

PAHALGAM

Jude H Gomes

Pahalgam literally means "village of the shepherds" in Kashmiri, with "Puheyl" meaning shepherd and "goam" meaning village, in Hindu literature.

The Kashmir conundrum is a labyrinthine issue, replete with complexities and nuances. The assertion that 100% of territorial Kashmir belongs to India is a contentious claim, mired in historical, cultural, and geopolitical intricacies.

The utilization of Indian tax revenue to support Kashmiri residents is a tangible manifestation of the symbiotic relationship between the Indian Government and the region. However, the concomitant expectation of loyalty and reciprocity from the local populace is also palpable.

The scourge of terrorism, perpetrated by Pakistani-sponsored groups, has resulted in the tragic loss of innocent lives, including tourists. The reprehensible acts of violence, which have claimed numerous lives, including 26 individuals in a singular incident, underscore the imperative for efficacious counter-terrorism measures. The query regarding the ability of six terrorists to cross the border post-incident highlights the exigency for enhanced border security and intelligence gathering. The onus lies on the security apparatus to prevent such infiltrations and ensure the safety of citizens. This, in turn, would underscore the paramount importance of tourism in sustaining the regional economy. The juxtaposition of Indian hospitality with the harsh realities of terrorism and violence in Kashmir serves as a poignant reminder of the need for peace and stability in the region.

According to me, the 'Kashmir' issue necessitates a multifaceted approach, encompassing diplomatic, economic, and security dimensions. A nuanced understanding of the complex interplay of factors involved is essential for devising effective solutions that address the concerns of all stakeholders.

The newly selected Pope Leo XIV had this to say: "I am pleased by the announcement of the ceasefire between India and Pakistan, and I hope that through forthcoming negotiations a lasting agreement will soon be reached."

Pahalgam Carnage

"If there is a paradise on earth, it is here, it is here, it is here," said Amir Khusrau, a renowned Indian Sufi poet, about Kashmir. But the Pahalgam perpetrators have made it bloody.

In the Baisaran valley in Pahalgam, On the 22nd of April 2025, While the tourists were freaking out in the meadows, Helping themselves to a picnic lunch, Under the bright sun.

The terrorist struck,
With all their brutality,
Killing 26 young Indians,
In the worst of atrocities.

It all happened in the beating heart of the Anantnag district,
Where the Lidder River whispers through the valley,
And the tall mountains stand in majestic grace,
In the Vale of Kashmir.

The gruesome carnage was committed,
By AK-47-toting terrorists,
On a day that was meant to be peaceful and joyful,
Which humanity will never forget.

They say,
Terrorism doesn't have a religion,
But the terrorists proved it otherwise,
When unable to recite the Kalma,
They shot those hapless Indians,
In an inhuman style.

But the Indians,
Never thought like that,
For they were always united in great style,
1.4 billion to be precise.

The terrorists asked the victims to undress,
To prove their religion,
And that proved the point,
That terror has a religion.

The victims were mostly young,
They were all bright,
They all had ambitions,
To come up in life.

The worst came when they were shot dead,
In front of their wives,
Who wailed for their safety,
But the lethal Pakistani terrorists,
Failed to sigh.

Being born a Hindu is no crime,
Being born in any religion is divine,
But perpetrating terrorism,
Is a terrible crime.

Socially Speaking

Maryanne Donald

It began small: take a picture posing with a fancy car, and post it on FaceBook. People would assume the car was yours, and that your life was way better than theirs. Then came the influencers. They'd post reviews hyping up things they'd never use in a million years (all for a fee, of course) and the general public would lap it up, rushing out to buy useless junk. FaceTune and other editing apps took advantage of young girls' insecurities to make them aspire to beauty standards that nobody could replicate. But when the Defence Ministry of Pakistan posts footage of a video game, trying to pass it off as their own fighter jets downing Indian military planes, it's about time we started asking questions of social media. If we can no longer believe the official channels, what then is real?

It was supposed to be a way to keep in touch with family and friends who no longer lived in the same country. In the days when international phone calls cost an arm and a leg, and letters took a week, minimum, to reach someone on another continent, social media was hyped as the way forward. You could take a picture of your newborn, post it, and the grandparents would immediately be able to view their grandchild. There was no need for expensive - sometime unaffordable - international flights, and no waiting weeks for the baby's picture to be developed or printed out and then snail mailed.

It's like Alexander Fleming versus Mikhail Kalashnikov,
One invented penicillin,
And the other AK-47,
One saved a life, the other killed the hapless,
Kalashnikov must be turning in his grave,
Seeing the legacy of his invention.
Five Lashkar terrorists,
Brought India to an emotional halt,
But let there be no doubt,
In the minds of the killers and their handlers,
The young India is 65% of 1.4 billion,
That will not forget its revenge.

--Terrorism is the worst crime against humanity. Life is only a sojourn on Planet Earth. Live with that in mind—
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Please Note :
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Like all things, it evolved. Messengers allowed us to chat in real time to people miles away. And then WhatsApp came on the scene like Cinderella at the ball, and offered us an opportunity to send music, voice notes and loads of pictures to anyone, anywhere. All you needed was a phone and some wifi.

YouTube was supposed to be a fun way to watch funny or ridiculous videos for free. But now we're watching heavily edited influencers trying to convince us to buy new things every week.

Music apps were theoretically so that artists could interact with their fans. Now they're a numbers game, where you need to make sure you beat the previous record set for streaming or your record label raises eyebrows.

What started out as keeping up with our families turned into faking it to make everyone envious. Lying to keep up appearances isn't just overlooked; it's encouraged. Better to post video game footage and pretend to have won, than to post pictures of what you've lost and ask for volunteers to help in those areas. Better to let people suffer without aid, than to admit that your losses are mounting.

Granted, we don't need to share every detail of our lives online. But perhaps we should start being truthful again? Perhaps we should stop looking to social media to supply our self-esteem? Maybe we should discount the likes, and start counting the people who we can call at three am. That's where real success lies.

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