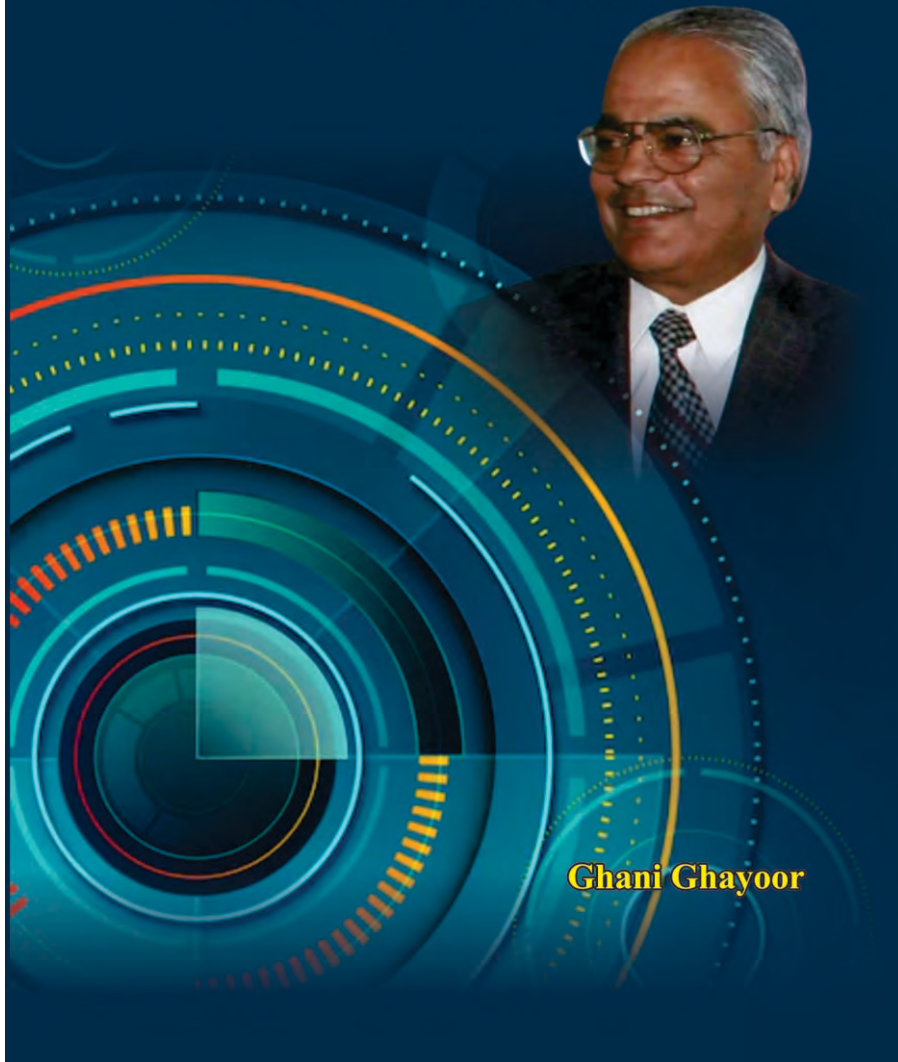


FROM SHIELD TO VISION

**THE EXTRAORDINARY JOURNEY
OF MASUD CHOUDHARY**



Ghani Ghayoor

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By
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FOREWORD

"From Shield to Vision" is more than just a biography; it is the tale of a man who wielded the sword of justice and nurtured a vision for an empowered society. Masud Choudhary's life was a symphony of resilience, leadership, and compassion. From his early days in Kalaban to his pivotal role in shaping institutions and empowering communities, he left an indelible mark on every sphere he touched.

This book, written and compiled by Abdul Ghani Jagil (Ghani Ghayoor) is a tribute to his unparalleled legacy—a journey that took him from the rigorous discipline of police service to the noble pursuit of education and social upliftment. His life reminds us that with courage, vision, and a steadfast commitment to one's ideals, it is possible to transform challenges into triumphs.

Ghani Ghayoor

From Shield to Vision

Prepare to be inspired as you delve into the story of Masud Choudhary—a man whose legacy continues to light the path for generations to come.

MehtabJagil, IRS

PREFACE

Masud Ahmed Choudhary, widely known as Masud Choudhary, is referred to by his full name in the title and throughout the contents of this book to maintain consistency and clarity, while acknowledging the name he is commonly known by.

Masud Choudhary, a distinguished police officer, was far more than a figure in law enforcement. He was a visionary reformer, a pioneering administrator, and a beacon of hope for countless marginalized individuals. With an unwavering commitment to progress and upliftment, he excelled not only in his professional duties but also as a trailblazer following in the footsteps of luminaries like Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Dr. Zakir Hussain. His legacy includes the establishment of the Gurjar Desh Charitable Trust

in Channi, Jammu, a lasting symbol of his dedication to social and educational reform.

Tasked with founding Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University, Masud Choudhary brought this ambitious vision to life with extraordinary efficiency, creating an institution that empowers the youth of historically underprivileged communities. His tireless efforts bridged the gap between tradition and modernity, leaving a transformative impact on the socio-economic landscape of the marginalized sections of Society.

This book is more than a biography; it is a tapestry enriched with reflections from those who influenced or were profoundly impacted by Masud Choudhary. Their perspectives, interwoven with his life story, lend depth and dimension, making this work a historical and biographical account of lasting significance.

The timeless words of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow capture the essence of his journey:

"Lives of great men all remind us,
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us,
Footprints on the sands of time."

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Masud Choudhary's life exemplifies these sentiments. Whether through his dedication to education, his commitment to justice, or his pioneering institutional work, his legacy continues to inspire.

This account aspires to present not only the narrative of his life but also the values and lessons it embodies. It is my hope that readers will find in these pages a torchlight of inspiration, illuminating the path to service, justice, and progress.

With great humility, I place this work in your hands, trusting it will honor the life of a man who devoted himself to the upliftment of others.

Ghani Ghayoor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book (and its earlier Urdu versions) would not have been possible without the invaluable contributions of Masud Choudhary himself. I am deeply grateful for the long and insightful conversations that shaped the outline of this work. I also acknowledge the contributions of prominent personalities of our time, including (Professor Dr. A.K. Kaul, Ali Hussain Hakla (Trustee), Shoket Javed (Trustee), Shaukat Parvez (Trustee) and others, whose diverse perspectives enriched the content significantly.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to my younger brother, Mehtab Jagil, for his generous support during the demanding process of structuring and editing the book. Additionally, I am grateful to Masud Choudhary's family, whose personal reflections provided a deeper understanding of his remarkable persona. In particular, I wish to

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mention his son, Arfat Masud, who continues to uphold his father's legacy.

Lastly, I express my sincere gratitude to my encouraging family, my better half Waheeda Rehman, my son Saqib Ghani, and my precious daughter Insha Ghani, for their encouragement and support, allowing me to dedicate time to this and many other endeavors.

