

# Brief

## Seven Exoduses and the Ethnic Cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus



Destroyed Kashmiri Hindu Homes in the Kashmir Valley. (Jammu & Kashmir, India) | Image Credit: Javed

## Historical Context

Named after Rishi Kashyap<sup>1</sup>, one of the 'Saptarishis' or revered seven Hindu sages, the valley of Kashmir (*current day region in the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir*) is a 140 kilometre long and 32 kilometre wide ancient lake basin valley<sup>2</sup> in the Indian Subcontinent having a 5000-year-long continuously recorded history that follows modern western historiographic standards. The historical chronicle of early Bharat (India), Rajatarangini<sup>3</sup> or the "River of Kings", was composed in Sanskrit by Kalhana in 1148 and is widely regarded as the most significant and accurate work of its kind. Kalhana mentions the 'Nilamata Puranan'<sup>4</sup> as one of Kashmir's (Kashmir's) ancient history sources and begins the history of Kashmir with Gonanda I approximately around the 7th century of the Kali Era (3102 BCE). Rajatarangini spans the entirety of Kashmir's history, from the dawn of time to the date of Rajatarangini's composition. It is a masterpiece in its own right as it encompasses several centuries and chronicles Kashmir's history. However, its true chronology was confirmed during the reign of Karkota Dynasty under its legendary Hindu ruler Lalitaditya Muktapida (697–733 CE). In his Rajatarangini, the 12th-century historian Kalhana describes Lalitaditya as a noble world conqueror, crediting him with several victories and extraordinary powers. Lalitaditya expanded the Karkota Empire from the Caspian Sea's edge to Prgjyotisha (Assam) in the east and the Rashtrakutas (Deccan) boundaries in the south of current-day India. The Karkotas were replaced by the Utpala and Lohara dynasties, who ruled until 1315 CE. The Hindu Karkota, Utpala, and Lohara dynasties reigned over a period of remarkable

renaissance in art, literature, science, mathematics, spirituality, reasoning, and overall material progress. Abhinavagupta, the most renowned scholar in the 10th and 11th centuries, shines as Kashmir's most exemplary intellectual credited for bringing Kashmir Shaivism to its practice's pinnacle.<sup>5</sup>

Between 1315 and 1339 CE, Kashmir was ruled by a succession of rulers and experienced significant instability. Suhadeva, the last stable king of the Lohara dynasty, ruled till 1320 CE. Suhadeva granted sanctuary and status to Shah Mir of Swat Valley, the Chaks of Dardistan in Gilgit, and Bulbul Shah and Rinchan of Ladakh. As a result, the influence of Islamic leaders in governance rose. After the death of Suhadeva and a Turkish invasion in 1320, Kashmir plunged into chaos.

In 1339 CE, Shah Mir ascended to the throne and took the name "Shams-Ud-Din". Meanwhile, Sayyid Ali Shah Hamadan (Also called Shah-E-Hamadan) arrived in the Kashmir valley during the reign of Qutub-Ud-Din, the Kubrawiya Sufi, and pursued Islamisation in earnest. Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani was an Iranian poet and Sufi Muslim of the Kubrawiya order who lived from 1312 until 1384 CE. He was born in Hamadan, Iran, and travelled across Central and South Asia preaching Islam and practising Sufism. He executed the well-known Shah-E-Hamadan code (the covenant of Umar or Zimma) on the lines specified by the 2nd Sunni Caliph, Umar, which prohibited the construction of Hindu Temples and several other rules discriminating against the native Hindu populations.

<sup>1</sup> Christopher Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir And Kashmiris* (Oxford University Press 2015).

<sup>2</sup> 'Nilmata Purana' (*Ikashmir.net*, 2022) <<https://www.ikashmir.net/nilmatapurana/>> accessed 15 March 2022.

<sup>3</sup> 'Rajatarangini Of Kalhana - English - Jogesh Chunder Dutt Volumes 1 & 2 : Kalhana, Jogesh Chunder Dutt' (*Internet Archive*, 2022) <<https://archive.org/details/RajataranginiOfKalhana-English-JogeshChunderDuttVolumes12/Rajatarangini-JogeshChunderDuttVol1/>> accessed 15 March 2022.

