

# National Seminar

# The Kashmir Cause:

# Socio-economic Projections



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### Theme of the Event:

The Centre for Peace, Security and Developmental Studies (CPSD) conceived an idea to highlight the Kashmir cause by analyzing the socio-economic potential and emerging opportunities in the valley. The main aim was to shift the focus from Kashmir as purely a conflict-ridden zone towards highlighting the cultural and socio-economic prospects of the state. It was highlighted that the future of Kashmir's economic prosperity is dependent on factors such as tourism, the handicrafts industry and the local mineral resources.

The four panelists presented on the following topics:

### **Kashmir Cause: Changing World Order and Emerging Opportunities & Challenges**

Presented by Former Ambassador Najamudeen Shaikh.

### **Social and Demographic Engineering in Kashmir**

Presented by Former Ambassador Arif Kamal.

### **Creating Socio-Economic Incentives and Opportunities: Expected Role by Philanthropists**

Presented by Ch Muhamamd Saeed, Minister for Sports, Youth & Culture, Mangla Dam Affairs & MDA AJK.

### **Opening and Closing Remarks on “Kashmir Cause Socio - Economic Projections”**

Presented by Lt Gen Agha M Umer Farooq (retd), Former Ambassador and President CPSD.

**Opening Remarks by  
Lt. Gen Agha M. Umer Farooq (retd.)  
President CPSD**



The President of CPSD inaugurated the seminar by elucidating upon the paradigm shift observable in peace and conflict. He deliberated on the idea of gearing up for creating, presenting and projecting a strong narrative of Pakistan on a national, regional and global arena so the country's efforts could be widely recognized.

Therefore, Pakistan's efforts should now be focused towards using soft power to invite international engagement to ultimately benefit the Kashmir cause and bring attention to the Kashmiris right to self-determination. Soft power is the need of the hour because the current status quo present in Kashmir is not going to change in the near future thus, alternate methods should be used to push forward the Kashmir cause. The recent India-US strategic alliance also indicates a further strengthening of the existing status quo which can only be countered through soft power. He also supplemented his argument by citing Robert Kaplan's theory of 'coming anarchy' which projects the future as one with civilizational breakdowns therefore, 'creative chaos' should be used to create new perceptions.

Lt. Gen Farooq (retd) further outlined how to harness the capacities and capabilities of Jammu and Kashmir to transform the socio-economic landscape for the betterment of its citizenry. The Kashmiri state's potential can be further recognized through its literacy rate of 74%. Finally, it was asserted that the existing dynamic pool of human resource should be utilized in order to see a thriving Kashmir.

**Najamuddin Shaikh, Former Ambassador**

Najamuddin Shaikh took the conversation forward by delivering an address on the topic **Kashmir Cause: Changing World Order and Emerging Opportunities** and Unique Challenges. Focusing



on the topic from an International Relations lens, he lamented Pakistan's inertia on the diplomatic front with regard to the Kashmir cause. There has been an attempt to isolate Pakistan by Indian claims of the country's sponsorship of terrorism, specifically to create unrest in Kashmir. Thus, Pakistani diplomats need to engage in proactive policy to create a multifaceted narrative so that Kashmir cause can be highlighted in the international consciousness.

**Chaudhary Muhammad Saeed**  
**Minister for Sports, Youth & Culture, Mangla**  
**Dam Affairs and MDA**



Chaudhary Muhammad Saeed delivered an address on Indian atrocities in Kashmir to discuss how the existing plight of the Kashmiris can be alleviated through philanthropy and greater investment in the region. His topic addressed the question of: **Creating Socio Economic Incentives and Opportunities: Expected Role by Philanthropists.** He pointed out the inaccuracy of the Indian claim of infiltration which disregards the sentiments of the Kashmiri population. An important aspect raised by him was the presence of the Kashmiri diaspora. He narrated figures of 2.1 million Kashmiri immigrants in Europe. This community is important for the inflow of foreign remittance and they can support the Kashmir cause by international mobilization. Moreover, being a business hub, Karachi's influential citizens should expand their business ventures into Kashmir to effectively mobilize local capital.

**Arif Kamal, Former Ambassador**

Arif Kamal addressed the gathering on the topic: **Social and Demographic Engineering in Kashmir.** He commenced his address by castigating on the role of the United Nations in deciding the fate of Kashmiris. He focused on the deleterious policy of demographic change BJP is pursuing to meet its political goals in J&K. He highlighted that the Indian-enforcement of demographic engineering in J&K is in congruity



with the policy of Israel towards occupied Palestine and the apartheid in South Africa. He stressed the importance of Pakistan's role in taking a clear line on this critical matter to circumvent BJP's efforts to erode the cultural, political and legal identity of Kashmiris. This demographic reengineering effort by the BJP is an effort to influence any future plebiscite that will take place in Kashmir.

## **Interactive Session**

The speakers' remarks were followed by an interactive session. The discussion revolved around the positive role of local entrepreneurs in empowering Kashmiris through investment. There was also an elaborative debate on how the Pakistani diaspora could contribute towards the political and economic upliftment of the Kashmiri people. Furthermore, the discussion emphasized how CPEC would socially empower the people of Kashmir.

## **Concluding Remarks**

Gen Agha Muhammad Umer Farooq (ret'd) stressed that Karachi is the economic hub of Pakistan and therefore it needs to participate proactively in Kashmir's socio-economic empowerment. He underscored areas in which investment would be mutually beneficial. The area of tourism in Kashmir needs new initiatives in human resource development, which could be readily provided by Karachi. The business elite and media industry of the country could also play a critical role in augmenting Kashmir's projection onto the global stage by promoting local culture through film and drama.

Moreover, the state of Pakistan could also explore the dimension of education. Universities in Pakistan could initiate opportunities such as students exchange programs with universities in Kashmir to enhance inter-cultural harmony and integration. Agriculture should also be a sector that should be worked upon, Pakistan is mostly an agrarian economy and Kashmir's enhanced agricultural capability will help both the country and the Kashmiri population. This capability can be enhanced through adopting modern technological methods in agricultural practices.

Furthermore, the human resource in Kashmir could be engaged by business elites to give them economic opportunities for the betterment of their lifestyle. Similarly, mining – a very lucrative domain could reap great benefits. He stressed that by utilizing Karachi's philanthropic spirit, not only would it bolster the Kashmir cause but also generate opportunities in both Kashmir and Pakistan. The seminar proceedings concluded with the aim to disseminate policy recommendations among official circles so they may be considered for review.