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MASUD CHOUDHARY'S APPEARANCE AND A BRIEF OUTLINE

Masud Choudhary's appearance exudes a distinct charisma. His round face, wheatish complexion, and broad, arched eyebrows frame a pair of expressive, intelligent eyes. A couple of moles on his right cheek seem to act as marks of emphasis and significance, as though inviting one to examine his persona with care and attentiveness. His personality is multi-layered, revealing depth and complexity upon closer observation. When he looks at someone, his gaze is steady and piercing, weighing the other person from head to toe in an instant. At times, his eyes carry a hint of critique, and at other moments, they brim with an air of triumphant confidence. The expanse of his forehead, merging seamlessly into the receding hairline, evokes a sense of intellectual presence reminiscent of Faiz Ahmed Faiz, a famous progressive poet of the sub-continent. A radiant

cheerfulness often graces his face, lending him an aura of perpetual contentment. In moments of laughter, he casts aside his self-imposed restraints, revealing a disarmingly affable side. A modest yet prominent nose supports thick glasses, which seem almost symbolic of his thoughtful nature. His stout neck and well-proportioned, athletic build complement his medium stature. His forearms, adorned with dense hair, are proportional to his frame, albeit not overly long. Yet, these very hands have patted the heads of towering figures, humbling them, and embracing impoverished students, uplifting them with both emotional warmth and financial support—a testament to his generosity and magnanimity.

Masud Choudhary possessed the rare ability to combine a velvet glove with an iron fist, commanding respect and authority over his subordinates and the general public alike. His multifaceted personality allowed him to seamlessly inhabit multiple roles: a three-star police general, a capable administrator, an institution-builder, and even a thinker of profound influence. Perhaps his greatest achievement was awakening the slumbering consciousness of the marginalized Gujjar community. As we know, tribal identities and distinct lineages serve as a source of

recognition, a divine principle at its core. Inspired by this sentiment, Masud Choudhary emerged as a genuine leader and guide for his community, offering not merely symbolic aid but meaningful, transformative assistance. For him, alleviating hardship did not mean handing out alms or superficial relief; it meant equipping individuals with skills and education to earn their livelihoods and instilling self-confidence over-dependence. His vision rejected feigned humility and mendicancy, advocating instead for empowerment through self-reliance.

From early on, Masud Choudhary dedicated himself to weaving dreams of progress for the Gujjar people. By the 1990s, his aspirations took tangible form, culminating in actionable initiatives. It was through his tireless efforts that the Gurjar Desh Charitable project came to fruition, a testament to his commitment to uplifting his community in both spirit and substance.

Chapter - II

BIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT OF LATE MASUD CHOUDHARY

PERSONAL LIFE

Born on April 10, 1944, in the serene hamlet of Kalaban, Mendhar, Poonch, Late Masud Choudhary embodied a rare blend of intellect, determination, and compassion. Son of Babu Faiz Ahmed and Resham Bi, he grew up in a family deeply rooted in tradition yet driven by progressive ideals. His journey from Kalaban to the pinnacles of professional and societal contributions was as extraordinary as it was inspiring. A distinguished alumnus of Aligarh Muslim University, he earned an LLB and was later conferred a D.Litt (Honorary) in recognition of his monumental achievements.

Choudhary shared a life of love and mutual respect with his wife, Noor Jehan, whose companionship enriched his journey. Together,

they nurtured a close-knit family that included their children:

- Dr. Nazia Ahmed, married to Habib Choudhary, Chief Engineer PDD, J&K
- Dr. Yasmin Choudhary, married to Khalil Ahmed Poswal, SSP JK Police
- Arafat Masud, Civil Engineer, JKPWD married to Saima Choudhary.

His siblings, including Sharifa Begum, Mehmood Ahmed Rana, Dr. Zahoor Ahmed Rana, Late Maqsood Ahmed, Javed Ahmed Rana, and Parvez Ahmed Rana, also played vital roles in shaping the rich tapestry of his life. Masud Choudhary breathed his last on December 16, 2022, in Jammu. He rests in eternal peace beside his beloved wife at Channi near the Gurjar Desh Charitable Trust, Channi Himmat, Jammu—a fitting place of repose for a man who devoted his life to the upliftment of society.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY

Masud Choudhary's illustrious career began in 1967 when he joined the J&K Police as a Deputy Superintendent of Police. Over the next four decades, he served with distinction in a variety of challenging assignments, including as District Police Chief in Jammu, Poonch,

Kathua, Udhampur, and as Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) in Srinagar, Kashmir during the peak turmoil where he was instrumental in ameliorating critical situations¹. He also held critical roles as SSP Vigilance Jammu and SSP CID SB Jammu, showcasing his versatility and commitment to maintaining law and order in diverse and sensitive regions².

His unwavering dedication and exceptional leadership earned him successive promotions throughout his career. In 1992, he was appointed Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police, during which he served as DIG Vigilance J&K, DIG Jammu-Kathua Range, DIG Administration at Police Headquarters, and Director of the Sher-e-Kashmir Police Academy, Udhampur. As Director, he transformed the academy into a nationally reputed institution, rivaling the esteemed Phillaur Police Academy in Punjab.

In 1997, he was promoted to Inspector General of Police (IGP), taking on the roles of IGP Crime and Railway and later, IGP Headquarters. By 2003, his exceptional service and vision led to his appointment as Additional

¹ *He dissolved the tense situation that was created after the assassination of Mirwaiz Mohammad Farooq Shah on 21 May 1990. Another such situation arrived following the brutal assassination of Tika Lal Taploo on 13 September 1989 where Masud Choudhary was instrumental in handling it. Keeping in view the seriousness of the situation, L. K. Advani and Sh. Kedarnath Sahani attended Pandit Taploo's funeral.*

Director General of Police, marking the pinnacle of his career in law enforcement. His last position before retirement in 2004 was as Additional Director General, Headquarters, where he continued to demonstrate his unmatched administrative acumen and integrity.

Over the years, Masud Choudhary's contributions to policing were recognized through numerous prestigious honors, including the Police Medal for Meritorious Services (1982-83) and the President's Medal for Distinguished Services (1994-95).

Even after retiring from the IPS in 2004, Choudhary's dedication to public service remained unwavering. He was appointed the founding Vice-Chancellor of Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University (BGSBU) in Dhanore, Rajouri—a monumental task that he undertook with unmatched zeal. With limited resources and time, he transformed barren land into a thriving academic hub. Under his leadership, the university not only became a beacon of education and opportunity in the region but also fostered significant socio-economic development. His efforts extended beyond academia, as he worked tirelessly to connect the university to the nearest town, secure land for roads, and create employment opportunities for the local population.

Chapter –III

**FROM SHADOWS TO LIGHT
THE EARLY YEARS OF MASUD
CHOUHARY**

SOURCE OF INSPIRATION

*“Zulmatoon ke saaye mein palte rahe atfaal-e-
noor,
Pathroon ke shehr mein hoti rahi sheesha-gari.”*

"In the shadows of darkness, the children of light
continued to grow,

And in the city of stones, the craft of glasswork
flourished."

