Life after death: On Kashmir after Syed Ali Shah Geelani

India must seize the opportunity to start a political dialogue to resolve the Kashmir issue.

Syed Ali Shah Geelani was more an Islamist than a Kashmiri nationalist, and his demise at the age of 92 brings down the curtain on a phase of separatist politics in the Valley. He represented a strident pro-Pakistan stream of Kashmiri separatism. Geelani inspired armed rebellion and remained a steadfast barrier for any potential political dialogue between New Delhi and Kashmir separatists. He opposed a settlement of the Kashmir question that the former dictator of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, had helped formulate. Geelani’s recalcitrance only hardened with age, but his death did not stir any public outpouring of Kashmir grievance even when heavy policing and communication restrictions in the Valley are accounted for. But there can be no denial of the fact that people have grown wary of the relentless cycle of conflict. Geelani’s brand of politics was losing mass support even before the Indian crackdown on separatists acquired a new aggressive edge after the Pulwama suicide attack in February 2019. The Narendra Modi government abandoned negotiations in Kashmir, not only with separatists but even with mainstream political parties, save a half-hearted initiative in June this year. After the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir was stripped of its autonomy and reorganised into two Union Territories in August 2019, the decline of separatists including Geelani was evident.

The volatile situation in Afghanistan, and Pakistan’s euphoria about the return to power of the Taliban in Kabul will have an impact on the situation in Kashmir. The Taliban have said they would ‘raise voice for Kashmir Muslims’ and Pakistan has always maintained that peace in Afghanistan is connected to a resolution in Kashmir. Global Islamists are exulting over the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan. With Pakistan emerging as a key influencer in Kabul, the U.S. will have to seek new terms of engagement with it. New Delhi has been in self-congratulatory mode over Kashmir. Far from secession, even autonomy questions have been rendered irrelevant in conversations on Kashmir, which now revolve around restoration of its full statehood. However, the relative calm and silence in the Valley should not be mistaken for acquiescence. Political parties have expressed frustration over the fact that the June dialogue between them and Mr. Modi was aimless and not followed through.

The political dialogue with mainstream parties must be carried ahead in full earnest. The chaos in Afghanistan presents challenges for India, especially in Kashmir, which need wider deliberations with the international community. But Geelani’s death could be an opportunity to set the stage for new conversations with various Kashmiri outfits. The Government must use this moment to initiate a comprehensive dialogue to find a way forward for a future of the people of Kashmir as an integral part of India.
Vocabulary

1. **Life after** death (noun) – The hypothetical existence or survival of the soul after death.

2. **Seize** (verb) – Take (an opportunity) eagerly and decisively.

3. **Dialogue** (noun) – conversation, talk, communication बातचीत, संवाद

4. **Resolve** (verb) – settle, sort out, solve, find a समाधान करना

5. **Demise** (noun) – A person's death. मृत्यु

6. **Bring down the curtain on** (phrase) – Bring to an end. अंत होना

7. **Strident** (adjective) – harsh, raucous, rough कठोर

8. **Pro** – (prefix) – Favoring; supporting. समर्थक-

9. **Stream** (noun) – A mass of people or things moving continuously in the same direction. भीड़, जनसमूह

10. **Separatism** (noun) – dissension, dissent, dissidence अलगाववाद

11. **Inspire** (verb) – stimulate, motivate, cause प्रोत्साहित करना

12. **Armed** (adjective) – Involving the use of firearms. हथियारबंद, सशस्त्र

13. **Rebellion** (noun) – defiance, disobedience, rebelliousness, विद्रोह, गदर

14. **Steadfast** (adjective) – firm, determined, resolute, रुद्र, स्थिर, अद्वित

15. **Barrier** (noun) – obstacle, obstruction, hurdle, अवरोध

16. **Separatist** (noun) – A person who supports the separation of a particular group of people from a larger body on the basis of ethnicity, religion, or gender. संप्रदायवादी

17. **Settlement** (noun) – resolution, sorting out समाधान, समझौता,

18. **Question** (noun) – issue, matter, problem, मुद्दा, मामला, विषय

19. **Dictator** (noun) – A person who behaves in an autocratic way. तानाशाह

20. **Formulate** (verb) – Create or devise methodically (a strategy or a proposal) निरूपित करना

21. **Recalcitrance** (noun) – A person with an obstinately uncooperative attitude. असहयोगी रवैये वाला व्यक्ति

22. **Harden** (verb) – Make or become more severe and less sympathetic. कठोर होना

23. **Stir** (verb) – spur, drive, rouse, prompt उमड़ना

24. **Outpouring** (noun) – An outburst of strong emotion.
25. **Grievance** (noun) – complaint, criticism, objection शिकायत, कष्ट, विपत्ति

