

**‘Let there be Maharajah’s rule in Kashmir’**

**Interview by Sardar Mohd Abdul Qayyum Khan**

Sardar Mohd Abdul Qayyum Khan describes violence in Kashmir as misuse of Islam, but refuses to call it terrorism and holds India equally responsible. President and Prime Minister of “Azad Jammu and Kashmir” (AJK) at different times, the 80-plus supremo of Muslim Conference, on his first visit to India, tells Mahendra Ved that he wants Kashmiris on both sides of the LoC to evolve a consensus on what is their cause:

Q You are called ‘Mujahed-e-Awwal’, the first to raise the banner of revolt against the erstwhile Maharajah. Why do you advocate a return to 1947 that includes monarchy?

Let it be Maharajah’s rule. It is a lesser evil, if you would like to call it. It is better than the whole region being on fire.

Q Can the current India-Pakis-tan dialogue lead to a resolution of the Kashmir question?

My coming here itself is significant after being denied visa for 50 years. The India-Pakistan talks have started in good faith, in response to international requirements and the situation that was brewing up. They are in the right direction, but the pace is slow. The talks will have a lot of impact on J&K and the whole region.

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