"Kala Ban," a land of rugged mountains and
dense forests of jet-black trees, derives its name
from the perpetual shadows cast by its dark trunks.

Despite its harsh environment, the region became a symbol of perseverance, nurturing streams of knowledge and wisdom. From this seemingly desolate place emerged a legacy of progress, with one figure shining especially bright—Masud Choudhary.

The foundation of this remarkable journey was laid by Masud's father, Al-Haj Choudhary Faiz Ahmed, a government schoolteacher, affectionately called Babu Faiz Ahmed. Residing in Kala Ban, he embodied tenacity, much like the towering peaks surrounding him. A man of profound intellect and foresight, Babu Faiz Ahmed was deeply influenced by the Aligarh Movement and passionately advocated modern education for the upliftment of his marginalized Gujjar community. Though limited by the constraints of his time, he remained a quiet yet determined torchbearer of progress.

His composed demeanor, moral integrity, and unwavering dedication left an indelible impression. Alongside his dignified and graceful wife, he provided a harbinger of optimism for their community during the turbulent period surrounding the partition of 1947. Amidst the

chaos, he relocated to Abbas Pur (PoK) with his young children, possibly envisioning a new chapter for the Gujjar community.

On April 10, 1944, amidst the jagged slopes of Kala Ban, Mendhar, a light was born—Masud Choudhary. Rising above the shadows of poverty and the challenges of a remote upbringing, he emerged as an inspiring figure for the youth of his oppressed community.

*"Na pakdi qafiley ki jis ne ungli,
Wo bachcha sab se aage chal raha tha."*

"The child who refused the caravan's guiding hand,
Is now leading the way, far ahead."

FROM ABBAS PUR TO ALIGARH: THE JOURNEY OF MASUD CHOUDHARY

Babu Faiz Ahmed carried the responsibility of nurturing a visionary leader. His efforts bore fruit in the character and determination of his son, Masud, whose early years were marked by determination and a thirst for knowledge.

After attending Bandi High School in Abbas Pur, Masud's family returned to Kala Ban. Despite the lack of basic amenities like water, electricity, and roads, young Masud Choudhary demonstrated remarkable perseverance. He walked five kilometers daily to school, studying by the light of a kerosene lantern.

Later, Masud joined Poonch High School, where he lived in the hostel and on holidays frequently trekked 15–20 kilometers back home through treacherous mountain trails. His teachers—Ghulam Mohiuddin, Master Labhu Ram, Rajinder Singh, and others—played a vital role in shaping his academic journey.

Masud passed his matriculation from Poonch High School, earned a B.A. from M.A.M. College, Jammu, and completed his LL.B. with distinction from Aligarh Muslim University in 1966. At Aligarh, he was inspired by eminent leaders like Vice-Chancellors Badruddin Tyabji and Ali Yawar Jung.

Masud Choudhary's journey from the shadows of Kala Ban to the heights of professional excellence stands as a testament to vigor,

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education, and the pursuit of justice. His life is a shining example of hope for marginalized communities, illuminating the path toward empowerment and progress.

Chapter – IV

**MASUD CHOUDHARY: AN
EXEMPLAR OF LEADERSHIP AND
SERVICE"**

EARLY STEPS ON A NOBLE PATH

In the year 1967, a young and resolute Masud Choudhary embarked upon a journey that would etch his name in the annals of public service. Donning the mantle of a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), he began his career not merely as an enforcer of law but as a custodian of justice and societal harmony. His early postings as DSP Headquarters Rajouri, SDPO Reasi, and SDPO R.S. Pura shaped the bedrock of his illustrious career. With an astute understanding of grassroots policing, he tackled community concerns and district-level challenges with finesse and empathy.

When entrusted with the role of DSP City Jammu, Choudhary displayed a rare blend of

operational acuity and administrative prowess, cementing his reputation as an officer of exceptional caliber. These formative years were not merely a chapter of initiation but a prelude to a life devoted to the ideals of duty and justice.

A Commander in the Making

Rising through the ranks with quiet determination, Choudhary's ascent was marked by a steadfast commitment to excellence. As Superintendent of Police (SP), he ventured into some of the most challenging terrains—Poonch, Kathua, and Udhampur—districts that bore the scars of communal discord and lawlessness. Each posting brought its own trials, yet in these crucibles of conflict, he honed his craft, managing to restore peace and order with an unyielding hand.

His tenure as SSP Jammu and later in CID and Vigilance further solidified his stature. Whether leading complex investigations, gathering intelligence, or combating corruption, Choudhary proved himself an indomitable force. Through diligence and integrity, he

became not just an officer but a beacon of trust for both his peers and the public.

Leadership Amidst Turmoil

The true measure of Choudhary's mettle came during his tenure as District Police Chief in Srinagar, a post he held during the most turbulent years of militancy in the region. In a time when the valley lay gripped by fear, with institutions faltering and the police force in disarray, he took on the Herculean task of rebuilding the law enforcement structure from the ground up.

Amid chaos, he instilled discipline, resilience, and a renewed sense of purpose among his team. Under his stewardship, constables and officers alike rediscovered their roles as protectors of the people. It was not merely a revival of a system but a rekindling of hope in a region besieged by despair. His composed and courageous leadership during high-stakes moments ensured that law and order prevailed, even in the face of overwhelming odds.

The Visionary Strategist

Elevated to the rank of Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Choudhary continued to serve with distinction. As DIG Vigilance, he tackled the scourge of corruption with the precision of a surgeon, ensuring that accountability became more than just a promise. In his tenure as DIG Jammu-Kathua Range, he pioneered community policing initiatives, bridging the gap between law enforcement and the people it served.

His posting as DIG Administration at Police Headquarters showcased another facet of his brilliance: his ability to modernize and streamline processes. Working alongside the Director General of Police, he played a pivotal role in drafting policies that brought efficiency and innovation to the force, laying the groundwork for a more dynamic and adaptive policing system.

Transforming the Future of Policing

Perhaps one of his most enduring legacies lies in his transformative leadership at the

Police Training College in Udhampur. Recognizing that the strength of a police force lies in the training of its officers, Choudhary spearheaded reforms that revolutionized the institution. Introducing modern methodologies, he ensured that recruits were not only equipped with technical skills but also imbued with the values of empathy and integrity.

Under his stewardship, the college evolved into a full-fledged Police Academy, a fitting tribute to his vision and efforts. He ensured that the officers stepping out of its gates were prepared to meet the complexities of modern law enforcement with courage and competence.

The Pinnacle of Service

As Inspector General of Police (IGP), Choudhary's responsibilities expanded to overseeing critical domains such as crime and railways. His tenure was marked by his ability to unravel intricate criminal networks and ensure the safety of vital infrastructure. Promoted to Additional Director General of Police (ADGP), he brought his wealth of

experience to bear on the department's policies and operations, leaving an indelible imprint on the state's policing framework.