26. **Policing** (noun) – The maintenance of law and order by a police force. पुलिस तैनाती

27. **Account for** (phrasal verb) – reason for कारण होना

28. **Denial** (noun) – refusal, withholding इनकार, खण्डन

29. **Wary** (noun) – cautious, careful, circumspect; Feeling or showing caution about possible dangers or problems. एहतियाती, चौकस, सावधान

30. **Relentless** (adjective) – persistent, continuing, constant निरंतर,

31. **Cycle** (noun) – series, sequence शृंखला

32. **Mass** (adjective) – large-scale, extensive व्यापक, विस्तृत

33. **Crackdown** (noun) – clampdown, getting tough, काररवाई

34. **Edge** (noun) – limit, border, borderline, सीमा, हट

35. **Abandon** (verb) – give up, stop, cease, drop, छोड़ना; रद्द करना

36. **Negotiation** (noun) – discussion, discussions, talks बातचीत, वार्ता

37. **Mainstream** (adjective) – Belonging to or characteristic of the mainstream. मुख्य धारा, विशेष पक्ष

38. **Half – hearted** (adjective) – unenthusiastic, lukewarm अनमोल, उदासीन

39. **Erstwhile** (adjective) – former, old, past भूतपूर्व

40. **Strip** (verb) – remove, take away from, बेदखल करना, हटाना, छीन लेना

41. **Autonomy** (noun) – self-government, independence, self-rule स्वतंत्र अधिकार, स्वयं शासन

42. **Evident** (adjective) – obvious, apparent, noticeable, प्रत्यक्ष, स्पष्ट

43. **Volatile** (adjective) – tense, strained तनावपूर्ण

44. **Euphoria** (noun) – elation, happiness, joy, joyousness उत्साह

45. **Maintain** (verb) – declare, assert दावा करना, जोर देकर कहना

46. **Resolution** (noun) – solution to, answer to, समाधान

47. **Exult** (verb) – rejoice at, rejoice in, take delight in, मग्न होना, बहुत प्रसन्न होना

48. **Key** (adjective) – crucial, central, essential मुख्य
49. **Influencer** (noun) – A person or thing that influences another.

50. **Seek** (verb) – Attempt or desire to obtain or achieve (something)

51. **Engagement** (noun) – The action of engaging or being engaged.

52. **Self – congratulatory** (adjective) – Unduly complacent or proud regarding one's personal achievements or qualities; self-satisfied.

53. **Far from** (phrase) – Very different from being; tending to the opposite of.

54. **Secession** (noun) – The act of becoming independent; The act of leaving an government or organisation, esp. the decision of a state to separate from the government.

55. **Revolve** (around) (verb) – be concerned with, be preoccupied with

56. **Restoration** (noun) – The action of returning something to a former owner, place, or condition.

57. **Acquiescence** (noun) – consent, agreement, acceptance

58. **Aimless** (adjective) – purposeless, pointless

59. **Follow through** (phrasal verb) – bring to completion, bring to a finish; Continue an action or task to its conclusion.

60. **Carry ahead** (phrasal verb) – To continue or develop something

61. **In Earnest** (phrase) – Occurring to a greater extent or more intensely than before.

62. **Chaos** (noun) – disorder, disarray, disorganization, अराजकता, अव्यवस्था

63. **Deliberation** (noun) – Long and careful consideration or discussion. चिंतक, विमर्श, सोच-विचार

64. **Set the stage for** (phrase) – Prepare the conditions for (the occurrence or beginning of something)

65. **Outfits** (noun) – organization, set-up, enterprise

66. **A way forward** (phrase) – The course of action to be followed in future. आगे का रास्ता, कार्यप्रणाली

67. **Integral** (adjective) – essential, fundamental, basic अभिन्न, मूलभूत, मौलिक

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Practice Exercise

Direction (Q1 – Q3): Select the best express synonym of the given word.

1. **Strident**
   A. Rebut
   B. raucous
   C. Sordid
   D. Touchstone

2. **Steadfast**
   A. Moribund
   B. Elliptical
   C. Arduous
   D. Firm

3. **Relentless**
   A. Idyllic
   B. Edify
   C. Continuing
   D. Dormant

4. What is the **antonym of ‘Abandon’?**
   A. Aloof
   B. Accept
   C. Arduous
   D. Admonish

5. **Idioms and phrase**
   Set the stage for
   A. Cause someone to be in opposition or conflict with someone or something.
   B. Make someone seem distinctive or superior.
   C. Prepare the conditions for (the occurrence or beginning of something)
   D. Offset something against something else.

