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TUESDAY | OCTOBER 20, 2026 | JUMADA AL-AWWAL | 08, 1448 AH

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20-10-26

Teachers Shape the Future of the Nation.

Teachers are nation-builders, and the future of a nation depends on their efficiency. All other professionals emerge from the teaching profession. Therefore, teachers are the architects of a nation's future and progress.

In Kashmir, the role of teachers was and continues to be crucial because of the region's recent circumstances, violence, and radicalization. Teachers and schools play a very important role in preventing the radicalization of students, some of whom later suffered the consequences of stone-pelting and the loss of their life and careers. Over the past three decades, we have witnessed that some teachers in Kashmir, not all, but a few, particularly FAT teachers and teachers affiliated with Jamaat-e-Islami, have allegedly led young students towards terrorism, violence, and radicalization.

I am narrating this account because of what I have witnessed with my own naked eyes. The role of teachers is to build careers and guide the nation in the right direction. However, in Kashmir, we have witnessed the very opposite in some cases. Therefore, the role of teachers is crucial. A teacher can turn an evil person into an angel, just as a negative influence can lead a person towards evil. This is the point I wanted to make.

The same teacher can also transform radicalization into a process of deradicalization through education and guidance in Kashmir. Therefore, the role of a teacher is important not in just one direction but in various other roles and responsibilities that a teacher must fulfil. All other professionals emerge from the teaching profession, and this is where we can realise how important the teaching profession is. A teacher must be among the most competent, dedicated, and honest members of our society, serving as a role model both inside



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the school and outside it.

Teachers work with young, impressionable minds and can shape them into responsible citizens, professionals, and nation-builders. The foundation of every other profession is laid by a teacher.

We have witnessed how education was affected by prolonged turmoil in Kashmir and how schools were targeted by radicalized mobs. During these critical times, the Indian Army came to the rescue and played an important role in safeguarding the future of students.

Today, we are witnessing doctors, engineers, and other professionals emerging

from these Army goodwill schools, guided by dedicated teachers.

The role of teachers extends far beyond the boundaries of a classroom. They are the architects of the nation's future, shaping not only the intellectual abilities of students but also their character, values, attitudes, and sense of responsibility. Every doctor, engineer, scientist, administrator, soldier, and national leader begins their journey under the guidance of a teacher.

The quality of teachers, therefore, directly influences the quality of future generations and the direction in which a nation progresses.

A teacher's responsibility is not limited to completing the syllabus, preparing students for examinations, or ensuring academic success.

Their greater responsibility is to nurture responsible citizens who understand the values of honesty, discipline, compassion, tolerance, and respect for others. A truly great teacher inspires students to think critically, question constructively, act ethically, and contribute meaningfully to society.

In a world increasingly driven by technology, artificial intelligence, and material success, teachers must ensure that human values remain at the centre of education.

In a place like Kashmir, where the younger generation holds immense potential, teachers have an even greater responsibility. They can guide young minds towards peace, coexistence, innovation, entrepreneurship, and social progress. They can



help students rise above prejudice, overcome challenges, and transform their aspirations into achievements. A teacher who inspires one child may change one family, but a generation of dedicated teachers can transform an entire society.

Nations are not built merely through infrastructure, technology, or economic

growth; they are built by the character and capabilities of their people. Teachers lay the foundation of that character. Therefore, investing in teachers, restoring their dignity, and strengthening their moral and professional responsibilities is not merely an educational priority; it is an investment in the future of the nation.

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Beloved by the Prophet, Respected by the Angels: The Life, Legacy and Martyrdom of Uthman Abn Affan (RA)

The amazing life of Uthman Ibn Affan (RA). He was wealthy from a respected family and very generous, but his heart was not at peace; he could not find the truth he was looking for until the dream changed everything. Later, he would be promised paradise and become the Prophet's son-in-law. And rise as the third caliph of the Muslims. But what was the secret that made him so rich, how did he become such a good and respected person and despite all this, who killed and why were the stories about him true, the true story of the great Muslim leader Uthman Ibni Affan (RA).

He was born in Taif, six years after the year of the elephant. He was five to six years younger than the Prophet, peace be upon him. The name Uthman means baby snake in Arabic. The Arabs have a tradition of giving names that sound strong or frightening. His father was Affan Ibn Adul As, and Uthman belonged to the Umayyad family. Which would later be known as the Umayyad dynasty, from the fifth grandfather, his family was related to the Prophet, peace be upon him, the Hashim and Umayyad clans were relatives, his nickname was Abu Abdullah, and he was born in the year 577. When Uthman's father passed away in Sham, Uthman was around 20 to 22 years old. He was the only son in his household with the great wealth of 3 million dirhams inherited from his father, and his previous business experience. He continued to be known as a successful trader in Mecca.

