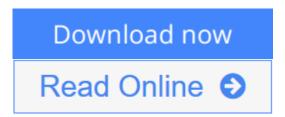


### Kashmir: Its Aborigines and their Exodus

By Col Tej K Tikoo



#### Kashmir: Its Aborigines and their Exodus By Col Tej K Tikoo

Exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir in 1989, was their seventh such exodus since the arrival of Islam in Kashmir, in the fourteenth century. This was precipitated by the outbreak of Pakistan-sponsored insurgency across Kashmir Valley in 1989. The radical Islamists targeted Pandits - a minuscule community in Muslim dominated society, creating enormous fear, panic and grave sense of insecurity. In the face of ruthless atrocities inflicted on them, the Pandits' sole concern was ensuring their own physical safety and their resolve not to convert to Islam.

Over 350,000 Kashmiri Pandits were forced to flee en masse leaving their home and hearth. This was the single largest forced displacement of people of a particular ethnicity after partition of India.

Pandits' travails did not end with the exodus. The obstructive and intimidating attitude of the State administration towards the Pandit refugees, made their post-exodus existence even more miserable. The Government at the Centre too remained indifferent to their plight.

This book traces the Pandits' economic and political marginalization in the State over the past six decades and covers in detail the events that led to their eventual exodus.

In the light of ethnic cleansing of Pandits from the Valley, the book also examines some critical issues so crucial to India's survival as a multi-cultural, liberal and secular democracy



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About the Author

Col. Tej Kumar Tikoo (Retd), PhD, was born at Srinagar (Kashmir) on April 15, 1950. After completing his school and college education at Srinagar, he joined the Indian Army, being commissioned into 1st Battalion of the newly raised Naga Regiment on August 22, 1971. Soon thereafter, he found himself fighting the 1971 Indo-Pak war in the eastern sector, which resulted in the creation of Bangladesh. As an infantryman, Col. Tikoo spent a major portion of his thirty-four years of service in the army on the line of control in Jammu and Kashmir or fighting insurgency operations. Col. Tikoo is a graduate of the prestigious Defense Services Staff College and has been an instructor in the Senior Command wing of the Army War College at Mhow. He retired in 2004 and has an M.Sc. in defense studies from Madras University, and a PhD in defense studies.

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