<sup>4</sup> n2.

<sup>5</sup> SEN, TANSEN. "KAŚMĪR, TANG CHINA, AND MUKTĀPĪḌA LALITĀ-DITYA'S ASCENDANCY OVER THE SOUTHERN HINDUKUSH REGION." *Journal of Asian History*, vol. 38, no. 2, Harrassowitz Verlag, 2004, pp. 141–62, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41933381>.

The worst, though, was yet to come. Sultan Sikandar Shah (1389–1413 CE), also known as Sikandar Butshikan (destroyer of idols), joined hands with Muhammad Hamadan (Shah-e-Hamadan's son). They unleashed an Islamic terror crusade throughout the Kashmir Valley. Under their watch, native Kashmiri Hindus were subjected to forced conversions, rape, murder, and societal discrimination. Hindu temples were razed, and mosques were constructed in their place. At this point, **the 'First Exodus' of Kashmiri Hindus** began from the Kashmir Valley, wherein thousands left to protect themselves from persecution and tyranny.<sup>6</sup>

During Zain-ul-Abidin's reign (1420–1471 CE), jizya was abolished, cow slaughter was stopped, and temples were repaired and rebuilt. During Fateh Shah II's reign (1505–1514 CE), the Chaks were able to seize control. Shah was earnestly influenced by Shams-ud-Din Araqi, a Noorbakshi Shi'a Sufi who revived the heinous practise of persecuting Hindus. During this time, the **'Second Exodus' of Kashmiri Hindus** took place.<sup>7</sup>

The Shah Miri dynasty crumbled by 1561 CE, and Akbar eventually took power in 1585 CE, ushering in a new era of relative restraint. Akbar's third son Jahangir was fond the Kashmir Valley and he spent many summers there. However, the somewhat tolerant policy of Akbar was effectively reversed by Jahangir and his son Shahjahan. Jahangir's renowned commander, Sardar Itquad Khan. Khan was harsh and brutal, tainted and notorious for the persecution of Hindus in Kashmir. Khan specialised in torturing Hindus into converting to Islam by torture and taxes methods. Subsequently, Aurangzeb and his infamous governor, Iftexhar Khan, continued the reign of terror that had been imposed on Kashmiri Hindus by Sikandar/Mir Muhammad Hamadani and Fateh Shah/Shams-

Ud-Din Araqi. This marked the beginning of the **'Third Exodus' of Kashmiri Hindus.**

Aurangzeb (1658–1707) was the third son of Shahjahan, the fifth Mughal emperor, and probably India's most despised emperor. Aurangzeb appointed 14 cruel Subedars as governors and administrators of Kashmir during his reign in an attempt to Islamise the Valley. Subedar Iftexhar Khan was one of them. During Khan's reign (1617-75), the Kashmiri Hindus were subjected to unspeakable atrocities, leaving them with no choice except to convert to Islam or perish. During Khan's term of hair-raising violence and oppression, he instilled among Kashmiri Hindus the belief that their future in Kashmir could only be ensured if they converted to Islam. As a result of this threat, thousands of Kashmiri Hindus were forced to convert to Islam by the cruel Subedar's tactics of intimidation and deceptive, brutal religious intolerance. Thousands of people who could not bear the persecution left their homes and sought safety in neighbouring regions to preserve their faith, which they held so dear. Durrani of Afghanistan took control of the Kashmir Valley in 1753. They were just like Aurangzeb in their cruelty. During this time, the Kashmiri Hindus experienced their **'Fourth Exodus.'**

In 1819, the Sikhs took control of the Kashmir Valley. Following Maharaja Ranjit Singh's death, the invading British ceded the territory to Gulab Singh, the Dogra king, and the Native Kashmiri culture resurfaced. It's worth noting that the majority of Muslims in the Valley were not persecuted for their faith during the Sikh and Dogra eras.<sup>8</sup> From 1931 CE to 1994 CE, there had been a time of peace. Following that, **the fifth, sixth, and seventh exoduses of Kashmiri Hindus from the Kashmir Valley occurred in 1931, 1950–1980, and 1989–1994, respectively.**<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> 'Paradise Lost: The Seven Exoduses Of Kashmiri Pandits By Prof. K. L. Bhan' (*Ikashmir.net*, 2022) <<https://ikashmir.net/exodus/chapter1.html>> accessed 15 March 2022.