He also had beautiful handwriting and, after becoming Muslim, became one of the 40 scribes who wrote down the revelations alongside the Prophet, peace be upon him. Uthman has a powerful way of speaking and constantly recites the Quran. The two copies of the Quran he owned became worn out from how much he read them, and his famous words became well known. If our hearts were pure and clean, we would never get enough of reading the Quran.

Uthman was one of the first believers from the Banu Umayya clan; his father's cousin was Abu Sufian, the political leader of Makkah, because of his respected background and high status in Makkah. He suffered severe torture after becoming a Muslim; one of those who tortured him the most was his own uncle Hakam Ibn Abi Al As. Uthman remained firm in his faith, saying even if I give my life here, I will not turn away from this path. In the end, his uncle gave up and released him, untying the ropes in the room where he had been torturing him.

While in Sham for trade, Uthman had a dream. When he returned, he shared it with his aunt, who interpreted it, deeply affected by the interpretation, and he fell into deep thought. One day, as Abu Bakr (RA) was passing by, he noticed Uthman's concern



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and asked, "Oh, Uthman, why do you look so thoughtful, Uthman then recounted his dream. At that time, Abu Bakr had already embraced Islam, but Uthman had not yet accepted the faith. Abu Bakr, let me tell you something and began sharing the truths he had heard from the Prophet, peace be upon him. A door opened in Uthman's heart, and Abu Bakr took him to the Prophet.

Thus, Uthman joined the ranks of the first believers at the age of 36 to 37. Uthman had never married at that time; the Messenger of Allah had two daughters, Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthum. These two were engaged to the sons of Abu Lahab, Utba and Utaiba; however, when Surat al Masad was revealed, Abu Lahab was filled with rage and forcibly separated his sons from the Prophet's daughters. He intended to hurt the Prophet and humiliate him in front of others. Abu Lahab, son of Utaiba, mocked and insulted the Prophet in response. The Messenger of Allah made a supplication; may a wild beast tear you apart.

Two years later, Utba set out on a trade journey. While his caravan stopped to rest for the night, a lion suddenly attacked; however the lion ignored everyone else and only tore Utba apart before leaving. The Messenger of Allah was deeply saddened by the divorce of his daughters. Meanwhile, Uthman thought to himself, what if I ask for her hand in marriage? Would the Messenger of Allah accept me? He approached the Prophet, and the Messenger of Allah gave his eldest daughter, Ruqayyah, to Uthman in marriage. Their union became a widely discussed event in Makkah, Abu Lahab's schemes failed, and the Prophet was never disgraced; on the contrary, a son-in-law, Uthman, joined his household.

However, this time the disbelievers made life even more difficult for Uthman; they ob-

structed his trade and even prevented him from walking freely in the market. In the end, Uthman, along with his wife Ruqayyah and a few other Muslims, came to the Messenger of Allah and said, Oh Messenger of Allah, we wish to migrate to Abyssinia, at that time, the struggle for Islam had been ongoing for 13 years in Makkah and would continue for another 10 years in Madina. After the migration, Prophet Said, you are the first to migrate with your family after Lut (AS).

With the conversion of Ummer (RA), Muslims began to pray openly. One day, when the Prophet (AS) recited Surat Al Najm during prayer, the polytheists were so deeply affected that when the verse of prostration came, they fell into sajood along with the Muslims. This event led to a false rumour reaching Abyssinia claiming that Makkah had changed, everyone had become Muslim, longing to their homeland, many Muslims in Abyssinia decided to return. Jafar Al Tayyar warned them, saying wait we have not received any news from the Messenger of Allah. Despite his warning, many return to Makkah only to find that nothing has changed. In fact, the oppression had intensified; thus, the second migration to Abyssinia took place, this time with more than 100 people. Seven years later, the migration to Madina began after returning from Abyssinia. Uthman migrated once again, this time to Madina. He became one of the few companions to have migrated twice for the sake of Allah.

