

paper

txt msgs

from Kashmir



paper
txt msgs
from Kashmir
December 2009 - January 2010

Conceived and initiated by Alana Hunt with additional words from Suvaïd Yaseen, Majid Maqbool, Zooni Tickoo, Iram Razzaq, Rahim Seab, Gowhar Fazili, Uzma Falak, Tanveer Ahmed and many people in Kashmir....

Heart, be faithful to his mad refrain -
For he soaked the wicks of clay lamps,
lit them each night as he climbed these steps
to read messages scratched on planets.

Agha Shahid Ali
The Country Without a Post Office

Paper txt msgs from Kashmir would not have come into being without the participation and assistance of many people in Kashmir.

In particular Suvaid, Suhail, Fayaz, Inder, Tanveer Hussain, Mubashira, Irshad, Ishtiyag, Majid and Riyaz. Many warm thanks.

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The lines of nation-states have fractured the shape of Kashmir.
Today the mountainous region sits occupied and divided between India,
Pakistan and China.

For more than sixty years people in Kashmir have been waiting for the
right to self-determination; promised a plebiscite that has not yet come.

For the last twenty of those years war has raged in various forms. It is
a torn place; endless kilometres of barbed wire run like open veins
across its surfaces.

Still, life remains in motion.



Since prepaid mobile phone connections in Kashmir have been banned, perhaps now is the right time for us to use our imaginations a little and generate different kinds of communicative tools ourselves....

This card has been designed as a space for people to write a different kind of 'paper text message' to anyone, real or imagined, anywhere in the world about anything you would like to write in a text message - but are currently unable to do so.

You are free to keep this card or give it to someone you know directly. But it is also hoped that many of the responses will be posted to the address below in order to form part of an art exhibition in New Delhi that hopes to create some discussion around the reasons for the recent emergence of 'paper text messaging'.

چونکہ کشمیر میں پری پیڈ موبائل فون بند کر دئے گئے ہیں، اس لئے شاید یہی صحیح وقت ہے کہ ہم اپنی سوچ کا استعمال کریں اور طرح طرح کے مواصلاتی چیزیں اپنے لئے ایجاد کریں۔

یہ کارڈ اس ارادے سے بنایا گیا ہے کہ لوگ حقیقی یا خیالی کسی شخص کو کہیں بھی جو کچھ اطلاع دینا چاہتے ہوں، جو وہ ابھی نہیں دے پارہے ہیں، اسے اس کارڈ میں لکھ سکتے ہیں۔

آپ یہ کارڈ خود اپنے پاس رکھ سکتے ہیں یا کسی ایسے شخص کو بھی دے سکتے ہیں جسے آپ براہ راست جانتے ہو گئے، لیکن امید ہے کہ کچھ جوابات نیچے دیئے گئے پتے پر بھی بھیجے جائیں گے تاکہ ان کو نئی دہلی کی ایک نمائش میں شامل کیا جاسکے اس غرض سے کہ ایک بحث شروع ہو جو ان وجوہات پر غور کرے جن کے چلتے نئی پیپر ٹیکسٹ میسجنگ کی شروعات ہوئی۔

Postal address:

Paper Text Messages 122/I Yamuna Hostel JNU New Delhi INDIA 110067

to:

from:

paper text message:

In the winter of December 2009 close to a thousand “paper txt msgs” were distributed throughout Indian administered Kashmir as a kind of tongue-in-cheek response to the government’s ban on pre-paid mobile phone services in the region.

Virtually overnight hundreds of thousands of mobile phone users – people conducting business, college students, families, distanced lovers – were left without means of telecommunication.

There was little more than a whisper across the Indian media; it was not an isolated incident. The monitoring, blocking and banning of phone services is just one of the many ways in which the military occupation intervenes into, disrupts and desecrates the rhythms of daily life in Kashmir.

Through the distribution of an “alternative communicative tool” dejected pre-paid subscribers were invited to write a “paper-txt-msg”, to anyone real or imagined, about anything they would like to write in a txt msg but were suddenly unable to do so.

These paper txt msgs moved between people’s hands in different ways and different places; they carried stories of their own, with many eventually finding their way back to me in New Delhi.

Accompanied by a range of texts that touch upon the experiences of Kashmir today, it is these paper txt msgs, a cacophony of diversely wonderful voices, that fill the following pages....

Alana Hunt

to: MY BELOVED

from: MANTASHA

paper text message: I want to say "Sorry"
but can't ~~it~~ say it as
Sms doesn't go through.

Love You
Miss your smsez
😊

to: MOM N DAD

from: SHEIKH SIBTAIN

paper text message:

SALAM,

DON'T WAIT FOR ME
AT DINNER-----

I WILL BE LATE, AS
USUAL---



to:

from: Mukhtar An

paper text message:

It is the Violation
of Human Rights & it had
created a huge Kallac
in the city. The suffers
of this boy are all people
from Business man to
a common man

Mukhtar An
Dep. 1an

to: Suhail-ul-Islam (Fozal, Bahwana)

from: Fayaz Ahmad (Sofore, Baramulla)

paper text message:

Hey Pal. wtz up. How r ur parents?

Did Aqbal book our tickets - I mean Return tickets to Delhi? Reached home the next day from Sonagar. I hope ur Parents didn't feel my absence. well, I feel very cold here but home is home. A respite from that Sahara called Delhi. Did Tawid contact U? This ban is just too much. It is like being inhuman towards people. wn r we leaving?
Reply.

to: To ~~Farah~~ Asim Rehman

from: Talha

paper text message:

مواصلاتی آلات کی ایجاد مطلوب رہی ہے
لہذا ہم اسی کا تقاضہ ہے۔ برپید تو
ایجاد ہوا تھا۔ تو کیا ہوا۔
ایجاد کر رہا آں اں ماحول جاہ ضرور
سیاحت دان قومی تبادلات کے نام پر
آلات اور حقوق کو معطل کرنے
کی ہمت نہ کریں۔

to: Maraim
from: Sofia Shah

paper text message:

Hey cool doll, how r. u?
wtz up? Didn't c u at college
yesterday, couldn't contact u,
U know y. I hope everything is
OK. Kming college tomorrow.
C u there. T.K.

to: The Indian Govt
from: ANAM AHMAD

paper text message:

Save us from the
discrimination

Its a high time
we be treated
equally.

Ames

From Shafceq Ahmad Khan

From: R/o Tangdhar ECC

paper text message:

Telecom dept of India some
irresponsible to J&K state. It shows
that J&K state is isolated from
rest of the country. It is deep
matters treatment with J&K
state

to: India

from: Afz

paper text message: let us live

to:

from:

paper text message:

حاجی عبدالرحیم خواجہ
روقت رحیم

محترم والہ صاحب اسلام علیکم
امیرکنا سون حسرت سے میری تھی۔ (میں بھی حسرت
سے تو تھی۔ میری طرف سے اچھے سے سو رہی ہے۔
پری تھی کہ میں کی وجہ سے مشکلات میں آ
رہی ہے۔ دوستوں سے بھی رابطہ منقطع ہے۔
لیکن بے بسی کیسے سہا نہیں۔ آپ بالکل بے فکر
رہیں۔ جب تک میں نہیں اُٹھتی میں STD
سے کال کر رہا ہوں گا۔
عوسلام

to: P. Chidambaram.

from: Nida.

paper text message:

Respected sir,

It is really irritating
on your part to impose
ban on pre-paid connectio-
ns.

At least let us breathe
freely. That will be so
kind on your part.

Yours sincerely,
Nida.

to: Mr. Chidambaram

from: SHABIR DAR, KULGAM

paper text message:

History has taught me how India has manipulated every move in Kashmir through oppression and suppression. Your country has been gagging the voices of resistance in Kashmir, I know; U too know.

But, now you did not like that I should talk to my mother every evening, or give a word of encouragement to my friend studying in Bangalore. How sad for "democratic" and "secular" India.

to: Mr. P. Chidambaram

from: Jahanzeb

paper text message:

Sir, I can't thank
you enough for the
ban on prepaid phones.
I hear it's internet
next. You're really on
fire... while you're at it,
please ban cars and buses
so I won't have to go to
work anymore...

The Storytellers

Suvaid Yaseen

We are our stories. We are made of our stories. Our story is perhaps the most important constituent of our self. Our idea of our self. Personal as well as collective. Kashmir doesn't let you build an independent self identity. Or perhaps a consciousness of it. The idea is not to debate on personal versus collective. But the feeling is that the personal is not an option to be ticked. There is one option. One answer. And that is the right answer. And you cannot escape the effect of it. You are entwined with it. A romance of sorts. Painful. But you can't escape. At some stage you don't even want to escape. It's your definition. It's a part of you. It is You.

No one is able to escape the conflict of discussing conflict in discussions. Perhaps there are some lucky ones. But one could raise doubts about their senses. Or do that in desperation of keeping one's self in the standard, popular category. Normal. Whatever! Perhaps it is the other way round. The burden of a conflict ridden identity is not easy to manage. Maybe the feigning of senselessness is easy. Don't know!

Distance increases the intensity of Love. Of declaration, of allegiance. The need to declare. The compulsion to proclaim. The introduction has to encompass your strongest, intimate feelings. There is a risk. You take it. It's about you. Your story. You.

You tend to define yourself in relation to the Other. Definition through Difference. Recognition of the Difference. Sometimes even a longing for the Recognition of that Difference. A special difference, you take pride in.

Outside Kashmir you tend to be more Kashmiri. In Kashmir you may criticize the phul (bicarb-soda) in the morning's nun chai for being too acidic, outside it's a party delicacy. No frills attached. You are not bothered, even if some non-Kashmiris wince at the mention of a tea with salt. A treat given more charm if someone coming from home has brought some kulche or baegirkhaen.

The longing for home. People in home. The coolness of air. The heat of politics. Everything seems to have an aura. You are reminiscent of Kashmir every now and then. The morning lipton chai makes you aware that you are not home. The Urdu paeth kath with friends tells you that you are away. The 40 degrees in April reminds you that it is still spring in Kashmir. When the news on TV hides more than it informs, you miss the reporting of local channels, however 'unprofessional'. There was some government regulation there too. Anyway, there is an added irony. You are happy to escape it. You are guilty to escape it. All at the same time.

So the conversations start. Start with anything, with anyone. And before you realize it you are talking about Kashmir. Even if you had decided to keep it non-Kashmiri. Can't help it. People ask about you. You can't help but mention Kashmir. Kashmir is You. You are Kashmir. The dividing line increasingly blurred.

Over coffee, you explain the ingredients of kong-e-kehwa, made from the costliest spice in the world, the best quality of which Kashmir produces. With lunch you boast about Kashmiri Wazwaan, cooked for days together, the best quality available on weddings. With heat you talk about snow. With fog and smog you talk of clear summer skies. With AC you talk about the electricity produced in Kashmir, and taken by India. All Kashmiri.

These are softer themes. At University protests over fee hikes and the like, you give sarcastic smiles when police provide the security. And when they selectively do nothing when they should actually intervene.

You read the morning newspaper and tell people about the news items relating to Kashmir, and tell them how they haven't, more often than not, portrayed the full story.

With heat you talk
about snow. With fog
and smog you talk of
clear summer skies.
With AC you talk
about the electricity
produced in Kashmir,
and taken by India.

These are bits and pieces. There is a grand narrative which one has to repeat. After the introduction. Infinitely. With almost every person introduced.