<sup>7</sup> 'Paradise Lost: The Seven Exoduses Of Kashmiri Pandits By Prof. K. L. Bhan' (*Ikashmir.net*, 2022) <<https://ikashmir.net/exodus/chapter2.html>> accessed 15 March 2022.

<sup>8</sup> 'Convert, Leave Or Perish: Exile Of Kashmiri Hindus Was By Islamic Design' (*News18*, 2022) <<https://www.news18.com/news/opinion/opinion-convert-leave-or-perish-exile-of-kashmiri-hindus-was-by-islamic-design-4675937.html>> accessed 15 March 2022.

<sup>9</sup> 'The Seven Exoduses Of Kashmir Valley - Indic Corner' (*Indic Corner*, 2022) <<https://www.thejaipurdialogues.com/indic-corner/itihasa/the-seven-exoduses-of-kashmir-valley/>> accessed 15 March 2022.

## The Seventh Exodus

In the late 1980s, the Kashmir Valley was engulfed by terrorism aided and funded in the name of 'Islam' by Pakistan as part of its K2 (Kashmir and Khalistan) strategy by initiating Operation Tupac<sup>10</sup> to foster successionist movements in India to bleed India by a thousand cuts. As a result, several radical Islamist factions, Pakistan-based terrorist organisations and their local sympathisers joined hands to form an Islamist separatist movement that would be both religious and political. Hinged on its brutal aggression against Kashmir's minority Kashmiri Hindus (locally known as Kashmiri Pandits), who were considered infidels and India sympathisers by Islamists and terrorists in the valley of Kashmir.

Over several years, Pakistan-sponsored terrorists and their local sympathisers organised a terror campaign of targeted killings, rape, threats, and

systematic damage of Hindu homes and places of Hindu worship. As a result, facing unimaginable devastation, Kashmiri Hindus were forced to flee their native homeland in the valley during the early 1990s in a mass exodus. As per numerous reports, over 4,00,000 Kashmiri Hindus left the Kashmir valley in only a few weeks in February–March 1990.<sup>11</sup> Every year on January 19, the Kashmiri Hindu community recalls the horrors of this systematic persecution as 'Holocaust day'.<sup>12</sup> More Kashmiri Hindus escaped in the following years until just approximately 3,000 families remained in 2011.<sup>13</sup>

This marked the '**Seventh Exodus**' of Kashmiri Hindus from the Kashmir Valley.<sup>14</sup> The exodus of Kashmiri Hindus from the valley of Kashmir is a catastrophe; it is unprecedented in human history, and the exiled are still surviving in exile 32 years later (2022).

## Ethnic Cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus

Ethnic cleansing is the systematic removal of ethnic, racial, and religious groups from a certain region in order to ethnically homogenise the territory. Along with outright removal, elimination, deportation, or population transfer, it also encompasses indirect measures such as murder, rape, and property devastation that are intended at forcing migration by coercing the victim group to depart and preventing their return. Even though

ethnic cleansing has no formal definition under international criminal law, it is a crime against humanity that could also fall under the Genocide Convention.<sup>15</sup> Ethnic cleansing is part of a 'cycle of violence' that leads to genocide, in which the perpetrator's ultimate purpose is the annihilation of the targeted group. Ethnic cleansing is akin to forced deportation or population transfer, but genocide is the attempt to wipe out a certain

<sup>10</sup> Srikanta Ghosh and S. K Sinha, *Pakistan's ISI* (APH Publishing Corporation 2000).

<sup>11</sup> Rahul Pandit, 'Genocide Of Kashmiri Pandits: Reconciliation And The Way Ahead' (*Swarajyamag*, 2022) <<https://swarajyamag.com/blogs/genocide-of-kashmiri-pandits-reconciliation-and-the-way-ahead>> accessed 15 March 2022.