6. **Para Jumble based on Editorial: An uneven uptick**
   P. The only blip in the past 11 months came in June, when takings fell below ₹93,000 crore in the aftermath of the second COVID-19 wave
   Q. Those curbs have been progressively easing up — just as they were a year ago when the country saw a phased unlocking from the national lockdown.
   R. that compelled mobility restrictions across States.
   S. With gross revenues of ₹1.12-lakh crore in August, the GST has now yielded over ₹1-lakh crore a month for almost a full year.
   A. SPRQ  
   B. PQRS
   C. SRQP
   D. RQSP
President Joe Biden has mounted a stiff defence of his position on pulling American troops and civilians out of Kabul, an operation widely regarded as and disastrous, vowing that the era of in the politics of other nations had ended. His comments came in the context of sharp criticism of an evidently poorly planned exit, with deadly terror attacks near Kabul airport. Since the withdrawal, U.S. polls suggest that nearly twice as many people disapproved of his management of the end of the long war as those who approved, that 56% of surveyed individuals disapproved of his performance on foreign policy, and his overall job approval rating had hit a new low of 44%. When the poll statistic of 71% of Americans believing that the U.S. mission in Afghanistan was a failure is taken together with Mr. Biden’s promise to the regime change paradigm in foreign policy, it begs the question of whether such a new era of U.S. non-interventionism is possible or likely. The answer depends on the extent to which the U.S. believes it can manage the forces of international terrorism from afar, sans boots on the ground.

7. A. flaunt  B. Tautological  C. marshaled  D. botched
8. A. concise  B. meddling  C. civil  D. Hapless
9. A. coterminous  B. Assiduous  C. Scrupulous  D. Elliptical
10. A. Aristocratic  B. Touchstone  C. Agenda  D. eschew

[Answers]

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Answers


[Cloze test]

Explanations

6) With gross revenues of ₹1.12-lakh crore in August, the GST has now yielded over ₹1-lakh crore a month for almost a full year. The only blip in the past 11 months came in June, when takings fell below ₹93,000 crore in the aftermath of the second COVID-19 wave that compelled mobility restrictions across States. Those curbs have been progressively easing up — just as they were a year ago when the country saw a phased unlocking from the national lockdown.

7) **Botched** (adjective) – (of a task) carried out badly or carelessly. दिलाई से काम करना

8) **Meddle** (verb) – interfere, butt in, intrude हस्तक्षेप करना

9) **Coterminous** (adjective) – Coextensive, commensurate, अनुरूप, सम्मेश

10) **Eschew** (verb) – abstain from, refrain from, give up त्याग करना, छोड़ना

Explanations of other important words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.NO</th>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>Rebut</td>
<td>verb To contradict; to argue in opposition to; to prove to be false</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sordid</td>
<td>adjective Vile; filthy; squalid</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Touchstone</td>
<td>noun A standard; a test of authenticity or quality</td>
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<td>Q2</td>
<td>Moribund</td>
<td>adjective Dying</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Elliptical</td>
<td>adjective Oval; missing a word or words; obscure</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Arduous</td>
<td>adjective Hard; Difficult</td>
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<td>Q3</td>
<td>Idyllic</td>
<td>adjective Charming in a rustic way; naturally peaceful</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edify</td>
<td>adjective To enlighten; instruct, especially in moral or religious matter</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dormant</td>
<td>adjective Inactive; as though asleep; asleep</td>
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</table>
| **Q4** | **Aloof** | adjective | Uninvolved; standing off; keeping one’s distance | अलग, दूर, पथकर्त </p>  
| Arduous | adjective | Hard; Difficult | कठिन </p>  
| **Q7** | **Flaunt** | verb | To show off; to display ostentiously | इलालागना, शान दिखाना </p>  
| Tautological | adjective | Redundant; circular | अनुलप्त </p>  
| **Q8** | **Concise** | adjective | Brief and to the point; succinct | संक्षिप्त </p>  
| Civil | adjective | Polite; civilized; courteous | विनम्र </p>  
| Hapless | adjective | Unlucky | अभावी </p>  
| **Q9** | **Assiduous** | adjective | Hardworking; busy; quite intelligent/diligent | परिश्रमी </p>  
| Scrupulous | adjective | Strict; careful; hesitant for ethical reasons | ईमानदार, सावधान </p>  
| Elliptical | adjective | Oval; missing a word or words; obscure | अंडाकार </p>  
| **Q10** | **Aristocratic** | adjective | Of noble birth; snobbish | भल्य, क्लीनतंत्रीय, </p>  
| Touchstone | noun | A standard; a test of authenticity or quality | प्रामाणिकता या गुणवत्ता का परीक्षण </p>  
| Agenda | noun | Program; the thing to be done | कार्यसूची |