Someone asks you about you. You say you are Kashmiri. "Oh! Indian." "No Kashmiri." You insist. Then you talk and talk. Discuss, argue, politely, you lose patience, you keep patient. Talk.

Question: "Okay! You are from Kashmir! Such a lovely place. I just love it. I so want to visit it... at least once in my life. But... is it safe?"

Answer: "Sure. Well, yes... safe... relatively, more or less!"

Q: "Don't you feel scared there?"

A: "Fear is everywhere. In Kashmir, just the geography changes."

Q: "Lovely place, but for the terrorist attacks on innocent people. Thank God for the security forces!"

A: "Yes, mujhh... I mean, militants do attack Indian forces sometimes."

Q: "Do you really want to live with Pakistan?"

A: "We want to decide whatever. Just that."

Q: “But won’t you create an Islamic state if India leaves?”

A: “Well...”

Q: “Tell me something about Kashmir. I’m really interested to know.”

A: “I OK”

Call: “Hey! Happy Republic Day!” Response: “That’s for Indians. Not me!”

Replies: Standard narratives. Repeated many times over. Personal stories. Insider takes on politics, history. 1586. Akbar. Afghans. Sikhs. Dogras. 13th July 1931. Sheikh. 47. Indians. Army. Occupation. 1953. 1975. Maqbool Bhat. 89. HAJY. 90’s. Naebid. Ragda. 2010. Azaadi. Longing for Azaadi.

Vocabulary: Shaheed - Martyr. Shaheed Malguzaar - Martyr’s Graveyards. Hartals - Strikes. Crackdowns. Curfews - declared, undeclared. Half-widows. Disappeared. Torture. Papa-1, Papa-2. IB & Cargo. Cant. SOG & RR. Terms you explain with pride. Words, imposed, hated.

....completing sentences
only to be arrested again
from the exit gates.

Reply with the specific vocabulary interspersed. The narrative flows smoothly. You are pleased with the smoothness with which you narrate. Frustrated at the same time over the same smooth repetition. Thinking if there is something else that you could talk about.

Wondering what else occupies people’s minds in other parts of the world. Are you mad? Or has the whole world gone nuts? You joke about recording Kashmir history in your own words and press the play button when next time someone wants to know about Kashmir. And then the cruelty topping it all - but. At last you hear a “but” in the reply. “But, you know that... India, Indians, Pakistan, Pakistanis.”

But that’s the fight. You figure out. The fronts are many. You have taken the story-telling front. Or you find yourself on that front. You rationalize. It’s not that bad, anyway. In fact, very much necessary. Sacrifice needs to be narrated. Explained. To expose the hegemony of imposed discourses which are taken for granted as the peoples’ will while the people are busy burying dead and tending to the injured, completing sentences only to be arrested again from the exit gates. Suffering, resisting, near, far away.

Tales need to be told. Recognition needs to set in. There is no lack of sacrifices. Too many. And in order that those be recognised, the sacrifice of talking about oneself, about one’s story, about Kashmir, through that story seems a moral obligation. A very small sacrifice, if at all.

You also try other things. Someone called them ‘everyday resistances’. Overtly and with yourself. When in

some you have to write nationality you crib about having to write that six letter word! You silently write it and pass on the form and believe nobody takes notice.

You tell yourself you didn't do it. Other times don't you proudly say that I am a Kashmiri! Just a Kashmiri! You discuss, debate... Perhaps Gandhi also had a British Indian passport or colony passport or whatever... you retort.

You silently write it and
pass on the form and
believe nobody takes
notice. You tell yourself
you didn't do it.

You write your permanent address and stop at J&K. Unless there is a country column to fill! Ah! Maybe my children will write Kashmir there. You think as a consolation. Or may be theirs. Or theirs. Some generation.

Some tell you that the world is moving towards global-governance. Countries won't matter in the near future. Yet you see all the people feeling proud about their countries. Proudly carrying their flags. But you don't have one. And they tell you to forget about it. Forget about divisions. Create unity. You argue. You wonder.

Thinking if it was possible if at all to hide all those graves dotting every corner of the Valley. Stones marking the graves. Even if you remove the stones over the graves, what would you do with those grave-stones? They have names written all over them. Names, aliases, areas of Martyrs... They shout... constant reminders. They haunt you. They left. They are there. You can't move away. You say ninety thousand people were marty.. eh.. killed in the last twenty years. You speak about mass graves. Unnamed graves.

You explain the 'Bullet & Stone' game that children play. Funny game. Amazingly real. Death is real. Limbs cut down are real. Eyes popped out are real. The marbles shot by the robed guys from slingshots are real. Ahhhh... the bullets are real too. Isn't death real too?

You tell them you are resisting. Resisting at that very moment the very compulsion of the promise you made to yourself last time that you are never discussing your grand tale again for two hours. At least not when you could discuss 'nicer' topics. Films, cinema, theatre...etc, not that you know much about them. Just you think of those topics as intellectually fashionable. But the sorry tale doesn't leave you.

Sometimes you try not speaking about Kashmir. Deliberately, you discuss other things. Try to. People talk about childhood games. You say you played 'mujahid-police'. They mention fancy dress. You remember the winter Pheran you wore but couldn't keep the arms inside for you might be suspected of carrying weapons. They talk about travels. You mention staying at home for days together due to crackdowns. They mention

missing their childhood. You mention the missing people of Kashmir. You can't really discuss other things. You have no other things.

You travel by bus for two hours in forty degrees to listen to a three hour long public meeting where they would probably speak for five minutes about Kashmir. Some of the people are in a habit of speaking about Kashmir. You go. You listen. You are elated. Happy that you exist. Then people come to you to know about the latest at ground zero. You tell them all you can. You remember the promise you made to yourself. You forget the promise. Next time.

You feel frustrated. Mad. Going mad. Mad. You write.

You think about the changing categories. Terrorist. Terrorist sympathiser. Then came more creative names. With an irony attached. 'Agitational terrorist'. That was when people took to peaceful agitations. With no guns, the term then advanced to 'Gunless violence'. You think about these things. You laugh. You tell them to people. Laughingly. Some laugh, some fall silent.

You hear the news of a sixteen year old child, hit with a teargas shell on the head, who later breathed his last. You call up one of the friends. Or they call you. You discuss, meet sometimes and chat over it until you are tired. You call a friend back home who is fed up of the four day long hartals and expects one more on Friday. Friday evening one more young boy is shot dead because a group of them had looked at a military convoy which passed them by.

You come to know about a thirteen year old who jumped into the river to escape the tear gas shells and bullets and drowned. You hear about the whole village being burnt.

Then came more creative names. With an irony attached. 'Agitational terrorist'.

You hear the news. Dreadful, brutal instances. You don't feel much. You feel terrible. You don't know how you feel. You can't explain it to others. The words are too little. The tragedy too big to be captured. You can't tell the entire scale of event. You don't even attempt to do that. You are a very bad storyteller. You are unpaid as well. You just save the fee you might need to pay to a psychiatrist if you keep all the events in you head. You tell them to your friends who might anyhow be feeling that you actually need the shrink. You think so. You don't know.

You would have thought the same about yourself in their place. Perhaps you would be justified doing that. But... No! That's an insane argument, you console yourself. And think you are all right. You are just doing

your moral duty to reach out to people with information of the actual state of affairs about Kashmir. You have to do it. That's the need.

Some people talk to you because of that. They want insider information about Kashmir. You tell them. You are also happy about it. You become some kind of a Kashmir expert. You feel you are using the tragedy of Kashmir for your ends. You are selling the tragedy. You feel commodified. You feel guilty. You don't want to do it anymore. Then you hear the news and then again you want to fill the missing portions. You start the same thing again.

So, the story continues. Who needs an introduction?



to: Brinda

from: Arif Qazi

paper text message:

A/a. Hope you are fine dear. I am fine.
What is up? Did Fayaz call you?
He was a bit upset yesterday. When
are you coming to Dargah? Reply and
take care. Khuda Hafiz

to: Bilal

from: Shabir

paper text message:

Hello dear bro,

I hope you will be fine and enjoying
~~the~~^{ur} married life. So, bro when
you will come back coz
every one is missing you. -
- - - Take care.

to: Shahzada
from: Sumaira

paper text message:

Saleem. Did Saleem Sir ask for the assignments today? I'm yet in no mood to start doing my assignments. Yeh I am in home-coming mood. Koi se forced karon (Padhai) phir se shuroo hogi. Tk Cr.

to:

from: Zamkheroda Bano R10 Dildaf Tonga

paper text message:

Jaland. 18.

میں یہ چاہتی ہوں کہ میری پیڑھ موبائل
بند نہ ہو۔ کیونکہ جب میری پیڑھ موبائل بند
ہوئے اس میں وقت میں میری ٹکریں
بڑھ رہی تھیں۔ میری پیڑھ بند ہونے کے بعد
میرا گھر والوں سے رابطہ نہ ہو سکا تھا۔
میں نے بغیر کسی وجہ کے بہت مشکلات پیش
آئی۔

to: UNITED NATIONS

from: KASHMIR

paper text message:

How is Kashmir different from
East Timor? Perhaps by
religion. Have you any
answer?

to:

from:

paper text message:

Dear,

* occupation
even if not given
anything ...
Sorry I'm dying!!!
No chance
For security reasons here
our educational institutions
have been banned. So,

I am looking for
few shops & a job for
my children who are yet
to come but I know they
will resist the oppression & *

to:

محمد اشرف

from:

شفاعت یوسف

paper text message:

اسلام علیکم ... آپ کیسے ہیں اور گھر میں سب
کیسے ہیں؟ میں امید کرتا ہوں کہ آپ کی
پڑھائی صحیح چل رہی ہے۔ محنت ہی
کامیابی کی بنی ہے۔ اگے بڑھتے رہیں۔ ہماری
دعاؤں آپ کے ساتھ ہیں۔ والسلام۔۔۔

to: Umairas

from: Suhail

paper text message:

Assalamu Alaykum. Hope you are
doing well. Tel me sis, why didn't
you send me Shazia's number?
Did you get that? Plz send that
as soon as psbl. Thank you.
TK CV. A.H.

to: People of India & Pakistan,

from: Fahad Shah

paper text message:

Kashmir needs freedom
from both being,
someone's "Integral part"
and other's "Jugular Vein".
Let the Kashmiris decide
its own fate.

to: Daniyal
from: Irfan Rashid

paper text message:

May you grow up in
FREE KASHMIR.

to:

INTIAZ AHMAD

from:

ASHRAF LONE

paper text message:

A/A Dear Intiaz, How are you
and the family members. I
am fine. Hope that all of
you would be fine. Your
Exams are near, so study
hard. Say Salaam to
family members.

All the Best

to: INDIA

from: A Kashmiri

paper text message:

"Dare to have PLEBISCITE in
Kashmir" - - - - -

I KNOW U WON'T &
U KNOW WHY U WON'T.

"U already know the results"

to:

Senain.

from:

Iffan

paper text message:

got your text from
Dawalpindi (Islamabad)
but couldn't text back
as we can't send SMS
from Kashmir to Pakistan

to:

Sumegha

from:

Aisha

paper text

we hopelessly wait
to pine for peace. Fidayee
encounter ended just
yesterday. A photojournalist
was targeted by a SSP.
A young boy ~~named~~ of 16 was
shot by police while he
was coming back from
tuitions. What should I
wait for - lost lines or
my phone which has become
useless. Their loss is greater
than mine.

to: Shahid Gulaiman

from: Idrees Bhat

paper text message:

Apa: Tenab khoob mann laga ghar
Padh rahe hain. Entrance
test kab se hain? Janyari
Kahan pahunchi? Good Luck.

to: shafi.

from: Subzaar

paper text message:

Hey if you are near
to market, just bring
1kg meat and half kg
onion because two guests
have come --- be
quick, Mama is waiting
she has to cook.