<sup>12</sup> '19Th January: The Holocaust Day' (*The Daily Guardian*, 2022) <<https://thedailyguardian.com/19th-january-the-holocaust-day/>> accessed 15 March 2022.

<sup>13</sup> 'A Departure From History: Kashmiri Pandits, 1990-2001' (*Taylor & Francis*, 2022) <<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0958493022000000341>> accessed 15 March 2022.

<sup>14</sup> 'Kashmir History And Politics' (*ikashmir.net*, 2022) <<https://ikashmir.net/history/fundamentalism.html>> accessed 15 March 2022.

<sup>15</sup> United Nations, 'United Nations Office On Genocide Prevention And The Responsibility To Protect' (*Un.org*, 2022) <<https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/ethnic-cleansing.shtml>> accessed 15 March 2022.

ethnic, racial, religious, or national group in whole or in part. While ethnic cleansing and genocide have similar goals and the methods employed to commit both crimes are often similar, ethnic cleansing aims to evict a persecuted community from a certain region, whereas genocide aims to exterminate such people.<sup>16</sup>

Kashmiri Hindus have long been victims of deliberate and coordinated Islamic separatist terrorism, ever so strongly since the 1980s. In 1990, Kashmiri Pandits were given three choices

— convert to Islam, leave Kashmir or get killed. What followed was a series of pre-meditated murders, rapes, targeted attacks, destruction of Hindu property and places of Hindu worship driven by Islamic fanaticism and extremism, helped and abetted from beyond India's borders, and supported in India by Islamist and separatist sympathisers have made systematic efforts to destroy the region's syncretic Hindu culture, customs, and legacy. Given below are details of some cases relevant to this brief:

**A list of select documented cases of murder, rape and violence against Kashmiri Hindus in the Kashmir Valley from the period 1989 until 2003.<sup>17</sup>**

Date	Details
March 14, 1989	Prabhavati from Nawagari, Chadoora in Budgam district was killed at Hari Singh High Street, Srinagar, J&K.
September 14, 1989	Renowned Kashmiri Pandit social activist and advocate Pandit Tika Lal Taploo was shot dead in his house in Habba Kadal, Srinagar, J&K.
October 31, 1989	47 year old Sheela Koul Tikoo, from Dalhasanyar was shot in the chest and head
November 4, 1989	Justice (Retd) Neelkantha Ganjoo was shot at close range and killed Hari Singh Street market near High court in Srinagar.
December 1, 1989	Ajay Kapoor, a resident of Maharaj Gunj, Srinagar, J&K, was shot and killed by terrorists in full public view.
December 27, 1989	57 years old advocate Prem Nath Bhatt of Anantnag was killed in full public view.
January 15, 1990	ML Bhan, a government employee from Khonmoh, Srinagar, was killed. The same day, Baldev Raj Dutta, an operator in Lal Chowk, Srinagar, was kidnapped, and his brutally tortured body was found four days later, on January 19, 1990, at Nai Sarak, Srinagar.
January 25, 1990	Squadron leader Ravi Khanna and his colleagues were waiting at the Rawalpura bus stand for an Indian Air Force bus to take them to the airport when a Maruti Gypsy and a two-wheeler carrying four to five JKLF terrorists surrounded them and fired a hail of bullets from AK 47s. Khanna and 13 other IAF men fell to the ground. Three died with Khanna, and ten were injured. Yasin Malik has admitted to this killing in an interview with Tim Sebastian. He was the area commander of JKLF, working under chief commander Ishafaq Wani.

<sup>16</sup> Jaakko Heiskanen, 'In The Shadow Of Genocide: Ethnocide, Ethnic Cleansing, And International Order' (2021) 1 Global Studies Quarterly.

<sup>17</sup> 'Atrocities In Kashmir' (*ikashmir.net*, 2022) <<https://ikashmir.net/atrocities/index.html>> accessed 15 March 2022.