A Legacy Etched in Time

Retiring in 2004 as ADGP, Masud Choudhary stepped away from active service, but his legacy remains vibrant and enduring. Known for his rare ability to balance authority with approachability, he earned the trust and admiration of those he served and led. His profound empathy for the people, coupled with his unwavering pursuit of justice, set him apart as a public servant of the highest order.

His life's work—resolving critical cases, introducing reforms, and inspiring generations of police officers—stands as a testament to the transformative power of leadership. In every role he assumed, from the smallest district posting to the highest echelons of the police hierarchy, Choudhary embodied the ideals of courage, integrity, and vision.

As future generations tread the paths he once walked, his story will continue to inspire.

For in the life of Masud Choudhary, we find the essence of a true public servant—a guardian of justice, a reformer of systems, and above all, a man who believed in the boundless potential of service to humanity.

Outstanding Achievements in Police Service

Masud Choudhary's career in the police force was marked by innovation, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. Recognized with the Police Medal for Meritorious Service (1982-83) and the President's Police Medal for Distinguished Services (1994-95), his work reflected his belief in the transformative power of perseverance and dedication.

As Superintendent of Police in Poonch, Choudhary implemented measures to uplift police morale, improve living conditions, and address operational challenges. He introduced community policing initiatives, fostering trust and cooperation between the police and the public, and spearheaded Operation Gulistan, an environmental conservation project that modernized police infrastructure and beautified facilities. His efforts elevated Poonch as

a model district, inspiring other regions to emulate its success.

During the militancy surge in Srinagar (1990), Choudhary's courage and administrative acumen proved invaluable. Later, as the founding director of the Sher-e-Kashmir Police Academy in Udhampur, he transformed it into a premier training institution, equipping officers with modern skills and ethical principles.

Guided by mentors like former DGP Pir Ghulam Hassan Shah, Masud Choudhary consistently prioritized integrity, professionalism, and systemic reform, leaving an enduring example in policing.

Chapter –V

**ECHOES OF IDENTITY
THE GUJJAR STRUGGLE FOR
DIGNITY AND HERITAGE**

Masud Choudhary vividly recalls the moment he first stood against the marginalization of the Gujjar community during his time at Degree College in Poonch. He remarked, “When no one speaks in my language, why should I speak in theirs? No regional dialect is inherently superior to Gojri.”

An encounter with Professor Sardar Bachan Singh remains etched in his memory. While Masud was conversing in Gojri, the professor interrupted, saying, “Masud, you still sound like a Gujjar boy.” Masud's response silenced the room: “Gojri is not just my mother tongue; it is a magnificent language. Its influences can be seen in Sindhi, Gujarati, Rajasthani, and even ancient Hindustani.

No language is inferior to another. Gojri has rich folk traditions, proverbs, and wisdom.” Concluding with a Sindhi proverb, "Ishqghu rog okho" (Love is a difficult affliction), Masud left everyone speechless.

He recalls a time when speaking Gojri in public or wearing traditional attire was rare among educated Gujjars, often seen as a source of embarrassment. After 1992, Masud championed the Gujjar identity, urging leaders and delegates of the Gurjar Desh Charitable Trust to embrace their culture. Over time, Gojri and traditional clothing became symbols of dignity rather than stigma.

In a light-hearted incident, a respected leader hesitated to speak Gojri during a phone call, opting for Pahari instead. Masud quipped, “Surely, no one near you only understands Pahari?” Embarrassed, the leader promised to call back later in Gojri.

Masud reflects on how even affluent Gujjar families avoided speaking Gojri, a trend he worked tirelessly to reverse. Leaders like Choudhary Mohammad Aslam and the late Mian Bashir Ahmed Larvi stood out for their pride in the

language. Yet, many educated Gujjars, particularly in Jammu and Rajouri, switched to Punjabi at home—a practice Choudhary deeply regrets.

Choudhary recalls his mentor Kunwar Rameshwar Singh a top cop, jokingly saying, “You even speak to educated Gujjars in Gojri!” Masud’s reply was firm: “If speaking in our mother tongue helps my people overcome their inferiority complex, no one should object. To me, my language is as sacred as anyone else’s.”

Citing historical examples, Masud highlights the endurance and intellectual contributions of the Gujjar community. From the scholarly King Bhoj of Ujjain, immortalized in the phrase “Kahan Raja Bhoj, aur kahanGanguTeli,” to the brave Zafar Khan, who defied Alauddin Khalji’s reign to establish the first Gujjar kingdom, their legacy is one of courage and dignity.

Masud also recalls the poignant words of Al-Biruni:

"Here, cow dung cakes and heaps of diamonds are placed together, with no distinction between good and bad, altruistic and selfish."

This, he says, reflects the historical neglect of noble and learned individuals within the Gujjar community.

*"Hain meri ungliyan khud apne lahu mein doobi,
Yeh kaanch ke tukdon ko uthane ki saza hai."*

("My fingers are soaked in my own blood;
This is the price of picking up shards of glass.")

For Masud Choudhary the journey of the Gujjar community is one of fortitude and hope. Celebrating their heritage, he calls for unity and mutual respect, urging communities to embrace their identities without division or alienation.

Chapter – VI

**THE INFLUENCE OF SIR SYED
AHMAD KHAN AND DR. ZAKIR
HUSAIN**

Every honorable individual has, at some point, a spiritual or intellectual role model. Our first teacher is often our family, particularly our mother. After that, our environment, schools, and institutions shape us. Beyond these, no individual can achieve greatness without drawing guidance from the works of great minds. Among the leaders who have profoundly influenced the educated class of our society, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and Dr. Zakir Hussain stand unparalleled. Therefore, this book dedicates a portion to their contributions, so readers may benefit from their enduring legacy. Furthermore, I find it essential to discuss certain movements that have shaped our collective ethos.

The study of the lives of great individuals reveals that they do not remain static, like framed portraits on the canvas of history. Instead, they bring vibrancy to their era by painting not only their own features but also highlighting the background and undertones of their time. They become both the identity of their age and active participants within it, resisting the currents of mediocrity and superficiality. Such was the case with Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, whose dynamism and foresight were underappreciated by many of his contemporaries but resonate strongly with us today. The masses, often enamored with transient glimmers, fail to see that the luster of gold endures far beyond the temporary brilliance of imitation.

In time, truth reveals itself. The influence of great individuals transcends their mortal lives, leaving an indelible mark. During his education in Aligarh, Choudhary encountered Sir Syed's intellectual movement, an encounter that undoubtedly shaped his vision. Sir Syed regarded disunity and chaos as the greatest obstacles to national progress. He fervently urged Indian Muslims to treat national pride and dignity as paramount, akin to their own personal honor. His

enduring mission was to awaken a dormant community from its slumber of complacency.