A Call from Home

Majid Maqbool

“Card chukha seath thavaan?”

(Do you carry the ID card with you?)

Mother worries over frequent phone calls

Away from home, home enters questions

‘Identity’ printed on a piece of paper

cuts through her voice; a discomfoting lullaby:

“Card gase hamashe seath thavun”

(always carry the ID card with you)

Home leaves a permanent imprint...

On scattered notes, stamped on memories

At home, mother would tiptoe after me

At the door, before endless blessings, she always asked

That question mothers have for their sons -

“Card tultha seath?”

(are you carrying your ID card?)

From Delhi now, your question settles on my unrest

Identity – detached from the card – hangs heavy

This is not Kashmir, mother

“Toete gase card seath thavun...”

(Still you must carry the card with you...)

The line dropped on this insistence

I kept redialing, to rest her concerns,

her unfinished questions, unanswered

Hello..helloo... mother

Can you hear me?

a discomfoting lullaby:
*“Card gase hamashe seath
thavun”* (always carry
the ID card with you)

I left the card at home, mother

In the back pocket of my worn-out jeans

Find: a fading photograph, scrutinized edges

And no trace of those unrecognized questions

forever inked on my memory

For troops to question my absence

The proof I left behind is not enough

That frisked ID card remains

like a festering wound, pocketed pain

I carry everywhere.



to: fancy.

from: Shabi

paper text message:

Where are you choti,
Come fast Papa is searching
for you. He is too angry
because no body has given
him Noon Chai. Come
fast and prepare Noon Chai
for him - -

to: Mudasir

from: Shanaaz

paper text message:

Aslam-u-alleum

when you will come
to office? Just give
me ^{miscal} ~~miscal~~ I will send
Sweets ~~best~~ for you. Don't
forget.

to:

اختیار الہ

from:

اشترن لون

paper text message:

السلام علیکم

پیارے اختیار آج کیسے ہیں اور کھ میں سب
کیسے ہیں؟ میں خبریت سے ہوں۔ امید ہے کہ آپ
سب خبریت سے ہونگے۔ آج کے امتحانات قریب
ہیں اس لیے اب دل رکھا کر پڑھائی کرنا چھو
والوں کو میرا سلام کہنا۔
والسلام

to: Showkat Mir

from: Faubad.

paper text message:

Saloom budy -

The Pre-paid kan could not stop
me from ~~as~~ being in touch with you.
Here am I with this new method.

I am planning to kn to ur home.
Prepare well for that. Also bringing
the books I needed. Apology for
the delay.

to: Gowhar Iqbal

from: Umar Jan

paper text message:

How are you? What is up?

Did you appear in UGC NET
Exam? I didn't, was busy
with B.Ed classes. Reply.
Take care. Allah Hafiz.

to: Tajamul Khalig (Sofore)
from: Ashad A. Khan (Bandipora)

paper text message:

My dear friend, I miss u a lot.
When are you coming back. My
parents also miss you. My mother
was not well. I had taken her to
the hospital. but there was a stroke.
I am concerned. Pray for
my mother. AD Best.

to: BHAAYI JAAN

from: IQRA

paper text message:

Assalamu alaikum. Bhaayi Jaan, ghar
Kab aawoge? Mere liye ek
pheran lana. Yaad rakhna.
Allah Hafiz.

to: Javaid Naik

from: Ziya Hussain

paper text message:

Shabash Bhai. B.Ed. Practice badya hui
hai apki. Ajjaz Sir bata rahe hai. "Mast"

to: Aftab wani
from: Rukaiya Rafiq

paper text message:

زندگی ظلم ہے، جبر ہے، موت کا عالم ہی ہے
ہم نے ہر حال میں جینے کی قسم کھائی ہے

ہم نے تمہیں قسمت کی لکیروں
سے پُرا یا ہے -

to: NUSRAT

from: HAKRASH

paper text message:

Hi!

I Love you dear. This prepaid
ban has made us into two
Sad people. I can't talk
With you. When can we
meet dear? Please come
to Chadoora on Sunday.
I'll see you there.
Miss you. LOVE.

to: P. C. Chidambaram

from: I. M. Loke

paper text message:

Mr. I. M., why don't you
ban yourself from
coming to this place,
and let us a
sign of relief.

to:

from: Y. Shafi Charkota Tagor's language
Jpk.

paper text message:

I was in hospital when
preparations were being made and
I used to make a call
to my brother for money
and I would not allow him
my wife faced a problem
in the hospital because she
was alone



to: US President Mr Barack H. Obama

from: Umar (Indian-held Kashmir)

paper text message:

No doubt 2 five in 21st century
when globalisation is the buzz-
word, here in Kashmir I am among
400000 mobile phone users who were
made to abandon their SIMs
just coz Indian govt was
fighting 500 rebels.

Hope you receive due care
and act.

Sorry couldn't find a pigeon
to carry this paper to you.

to:

Zamur Akbar chuk tongdur

from:

paper text message:

موبیل فون بند ہو جانے سے کشمیر میں کافی نقصان ہوا
لوگ اپنے گھر والوں یا رشتہ داروں سے رہتے نہیں
سہانے آکر کوئی رات کو بیمار ہو جاتا ہے تو ڈاکٹر
یا گاڑی والوں کو دھندلے میں کافی وقت
مہربان ہو جاتا ہے

to: People of Kashmir
from: Mehak (Citizen of Kashmir)
paper text message:

This is a request to all the
people of Kashmir not to
behave like a coward. Plz
react positively to the present
situation. and try to respond
back in every manner you can.

Mehak

to: Baseer (Delhi)

from: Mudassar Wani

paper text message:

No need to buy cell
phone for me. Just
bring some pigeons
for me.

On a Wednesday evening in mid-2010, after SMS services had been blocked once again, Majid Maqbool posted a question on his facebook page:

Who's afraid of SMS in Kashmir?!

The following exchange took place....

Inshah Malik: YOU

Jasim Hamid Malik: *people who are not kashmiris lol*

Majid Maqbool: *Whatever happened to the beep of that SMS...*

Inshah Malik: *silenced at the barrel of a gun... I am thinking if newborns will cry?*

Jasim Hamid Malik: *is 'whatever' a new disease?*

Majid Maqbool: *SMS: Silenced Messaging Service!*

Inshah Malik: *summoned messages spammed (SMS)*

Jasim Hamid Malik: *Satyaanas messaging service!*

Inshah Malik: *@JM why do u always follow me like a extra chochvore!*

Taha Mirani: *They really have Silenced the Messagin Service...*

Majid Maqbool: *Forgetting the SMS ban, i actually smsed a friend today. After a while; Message failed!*

Inshah Malik: *messages fail...and We won't... JM che ma goi malale.. wale lekhu ye ba chu pananui wall.. unh POGAL*

Sumegha Gulati: *any idea when they r going to start again...???*

Majid Maqbool: *Sumegha -- No idea.*

Amy Kazmin: *possibly its a blessing in disguise... 90 per cent of the sms i get in delhi, are annoying advertisements from dodgy real estate companies... i WISH i could silence them... :)*

Amy Kazmin: *though, of course, am not sympathetic to such tactics... <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/18099302-90b9-11df-85a7-00144feab49a.html>*

Majid Maqbool: *Thanks for the link, Amy. I tried to read your Kashmir reportage earlier, but this FT registration thing kept me away!*

Amy Kazmin: *@majid, its not THAT hard to register...!! and its FREE!!!*

Izhar Wani: *It was a nice piece by Amy in FT. In fact, I was asked to follow the FB one & I did.*



to: P. Chidambaram

from: Rajeev

paper text message:

Mr Home Minister I
have a Judicious piece of
advice for you. You must
rethink your policy as to
The ban on pre-paid connec-
tions in J&K. The ban has
further alienated the people
of J&K. It has further
aggravated the already wobbly
~~situation~~ situation. So, please
prevent a one more outbreak here

to: Paper Text alasaga 122/1 Yamana Hostel

from: Tongdor - Konneh.

Tua aru dila

paper text message:

سماں صبح دے دے کہ عواقب کنناہ شکر دار میت اے اور
وہیلے کہہ سے چھوڑا ہوا انداز ہے۔ یہاں میرے گھر
کا کھنڈا کھینچ لیا گیا ہے اس لئے اس سولہ کو
کہہ سے چھوڑنے کا ایک طریقہ ہے۔ وہ ہے۔
مویا سہل کا اور اس طریقے کو وہیلے سے چھوڑ دو
یہ سارا دے دے اور اگلا ہے

to: RUKHSANA

from: FIRDOUS

paper text message:

DIL KA DARD KISSE DIKHAEN
MARHAM LAGAANE WAALE
HI ZAKHM DE JATE HAIN*



to: Towheed-ul-Islam

from: Kuratul-Ain

paper text message:

A@a.
Mai ne aapka application
form Suvaid Afzal ke paas
rakha hai. Usse lena. mai
kal deptt. nahi aaongi. Friday
ko milte hain. Bye. Good Night.

to: Boba

from: Najam us - Sehar

paper text message:

Salam.

Boba, mai kail ghar aajaunga. Aaj
kameeray ke haan thehroon ga. Tum
figh na karna. - Najam

to: paper text message 12/1 Yamma Hostel

from: Tawder - Karmali, Jun 2000 Delhi

paper text message:

یہاں مسیح یہ ہے۔ کہ علامہ کرناہ بیت اللہ اور بیت

مکہ پر ایسا واقعہ ہے۔ یہاں پر اگر وہیں کئی کوئی ایسا

اللہ سے ملے۔ مگر؟ سرے اور ملاقات کیے 4 ذرا اور

4000/4000 فر کے ملاقات کرنا ہر وقت اس کے ہم

یہ مسیح دنیا جانتے ہیں۔ کہ تمہارا ہوا ہے کرناہ کو وہاں

سے جوڑ دو وہاں ملتا اور دیکھ اس علاقہ کو اپنے ساتھ

4 علاقہ

to: ZAFFAR ME'RAJ

from: JEHANGIR KHAN

paper text message:

YE NA THI HAMARI QISMAT K
VISAAL-E-YAR HOTA
AGAR AUR JEETE REHTE,
YEHI INTAZAAR HOTA.
KYA BAAT HAI DOST, KUCH
ATA PATA NAHI. KAHAN HO?

to: Aga Shahid Ali
from: Arshi Janid
paper text message: Your country has
a post office now but
postal system has become
irrelevant. When the
world is becoming hi-tech,
our pre-paid phone
connections are being
scrapped. Things have
not changed Shahid. I
am shahid (witness) to the
Indian oppression &
tyranny. Read it again & again

to: Chitambaram.

from: Mahesh

paper text message:

Rest are prepaid
connection immediately
below we are in
great need of
Mysu.

to: Jehangir

from: Zaffar Me'raj

paper text message:

Tum bhi to Eid K Chaand ho
gaye ho! Kahan hote ho? Do
baar college aaya tha mai. Tum
mile hi nahi!

to:

from:

Ajay naseer Tangdon ICC

paper text message:

Govt of India especially telecom authority
of India shows a step-mother treatment
with J&K state
and it is indicated that
J&K state is isolated from rest
of the country.

to: Rameez Raja

from: Najam-us-Sheikh

paper text message:

A.a, Maghrib ke baad milna. Ziya ko bhi
batana. Kal masjid mai Noor Ahmad
Khitaab farmayein ge.

to:

from:

Tasleem Anif Lone R/o Tangdar Tehkar
Dist Keupwara State J and K

paper text message:

Since the prepaial Committee
have been banned in J & K and
it has evoked strong resent-
ment towards H. Central
Govt and state govt. It has
hindered thousands of young
jobless and hilldwelling
strongly suggest to the Govt.
to resume the prepaial service
strongly

to: Rishi Meher

from: Purnima

paper text message:

Kya haal hai aple, ma'am? Kuch khaas
khabar sunao. Kya bataya Bittu ji ne
phir iss TV ke baare mein phir?
Kya Muzammil bhai kahan par hai
ajkal? Doh teen din mein aata hoon
mai Purnima -

to: Ali.mond.

from: eh.mond.

paper text message:

Janab, where are you?
I have not seen you from
last ten days, is everything
OK? Do one thing I
will come to your home
at 5.00 p.m. -- wait
for me ---

to: Daniyaal

from: Asima

paper text message:

A friend is someone
who understands you
past....

