart of the late Quaid-i-Azam, when he was breathing his last was Kashmir and her freedom. The Quaid-i-Azam had sympathies for toiling masses of Kashmir. Though he is no more amidst us his spiritual influence is still there to keep kindling the flame of determination and courage in the heart of every Pakistani to sacrifice his all for Kashmir.

... Those brave Mujahids who have undergone great hardship for the cause of their Mother Land, I assure you that their courage and sacrifices would make them masters of Kashmir. Nature made Kashmir a part of Pakistan, and Kashmir will one day become a part of Pakistan. Truce negotiations are being carried on and a stage for the forthcoming plebiscite is being set, but all this should not make you self-complacent. You should not relax your vigilant watch.

On the first death anniversary of Quid-i-Azam in September 1949, in her broadcast from Radio Pakistan, she reminded the nation that:

The question of Kashmir was nearest to the Quaid-i-Azam's heart during the last few days of his life. The only news which interested him whether on the Radio or in the papers was regarding Kashmir, he always felt very unhappy that this problem was being delayed. His wish to free Kashmir was not fulfilled during his lifetime. I hope the people of Pakistan will not rest and will make every sacrifice till the last wish of the Quaid-i-Azam is fulfilled.

Again in September 1950, on the Quaid's death anniversary she pointed out that:

... Quaid-i-Azam died with Kashmir as his constant care. That problem has remained as the major problem of Pakistan. The efforts of the people to decide their own fate and destiny have been ruthlessly put down. This mighty urge for freedom, of the people of Jammu and Kashmir cannot be ignored. No amount of propaganda can perpetuate this sad condition of those people and I am confident that all people of Pakistan will never allow this injustice to be perpetrated.

On Pakistan Day's message on 1951, she said:

... It is, therefore, your duty to realise your sense of responsibility and see that the people of Kashmir are no longer deprived of their right to determine their own future in a fair and unfettered manner.

On the third death anniversary of Quaid-i-Azam in 1951, she said:

That august body called United Nations has passed resolutions after resolutions and sent its emissaries without the solution being any nearer I hope the people of Kashmir will exercise the greatest care and vigilance to ensure that the tragedy is not repeated.

In August 1953, when government of Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah was toppled and he was arrested by Indian Government, in her Pakistan Day message the Madar-i Millat said:

... The solution of the problem of Kashmir by means of a plebiscite and the right of self-determination of the people to decide their own faith and destiny has been agreed upon in principle by Bharat. But it has been prevented on one pretext or in the other by dilatory tactics.

On Eid-ul-Azha message in 1953, and on death anniversary of Quaid-i-Azam 1953, she spoke about Kashmir, and said:

... Pakistan was achieved in seven years. Six years have now passed but the solution of Kashmir is as distant as it was at the death of the Quaid-i-Azam. Let us therefore, once again rally round the advice and the teaching of the Quaid-i-Azam and inculcate faith, courage and determination to force our adversaries to accept the united demand of the people of Jammu and Kashmir for self-determination. To his last breath the Quaid-i-Azam had Kashmir uppermost in his mind. The freedom of Pakistan cannot be complete until the four million Kashmiri brethren are liberated from the weight of the Bharati yoke.

She continued,

... Today there is not even semblance of democratic legal government in the Bharati-occupied part of Jammu and Kashmir. Sheikh Abdullah, who was put up as the Leader of the National Conference, is now behind the prison bars guarded by the Bharati bayonets. Whom does, therefore, the present government represent? They can only claim to represent those whose bullets and bayonets helped them to office. They have stilled the popular upsurge by resort to bullets and repression.

As soon as a vacuum of authority was created by the removal of semblance of legal or popular power, the people of the Valley boldly and courageously stood up against the bayonets and shouted

the slogans of *Pakistan Zindabad*. Their hearts, flushed with love for Pakistan, were pierced through by the bullets of the occupying army. "We cannot recognise any government which is installed without ascertaining the popular will."

Madar-i Millat comparing the Jammu and Kashmir with the referendum of NWFP, said:

The conscience of the world ought not to fail to note the emergence of a new imperialism arising not far away from our doors, with dangerous implications have already claimed three victims. Hyderabad, Jungadh and Manavadar. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru himself took the Kashmir issue to the UN and with his consent plebiscite was determined the only solution of the Kashmir Problem five years ago. In North-West Frontier Province a plebiscite was accomplished in a matter of few months, so was it done in Sylhet.

When the Congress suggested referendum in the Frontier Province we did not hesitate, in spite of the Congress government being in power in the province. What is it then that holds Nehru back now from an immediate plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir after having agreed to it five years ago. Who is responsible for this inordinate delay in Kashmir except the intransigence of the Indian Government who knows that it will be fighting a losing battle and no less to lethargy of the United Nations.

The Plebiscite Administrator was appointed with the consent of both the parties five years ago. There was no need to spend more than a month or two to make full arrangements for the purpose of holding the plebiscite. As a matter of fact we in this country have actually held a plebiscite to determine the will of the people in NWFP. Our experience there should have helped us to shorten rather than lengthen the period.

... We are definitely against any further delay. We have already been rebuked that some of our problems have gone into ancient history, because we delayed their solution. Under no circumstances will the people of Pakistan tolerate any further delay in the holding of this plebiscite. Ancient history does neither efface green memories and live issues, nor dampen enthusiasm and resolute determination of the Nation to undo

the wrongs. Its references should only help us to renew our resolve and rededicate ourselves to the sacred cause.

In 1965, when India and Pakistan went to war against each other she said:

Recent happenings have chilled the hearts of the people of good will and no doubt plebiscite is the fundamental human right of Kashmiri. Colonialism has not paid any dividends even to the long established imperialistic powers and will certainly pay none to the new comers in the field. The recent history is full of unsuccessful attempts to suppress the popular will.

In 1966, in her Eid-ul Fitr message, she said:

... While we enjoy the blessings of Edi, our hearts are heavily burdened with critical conditions and devastation of Kashmiris people who had to suffer and pay a heavy price for no fault of their own.

We are so extremely mindful of the splendid memory of our gallant martyrs who laid down their precious lives in order to preserve the honour of the people and to defend the sacred soil of this country. Obviously, the people have every right to check the balance sheet, because the sovereignty rests with them. Let us examine what is the net result of these sacrifices. Viewed in this context, one is baffled to find the positive gains and net results. What the blood of our brave soldiers achieved was lot on the conference table.

The interpretation and explanation of Tashkent Declaration does not solve the issue and problems of Kashmir and Pakistan for which the people of Kashmir and Pakistan were subjected to numerous hardship and extreme sacrifices.

The crux of the matter is that the fate of Kashmir miserably lingers on as before. Under the circumstances, it would be wishful thinking to hope against hope for a better end.

It is proudly claimed that the Tashkent Declaration would pave the way for the settlement of Kashmiris dispute. Is it not a bitter fact that for the past 1 year we have been constantly and painfully paving the way for the solution of down trodden Kashmiris? Naturally, the question arises as to where will it lead to and what is the ultimate end of it? Judging therefore, from the realistic point of view, it must be said that the

Tashkent Declaration betrayed lack of sagacity, wisdom, foresight and vision on the part of those who accepted signed, sealed and delivered on behalf of Pakistan an attempt to explain it away only adds insult to injury and hurts the cause of the people of Jammu and Kashmir as well as of Pakistan in an irreparable way.