February 1, 1990	Krishen Gopal Berwa, a central government employee and Romesh Kumar Thussu, a state government employee of Trehgam, Kupwara were gunned down in full public view.
February 2, 1990	Satish Kumar Tickoo, a young Kashmiri Hindu (Pandit), was shot at point-blank range by a group led by Farooq Ahmad Dar (alias Bitta Karate).
February 13, 1990	The director of Doordarshan, Lassa Kaul was murdered when one of his colleagues allegedly leaked information about his movement. On the same day, Rattan Lal of Rawalpura, working in military engineering service (MES), a civilian organisation, was also killed.
February 16, 1990	Anil Bhan was killed by Farook Ahmed Dar, aka Bitta Karate, who's responsible for killing thirty-four Kashmiri Pandits.
February 23, 1990	Ashok Kazi was accosted, harassed and shot in the knees, kicked into the drain and urinated upon. As he waited for his agonising death, a few more shots were fired to kill him.
February 27, 1990	Naveen Sapru was shot near the Habba Kadal bridge in Srinagar, J&K. The murderers then danced around him, and as he lay breathing his last in full public view.
March 1, 1990	PN Handoo of the information department was killed, and Tej Kishen of Badgam was hanged to death by Islamist terrorists.
March 18, 1990	RN Handoo, the personal assistant to the Governor, was killed outside the gate of his house at Narsinghgarh, Srinagar.
March 19, 1990	BK Ganju was killed when his Muslim neighbour gave his hideout to the terrorists.
March 20, 1990	AK Raina, deputy director of Food and Supplies, was murdered in his office at Srinagar in front of his subordinates.
April 10, 1990	HL Khera, the general manager of Hindustan Machine Tools (HMT), was shot dead by terrorists in Srinagar.
April 19, 1990	Sarla Bhat was gang-raped by several Muslims, stripped naked and murdered brazenly. Her dead body was thrown on the roadside in full public view.
April 24, 1990	45-year-old Bansi Lal Sapru of Gulab Bagh, Srinagar, was accosted by his neighbours, shot and killed from a close range.
April 24, 1990	Ravinder Kumar Pandita of Mattan, Anantnag, was shot dead at close range on his way back home. His killers danced over his dead body in glee.
April 27, 1990	Brij Nath Shah was kidnapped from his home in Sadhu Ganga, Kupwara. He was found dead two days later. He was tortured, and his lips were stitched shut.
April 30, 1990	Sarwanand Koul 'Premi' and his son, Virender Koul, were abducted from their home, and two days later, their dead bodies were found hanging, with their limbs broken, hairs uprooted, and portions of their skin slit open and burnt.

May 1990	Shyam Lal of Chiragam, Anantnag had his hands and feet chopped off and skull battered after being kidnapped. His remains were stuffed into a sack and deposited on the threshold of his house.
May 2, 1990	Professor KL Ganju had six bullets pumped into his body. His corpse was kept in the local mosque for the night and then thrown into the river. According to one of the assassins who was arrested later, Mrs Ganju, too, was ruthlessly killed and her corpse was tied with a stone and thrown into the Jhelum. But since her dead body was never found, one can never be sure about what exactly happened to her.
May 2, 1990	Twenty-three-year-old Surinder Kumar Raina, son of Jia Lal Raina, working as a liftman in the SKIMS, Soura was kidnapped in front of cheering and dancing onlookers and then killed on Ali Jan Road.
May 13, 1990	Twenty-seven-year-old Ashok Kumar, son of Bhasker Nath, from Pulwama, was kidnapped by Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists, who broke his hands and feet, dragged him to the main crossing of the town, plucked out his eye-balls with iron rods and killed with a burst of bullets in the presence of hundreds of cheering onlookers, one of whom was chanting "Islam is glorious and great". On the same day, in another part of the valley, Veer Ji Bhat, son of DN Bhat, a junior engineer in the state irrigation department posted at Shopian, was sprayed with bullets. Despite bleeding profusely, he caught hold of one of the terrorists when the other terrorists, armed to the teeth, sprayed more bullets on him before making suitable their escape.
May 16, 1990	Bushan Lal Koul, son of Shridhar Koul, a government employee and a resident of Amnoo village, not far from Kulgam, Anantnag, was kidnapped by Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists and strangled to death with a steel wire.
May 18, 1990	Twenty-seven-year-old Manmohan Bachloo, son of Janki Nath Bachloo, of Qazihama, Baramulla, an assistant in the postal department of Karnah, had come home on holiday. A childhood friend asked him out for tea and led him to a shop where his other accomplices shot him at point-blank range.
May 19, 1990	Dilip Kumar, son of Mohan Lal, hailing from Mujamarag, Shopian, was dragged out of his home by Muslim terrorists. Dilip's teeth were hammered out, and twelve bullets pumped into him. His dead body was hung from a tree with a letter pinned on his chest, daring anyone to lift it and get a prize of one lakh.
May 27, 1990	Prem Nath of Uttarsu in Anantnag district was kidnapped and subsequently impaled by being nailed on the chest and feet.
June 4, 1990	Girija Tickoo in Bandipora was abducted and blindfolded. Then four men took turns raping her. Finally, when she identified one of them by his voice, the men fearing identification took her to a wood processing unit and mechanically sawed her alive. Sometime later, almost a similar fate befell Kumari Babli and her mother Roopwati of Pulwama.
June 1990	Ashwani Kumar, injured by terrorists' bullets, was refused a vehicle to transport to the hospital. When he was finally rushed to the hospital, the doctors refused to treat him, succumbing to his injuries.