Believes in your future
and accepts you today
just the way you are.

BEEP BEEP

Zooni Tickoo

Hello I am an sms.
You know what they call-
The Smooth Mumbling Shine
I love to mumble, murmur,
Moan, mutter, and also mediate.
Like bridging gaps and
Filling the vacuums.
Heart to heart, Phone to phone,
Soul to soul.
Whoever said our youngsters
are cold and lack skill verbally !!
Hah! You would be amazed
Of how highly they regard me.
Of my value they pen poems, ballads.
And hail me on the idiot box
Or in newsprint,
Superimposing my invincibility.
Oh, and go ask those distant lovers,
How much they await me...
Night after night, conveying complaints,
Dreams, Hopes, desires all unabashedly.
Ah, this almost makes me blush. Sigh!
So, this is how I mediate. And
This fortune of delivering Shine,
I inherited from my great grandfather
The Postman. Hope he rests in peace
In his grave of lost, undelivered letters.
What pride would swell in his heart for me

Making the world smaller by the day!
How amazingly I became the catalyst for
The invention of the new “txt lingo”.
‘shrnkin’ all emo talk in 2 160 chrtrs’,
I tell you, It is no mean task.
But, sometimes I also Meditate.
In the ‘silent mode’
Only vibrating my soul a little,
About who am I
After all, it is so fashionable
To be ‘existentially damned’.
Thus, I think I am suffering from
The “mid-life crisis”.
But of course I am so much loved,
So much needed by all.
Then why would someone want
To ban me, me of all!
Barb my freedom in this land
Blindfold my Shine in this land,
Fracture my constitution in this land
This land – the furnace of revolt.
Dismiss my existence all in all,
And rub away my traces however frail.
Yes, such a deep crisis to me it is!
They, some of those heartless, tech-less people,
Who oppose “*azadi*” – basic freedom,
All that those vengeful demons do
Is kill people and impose Armed Acts,

Acts of inhuman obscenity,
Which disarm me and
Rob me of my only fortune
Of delivering Shine,
Unbound and unobstructed!
How I long to roam in the
Veins of that deranged Valley
From one phone tower to another.
From one heart to another.
Sending across signals of
Intimacy and what not!
I have known of texting carnivores
Devour all sorts of 'interesting anecdotal'
Jokes about anatomy and the 'birds n bees'.
How often they have evoked giggles
Frowns, and loud roars of curious laughter.
I have listened to those amateur poets,
When no one else would have dared to,
Impart their fragile craft of words.
To be honest, when I fell in this valley,
I fell straight into Love.
I have known all sorts of people,
Businessmen, housewives,
kids, students, unemployed youth,
Retired elders and lovers blah blah.
But in this Valley, angels reside.
Cooing and echoing their hearts divine.
Somewhere sobbing, sloganeering at other
Shedding streams of tears while
Somewhere Showering trails of stones.
These are people of wonder mysteries.
Their bereavement, their agony and eagerness
To mumble, murmur, mutter, and moan
in the smoothest and the most suave ways,
has been banished and causes heartache.
How can I not mourn then of my exile?

I have listened to those
amateur poets,
When no one else would
have dared to....

This separation, this abandonment.
Such coldness, such struggles of the land and heart!
I no longer dream, but see gory nightmares...
Of those lovely people asking Agha Shahid Ali
To reinstate the dead Postman out of his grave,
Into the existential Post office.
And in another I saw, young boys and women
Hurl their hearts filled with cold emotion
At the oppressor, again and again,
Conveying in blood all of their sadness..
And then another, in which I get my tongue
Trimmed, sewed, clipped, stomped and burnt
Only to be left as deranged as this Valley.
Able to "beep" but never able to sing of its joys.
Muted, gagged, silenced and hushed
Sobbing still in sleep, awaiting the end of
This long daunting slumber. Maybe
Till dawn breaks and ends this spell,
Mumbling smoothly its Shine into
Every demon of my nightmares.



to:

from:

paper text message:

The Ban on Prepaid
Is Just ~~like~~
- a Political Gimmick.
When world becomes
a global ~~any~~ Govt of
India is pushing us
in Stone age.

Abdul Sadiq
Dep of Law, K.U.

to: India
from: Nasheem Ashraf Mir (7th Standard)
paper text message: Kashmir wants freedom
India can live by cutting
its head, but Kashmir
can't live by ~~de~~ being
its head.

to: Khursheed bhai

from: Vineet

paper text message:

Hey Khursheed bhai,
How r u doing? I know it is disgusting
for you guys to be 'primitivised' by
the Indian government by not allowing
cell phones.

But dil 'godne ke liye mobile
ki zarurat nahin hoti...

Love
Vineet

to: Khurshid Mir

from: Mohd. Sayeed

paper text message:

Salam dear. Hope you are in best of
your spirits. Could you please e-mail
me your research proposal? I
would like to go through it.
Thank you.

to: Atta

from: Javid

paper text message:

Salam Bhai-jan.

Hope everything is fine. I'm planning to come to your village on Eid. I hope by that time this ban would be over. It is helplessness, nothing else. It is such an irritating experience. Say my Salam to ur parents.

to: Aftab Rather

from: Rumaiss

paper text message:

Ah. I won't ask you for a favour again. I have been asking for microeconomics notes for so long and you never paid any heed. God bless you. Tk. cr.

to: Aijaz Mir

from: Mudasir Rather

paper text message:

Tum Social Science students ko dunya
ka asli mechanism pata hi nahi hai.
tum Kyun apne discipline ka zyada
bhaav chada rahi ho. Bakwas karo
sawal bhar aur pass ho jaoge phir
bhi! Humein tou lab. mai ragadna
padta hai yaar !!! 😊

to: Saleem Sir.

from: Umar Jan.

paper text message:

Good Morning, Sir. Sir, are we going to
present tomorrow or day after? Sir, actually
I'm not feeling well today. Can I do it on
Wednesday? Thank you, Sir.

to: Hilal Shah

from: Shabnam

paper text message:

Ye dastoor-e-zabaanbandi hai kaise
teri mehfil mai, yahan tou baat
karne ko tarasti hai zabaan meri.
Katyo chukh tze nundbane,
Walo maashuq myaaney...

to:

from: Official Ahmad Lone ice Tongkah

paper text message: Telecom deptt. of india

that J&K state as @state state.

It means 7 citizen of J&K state
are not faithful to india govt.

It is the fault of J&K Govt.

Solve the problem of there citizen

we are unable to know the cause
of this treatment with said state

It shows J&K state is separated from

rest of the world in this ~~state~~
world. globe

to:

from: MUKHTAR AHMAD

paper text message: TANGDAR KARNAH.

I am a teacher by
profession and I feel that
in Kashmir mobile
prepared phone were the
income generation for
about 20 thousands people
and it should be re-lan-
ched soon as possible

Dr. M. A. Khan

NAME/BAHAR-ul-NABI dept of law.

Prepaid ban imposed in J&K
State violates the fundamental
right of people living in the state
of J&K (Right to freedom, liberty,
expression etc). This has made
life of so many groups dependent
upon this business tough. people
are suffering a lot specially
lower class coz they are not in
a position to afford
postpaid connections. This is a
sign of tyranny in J&K.

paper text message

from

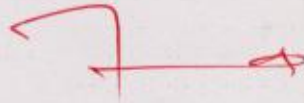
to

to:

from: Disha Aci - Targeted Karol Lumpur
J&K.

paper text message:

Why it is so that Kashmiri
is not treated as
Indians by the Indian
Govt.



to: Hamid

from: Fayaz

paper text message:

Hey dude how are u feeling
now? I hope you will
be recovering very fast.
I use to pray Almighty
for your health.

Love you
Fayaz.

to:

Schar Saleem (Tebby)

from:

Shabby

paper text message:

Plz send me
sm's ---
my inbox is empty :-)

Do msg me so
that my inbox gets
filled - - -

itna Vistara se likhna Zaroori
nahi hai-

Nheray Dhyaaray

(Dark Days) Iram Razzaq

English

Seven seas in between is hardly a distance
when beats find themselves in a subtle mergence.

Although the brightness of night leaves me lit within
dark days bring along painful shades of ignorance.

Keep intact the chords of faith and the beats
vain is the ban, as love needs no reference.

Rest those swollen lids and listen, hear me. You will
find me in flutters within, even in absence.

Hold on tight, these wings of hope, as despair stiffens its claws
dark days will end soon, as calm wills the screams of silence.

Meelan ne painday kuj ni rehnay
jilay tharhkanan kathyan tharkaniyan whayn

Dhyaarhi na nhera barha dahda hona hai
p'haanvayn raatan andar lau baalyan whayn

Ishqay ki triyyay ni lorh ni paini, sanglan bekaar hoi jaaniyan
jay dilay tay yaqeen niyan yaariyan pakkian whayn

Bahrli akh nooti te andarwarli akheen nal takyan miki
dil aapay bolsi jilay maarhiyan na koi khabran whayn

Nhera vi muksi ik dhyaaray tay khamoshiyan na rola vi
maid na choriyan jilay dil chorhnay niyan neetan whayn

Pahari



to: Mr. Man Mohan Singh .

from: Mr. Mohammad Ashraf Mir .

paper text message:

It is an attempt to
kill the voice of Kashmiris.

to: Ushtaj Ahmad

from: Shahnam Shahabuddin

paper text message:

Assalamu Alaykum Mr. Bangalose! Kahan pahunchi
aapki naukri? Hotel management walon
ki tou kya liye hoti hai yaar. Zakarat
Salary! wch bhi tum jaise nahi koon
ke liye !!!