When Masjid Al Nabi was built Uthman was there, when the Prophet's house was constructed Uthman was there, when the First Islamic school was established Uthman was there, when the market of Madina was formed Uthman was there, when the Madina Charter was announced Uthman was there, when the first military units were organised Uthman was at the front lines, throughout Islamic history we can always see Uthman he was one of those, who never strayed from the path of the Messenger of Allah. Without a doubt, Uthman's greatest trait was his modesty; at the same time, he was extraordinarily handsome. The Prophet, peace be upon him, once called him the second Yousuf.

The Messenger of Allah said, higher modesty is part of faith, and the one who has higher modesty is from the people of Paradise. This means that when a person loses their modesty, they also lose their faith. One day, the Messenger of Allah (AS) was sitting when Umer (RA) entered. He welcomed him warmly, then Abu Bakr (RA), who came in, and he received him in a relaxed manner.

However, the moment he heard that Uthman (RA) was coming, he immediately

adjusted his posture and strengthened his clothing. Seeing this, our mother Ayesha (RA) asked in astonishment. Oh, Messenger of Allah, first Abu Bakr came, then Umar came and you greeted them comfortably but when Uthman arrived, you sat up straight and adjusted your clothing. He is the son-in-law, the one with whom you should feel the most at ease. Why did you act this way? The Messenger of Allah replied with, "Uthman is a man whom even the angels feel shy before". How could I not show him the same respect, hearing this Amar Ibn Aas (RA), who became even more curious about Uthman. And went to ask him, the Messenger of Allah speaks of you with great praise. What is your secret? With humility, Uthman (RA) and replied that there is nothing special about me. I am the same in private as I am among people.



was the true definition of sincerity. When a person remains the same in private as they are in public, they have attained true sincerity (Ikhlass), and if they are not aware of their own sincerity. This is the greatest sign of sincerity; with these words, Usman (RA) taught the most beautiful lesson on sincerity.

This is not just a story, it is a lesson for us, do not just be inspired and forget it, ask yourself what I can do? What can you give to those in need, to the cause of Islam, to a righteous cause? Make an intention today to give something and fulfil it as soon as possible. Uthman (RA), who spent almost all his wealth on the expedition to Tabuk.

In the ninth year after the Hijrah, yet by the 12th year, he was once again a wealthy man; he kept giving, and Allah kept blessing him with more. Do not fear giving, the more you give, the more Allah will provide

for you trust in him.

During the Caliphate of Uthman (RA), concerns arose about differences in recitation styles to preserve the unity of the Quran. Uthman ordered it to be officially compiled into six copies, forming the mushaf as we know it today.

Uthman (RA), who narrated several hadiths from the Prophet peace be upon him, one of the most well-known narrations is "The best among you are those who learn the Quran and teach it".

As time passed, the martyrdom of Uthman, who complained against the governors in different regions of the Islamic State, grew significantly. In response, Uthman (RA) sent letters across the lands advising the people to be patient and remain on the path of Allah. However, despite the unrest, he did not remove his governors and divisions continued to spread throughout the Islamic territories to address these rising tensions.

Despite his efforts to calm the situation, the main instigators of the rebellion refuse to back down. A delegation from Egypt arrived to meet Uthman, bringing their complaints against the governor. Uthman asked them who do you wish to have as their governor? They responded with their Mohammad, the son of Abu Bakr. In response, Uthman agreed and wrote an official decree appointing Muhammad as the new governor. He sealed the document with his official stamp and handed it over to the delegation.

As the delegation set out on its return to Egypt, a letter was mysteriously found. It was assumed that it carried the seal of Uthman along with commands for the punishment of the leaders of the delegation after their return. Feeling shocked and disappointed, the delegation came back to Madinah, where they accused Uthman of betraying them. Uthman strongly denied this allegation and vowed that neither he nor anyone on his behalf had penned down the letter. The companions who knew Uthman believed that the letter was fabricated.

However, the dissident Muslims did not heed their arguments and besieged Uthman in his own home. Although Uthman had people around him willing to save him, but since he strictly forbade killing among Muslims, he remained patient till the end of his life, reciting the Holy Quran until he was murdered. His life became an enduring source of inspiration for Muslims in matters of faith, charity, humility and willingness to sacrifice one's life for righteousness.

The Author is a writer, social educator and researcher from Baramulla, holds a master's in Gender Studies and a BED.

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The Instrument of Accession A Defining Moment in Jammu and Kashmir's History

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Signed on 26 October and accepted on 27 October 1947, the Instrument of Accession established Jammu and Kashmir's legal relationship with India during a critical period marked by an armed invasion and an urgent need for security.