June 22, 1990	Balkrishen Tutoo of Habba Kadal, Srinagar, an officer in the agriculture department, was critically wounded by terrorists who had barged into his house to abduct and kill his brother. On the same day, 52-year-old Makhan Lal Raina, a medical resident posted at a dispensary at Khan Sahib in Badgam district, hailing from Kharyar, Srinagar, was picked up from his dispensary, tortured and finally shot dead. His dead body was said to have been chopped into pieces. The mutilated body was eventually recovered from Dardpora in Badgam.
June 30, 1990	59 year old Raj Nath Dhar, son of Dina Nath Dhar, from Qutub-Ub-din Pora, Alikadal, Srinagar, was shot at and killed.
July 7, 1990	Gopi Nath Raina, son of Govind Ram Raina, of Manigam, Ganderbal was labelled an informer and shot dead in his shop by Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists. On the same day, Dina Nath Mujoo, a 70-year old theosophist who contributed immensely towards educating the Muslim youth of Fateh Kadal, was stabbed ruthlessly by terrorists who barged into his house in the dead of night and decapitated him.
July 15, 1990	Shiban Kishen Koul, son of Radha Krishen Koul of Ashmuji, Kulgam, Anantnag, was slaughtered by his close neighbours. His father was slaughtered the next day, July 16, 1990, in the same manner.
July 26, 1990	Sixty-one-year-old former serviceman Autar Singh, son of Fateh Singh, of Saimnoo in Kulagam district of Kashmir, working with Hindustan Petroleum in Pulwama, was labelled an informer and shot dead by armed Islamic terrorists.
August 13, 1990	Babli Raina of Sopore, a teacher by profession, was gang-raped in her house in the presence of her family members.
August 17, 1990	Chand Ji Kher, the sound teenage son of Dina Nath Kher, and a resident of Vessu, Anantnag, was killed after he went out of his house on being called by his Muslim friends.
October 6, 1990	Professor DP Khazanchi, son of Damodar Khazanchi of Kani Kadal, had three bullets pumped into him, killing him on the spot. On the same day, Zinda Lal Pandita, son of Prakash Ram Pandita of Bagatpora, Handwara, was kidnapped from his residence and strangled to death with a steel wire in a nearby orchard by JKLF murderers.
October 7, 1990	Jagan Nath Pandita, son of Ganesh Nath Pandita of Bagatpora, Handwara, was kidnapped from his house and taken to his orchard, where he was strangled with steel wire. His killing occurred during the intervening night of October 7-8, 1990.
October 12, 1990	47-year-old Pushker Nath Razdan, son of Tika Lal Razdan, a resident of Khonmuha, in Pulwama district, was killed by Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists who barged into and shot him in his house at night.
October 15, 1990	Maheshwar Nath Bhat, son of Zana Bhat of Hazuri Bagh, Srinagar, was killed when armed terrorists barged into his house seeking his son-in-law who had hid in the house.



