

## Muhammad Ishaq Zafar

**Interviewer:** Mr. Zafar, you were telling me that your forefathers have witnessed the movement of 1947, so would you like to share with us that what was the history that they shared later.

**Mr. Zafar:** In 1947, my grandfather and their brothers have lived there in Bani Hafiz, Azad Kashmir, from the last 2-3 generations. At that time, the situation of all about the war was that the Hindus and Sikhs were in majority and they came to our forefathers asking them to provide shelter. One of elders of our named Hafiz Mian Muhammad Younas was such a kind person to them that he gave shelter to around 3000 families to his house and kept them there for around six months and provided them food as well. After that six months' period of time, there were sent to Red Cross. There were so many people displaced from this region, though a lot of Sikhs and Hindus were living here in this region of our Pakistan, and so our business concerns that were in between the area of Athiyanwala, Chinari and Chakothi, the majority of the business concerns were with Hindus and Sikhs. When the war occurred in 1947, and they displaced, then the elder ones, ladies and children of them were provided shelter there to our houses saying that otherwise they will be killed. The situation that, that the Muslims on the other side of the boundary of occupied Kashmir, who were willing to move towards here in the Azad Kashmir, were not actually allowed to move alive, because a brutal killing was prevailing there. Same situation was from here as well. The non-Muslims who also tried to shift from here to there were also killed as well. My family was basically a spiritual family and our family heads were so kind to others, so my uncle Hafiz Mian Muhammad Younas RA, and books written by him are still available in Kashmir Culture Academy, Srinagar, and provided those non-Muslims shelter. He not only provided them shelter, but also departs them with love and care. So, on the basis of mankind, he provided shelter to 3000 families there, and out of those families, a one of grandfather of them, who was Mayer of Sraay in year 1997-1998 was also one of them. So out of those 3000 family, the people are settled in South Hall England and Canada. I myself met one family out of them in London when I visited London back in 2009. At that time, his son was Mayer, so the father of his who was around 100 years old, he also witnessed and shared the same story with me. A person out of a Sikh family from Canada also shared a video message with me where he detailed everything about that, which a displacement occurred, and a number of people lost their lives in the line of that war.

**Interviewer:** So, what your forefathers share in this regard, what was their point of view?

**Mr. Zafar:** When Mahraja done the deal of Kashmir with India, at that time the majority were Muslims in Kashmir, so the Muslims did not accept that deal or the affiliation of India, so the Muslims started like a war against the Mahraja and Indian army for freedom, and you can see now the 10 districts of Azad Kashmir currently, those were separated as a result of that struggle of movement done by the Muslims. On the one hand, Mahraja made a deal or affiliation of Kashmir with India, on the other hand, in 1947, Muslims

from there like Sheikh Abdullah were also along with Mahraja. So, the majority of Muslims started a movement of freedom like the way it is still the movement there in the occupied Kashmir right now as well. So, from the start of that freedom movement up till now, millions of Muslims are martyred and that movement is still alive there.

**Interviewer:** If you remember, what your forefathers tell that how much beneficial this partition was for the Muslims.

**Mr. Zafar:** As we were fighting for the freedom since 1947, and as a result as we are free here in that part of Pakistan, but there in occupied Kashmir, everything is there except freedom. Neither life is safe there nor the honor or wealth, that is the only reason that people struggle for the freedom. Basically, mankind came to this world with no objections and has rights to move freely without slavery, but as the India trying to make them slave, so there will be a reaction of that. We feel that as we are free in this area, its all Almighty's bleedings to us that we are in relation of blood and love to Pakistan because Pakistan has helped us a lot at every single moment, but at this point of time, Kashmiris are facing and battling for their freedom themselves. I must say and condemn that this division of subcontinent is out of question. Basically, Kashmir was the part of Pakistan during that division, so that is an in-complete division. They way the foreigners wanted to make it clear division; it was not according to that manner. Also, by that plot of that division, Western Pakistan also get separated from us. So, both wings of Pakistan get affected. One wing was Western Pakistan and the other is occupied Kashmir.

**Interviewer:** Sir, thank you so much for allowing us to interview you.