Hey, m jus jokin! what's up?
where are you working these days?

to:

ALANA HUNT

from:

ISHTIYAR AHMAD LONE (M.A Political Science)
Kashmir University

paper text message:

Not only 38 lakh subscribers are suffering but 20,000 youth have been rendered jobless due to this ban. Today everybody knows that people are dependent on mobiles. One wonders what democracy means for India. Why such decisions are taken in J&K only? Sometime SMS service is banned. Sometime undeclared curfew is imposed for weeks together! What the hell is going on! It seems that Central Government considers Kashmiris as a herd of cattle who just need air, water and food to live! The effect of such an decision will be terrible.

to: Yasin Shayyar.

from: Suhail-ul-Islam

paper text message:

Afr. I hope you are in good health.
I called Akhtar and enquired
about the book (By Dr. Nisar Trali).
He said he would get a copy
for you. Take care & Allah Hafiz.

to: Paper Text masage 122/1 Yamna Hostel

from: Mansoor Ahmed Palay. Tongdar. Karnah
JNU. New Delhi

paper text message:

یہاں دعا دعا کرتا ہوں کہ یہاں پر پسماندہ اور آئنا نعت علاقہ ہے
لیکن بد قسمتی سے یہاں پر ویشٹان اور کیشٹر کے ساتھ ہے۔ مگر
شیل کیشٹر کیشٹر کی وجہ سے یہاں پر ویشٹان اور کیشٹر سے ہی ملے
کے۔ پوری دنیا سے لے کر دعا دعا کرتا ہے۔ اس کے کوئی ویشٹان
کا حصہ یا کیشٹر کا حصہ ہے۔ یہاں پر کیشٹر سے ملے ہوئے ہیں
کیونکہ کسی بھی پوزیشن سے یہ کسی بھی ملک کے ساتھ
یا کسی پوزیشن کے ساتھ ہے۔ اس کے کوئی ویشٹان
ویشٹان

to: God

from: Ashar

paper text message:

when will India
leave Kashmir -
—

to:

from:

Johns Ali. Coast Dept.

paper text message:

Range 286

Television is everywhere in
India but why is
Cassini only when pre-
paid are banned

Johns

to:

from:

Feroz Ahmed.

paper text message:

Dam on the-pain communist is
is just to cripple down the
economy of Jek as the present day
war is war of ideas & the anti this
tent to make the people of Jek to
suffer & not to make any
development as they feel threat from this
part of the world as it is emerging & it
has made world mobilized world for its
right to self determination.

to: Indian Home Minister P. Chidambaram

from: An occupied resident of Valley

paper text message:

You were yourself occupied
^{someone} by ~~at~~ one point of history.

You should understand our
pain and ~~not~~ add to it.

It baffles me what turned
India into brute occupiers.

Please! Withdraw now. **NOW**

—

to:

from: Tasleem Arif Lone Tangdhar Ilc

paper text message:

It is not good to treat the
state as isolate. as ~~the~~ the
state is heaven on earth but
the people of the state is suffering
alot. I think it is not good to
bound the state with rest of
the world in this global system
it shows a distinction between
the people. —

to: P. Chidambaram

from: Abdullah Danish.

paper text message:

What I really don't understand is that the process of
having a pre-paid sim is so foolproof in Kashmir
already. The ban of pre-paid was uncalled for.
The subscribers have now shifted to post-paid
anyway - but

The ban was nothing but a trouble given
to the people of J&K and another reason
given to them to increase the feeling of alienation
and hate to India.

to: Mr. P. Chidambaram, Indian Home Minister

from: Ishfaq A.

paper text message: We Kashmiris know the Policies of New Delhi very well, so there is no need to be pretentious. New Delhi has treated us like slaves and has reminded us of this reality time and again.

6 pay connections were made available here @ Rs 40/cylinder. When Kashmiris became defunct prices were hiked to more than Rs 200 and poor Kashmiris were helpless. Now again PK-kind SIMS were distributed in the state @ Peanut rates, only to repeat the things. For terrorists there are other means to communicate, so does it mean I will burn them also.
 try to use logic, PK.

to:

from:

Altaf Hussain (Tangdani) ICC

paper text message:

Telecom authority of
central govt conduct irreg-
ular treatment with Tandy
state ~~data~~ due to ban of
mobile communication prepaid
system. its nearly loss of text
message which provide cheap
and easy to customers. they
suffer badly.

form:- Altaf Hussain
Tangdani

to: Shankar

from: Mohan

paper text message:

Namste!
what Sarkar has done
by banning mobile phones.
It is disgusting for we
people (particularly for outsiders)
It seem we are Thousand
miles away from each
other - - - Take care bro
Ram Ram.

to: P. Chidambaram -

from: Abid

paper text message:

You should accept the reality
that Kashmir is a dispute.
Who took the issue to
UN, its U. Resolve Kashmir
qspu the wishes of
people so that peace
prevails in entire
South Asia.

to:

P.C

from:

Badr (Occupied Kashmir)

paper text message:

Are you gonna
ban autorickshaws
too?

PS: Geelani has been
driven around in
autorickshaws of late!!

Shahre Gaam Aam Gey Mobail

(Mobiles have taken over the city and countryside)

Rahim Seab with transliteration and translation by Gowhar Fazili

On a field some where in Kashmir, Rahim Seab once shared his views about the mobile phone in a *ladishab* or countryside ballad. Combining wry humour with contemporary social issues a recording of Rahim's *ladishab* can be accessed online here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXZV5DwbbpU>

Shahre gaam aam gey mobail
Ded te bab hokun ami ralow dil

Boz sa bayi myani ratsa hana
Sharm te hayah chu yeti gomut fanah!
Pezis peth chi maraan azik jehil!
Shahre gaam aam gey mobail

Aki doh esem karein majboori kath
Akis jayi khotus STDs peth
Tati es akh koor karan phone
Wariyah kaal praraan dood me khoon
Emi phon e weil dopnam ye travon yale, yeke tsei kar
Bakhudah trowun ne toti reciever
Mandechith bei dras thewem nil
Shahre gaam aam gey mobail

Bai meiyani mobailan dits warah kem
Emi seit bronth peki mukhbir taam
Emi seit shaheed gai kam dar dil
Shahre gaam aam gey mobail

Akh akis nish gatsnas chane fursath

Mobiles have taken over city and countryside
Father-Mother are forgotten, for it has linked hearts

Listen my brother for a little while
Shame and prudishness have vanished
Morons of the present day kill you for speaking the truth
Mobiles have taken over city and countryside

One day I had to make an urgent call
Went up to an STD shop,
a girl was on the phone
Waiting for too long boiled my blood
The phone-man said give him a chance – here go ahead!
By God! She still didn't let go the receiver
Ashamed, I decided to take off
Mobiles have taken over city and countryside

Brother! Mobile has served many purposes:
Even informers and spies made great progress!
What lively youth were martyred by the mobiles!
Mobiles have taken over city and countryside

We have no time to visit each other

Phonas peth chalaan che seri y kath!
Raath doh chaloo number dayil
Shahre gaam aam gey mobail

All talk happens over phones!
Dialling all the time! day and night!
Mobiles have taken over city and countryside

Zanani dop mardas shaman chun-e siun
Dopnas temiuk chu sahley, drav hokun
Validity mukleyam ye chui mushkil
Shahre gaam aam gey mobail

Wife asked her man, we have nothing for dinner
He said that's not important, and went away
Validity got over: that's the bigger problem!
Mobiles have taken over city and countryside

Mobailas chen is ay-e balaay / Na chu kuni rashan na cha kuni chai!
May your mobile perish! / There are no rations, nor any tea!

Nev baagin aayam go hasa waqtas daakh
Yor wanan akh kath or-e chukh wanaan byaakh
Ponse badal chandas chui izrail
Shahre gaam aam gey mobail

What have I got married to! What times are these!
I speak of one thing, you speak of another
In place of money your pockets have this angel of death
Mobiles have taken over city and countryside

Mobailas chen is ay-e balaay
Na chu kuni rashan na cha kuni chai!
Aamdani rostui baran chukh bill
Shahre gaam aam gey mobail

May your mobile perish!
There are no rations, nor any tea
There's no income, but you keep paying the bill
Mobiles have taken over city and countryside

Az wotum reth wanaan me che pain
Weni weni zanhti no gayi greain
Pandah do wotum mehsa ye pill
Shahre gaam aam gey mobail

It's been a month since I have this pain
I keep saying this and you remain unmoved!
I've been waiting for a tablet for fifteen days!
Mobiles have taken over city and countryside

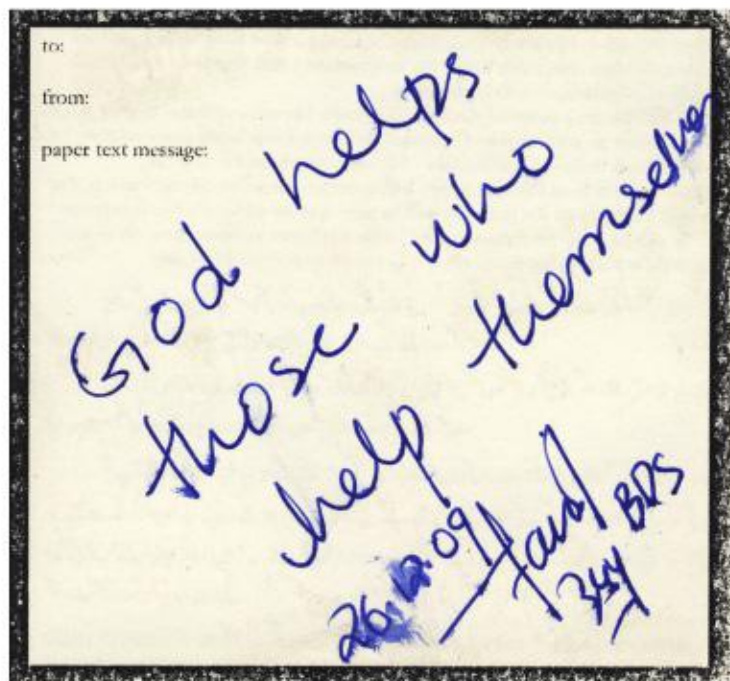
Sariney companiyan chu mobail boss
Yeti kuni ropeyah tath kerkh tsaas
Sarey company khiyaven shill
Shahre gaam aam gey mobail

Mobile is the boss of all companies
It has made us cough up every last penny!
All other companies are eating dust!
Mobiles have taken over city and countryside

Rahim pantsgeim wanan mobailuk haal
Raath doh hello hello sirif missed call
Botnas peth ath tevith khada sae-il
Shahre gaam aam gey mobail

Rahim Pantsgam reveals the story of a mobile
Hello?Hello? All day and night: but only missed calls
The press of a button, makes him a beggar!
Mobiles have taken over city and countryside





to: Shamshada

from: Javaid.

paper text message:

Hi dear how are you?
I am deeply missing you.
we remain apart because
of this ban. It is
irritating dear ---- don't
know what will happen in future
but I will meet you on
coming Sunday love you.

to: chilumbalem

from: Zahoor Ahmad.

paper text message:

of Kashmir

Let the people¹ live
like others like

Zahoor

to:

from:

paper text message:

No justice with Kashmiri
People.

to:

from:

Ab. Rashid (Tangdal) ILL
Govt of India shows a
paper text message: distinct between 7th and other
state of country it means
the people of states are all
- regular in their rights. Govt
has no faith on the citizen of
state.

form Ab. Rashid
R/o Tangdal.

to:

from:

Masim Ahmed 407dr Kernal
Dist Kephwah State Jandk

paper text message:

"9. Suggest the Service
Providers in Jark to fight
the verification process so
that people won't suffer
on account of lethargic
attitude from the S.
Providers. It should be
remedied soon.

to: New DELHI

from: Mohsin Malik

paper text message:

quite unfortunate to discriminate
Kashmiris again by banning
prepaid when it is sold
free of cost without
identification proof in
your so called
Kolkatta etc.

to: Asif Ahmad Khattak (Kazigund)

from: Fayaz Ahmad. (sopore)

paper text message:

Salaam, fal.

