



KASHMIRI PANDIT SANGARASH SAMITI

Sathu Barbar Shah, Srinagar, Kashmir (J&K) – 190001

e-mail: kpss.kashmir@gmail.com

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Today KPSS addressed a press conference in Kashmir Valley in Hotel Meridian, Lal Mandi, Rajbagh, Srinagar at 11:00 a.m.

Theme of the Press Conference

"Survival options of Kashmiri Pandits in the Valley"

- 1. Employment, Business Avenues, Financial Support, Proper Housing Support.*
- 2. Bringing back religious places into our fold.*
- 3. Socio-Political space, so that their problems are heard and addressed.*

PRESS RELEASE

KPSS an established forum of Pandits in the Valley has been constantly bringing up to the notice of the Governments and Civil Society, the issues of confronting their survival in the Valley. This is the first formal press conference of Samiti. We are fortunate that one of the prominent KP leaders, Shri Moti Kaul, agreed to address this conference. Mr. Kaul, has remained connected with the Valley Pandits, especially during last four years, and contributed in various ways to redress our problems.

Today's, press conference, shall focus on the "survival of minuscule Pandit minority in the Valley" who chose to stay back



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under difficult circumstances. The need of the hour is, to ensure Pandits in the Valley, not only survive and prosper, but contribute to strengthening of all institutions that can re-activate as the Valley's socio-cultural-ethos of the society.

Pandits continue to be discriminated at all levels, be it Employment, support to setting up of small businesses, education or proper housing. It is an irony of our fate that during last 18 years, not more than 200 Kashmiri Pandit youths got employed in Government jobs, out of these 130 got jobs as Class IV. How can successive Governments claim that they are doing their best? Our educated youth is virtually rotting, and forced to think of leaving the Valley. It is a sad fact that Pandits in the Valley, further dwindled during last eight years from 20,000 Nos to present 4,000. This speaks volumes about the negative role played by the main stream political parties / bureaucracy of the state.

It is a known fact that Pandits connectivity with place they belong, are their temples and shrines. Today, look at these religious places. Tens and tens of these temples have been destroyed, and lands grabbed by vested interest. Even the Temple Bill, which was given a big media attention finally was put into the cold storage, by vested players.

Pandits in the Valley are convinced that unless they are given legitimate space in socio political sphere, their issues and problems will never be properly addressed. KPSS demands setting up of a special task force which will look into all the aspects of survival of the Pandits in the Valley. We want to make it very clear that Pandits in the Valley will no more tolerate the discrimination and neglect shown by the establishment.

Press conference is addressed by KPSS President Mr. Sanjay K. Tickoo and Shri Moti Kaul.

(Moti Kaul)

(Sanjay K. Tickoo)