October 1947 was one of the most decisive periods in the history of Jammu and Kashmir. Following the end of British rule and the Partition of the subcontinent, the princely state faced an uncertain political future. While India and Pakistan had emerged as independent dominions, Maharaja Hari Singh had not yet decided which dominion Jammu and Kashmir would join. The situation took a dramatic turn on 22nd October 1947, when the Pakistani-backed tribal raiders started their attack on Jammu and Kashmir through the Pakistani side. Their entry through Muzaffarabad into Baramulla posed an immediate security threat. News of violence, theft, and attacks against civilians was spreading fear, while Srinagar was threatened with capture. As far as Maharaja Hari Singh was concerned, the priority was to secure his state and his subjects. Given the worsening situation, it became imperative for him to ask for urgent military help. Thus, the situation gave rise to what can be termed one of the most important constitutional acts ever witnessed in Jammu and Kashmir: The signing of the Instrument of Accession to India.

The tribal invasion placed Jammu and Kashmir in a position where its political future and immediate security could no longer be considered separately. Armed raiders advanced towards the Kashmir Valley, and Baramulla became a major site of violence. Historical accounts describe the suffering of civilians during this period, including the loss of lives and the destruction and looting of property.

The attack on St Joseph's Convent and Hospital in Baramulla remains among the most widely documented incidents of the invasion. The threat to Srinagar increased the urgency of the situation. The Maharaja's letter to Lord Mountbatten, dated 26 October 1947, described the military emergency and requested assistance from India.

The crisis demonstrated the serious consequences of the invasion for the state's security and political stability. In these circumstances, the Maharaja turned to India for assistance, and accession became central to the response.

On 26 October 1947, Maharaja Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession, formally acceding Jammu and Kashmir to



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the Dominion of India. Lord Mountbatten, the Governor-General of India, accepted the accession on 27 October.

The Instrument of Accession was a formal constitutional document used by princely states to join one of the two dominions created after Partition. It established the legal basis for Jammu and Kashmir's accession to India and specified the subjects over which the Dominion Legislature would exercise authority, including defence, external affairs and communications, along with associated matters.

The accession was a decisive step that established the legal basis for India to assist in defending Jammu and Kashmir against the invasion. It linked the state's political future with India at a moment when the security situation had become critical. The sequence of events is particularly important: the invasion began on 22 October, the Maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession on 26 October, and Mountbatten accepted it on 27 October.

These dates remain central to understanding the events that shaped Jammu and Kashmir's relationship with India. The Indian Army reached Srinagar by an airlift operation on 27th October 1947, to protect the state from raiders who had started moving ahead. This development is considered a key turning point in the crisis.

Indian troops were engaged in their operations at very difficult times, as the first job for them was to protect Srinagar and prevent the advancement of raiders inside the valley. Protection of the Srinagar airport became even more crucial for Indian forces, as it provided them with reinforcements. Indian forces participated in operations to repulse these invading forces as well as to capture important strategic positions.

These operations went on for several months and culminated in the first India-Pakistan War over Jammu and Kashmir. The Indian soldiers during these operations became an important part of the region's history.

Their service reflected the challenges involved in defending a state facing an armed invasion during the uncertain months following Partition. The accession and the military response must therefore be understood together: the Maharaja's decision established the legal basis for India's intervention, while the deployment of troops addressed the immediate security emergency.

The Instrument of Accession has been a significant document with regard to the history and constitution of Jammu and Kashmir in India.

This document was used to make note of the decision made by the Maharaja with regard to his accession to India, which would eventually provide the Indian government with its response to the invasion. Moreover, the events of October 1947 became part of an international issue as well.

The struggle lasted till January 1949, when the ceasefire came into effect, and Jammu and Kashmir remained divided into two parts, with one part being managed by India and another by Pakistan.

The area that is governed by Pakistan is termed Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK). Understanding the accession requires examining the original document, the circumstances in which it was signed and accepted, and the events that immediately preceded it.

Historical discussion should distinguish the documentary record from later political interpretations. For India, the accession remains central to explaining the legal basis of Jammu and Kashmir's relationship with the country.

The invasion and the need to defend the



state were crucial circumstances surrounding that decision.

While the signing of the Instrument of Accession was a constitutional landmark, the happenings associated with it also entailed immense human suffering. Civilians in the region witnessed violence and displacement at a time when any immediate emergency had long been over.