How is life? Me fine, just busy w/ my studies. This ban is crippling. Tried to mail U, but that U rarely chk mail, so sent U this novel thing.

How r Eid preparations going on? Thout they would left it on Eid, but how does our festivals matter. Infact, how do we matter as humans.

I now think the beauty of our land has been very disserviceful for Kashmiris. It has focused all atension to the land not to the people. Anyway, enjoy your Eid with my txt Msg. EID MUBARK.

to: Sajad Bhayya

from: Mohd. Sayeed

paper text message:

Afa. Please don't forget to bring a
Sweater for me. Also, bring one
bread for Mouj (Daadi).

to: Security Agencies of India

from: Akhter Rasool

paper text message:

please make your system of
IT updates, please make new software
for call trace, why you blame
us if you are not capable.

please see other in intelligence
agencies of world. they know
calls and every thing about
caller with the help of new
software system.

Akhter

to:

from: SAFEER AHMAD.

paper text message:

1. That Prepaid System is easier
than Post Paid System.

2. A least 60% of People living
in Kashmir lived with Below
Poverty line.

3. That all of us we Can not
pay monthly fee.

4. we want that the Prepaid
System started again.

to: ~~Oba~~ Obama
from: Waseem-Ul-Ayoub.

paper text message: Prepaid phones have dominated the scene but unfortunately they were mis-used by the people. But banning on prepaid phones ~~doesn't~~ ^{can't} mean we will have the chaos going in and around. But creating that much chaos which will definitely have the humanity.

to:

from: Shakeel Ahmed Basha

paper text message:

Ban of on the paid sim
is another example of
draconian law which
India is trying to make
justifiable. ~~is~~ violation
of fundamental right of
Right to freedom & liberty
Name: Shakeel Ahmed Basha
Student of Law of K.U.

to: chidambaram

from: Mudasi's

paper text message:

Banning on the Prepaid
sim is not simply the
Banning the helmsmen
but it simply is
crushing the workers
thoughts of the people
in the name of technology

to: A Shakael Ahmad Ahanger (Shopian)

from: Burhan and Irfan

paper text message:

We are sorry for what they did
to you and our sisters. But we
want to give you assurance from
the core of our hearts that we
are not going to leave you alone.
We will always STAND with you.
Even if ~~our~~ whole world is leaving you
alone, there will be always two
guys who will always be with
you.

Burden of Memories

Uzma Falak

My memory keeps getting in the way of your history

Agha Shahid Ali

A little over fifteen years ago, while holding my mother's arm, I looked out from a window of my house in Srinagar. Though the sight now blurred, my memory bears an indelible impression; men shouldering the dead in shrouds, women wailing and the air resonating with slogans of Hum Kya Chahtay? Azaadi! (What do we want? Freedom!) I vividly remember asking my mother, "When shall we get Azaadi?" I didn't know what Azaadi meant, though I knew that the people of my land desperately wanted it. A long silence had followed my question.

Today, after all those years, I stand at the same window, now with a broken pane, bearing witness to the same yearning, anger and asking the same question to myself. When shall we be free? No matter how hard our elders tried to shield us from the trail of destruction outside, their efforts failed. My generation grew up listening to terms like Curfew, Crackdown, Martyr, Tehreek. Azaadi was in the air – at the bakers', in dining rooms, in buses and on the streets.

My childhood passed under the shadow of a gun. Dreams were interrupted by the deafening sound of gunshots and grenades. I remember my brother's favourite past time was to make wooden toy-guns and play what he called 'encounter-encounter'. During cricket matches no one around me would cheer for India. As a child, I failed to comprehend the sentiment, however, gradually in those small but strong signs I started to find my identity as a Kashmiri.

On a sunny afternoon, I remember walking home from school with my friends. The roads were barricaded, the troopers stopped us and one of them frisked our school bags. He even frisked my friend's lunch box, which made me angry. I snapped back saying, "We are school going children and this is a lunch box. How can you expect..." He was red in the face as I looked sharply at him and walked away. Anger and excitement gripped me at the same time as I hurried back home to narrate what I thought was an act of gallantry. But, my mother was scared. She scolded me saying, "They could have shot you there and then."

At educational institutions books conceal our history, even maps are distorted. But planners of such tactics forget that children here live in conflict and life is the greatest teacher.

The heavy presence of troopers, the army pickets at every nook and corner, the barbed wires and barricades, the frisking – it all seemed ‘normal’ until I stepped out of Kashmir and found a different world. It was then I realized that my home was not ‘normal’.

Debates surrounding us made me inquisitive and I found that in the United Nations, the state of Jammu and Kashmir was registered as a dispute after litigation made by the first Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. The UN suggested a plebiscite, which was accepted by Nehru and promised to the people of the state during his speech on All India Radio in 1948 and also while addressing a mammoth gathering at Lal Chowk in Srinagar. Nehru made this promise time and again.

At educational institutions
books conceal our history,
even maps are distorted.

But instead of holding to the promise, New Delhi indulged in systematic abrogation of the special status guaranteed to the state under the Treaty of Accession. Till 1987, observers say not a single state election could be termed ‘free and fair’; such doctored democracy could only breed rebellion.

Two years later, an armed uprising erupted and New Delhi’s response was repressive, to say the least. The number of people killed is disputed, but the widely accepted figure is 70,000.

Since childhood I have only known the inhuman face of India’s presence. Victims of torture, rape, forced disappearances, unmarked graves, widows, half widows, orphans – their common address is Kashmir.

In 2005, a bomb blast outside Tyndale Biscoe and Mallinson girls’ school, where I studied, left me uneasy for days. Disturbing images of my classmates and children yelling, crying in pain; blood soaked uniforms and blood spilled floors. My helplessness at not being able to locate my younger brother in that huge crowd of media men, ambulances, OB vans and troopers still haunts me.

The picture perfect Kashmir, is not only about the picturesque Dal Lake and Mughal gardens it is also the most densely militarized zone in the world. Here minors are booked under draconian laws like the Public Safety Act (PSA), which allows people to be held without trial for up to two years. There are no juvenile homes here. The Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) gives Indian troops free hand to search, arrest, shoot and also provides them with immunity from prosecution. Human rights violations, a plagued justice system and bad governance are what people are protesting against. With my childhood memories hoarded, 2010 only reinforced my identity as a child of conflict. And, it also came with a yearning to express our collective pain. For me writing became a consolation and a need.

Marked as the year of Innocent Killings, 2010 began with the killing of Inayat Khan, 16, who was shot by troopers on his way to tuition on January 8. Days later, Wamiq Farooq and Zahid Farooq, both school going boys like Inayat, became victims of the government forces' actions.

Worst was yet to come; on April 29, the Indian Army killed three Kashmiri youth in a fake encounter near the Line of Control (LoC) in the Machil sector. The situation became aggravated after 17-year-old, Tufail Ahmed Mattoo, who was returning from tuitions, was hit in the head with a teargas canister inside the Gani Memorial stadium in Srinagar's old city. After that our days passed counting the dead; in total 118 people were killed during the summer unrest of 2010.

With every case that is forgotten, the memory sharpens.

The words of Faiz Ahmed Faiz sum up our miseries. *"The executioner's hands are clean, his nails transparent. The sleeves of each assassin are spotless. No sign of blood: No trace of red..."* Kashmiris have been alienated for decades. With every case that is forgotten, the memory sharpens. With every act of injustice a new stone thrower is born. The government has failed to reach people. In a volte-face, the government charged dead Wamiq, 13, of causing injury to a cop instead of bringing his murderers to book.

"There are countless pending cases and everyone knows the fate they meet. We don't have any hopes. We can't push it to the court for long. We are common, poor people and can't afford the costs. Allah is the witness and that is the only consolation." These words of a brother, whose sister was among those killed, speak volumes about the faith common man has in the judiciary.

Terms like healing touch, negotiation table and dialogue have been used and abused by the government repeatedly. In reality India's answer to stones has been brute force. Though India's diagnosis has always entered on development and employment, intentionally shoving the real issue under the rugs of oblivion. Labelling the unrest as part of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) backed is seen as yet another desecration of Kashmir's sentiment.

A 5th grader in my neighbourhood secretly comes out of his house, without letting his mother know, to pelt stones and register his protest. Is he, a boy in grade 5, funded by ISI or LeT or is he crying for employment? I will let you be the judge.

I saw 9-year-old Sameer Rah in shrouds, his tiny body on a stretcher, being carried for the burial. He was ruthlessly beaten to death, and when his body was found he still had a half eaten toffee in his mouth. I can't forget the face of his wailing mother and my own helplessness as I stood on the street testifying.

The tearful voice of Sameer's friend from a mosque loudspeaker still echoes in my head, "Sameer your blood will bring revolution!"

Concertina wires, barricades, burning tires or its leftover, crushed glasses, scattered stones – these have become signposts on every street in Kashmir. The graffiti Go India Go, We Want Freedom – a message loud and clear, is what every street in Kashmir says.

While the idea of Azaadi remains dear to the heart of Kashmir, there has been a transition from guns to stones and slogans and many other forms of dissent. While peaceful protests on the streets are quelled, they have reached cyberspace. Videos and pictures, depicting the gory realities of New Delhi's troops have been shared across the globe.

In these times, when the mind is busy in damage control and when everyday brings with it new ordeals, we have to keep our head and wage war against our memory lest we forget. Our memory is the strongest weapon in such times.

As a Kashmiri I don't hate Indians; I have many Indian friends. The protest is against the impotency of the Indian government to understand our sentiment. It is over 60 years and India should respect the ideals of the democracy that it claims to uphold, otherwise, its global image of being the world's 'largest democracy' might be dubbed as the biggest PR scam in history.

Iram, a forty-day-old baby girl, died just because she couldn't make it to hospital as government forces did not allow her family through during curfew. Iram's 5-year-old sister, when asked, innocently said woh margayi, military walon ne jaanay nahe diya (she died because troopers didn't let her go). Iram's sister will find her identity as a Kashmiri in these signs, the way I did when I was a child. And when she grows up she too will sing the songs of Azaadi.



to: GOD

from: Syed Iqbal Ali

paper text message:

Please Help us. We r in
trouble. We are Waiting
for your miracle.

Please do JUSTICE with
us.

STILL WAITING

to: Mr. Home Minister (P. Chidambaram)

from: Dawar Hussain

paper text message: Hello, it's been a long
time since we've met.

Well I'd like to talk to you
Send me your new number
(postpaid one) as you know
the prepaid services are
banned.