Sir Syed believed that the only antidote to the stagnation of Indian Muslims lay in the acquisition of modern education—not in violence or clinging to archaic traditions. He was a staunch critic of conventional religiosity and committed himself to dispelling misconceptions surrounding religion. *Tehzeeb-ul-Akhlaq*, his seminal publication, was a cornerstone of this mission. He preached self-reliance and self-confidence to his community. It is an undeniable truth that Sir Syed was the pioneer who inspired Muslims to embrace modern education. Yet, even today, his profound insights remain misunderstood. The consequence is an imbalance, where degrees abound, but true education remains elusive. Historical complacency, fatalism, and intellectual laziness had already relegated Indian Muslims to the margins. However, those who understood the demands of changing times adapted and succeeded. Nations that fail to measure their standing in the fields of practical knowledge and modern sciences inevitably face humiliation and despair.

In this context, I regard Choudhary as a link in the same chain of reform. After Sir Syed, the figure who most profoundly influenced and resonated with him was Dr. Zakir Hussain. The symbiotic relationship between personality and society cannot be overstated; each shapes and influences the other. Unfortunately, our society remains trapped in the clutches of traditional clericalism and feudalism—a system that mirrors medieval Europe, where peasants were bound to share their earnings with their feudal lords. Today, these feudal lords—whether as landowners or religious leaders—have shackled people with the chains of their own names, offering superficial services akin to merchants rigging their scales.

The naïve public often overlooks that we now live in an era of competition. Sustenance is no longer a given; earning a livelihood is akin to drawing water from a stone. Gone are the days when rudimentary education, dressed with a superficial layer of religious instruction, was sufficient. The aim of modern education is not merely to make individuals employable but to make them self-reliant and productive members of society. Achieving this in an intellectually barren

environment is no small feat. Only through modern knowledge can hidden potentials be realized. Societies that fail to value their reformers remain mired in self-delusion, opportunism, and infighting.

Dr. Zakir Hussain declared unequivocally: "Education that remains detached from the living experiences and collective creativity of society will fail to foster the relationship between the individual and the community and will never achieve true progress or success. This is not a problem that can be solved by clinging to outdated, scholastic rituals. Like any obsolete system, it requires dismantling and reconstruction."

He dismissed conventional, lifeless knowledge as hollow and ineffective, stating that such knowledge neither enlightens the mind nor nurtures the soul but instead serves as a decorative veil for mediocrity. True knowledge, born of experience, instills humility and dignity, nurtures the mind, and strengthens the spirit. It propels individuals toward perpetual advancement. He emphasized the importance of selflessness and fostering a spirit of national service.

Dr. Zakir Hussain once remarked:

"You may choose to blindfold yourself, but the disease of poverty and destitution spreading all around you will not let you rest. Awareness of this suffering will rob you of peaceful slumber. The task before us is monumental—a challenge that demands courageous hearts and lofty spirits. For the selfish, it may offer opportunities to amass wealth, but for the selfless, it is a call to action to uplift their nation."

He condemned the sectarian divides erected by self-serving clerics and urged the rejection of their archaic doctrines. In his view, these teachings, though once beneficial, had become toxic relics. Instead, he advocated for adopting progressive methods from advanced nations while discarding superficial religiosity. According to Dr. Zakir Husain, traditional education, detached from reason and practicality, only perpetuates ignorance.

It seems that institution has a great role to play in the development of India's national life. Were I not convinced of this I would not have come to Aligarh leaving the Jamia work, to which

intellectually and emotionally I am so deeply committed.

P.7- Uniqueness of Zakir Husain and His Contributions: Birth Centenary Volume," edited by Satya Pal Ruhela and Ikram Ahmad.

The enduring legacy of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and Dr. Zakir Husain serves as a guiding light for anyone seeking to uplift society through knowledge, reform, and a sense of collective responsibility. It is this legacy that continues to inspire individuals like Masud Choudhary.

POLITICAL INFLUENCE AND LEADERSHIP

Choudhary's administrative acumen gained recognition from leaders like Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Mufti Sayeed. Appointed as the founding Vice-Chancellor of Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University, he brought his vision of education and community upliftment to life. His leadership extended beyond academia, with significant contributions through the Gurjar Desh Charitable Trust and advisory roles in key forums.

AN ENDURING LEGACY

Masud Choudhary's journey, defined by resilience, intellect, and a commitment to justice, continues to inspire. His contributions, spanning law enforcement, education, and community reform, serve as a guiding light for those striving to create a more equitable society.

Chapter – VII

**GURJAR DESH CHARITABLE TRUST
A SYMBOL OF REVIVAL AND
HERITAGE FOR THE GUJJAR
COMMUNITY**

The Gurjar Desh Charitable Trust, established in Channi, Jammu, by Masud Choudhary with the support of local Gujjars and prominent state figures, is a transformative initiative for the Gujjar community. Its mission combines providing modern education to a historically marginalized group with preserving their rich cultural heritage.

Over the years, the trust has evolved into a significant center for the Gujjar community, supported by the government and individuals from Jammu and Kashmir. The backing of prominent figures underscores the trust's profound impact.

The inauguration of the trust was a landmark event, attended by leaders from across India, symbolizing Masud Choudhary's vision and popularity. The trust addresses challenges faced by the Gujjar community, empowering them to redefine their socio-economic structures and actively participate in society. Its establishment marks a significant milestone in the Gujjars' journey toward progress.

VIEWS AND OPINIONS

Dr. Agha Ashraf Ali:

“This initiative is a testament to love and devotion. Masud Sahib's intellectual caliber inspires us all. I hope this effort becomes a model for widespread change.”

Naeem Akhtar Andrabi:

“The Gujjar community, despite its simplicity, must break free from outdated traditions. Strategic efforts under Masud Choudhary's leadership have transformed a vision into reality. This institution is a beacon of hope, blending cultural heritage and intellectual purpose.

The trust must extend its reach to ensure future generations emerge from darkness.”

Mohammad Yousuf Teng: “The Gujjars' history is a journey of contrasts. By day, they thrive in towns, but at night, they retreat into obscurity—a metaphor for their existence. The under Masud Choudhary’s guidance has safeguarded their heritage while advancing education and progress.”

Balraj Puri: “The Gujjars are custodians of ancient traditions, their untainted past rooted in loyalty. Their language, Gojri, strengthens their unity.”

Satti Sahni: “Industrious and entrepreneurial, the Gujjars have a rich heritage despite limited resources. Their music and folklore captivate, though their written literature is sparse. Living below the poverty line, they provide luxurious products like milk, butter, and wool to society.”

The Gurjar Desh Charitable stands as a symbol of revival, bridging the past and future for the Gujjar community. It invites continued support to ensure its noble mission flourishes.