January 2, 1991	Omkar Nath Wali, son of Parmanand Wali from Chak-i-Rajwati, Vessu in Anantnag district, was an assistant sub-inspector of police, posted at district police lines, Anantnag. He was kidnapped and shot dead by his colleagues in the police department, who hatched a conspiracy for his murder in connivance with the terrorists of JKLF.
August 8, 1991	Asha Koul was abducted from Achabal, Anantnag, and taken to an abandoned house of a Kashmiri Pandit in Srinagar where she was gang-raped for many days and then tortured to death. Her body was found later in a decomposed state in that very house on August 26, 1991.
August 26, 1991	22 year old Surinder Kumar Koul of Batagund, Handwara, was kidnapped by his friends, tortured, and shot to death at Langet in Kashmir.
October 18, 1991	Kanya Lal Peshin, son of Kanth Ram Peshin of Pazalpora, Bandipora, a poor farmer who barely managed to survive on his measly income, was kidnapped from his house at 9 pm and taken three kilometres away from his village where he was subjected to torture. Pins were driven into his nails and finally, a metre long piece of cloth was stuffed into his mouth to stifle him to death. His dead body was later found at Ajar, Bandipora.
March 31, 1992	Bimla Braroo of Nai Sarak, Srinagar, and her daughter, Archana were raped in the presence of her husband, Sohan Lal, before all three were killed.
June 24, 1990	25 year old Ashwani Garyali, son of Shambu Nath Garyali from Chhatabal, Srinagar, was shot by five masked terrorists after they labelled him an informer. He died upon being denied medical care by local Muslim doctors.
June 16, 1991	Rajinder Tickoo from Batpora, Shopian, who worked in the accounts department of Shopian Hospital accounts, was shot by four bullets. His disconsolate father himself cremated his body as no priest was available.
June 1991	Brij Lal Kaul and his wife Chhoti from village Harman, Shopian, were tied behind a jeep and dragged and then shot dead. Their mangled bodies were recovered some 10 kilometres away from Harman.
March 21-22, 1997	Seven Kashmiri Hindus (Pandits) were massacred during the night at Sangrampora village in Budgam. The terrorists dragged them out of their houses and gunned them down.
January 25, 1998	Twenty-three Kashmiri Pandits were shot in cold blood in Wandhama Village, including women and children.
March 24, 2003	Twenty-four Kashmiri Pandits, including infants, were shot dead in Nadimarg Village.

<sup>18</sup> 'Kashmiri Pandits' Exile: 7 Centuries Of Injustice, 1 Millennium Of Unhealed Wounds' (*Asianet News Network Pvt Ltd*, 2022) <<https://www.mynation.com/views/29-years-exile-kashmiri-pandits-centuries-injustice-unhealed-wounds-plmkby>> accessed 15 March 2022.

## Concluding Remarks

Kashmiri Hindus have been persecuted since the 14th century by aggressing invaders and brutal conquerors. Over the centuries, seven exoduses of indigenous Kashmiri Hindu people have testified to this reality. The seventh exodus of Hindus from Kashmir is a textbook case of "Ethnic Cleansing." Human rights violations faced by Kashmiri Hindus are unimaginable. Nearly half a million Kashmiri Hindus were forced to live in subdued conditions in other parts of the country and were uprooted from their native land and distanced from their culture. This circumstance has affected generations. Kashmiri Hindu children of all ages were deprived of proper schooling and now have little or no memory of their Ancestral lands. The Seventh

exodus of Kashmiri Hindus from their ancestral lands was violent and inhumane in the name of 'religion', coupled with separatist political aspirations. In light of the preceding case studies, it is clear that numerous forms of discrimination and persecution tactics, such as rapes, murders, kidnappings, ransom, and torture, were employed to displace the minority Kashmiri Hindu populations. These are heinous crimes and crimes against humanity, showcasing salient features of 'ethnic cleansing', and the international community must guarantee that the victim's voices are heard without fear of reprisal and the rule of law is upheld.

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