Oh! sorry ~~as~~ I forgot, you're
in Delhi. This ban is only
for J&K na!

to: Khaashid

from: Ashraf

paper text message:

Hi

Hi Dude, how are you?

when you will come back
from Jammu, I'm missing u

sez, haven't seen you
from last three months

--- Take care.

to:

from:

Satinder Singh

paper text message:

Sat sir Ahal

"Dear Brothers I have
arranged your tuition
and also deposit
some ~~money~~ charges for that

So, ~~now~~ come soon
and join tuition
as soon as possible.
Bye.

to: Mudassar A. Wani
from: Mudassar A. Rather

paper text message:

Hello Dr., How r you? What's up?
What about ICAR exam result? I
heard you've got good rank.
Congrats dear! Remember, you
have promised a treat! M
W8ng!!!

to: Harvinder Singh

from: Babu Singh

paper text message: - As you know that prepaid-system has been utterly bained in J&K state. Because of this very big inconvenience I could not communicate to you. I am very glad and delight to ~~the~~ know this that you're totally now recover from an cident. We are all missing to you please come and join us for my happiness and my amusement.
It is your sympathy towards me.
I really love you.

to: Mammolan Singh.

from: Kashmir University (M.A.K. Hostel)
Room no 32.

paper text message: Esteemed Sir, I want
to ask you how long you will
continue to deprive us from
Rt. to self determination and from
other basic rts. Has India been
able to suppress and crush the freedom
sentiment of Kashmiris in this long
span of 50 years, despite of the
fact that India has used every
inhuman and barbaric tool and
has deployed lakhs of troops for
the very purpose, so I suggest India
remind your own slaving and tear us
for the sake of God. Yours truly

to: All Kashmiris.

from: Nazish

paper text message:

It is well said that, "God
helps those who help themselves."
So it is the time for we
Kashmiris to join our hands
and fight for the common
aim and that is to
fight against the India and
the Indian Govt.
Insha Allah! We will be free
one day.

to: Umar Abdullah.

from: Dr. A. K. Hostel (University of Kashmir)
(Room No 32)

paper text message: Mr. C.M you have no
right to talk of Kashmir and about
Kashmiri people because you have
no mandate for that. You are
the selected agent and employee
of India as you and your father
have always represented India
in Kashmir and never represented
Kashmir in India. If you want
that history may ~~remember~~ ^{remember} you among
good people then you have necessarily
represent the voice of people the cry
for freedom. (AZADI from INDIA) Respect

to: Ruby

from: Baby

paper text message:

Salaam Dide,

How is climate in
Kashmir? is it soothing
for Delhiites? I am
missing you and others.
Pay my Salaam to
every one . .

to: Olivia

from: Dominic

paper text message:

Hi Olivia, herzlich
Glückwunsch zum Geburtstag,
konnte dich leider nicht erreichen
da in Kashmir SMS und
Prepaid-Mobiltelphone gesperrt
sind. Hoffe dir geht's gut,
bis Dalal
Dominic

to: people of India

from: Idrees

paper text message:

PLEASE LEAVE US
FREE !!

Interacting 60 kilometres Eastwards

Tanveer Ahmed

From Kokoi (Sehnsa) in Pakistani-administered Kashmir to Ari (Mendhar) in Indian-administered Kashmir...west of the Pir Panjaal and 40 odd kilometres south of Poonch City in the province of Jammu.

To my *naani's* sister

It has taken me over six months to generate the strength to communicate with you, dearest *naani*. Despite your due, I've found it so difficult to relate how empty I felt that morning upon arrival at the home that had initially been your sister's refuge in October 1947. On the 21st of September 2010, what had become her coveted nest – precipitously altered significance – when I saw her lying peacefully, as if asleep, but aghast at understanding that she had been strangled to death the night before.

It wasn't until I sensed that her spirit had escaped to a place more calm, kind and indiscriminate than the world we live in, that I mustered the strength to call your nephew Sanjay that afternoon.

When you both met each other for the first time in sixty-two years, in the summer of 2009, I always feared that it would be the first, last and only opportunity that you two would meet in this lifetime. It appears that The Almighty above has scripted that you - the eldest and fairest of your siblings - bear the pain of loss, greater than all the rest of us.

Knowing that she had overcome the trauma of abduction and Hindu-Muslim communal zealotry to evade death in a war zone against heavy odds in 1947 - made it harder to digest that in 2010 - she would ultimately succumb to an insidious attack on her life and property, committed by the family of her paternal grandson's in-laws. What *naani* had meticulously and selflessly protected throughout her life, for the sake of her adopted family, was recklessly and selfishly snatched by the latest additions to that family. Peace proved more lethal than war and the home more exposed than public space. *Naani's* death proved to be as much an indelible reminder of the human tragedy that befell our region as it was throughout her living moments.

Since that day, to repel the ghastly pain of losing my mother's mother forever, I worked with a renewed and single-minded vigour to re-integrate our disintegrated common space. I felt an unrelenting compulsion to transform the anguish of being eternally deprived of *naani's* affection into a meaningful contribution to erase the dread that a poisonous concoction of religion and politics had imposed on our society. The atrocities of 1947, committed by our people in the name of religion (Hindu, Sikh and Muslim) - out of fear of the other or motivated by mob instinct – need a healing balm.

The motive ever since I returned to our region in 2005, was to help restore the human aspects stalled by our divided existence. Ensuring that you both met was first and foremost on my mind. That our families, and all other families that have been cruelly separated since 1947, should meet as frequently as they wish without obstruction, is an aim that keeps my spirit alive.

I understand the difficulties associated with this task; *Naani* never wanted me to delve deep into the history of our region. She always suggested that I return to England and avoid the struggle and heartache involved in addressing the complexities of this tortured place. I know what the Hindu community that found itself on this side of the 'divide' had to endure in 1947. You and the rest of the Hindu (and Sikh) community that had to migrate, as well as those that were killed or forced to accept Islam, deserve an unequivocal public apology from the administration here. Such words might assist in acknowledging a deserved empathy for the Muslims of the Kashmir Valley; those who have conversely suffered from India's military presence. The life-long torment endured by *naani* and many others must be understood so as to prevent prejudice overpowering the natural instinct to co-exist. I feel duty-bound to work for this objective.

The past two months have been particularly painful. I've taken a break from activity to reassess. I try to deflect the pain of her loss by reminding myself that I spent most of the first four years of my life and the last six years of *naani's* life in her proximity. Particularly, her last forty days in this world which, bar a couple of days in between, I had visited her everyday. If by midday, I hadn't shown up at her house, she would walk the ten minutes or so across the village and turn up at the gate of my house to take me 'home'. She would insist on me staying the night every time but because of her paternal grandson's wife's presence, I always thought the wiser.

Or so I thought. Little did I know that she (the girl in question) had hatched a plan with her mother and brother to steal money and gold that was kept in the house. Although I sensed some friction between *naani* and the girl at times, I couldn't imagine something so serious brewing and I never questioned *naani*. True to her spirit of protecting what she had been given in trust (a trait that our beloved prophet Muhammad was renowned for), she showed equal faithfulness in keeping domestic matters private.

The motive ever since I returned to our region in 2005, was to help restore the human aspects stalled by our divided existence. Ensuring that you both met was first and foremost on my mind.

That fateful morning at the morgue, as I clasped the hand that had so lovingly fed me in my formative years as much as it did for the past forty days, I almost felt angry that she hadn't told me of the danger that she must have known she was in. It is painful to accept how fragile life really is. The seemingly limitless supply of love that I had taken nourishment from and for granted, since birth, had abruptly dried up without notice... forever. How I will spend the rest of my life without her is something I never contemplated before her death. Now I think of it incessantly.

I remember the afternoon before that horrible night, she asked me to phone you. Usually, over the phone, she would console you for the trials and tribulations that life had delivered. That day she needed consoling. It was there in her voice, but I couldn't sense it at the time.

My five year old daughter (whose photo you have) told me today that I must go and visit you. She wants to come too. Meeting you again would be highly emotive but it would momentarily mitigate *naani's* loss. She wasn't just my *naani*, she symbolised and upheld the diversity of our State's shared co-existence. So nobly, so adroitly.

I know that the longer I live the more I'll miss her.



to: Govt. of India.

from: Malik Saraj

paper text message: - They don't believe in
Kashmiris.

to: Aarif Nissar
from: Shefat Youssef

paper text message:

A.a... How are you? And how is
study going on? Hope you are
preparing well for the exam.
Say my salam to your family.
Keep going...

to:

ALMIGHTY ALLAH

from:

Iyeda Afshar, your Believer

paper text message:

Dear Allah,

THANKS FOR EVERYTHING;

every joy, every sorrow -
every moment of life
You were with ME!

THANKS SO MUCH!

to: INDIA

from: IMTIYAZ AHMAD

paper text message:

INDIA QUIT KASHMIR!
IMMEDIATELY!

It is in the interest of
ALL - KASHMIR,
PAKISTAN as well as
YOU - India!

to: Sayakat Sheikh Tangdan Karamah

from:

paper text message:

موبیل فون نہ چلنے سے کئی گھنٹے میں کافی نقصان ہوا
لیکن میں آپ اس پر جگہ رہتا ہوں جہاں موبیل
فون تو کیا کوئی پرندہ بھی نہیں مارتا میں
آپ کی وصیت سے گورنمنٹ کو اپیل کرتا ہوں
اس جگہ سے علاقے کے لوگوں کو بھی موبیل فون
کی ضرورت ہے اس علاقے کو موبیل فون دے
کر فربہ لوگوں کے روزگار کو بہتر بنا دے ۔

to: EVERY SENSABLE PERSON

from: Huma.

paper text message:

EVERY ONE IS BESTOWED IN
HIS/HER LIFE. ITS A FEW
WHO COULD LIVE IT.

GIVE THE THE
WORLD A HAVE
BEST AND PREPARE
YOURSELF FOR
THE WORST!

to: Munazza Shahdad

from: ~~Hafiz~~ Ali Asgar

paper text message:

I am forced to send this paper text message as the prepaid services in Kashmir are banned. So I can't send any SMS.

Well let them ban everything let them even ban our air and water. But they still can't ban our hearts beating for each other. LOL

to: Mantasha

from: Hashraf

paper text message:

Ha. I hope you are doing well. When are your 4th Sem. exams scheduled for? I expect you to visit my place after you are done with the exams. Lolz. Take care dear and All the best for your exams 😊

to: P. S. Bali

from: Nida

paper text message:

You have been a
great friend. God
Bless and stay
in touch.

to:

God

from:

Sana Teclani

paper text message:

Right from 1st standard,
read in books, India is
the largest democracy in
world. Is this the democra-
cy, I wonder.

"Almighty Save Us
from Atrocities,
Save Kashmir"

to: Mirwaiz Umar Farooq

from: Aadil.

paper text message:

I thought, I will send u
a text since prepaid are
banned in Kashmir!

Please move out of
Quiet Diplomacy.!

~~How~~ many time we will
fool our selves!

to: President Obama

from: Omais Syed

paper text message:

A few days back you got a
noble peace prize congrats for
that but i dont see any
change that u ~~for~~ brought
in the world to make peace,
may be the noble prize may
make you to realize this
every time you see it.

to: People of India

from: M. GOWHAR FAROOQ

paper text message:

WHY DON'T U REALIZE
WHAT UR GOVT IS DOING TO
UR COUNTRY

WAKEUP!!
OTHERWISE UR BOUND TO
GET TREMORS...

to: Rajbir

from: Sameer Ahmad

paper text message:

Tusi Ki Kar rahi ho? Oye
ajkal hamari yaad b nahi
ati hai. Kya baat hai?
Kahan par ho aaj? Jawab
likhna. Bye.

to: Honey.

from: Faizan.

paper text message:

When I say I love
you. I mean it.

Returning Home

Majid Maqbool

The Go-air aircraft that took off from Indira Ghandi International airport in New Delhi was some 20 minutes away from Srinagar airport. A young girl, probably in her early twenties, was sitting next to me in the flight, looking out from the window. Quiet and expressionless till then, she suddenly erupted in joy. I was awakened out of my half sleep. As soon as the vast expanse of mountains—suggesting entry into the Kashmir valley— appeared from the small window of the aircraft, she exclaimed aloud, “Vooooow!” Almost jumping from her seat, her reaction evoked curious looks from other passengers. She was too engrossed in the view outside to take any notice.

