

Syed Altaf Hussain Hamdani

Interviewer: Sir, first of all I would like to tell you that this a research based project, so would you like to allow us to interview you?

Syed Altaf Hussain Hamdani: Yeah, absolutely yes.

Interviewer: Thank your very much sir. Sir, kindly tell me, whatever conditions you have experienced, seen or told by your forefathers, kindly explain us that as you were not migrated from Hindustan to Pakistan, as you were already living here, so what was the environment here, I mean there were Hindus and Sikhs were living in your village as well, so what was that environment, kindly describe this.

Syed Altaf Hussain Hamdani: In 1947, as I was a younger boy, so there are only a few memories and realities told by the forefathers that the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims were up to the mark, but during that time when the movement of freedom was on its way, during those conditions, the non-Muslims also transformed in their thoughts, so they were thinking that Kashmir must with the Hindus, but because Muslims are in majority here, so according to the two-nation theory, the decision was actually that the Kashmir is the state of Pakistan. Later in 1947, when the conditions got worse, our forefathers were the main men of this village, so they told us that Muslims are now in a challenging condition. So, the Muslims worked a lot for the movement of freedom, so the Almighty showed them the day of freedom. Although, the Kashmir's issue was controversial, but the thing was that it had to be with the Pakistan. So, in our area, Hindus or Sikhs were not in majority, but one thing was that they were having hold in this area because those people were finally strong and wealthy, they had a hold on different businesses and as the main government was non-Muslim Maharaja, so they were also having edge from that point as well. What they actually did with the Muslims was that if they borrowed a single penny to a Muslim, the interest rate kept going on and on. So, the Almighty blessed us and conditions changed and they moved away from here during the division of 1947. Now, the conditions are much different and relieved here.

Interviewer: So, do you remember that either the medical camps were established here?

Syed Altaf Hussain Hamdani: I just only remember that when the conditions got more tight, the Hindus started running from here, because there were living in the down area of Hathiya bazar, so they started moving away from this area as they were hatred now by the Muslims, so the Muslims are beaten them as well, but my father even given them protection and stopped Muslims not to beat them and let them go because they were barehanded. One thing I would must share, as I was a teen at that time, and I remember that in this area of our village, all the Hindus women and children were gathered here because my father was protecting them all. There was a Hindu kid named Mahindra, and both of us were playing out. Suddenly, a plane came in from the India side and did shelling on the bridge there. So, we ran away from that area. Remaining, our forefathers told us what happened around. One incident that occurred and I am remembering is that

there was a Hindu named Malakram, who was a businessman. He took his family and tried to run away from this area, as they were passing through the bridge, there was a drain under the bridge. The Muslims threw them out of the bridge into the drain. Both the Hindu and his wife were killed in that session, but their one kid was alive in the drain. So, someone went to him and asked him that where he actually want to move. He said that kindly took me to the Nambardar Mr. Hussain Shah. They picked him up and dropped him here. Me and my elder brother, as we were kids as well, we were playing around. My mother took the boy and gave him a bath and gives him space to sit and gave him sort of first aid remedy. He stayed with us for 10 days or so and finally he also died as well. This is what I was remembering and wanted to share. There was a village called Nainsukh. Nainsukh area was actually belonged to Sikhs. They were thinking that both the Maharaja and British will protect us as well, but they were wrong at that time because there was actually no support to them at that time. So, I must say again that Almighty blessed us and the Pakhtoons troops played their role, attacked them and moved them away.

Interviewer: So you don't remember that either there were camps or not?

Syed Altaf Hussain Hamdani: No, no, there were no camps at all. When they face the worst conditions, they finally decided to move away rather than waiting for the others. They were even crushed during that time.

Interviewer: What were the medical facilities during that time, because people were also wounded as well?

Syed Altaf Hussain Hamdani: As you know that there were no good medical facilities at that time, so only the general tips of medical remedies were considered to provide the affected ones. Well, I would must say that Muslims were not hurt a lot because this area was actually belonging to Muslims. Only, Hindus and Sikhs were in trouble while they were moving from here as they were attacked by the Pakhtoons.

Interviewer: As you were a young kid, but later when you grown up, you forefathers must had told you that what was the difference between now and then, I mean the difference between this time now and before separation?

Syed Altaf Hussain Hamdani: Well, I would say that before separation, people were beloved to each other and they both Muslims and non-Muslims were caring for each other in every filed of life, but even at that time Muslims were also backward as well, poverty was there as well, but self-respect and honor was there to each other.

Interviewer: So you think that finally this is a good thing that Muslims are now in a separate state and living here on their own will?

Syed Altaf Hussain Hamdani: Absolutely yes, but only the sad thing is that, that Kashmir had to be the part of this country because there are 90% Muslims living in Kashmir, so it is in excess of cruelty and unfortunate that Kashmir is not the part of

Pakistan. On the other hand, I must say that Muhammad Ali Jinnah played a huge role in this division. There in occupied Kashmir, they 3rd generation is having birth while listening the noises of gun fires and dynamites, so they don't now caring for that and we are seeing all this in the documentaries, even the young kids are participating against the Indian army. Well, I must say that freedom is a blessing of Almighty, although we have thrown back the main purposes of freedom for what the Pakistan was made, and we what we have actually adopted now is that if the Almighty is not blessed on us, then maybe we are no more and maybe the part of the history.

Interviewer: Thank you so much Sir.