Chapter - VIII

TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO REALITY
THE VISIONARY JOURNEY OF
BABA GHULAM SHAH BADSHAH
UNIVERSITY

VISION FOR BABA GHULAM SHAH
BADSHAH UNIVERSITY

The founding vision of Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University, as articulated by Masud Choudhary, centered on the revival of Islamic culture and civilization. This was enshrined in its first constitutional clause. Remarkably, the university's basic infrastructure was completed within eight months, with classrooms operational under its roofs. Achieving these milestones required relentless 24/7 work schedules in double shifts.

Masud Choudhary responded to critics of the rapid construction, stating:

“People question how these buildings mushroomed from the ground as if by magic or Aladdin's lamp. Let them reflect honestly and consider the divine support behind this achievement.”

By December 2004, the university's camp office was established in Channi, Jammu. However, finalizing the campus location posed challenges. While Shahdara and Muradpur Rajouri were considered, acquiring sufficient land in these areas was impossible. The decision was ultimately made to establish the university in Dhanore, where 5,000 kanals of state-owned grazing pastures were available. Access to the site required constructing a five-kilometer link road, approved despite local resistance and financial constraints. Masud Choudhary's negotiation skills, including offering employment opportunities to local landowners, ensured the land acquisition in a record time.

Construction bypassed traditional tendering processes due to limited funds. A dedicated workforce of 200 laborers and 10-15 machines worked tirelessly, completing prefabricated structures within two months. By July 2005, the All India Council for Technical Education

approved over 5,000 square feet of building facilities including classrooms, offices, and lecture halls. This efficient departmental approach saved significant costs and prevented academic session delays.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND BIODIVERSITY INITIATIVES

Masud Choudhary's visionary leadership also led to the creation of a Biodiversity Park, which elevated the university as a Center for Biodiversity Studies in India. Recognizing the ecological importance of the Pir Panjal region, Choudhary collaborated with organizations like the Botanical Survey of India and the National Bureau for Plant Genetic Resources to protect endangered flora and fauna.

Renowned botanist Dr. A.K. Kaul commended Choudhary, saying:

“Without Masud Choudhary's persistent efforts, I would never have joined this initiative. His unwavering dedication was inspiring.”

The university further advanced ecological awareness by establishing the Mahatma Gandhi

Chair for Ecology and Environment, the first of its kind in India. This initiative promoted Gandhi's ecological philosophies and garnered support from botanist H.Y. Mohan Ram and then-Minister of Forests and Environment, Shri Jairam Ramesh.

HISTORIC CONVOCATION AND HONORARY DEGREE

In a landmark convocation, Chief Minister Dr. Omar Abdullah and Padma Shri N.R. Narayana Murthy graced the university. Narayana Murthy proposed Masud Choudhary for the prestigious Doctor of Literature (D.Litt.) degree, honoring his unmatched contributions. The announcement was met with resounding applause.

In his address, Choudhary highlighted the importance of education, research, and cultural values, emphasizing the university's pivotal role in the socio-economic upliftment of the region.

ACCOLADES AND TRIBUTES

NN Vohra (Former Governor of J&K):

“Masud Choudhary is one of the greatest institution builders of our era.”

Ghulam Nabi Azad (Former Chief Minister of J&K):

“Masud Choudhary turned the impossible into reality”

Dr. Manmohan Singh (Former Prime Minister of India):

“We hope Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University will nurture the talents of Jammu and Kashmir’s youth and contribute equitably to the state’s and the nation’s progress.”

Chapter - IX

**MASUDCHOUDHARY IN THE EYES
OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES**

**Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University –
A Miracle**

**“Miracles Are Not Just Witnessed; They Are
Created”**

Professor Qudoos Javed:

Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University symbolizes the triumph of vision, determination, and resilience over formidable challenges. Masud Choudhary’s leadership turned an improbable dream into a reality, transforming barren and inhospitable terrain into a thriving center for learning.

Through unwavering resolve, he overcame resistance from the local community, security challenges, and the absence of basic infrastructure, creating not just an institution but a guidepost of progress in an unlikely setting. His efforts embody the power of persistence and the belief that even the most daunting obstacles can be surmounted with courage and vision.

Masud Choudhary: A Visionary Leader and Administrator

Professor Kafeel Ahmad Qasmi,

Head of the Arabic Department, Aligarh Muslim University

Masud Choudhary, a distinguished alumnus of Aligarh Muslim University, played a pivotal role as the founding Vice-Chancellor of Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University. With a legacy of transforming barren lands into thriving institutions, he turned a site devoid of infrastructure into a functioning university through relentless dedication. Traversing rugged terrain to oversee construction, appointing faculty with foresight, and utilizing temporary facilities, he

ensured the university met its ambitious timeline. His commitment and leadership culminated in delivering the institution's first lecture on schedule, leaving an enduring mark on its foundation.

Dr. Masud Choudhary: A Ray of Hope for the Gujjars

Sarwar Chauhan, Retd. SSP

Dr. Masud Choudhary was a visionary leader who redefined the aspirations of the Gujjar community. At a time when many hesitated to embrace their identity, he proudly championed the Gojri language and heritage, inspiring pride among his people. Rising to prominence in law enforcement, he broke barriers as the first Dy. SP from his community and later as Additional Director General of Police, earning widespread respect through courage, intellect, and wit.

One of his most memorable traits was his charm, embodied in his famous "*Khoobsurat Chaaye*" ritual. Known for his ability to command attention, he would ask for this "*beautiful tea*" during

meetings, using the playful delay to engage his guests fully. The tea, always served only after the conversation concluded, became a delightful signature of his unique style.

As Vice-Chancellor of BGSBU University, he transformed it into a beacon of education, securing opportunities for local students and building its foundation in record time. His impact extended to the Gujjar Desh Charitable Trust, where he preserved cultural artifacts and promoted education, uplifting thousands in his community.

Honored as “Baba-e-Qoum” and often compared to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Dr. Choudhary’s life remains a testament to service, resilience, and pride in one’s roots, leaving an indelible mark on generations to come. May he rest in eternal peace.

Hatching the Truth: Crafting and Grounding the Plan

Choudhary Ali Hussain Hakla

The vision of the trust was born from Masud Choudhary’s leadership and commitment to

uplifting the Gujjar community. Starting as a modest initiative, it grew into a vital institution through the collective effort and generosity of the community and supporters across various backgrounds. Contributions, both large and small, transformed a simple plot of land into a hub for cultural preservation, education, and skill development.

Guided by Choudhary's resolve, the trust became a testament to collaboration and selfless dedication, functioning as a bridge to reconnect marginalized communities with opportunities for growth. Over the decades, it has remained a beacon of service, driven by a mission to preserve heritage and empower the underprivileged, proving that a shared vision can build a brighter future. As the journey unfolded, it truly became a caravan of hope and progress.

Magic of A University in a Remote Landscape

Professor Dr. A.K. Kaul

I had known Masud Choudhary even before reaching the oasis of Dhanore. This was a place

deprived of basic facilities like water and electricity, where even dreaming of a university seemed implausible. Witnessing a university emerge here in such a short span of time leaves one astonished and amazed.