To get a better view of the peaks, she leaned some more towards the window, her face pressed close to the windowpane. The young, cheerful girl from Delhi, it turned out, was travelling to Kashmir for the first time.

The sight of the overwhelming mountain peaks – that seemed to reach out to the skies from the window – lit up a smile on her face. As more and more mountains of bluish hue came in view, her smile grew wider, reaching her eyes. Sitting in their respective seats her friends, who were accompanying her, also seemed excited and quite fascinated by the breathtaking view presented from their windows. She waived at them; they exchanged smiles. Then she took out a digital camera from her handbag. Placing it close to the glass of the window, she clicked, several times—at times capturing the same unchanging view of mountain peaks of varying heights. Looking at the captured images on her camera, she would again smile on every captured view, and pass the camera to her friends sitting in their adjacent seats. They, too, would capture the mountainous scenes from their window, and then giggle at the captured images. For them the majestic mountains were a beautiful precursor of more beauty that lay ahead of them in Kashmir.

For the girl sitting next to me, a ‘paradise on earth’ was waiting to be visited and enjoyed. While she was engrossed in the outside view, I thought about this ‘paradise’ that conceals the real tragedy of Kashmir. I thought about the Kashmir that continues to be carefully and quite cleverly presented to the outside world by the Indian state and its media. However, this Kashmir – presented on those ‘incredible India’ ads, for example – is very different from the Kashmir I grew up in. The Kashmir that is proudly claimed as the ‘crown of India’ on tourist brochures and government media outlets (a strong allure for an average Indian and foreign tourist) is not the Kashmir I have known. A clever manipulation is at work: The beauty of Kashmir and its landscape is heightened, manifold; while its people, their suffering, death, torture and disappearances

at the hands of the state forces over the years are excluded from those projected images. Those who come from outside the state to spend their holidays in Kashmir rarely see beyond the obvious, beyond what the State tells them about Kashmir: ‘crown of India; paradise on earth!’

...‘paradise’ is a distorted picture of Kashmir, a carefully hidden truth wrapped up in lies.

Unlike the young Delhi based girl, I was returning home after spending some weeks in Delhi. For my generation (those born in the ‘80s) Kashmir is a wounded paradise. The wound is big, and it keeps getting bigger. It festers. It refuses to heal. It hurts when ‘paradise’ is endlessly talked about, and the wounds inflicted on people are overlooked and forgotten. Over the years

the beauty of Kashmir has been used to conceal innumerable tragedies and injustices inflicted on its people. (Only last summer, over 100 people, including many teenagers, were killed by the state forces in anti-India protests). The tourists come and enjoy the stereotyped paradise: a stroll in the beautiful gardens, a shikara ride in Dal lake; the allure of famous destinations like Gulmarg and Pahalgam.

Breathe in the fresh air of ‘paradise’, and then, leave. But for Kashmiris – having lived a militarized life of constant seize; forever locked in this beautiful prison -- ‘paradise’ can be a deceptive illusion. In the imposing hands of the state, ‘paradise’ is a distorted picture of Kashmir, a carefully hidden truth wrapped up in lies.

Meanwhile, the pilot made an announcement: “Ladies and gentlemen, fasten your seatbelts. We will be landing shortly in the Srinagar airport!”

The girls, growing restless by every minute, exchanged anxious looks and smiles. The girl sitting next to me went back to the window, fascinated by a more detailed view the window presented now. As the plane started losing height, green swaths of rice fields demarcated by thin lines and vast stretches of greenery and shiny rooftops of houses came in view. And as the features of the landscape below became sharper, the girl took some more pictures from her digital camera. She wanted to capture a detailed view of everything that came in view. The idea of visiting ‘paradise-on-earth’, for the first time, was exciting for her.

I was preoccupied by a different thought. My idea of Kashmir, based on the unresolved and painful memories of growing up in the Kashmir of a turbulent 90s, was very different from hers. It was akin to experiencing hell in paradise, and living with it. Fear and death acquired some material shape, transforming into some real, touchable entities. Friends and dear ones lost, as if they never lived, as years went past, cruelly. While I survived, others died, were disappeared, tortured... Every death left behind memories that lived with the survivors. All these memories were (are) in conflict with the images of ‘paradise’ brought out by the state for the people outside Kashmir.

The Indian State repeatedly projects images of ‘beauty’ and ‘paradise’ for the outside world, and cuts out the people from those projected pictures. Peoples’ suffering and their shared history of struggle is thus excluded. The beauty of landscape is amplified and a sanitized Kashmir presented—a ‘paradise on earth’, a holiday destination to be visited and enjoyed. But it’s the people that make the place and not the other way round. It’s their memories (of decades of suffering brought on them) that shape the idea of homeland in the hearts of the people of Kashmir.

Fear and death acquired some material shape, transforming into some real, touchable entities.

How does Kashmir look from above? I wondered in the flight back home. Innumerable bunkers littered everywhere. Indian military vehicles on civilian roads, and thousands and thousands of paramilitary troopers patrolling the roads with guns slung across their shoulders... If looked at several thousand feet above ground level, can the beautiful landscape and the overwhelming mountain peaks conceal the ugly structures of occupation? I looked more keenly from the window. Except for the huge mountains, the rivers coursing through them, and the open sky painted with huge patches of clouds, nothing else was visible. As the plane lost more height, the features of land below became more distinguishable. And as the aircraft neared the runway of Srinagar airport, the militarized colors—shades of yellow, blue and grey – painted on roofs of similar looking clusters of military complexes build around the airport came in view. For the girl sitting next to me, however, these colours were indistinguishable and insignificant to her idea of Kashmir.

The long lines of Indian military vehicles could be seen as the plane lost some more height to make the landing. And as the wheels of the plane touched the runway, the Indian troops could be seen walking around with their guns. The small military jeeps, in army green colour, also came in view. The vehicles were moving alongside a long line of similar looking military complexes build around the airport. Not surprisingly, the airport looked more like a military base than a civilian airport.

The ugly colors of occupation that came in view from the small window of the plane were, for me, more striking than the beautiful landscape of Kashmir the girl next to me saw for the first time. She can’t understand the pain that cements me with the haunted memories of my homeland — memories that we are repeatedly told to forget, and make ‘peace’ with the past. But then our struggle is also against forgetfulness, against those who want us to forget the unforgotten.

The aircraft finally came to a halt on the runway. The girl quickly detached the seat belt, got hold of her handbag, and stood up to leave. Ahead of me, she walked hurriedly towards the exit door. Standing near the exit door the neatly uniformed air steward smilingly told every passenger stepping out of the plane: ‘Thank you for travelling with us’. ‘Have a nice time..!’

The young girl stood still near the exit door. A pleasant waft of cool breeze blew across her face. Her long tresses, spread over her shoulders, briefly lifted in the air. ‘Vooooow’, she said again, turning towards her friends walking behind her, ‘its windy, it’s cool!’ She stood there briefly, allowing that peaceful feeling to sink in. While coming down the staircase, she readjusted her mane around her ears. In between she kept turning around to look at her friends. They were all smiling, all excited. Paradise!!

I took a deep breath of fresh air. Home is everything, I thought as I stepped on the ground.

...from a distance they seemed indistinguishable from each other. Unlike anxious troops on the roads of Srinagar city, all of them looked content, happy. They were all going home.

Slowly, I began walking towards the exit terminal to collect my luggage. A long line of RR (Rashtriya Rifles) personnel in their neat military uniform could be seen preparing for their departure. They were identifying their luggage, and about to board a separate aircraft waiting for them. Wearing similar military caps, from a distance they seemed indistinguishable from each other. Unlike anxious troops on the roads of Srinagar city, all of them looked content, happy. They were all going home. The expressions on their faces seemed to suggest they were leaving Kashmir forever. They kept hugging their colleagues who had come to see them off.

For the first time in my life I felt happy on seeing the Indian soldiers. Their departure — however brief it might have been — evoked a heightened feeling of elation in me. To allow this unique feeling to sink in, I stopped walking. Forgetting my own homecoming, for a brief while, I was taken over by the idea of their departure. And I didn’t want to think about their return. In the face of their departure my return seemed less exciting. The girl walking with me also seemed interested in their departure. But her interest was for a different reason. She again brought out her digital camera from her handbag. And then she clicked several pictures of their departure.

After she captured the soldiers of her nation, who went on to happily board the aircraft in a disciplined queue, waving their hands in goodbyes to their colleagues, I instinctively told her with a smile: ‘One day all of them will have to leave Kashmir.’ She turned around, and looked at me, surprised. Her smile had disappeared; her eyes narrowed. But she said nothing. She just walked ahead of me. ‘Have a nice time in Kashmir,’ I said from a distance before she disappeared along with her friends in a rented taxi.

She didn’t say goodbye.



Notes on Contributors

Suvaid Yaseen was born and raised in Srinagar, Kashmir. He has studied political science at Delhi University where he is currently completing his MA. Musing, he writes once in a while.

Majid Maqbool is a young journalist and writer from Kashmir whose work has been published extensively, in print and online, both in Kashmir and internationally. He has written for Al Jazeera, Greater Kashmir, Kashmir Dispatch.com, Conveyor, Hard News, Media Voice, OPEN magazine, Governance Now magazine, Tehelka, India's English language weekly, and Dispatches International, among other publications. His writings can be found at maqboolvoice.blogspot.com

Zooni Tickoo is a student of Dance and Psychology. She resides in the city of New Delhi, belongs to the valley of Kashmir and yet is based somewhere in the lateral worlds of all movement, literally. She likes to write sporadically, read and dance more often and tends to day-dream about Kashmir almost all the time.

Iram Razzaq is a visual artist who grew up in Pakistani Administered Kashmir and now lives in the United Kingdom where she graduated from Manchester Metropolitan University in 2002. Being part of one side of the divide her art, and occasional poetry in both Pahari and English, engage deeply with her home, Kashmir, and its occupation.

Rahim Seab is one among the few who continue to perform *Ladishab* a humourous Kashmiri folk form.

Gowhar Fazili chanced upon a video of Rahim Seab's performance on facebook and was roused by the lighthearted manner in which the ballad rued over the damage mobile phones have done to our society. When he isn't translating *Ladishab* online Gowhar pursues research on Kashmir in Social Anthropology. He has been a socio-cultural and ecological activist in Kashmir and has taught Political Science (rather creatively) to students at graduate level.

Uzma Falak was born in Srinagar in 1989. She studied at Tyndale Biscoe and Mallinson Girls School and completed her Bachelors in Mass Communication and Multimedia from Government Degree College Baramulla in March 2011. In 2010 she began writing for the online news portal Kashmir Dispatch.

Tanveer Ahmed is a writer, broadcaster and activist working for civil society development in Pakistani administered Kashmir. He spent most of his life in Britain and had worked as a journalist covering the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq before returning 'home' (to Kashmir) in April 2005, initially to re-unite his family across the LOC.

Alana Hunt is an artist and writer whose practice is best understood not so much as a producer of art-objects, but rather as a catalyst of culturally charged encounters – experiences, feelings, a kind of shared breath. www.alanahunt.net

The night is your cottage industry now,
the day is your brisk emporium.
The world is full of paper.

Write to me.

Agha Shahid Ali
Stationary

www.alanahunt.net/papertxtmsgsfromkashmir.html

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