These individuals' stories need to be included in historical memory. The tale of October 1947 is not one of decisions taken and actions performed by politicians or soldiers. Rather, it is also about civilians whose lives were touched by the invasion. Such remembering is crucial for the maintenance of peace, security, and humanity in general. The incidents on 26-27th October 1947 marked a significant turning point in

the history of Jammu and Kashmir.

The accession of the state to India was through the Instrument of Accession, while the entry of Indian troops into the territory indicated the beginning of a serious military operation in defense of Srinagar and other regions against invaders.

This day presents an opportunity to examine the historical accounts, pay tribute to those affected by the invasion, and appreciate the sacrifice for the defense of the region. For students and citizens, this date is associated with the connection of historical events with national security and constitutional processes. Its significance is inseparable from the circumstances of October 1947, when the state faced an armed invasion, and Maharaja Hari Singh sought India's assistance.

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14-Year-Old Shafiya Altaf from Budgam Reaches National Level in Baseball, Wins Silver in Yoga

At fourteen, Shafiya Altaf from Budgam has already built a sporting record across several disciplines. A Class 9 student, she has participated in running, baseball, softball, chess and yoga, moving between sports while continuing her studies.

Her journey began in 2023, when she was in Class 5. Her first experience in competitive sport came through running at the Budgam zone level, where she secured second position. It was a small beginning, but it introduced her to competition and gave her an opportunity to discover an interest that would gradually take her into several other sporting disciplines.

Baseball became one of the most important parts of that journey. Shafiya progressed through zone, district and UT-level competitions before reaching the national level. She has competed in Ganderbal, Jammu and New Delhi on her way to the nationals.

Reaching the national level at fourteen means that a sport that began as an activity at school age has gradually become a serious part of her life. Baseball also took her beyond the familiar sporting choices that many young girls encounter. Instead of limiting herself to one discipline, she continued to explore different games and learn from each experience.

Her involvement in softball followed a similar path. She participated at the zone and district levels and went on to the UT level. She also took part in chess at the zone, district and UT levels.

Chess, in particular, requires a very different approach from sports played on a field. It demands concentration, patience and the ability to think several moves ahead. For Shafiya, moving between chess



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and physically demanding sports such as baseball and softball has meant experiencing competition in very different forms.

Yoga added another dimension to her sporting interests. In 2026, she won a silver medal at the district level. The achievement came after she had already gained experience in several other sports, adding another discipline to her growing list of accomplishments.

What makes Shafiya's record interesting is the range itself. At fourteen, she has not confined herself to one definition of what a sportsperson should be. She has tried different disciplines, competed at different levels and continued to participate where she found an interest.

Such a journey also depends on support at home. Shafiya says her father has supported her in sports. His encouragement has allowed her to continue participating in competitions and give time to an activity that requires regular practice and commitment.

For young girls, family support can have practical importance.

Taking part in competitions may involve leaving home for events, managing studies alongside practice and continuing even when an activity requires time and effort. When parents support that choice, a young girl gets the space to take her interest seriously.

Shafiya's experience also offers a different way of looking at sporting achievement among girls in Kashmir. Participation is often discussed through medals and positions, yet the process begins much earlier, with a girl being allowed to enter the field, try a sport, compete and decide that she wants to continue.

Her own story began with running. She then moved into baseball, softball, chess and yoga, with each sport becoming another part of her experience. Baseball eventually took her to the national level, while yoga brought her a district-level silver medal in 2026.

There is also a wider significance in seeing a young girl from Budgam participate across these sporting spaces. A girl who becomes visible through sport can make the possibility more familiar to others around her. For younger girls watching, competitive sport becomes something they can consider for themselves rather than something distant or unusual.

Shafiya herself wants to continue in sports. Her achievements have therefore



not become a stopping point for her. She remains interested in participating, improving and seeing how far she can go.

Her message to other girls across Kashmir is simple: if you have an interest in sports, just do it. She wants girls to give themselves the chance to participate rather than hold themselves back from something they enjoy.

That message comes naturally from her own experience. She did not begin with a national-level achievement. She started as a Class 5 student taking part in a race in

Budgam, where she finished second. From there, one sporting experience led to another.

Today, at fourteen, Shafiya has competed in five disciplines, reached the national level in baseball and won a silver medal in district-level yoga.

Her story is still in its early stages, with many more years ahead to develop her skills and decide where sport will take her. What began in Budgam as a schoolgirl willing to try now continues as a national-level player willing to try even more.

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