Shining Example of Institution Builder

Professor Jigar Mohammed

Vice Chancellors come and go, but only a few manage to etch their names permanently on the institution's plaque. MasudAhmed Chaudhry, with his vibrant and insightful personality, is a shining example for institution-builders and a source of pride for the future Vice Chancellors.

Unwavering and Committed Guide

ChoudharyShaukat Javed (Trustee)

For nearly three decades, Masud Choudhary remained a constant guiding presence, his dedication unwavering and deeply personal. His leadership fostered a spirit of selflessness within the trust, enabling initiatives that uplifted countless underprivileged families. Hundreds of children from poverty-stricken backgrounds receive not

only free education but also books and uniforms, ensuring no child is left behind due to financial constraints.

The trust's commitment extends beyond classrooms, with rural children benefiting from subsidized transportation despite operational losses. Remarkably, all trustees work without remuneration, driven purely by altruism. This selfless dedication stands as a shining example of community service, reflecting values that rival even the most renowned philanthropic institutions.

The Champion of Community Excellence

Shaukat Parvez (Trustee)

The establishment of the has enabled our people to break free from feelings of inferiority. On one hand, modern education has provided our youth with opportunities for employment, and on the other, it has elevated the overall respect and status of our community. All credit for Establishing this prestigious Trust goes to Masud Choudhary

An Unparalleled History Maker: Masud Choudhary

Dr. Sabir Afaqi

Masud Choudhary embodies a rare blend of eloquence, grace, and empathy, dedicating his life to social welfare and education as a means of empowering the community. His efforts include securing land for the Gujjar Complex and an institution offering education from nursery to college, reflecting his unwavering belief in the transformative power of learning.

Deeply inclusive, he employs individuals based on their merit and diligence, regardless of background, demonstrating his commitment to unity and compassion. His profound knowledge of tribal history, combined with his engaging conversational style, further distinguishes him as a scholar and leader. For Choudhary, education is more than a profession; it is a passionate pursuit requiring a spirit strong enough to overcome any obstacle.

Ghani Ghayoor

From Shield to Vision

“Dreams are not what you see while sleeping; it is something that does not let you sleep.”

APJ Abdul Kalam, Wings of Fire

" In my view the imposing tower of misery which today rests on the heart of India has its sole foundation in the absence of education".

Amartya Sen: The Argumentative Indian

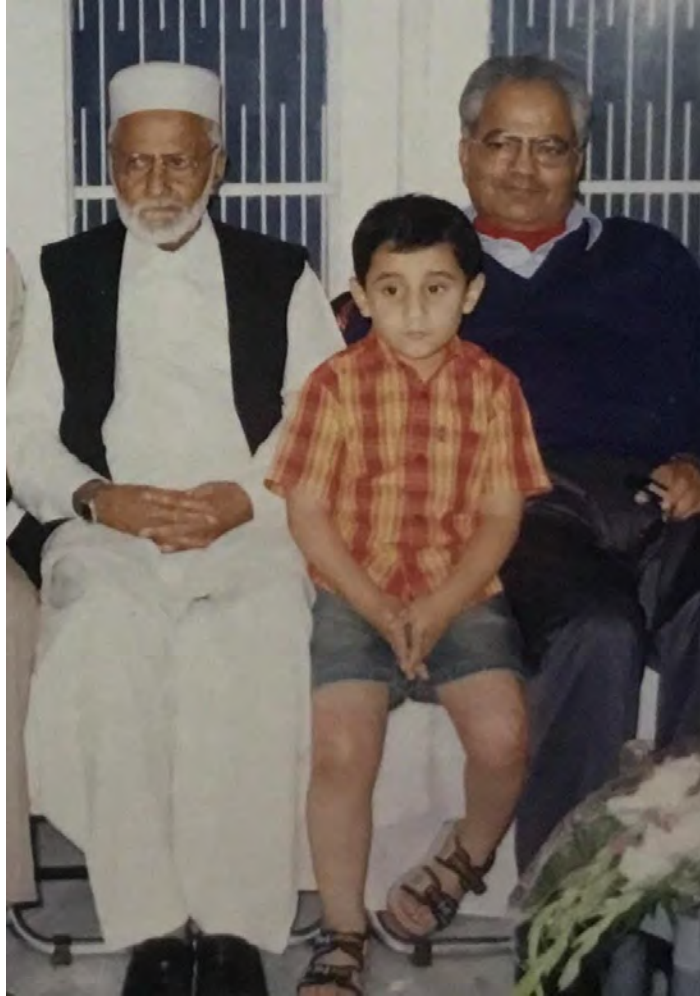
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- Newsletter – BGBS (all editions)
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- Vision Document – BGBS Yodhanur, Rajouri

Ghani Ghayoor

From Shield to Vision

PHOTO COLLECTION



LATE MASUD CHOUDHARY WITH HIS FATHER
JENAB BABU FAIZ AHMED AND HIS GRANDSON BURHAN
HABIB



MASUD CHOUDHARY AMID HIS REVERRED PARENTS



FROM LEFT SON ARAFAT MASUD, DAUGHTER IN LAW SAIMA CHOUDHARY,
DAUGHTER DR. NAZIYA AHMED, MASUD SB SITTING DAUGHTER DR. YASMIN
CHOUDHARY AND SON IN LAW KHALIL POSWAL SSP

Ghani Ghayoor

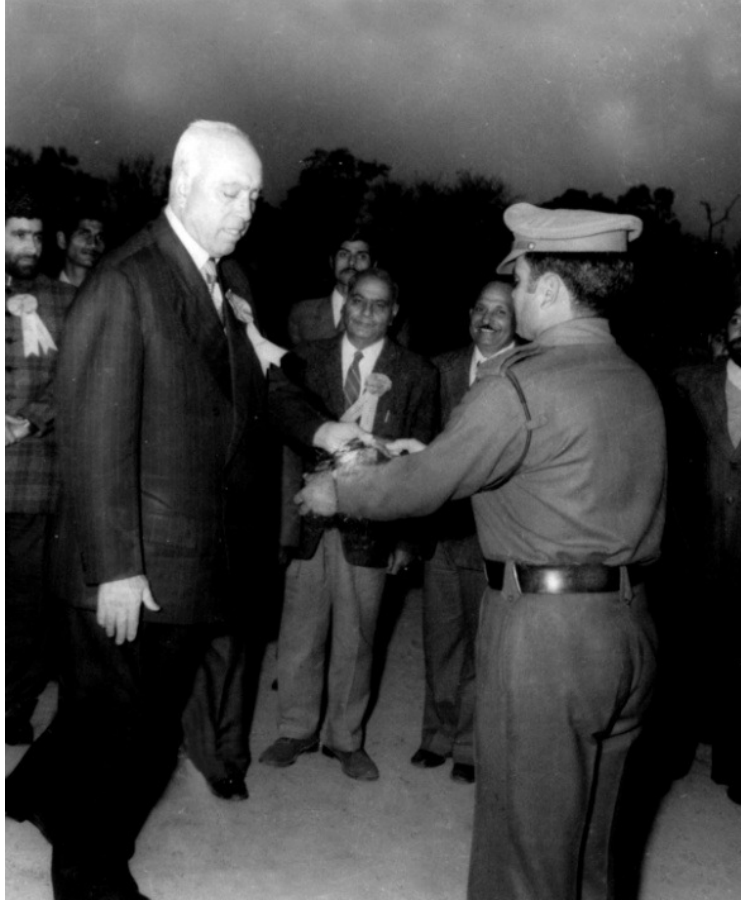
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LATE MASUD CHOUDHARY (ADGP 2003-04)



MASUD CHOUDHARY WITH HIS SPOUSE AND GRAND CHILDREN



MASUD CHOUDHARY PRESENTING A BOUQUET TO JB. SHEIKH
ABDULLAH

Ghani Ghayoor

From Shield to Vision



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, JAVED AHMED RANA, MOHAMMAD YUSUF TAING, MASUDCHOUDHARY



MASUD CHOUDHARY BEING FELICITATED BY SHAHID CHOUDHARY IAS, HAMID CHOUDHARY, SHAH MOHD. CHOUDHARY (R/SIDE) & OTHERS AT GDCT, JAMMU



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: MASUD CHOUDHARY, GHULAM NABI AZAD, OMAR ABDULLAH, SMT. SONIA GANDHI AT GDCT, JAMMU



WHILE SPEAKING AT MAHA GURJAR PANCHAYAT ORGANIZED BY THE GURJAR DESH CHARITABLE TRUST, JAMMU.

Ghani Ghayoor

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MASUD CHOUDHARY IN DIFFERENT CAPACITIES



DEMONSTRATING THE PLAN OF THE BGSBUTO MUFTI
MOHAMMAD SAYEED AT DHANORE, RAJOURI

Ghani Ghayoor

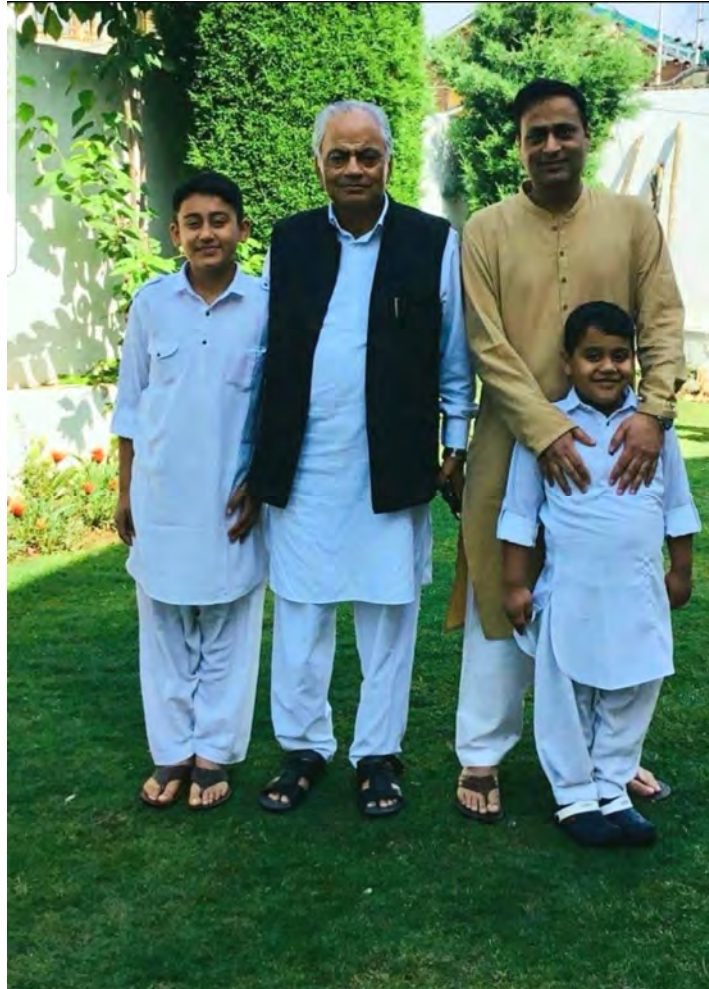
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MAHUD CHOUDHARY DISCUSSING THE UNIVERSITY'S PLAN WITH FAROOQ ABDULLAH



MASUD CHOUDHARY
ON CHAIR OF VC,BGBSU SHAHDARA RAJOURI



MASUD CHOUDHARY WITH HIS SON ARAFAT MASUD AND GRAND CHILDREN AMAAD MASUD AND AHMED SHAHRYAR MASUD



MASUD CHOUDHARY, SSP POONCH, WITH PRESIDENT OF INDIA, GIANI ZAIL SINGH, DISPLAYING SEIZED ARMS FROM CROSS-BORDER SMUGGLERS IN 1983.



MASUD CHOUDHARY, WHILE INAUGURATING GUJJAR BHAVAN IN PANCHKULA, HARYANA



MASUD CHOUDHARY (EXTREME RIGHT, SSP POONCH)
RECEIVING TROPHY FROM SHEIKH MOHAMMAD ABDULLAH,
THE THEN CHIEF MINISTER OF JAMMU & KASHMIR.



MASUD CHUDHARY WITH GHANI GHAYOOR (AUTHOR)



MR. MASUD CHOUDHARY, a distinguished police officer by profession, was far more than a figure of authority—he was a visionary leader, a social reformer, and a tireless advocate for the marginalized. His heart beat in unison with his community's struggles, and their pain was never distant to him—it was deeply personal. The hardships, injustices, and challenges faced by his

people became his own burden, and he dedicated his life to alleviating them.

His unwavering commitment to social welfare was the very foundation of his work. He did not merely sympathize with the underprivileged; he actively sought to uplift them, enhance their quality of life, and empower them through education and reform. His compassion was not confined to words—it was evident in his relentless actions, shaping lives and inspiring change.

Mr. Choudhary's contributions to public welfare were boundless. Institutions such as the Gujjar Desh Charitable Trust and Khuda Bakhsh School stand as enduring testaments to his noble vision. His impact extended beyond social activism; his love for knowledge and education was profound. As an avid reader and intellectual, he understood that true empowerment begins with learning. His role in the establishment of Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University (BGSBU) remains a cornerstone of his legacy, ensuring that future generations continue to benefit from his vision.

I am deeply pleased that Mr. Ghani Jagil, writing under the pen name Ghani Ghayoor, has beautifully encapsulated the essence of Mr. Masud Choudhary's life and mission in his book. This work offers readers a compelling and insightful account of his unparalleled contributions to society.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Ghani Jagil on the publication of this significant work. May it receive the recognition and appreciation it truly deserves.

Arshad Choudhary
Chairman, Gurjar Desh Charitable Trust
Channi, Jammu

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