

#MOTHER'S DAY SPECIAL

Mothers of the Nation



Shruti Kothari

"M" atra Devo Bhava," Revere your mother as a god. This timeless truth reminds us of the quiet strength, fierce love, and unshakable resilience that motherhood embodies. As the nation stands at a moment of heightened tension, this Mother's Day carries a powerful message. Rashtradoot pays tribute to the mothers of soldiers, who

Tributes to the Women who Serve and the Mothers who Stand behind them!

Shilpa Mehta
Performance Storyteller, Author & Proud Mother | Jaipur



Payal Jain
Businesswoman & Proud Mother | Jaipur



Surabhi Kasliwal Godha
Businesswoman & Proud Mother | Jaipur



Surbhi Patawari
Interior Designer | Jaipur



Jaishree Choudhary
Government Official & Proud Mother | Jodhpur



Shruti Johri
Businesswoman & Proud Mother | Kota



"How to talk peace with a guy, who has come to kill you"



Farooq is a man of simple pleasures. Henry Kissinger once said that after a dinner of Peking Duck, he would agree to anything. In the same way, Doctor Saheb loves food more than anything else. If he had a weakness other than golf, it is good food. He has a terrible sweet tooth. In the summer, in his house in Srinagar, you could find him often gorging on strawberries and cream, as he could well do in the middle of a golf game, share more cream than strawberries with friends. The food in the Abdullah household in Srinagar is always mouth-watering.



Rajesh Sharma

(Text is based on the conversations with A.S. Dulat)

In Delhi at the launch of 'Covert', Dulat's book in May 2024, Doctor Farooq Abdullah spoke to a full house in the India International Centre and poured his heart out. He was in his element and he said, "I am now two years less than sixty. Sometimes, I think to myself, when will that day come when I too can go to Lahore? When will I be able to wander the streets of Lahore, wear their fashions, listen to their ghazals and mujras? When will I be able to drive off to Peshawar? When will the day come when there is peace between our two countries?"

We want peace. How do we achieve it? I think we need leaders in both countries like Charles de Gaulle when he walked out of Algeria. I have never forgotten that he said enough is enough, many of the French protested, they saw it as a loss of power but he insisted on

saying it, on doing it. He lost the elections soon after, but today, I praise him. He is the kind of leader we need, who has the courage to say "Enough!" I hope that happens soon. To the Indians and Pakistanis amongst you, I say, "For gods' sake, let us mend fences, let us forget our animosity. It's been 75 years. Bahut ho gaya. Ab Allah ke waste hum Kashmiriyon ko maaf karo. Na wahan hamari izzat hai, na yahan hamari izzat hai."

"I am going to stand by what I say and what I stand for. I am part of this nation and I will remain part of this nation. But I will not remain part of a divided nation, where Hindus and Muslims are divided. I will fight to the last breath I have. How does it matter what religion you hold? Let's be human beings. Let's start understanding each other."

On this Dulat has written, "I am giving you his words in full, because I think that there is nothing greater than Farooq's eloquence, when it is unleashed." All that is well, Dulat sir. But, as Golde Meir had said, "How to talk peace with a guy, who has come to kill me."

Agha Ashraf Ali, a Kashmiri intellectual of international eminence, once said, "Sheikh had a heart of gold, but not much in his top storey." He couldn't understand Pandit Nehru's compulsion because of what was happening in North



At lunch, the same day with Priyanka Gandhi (left), Mollie (centre) and Nidhi Razdan (Right).

India after partition. Farooq, on the other hand, understands everything. He may pretend not to, but I have never found him wanting in political intelligence. In fact, sometimes I think, he is the smartest of the Abdullahs.

The Sheikh lived through different times, a time that was more

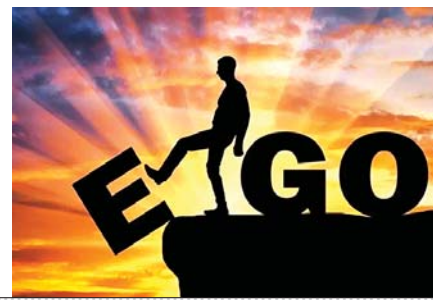


assured than today. Often, he would say, "I am with India because of two people - Gandhi and Nehru." Sheikh had that support, whereas his son had none. Farooq had lived through much more difficult times all alone, except for the days of Indira Gandhi, and as Farooq always complains that she betrayed him in the end.

It is the firm opinion of Dulat that given the kind of history and politics that Farooq has been in the midst of, Doctor Saheb has a greater role to play on a stage now. The India Alliance, after the death of CPI(M) stalwart Sitaram Yechury and its recent disastrous performance in Haryana and Maharashtra, needs constant attention and navigation too. Dulat says that he often wonders whether he would make it to the seat in Rashtrapati Bhawan, but given the mess that the India Alliance is currently in, Farooq is a great candidate to be its leader. It is clear that Farooq's time on the political stage is far from over. It is equally clear that the true importance of Farooq Abdullah is that he can never be ignored or underestimated. Maybe, it is the well-meaning ambition of a friend (Dulat) for his friend's future, two friends who were really close. Writer and former head of BBC, Andrew Whitehead said about this in London, after both Farooq and

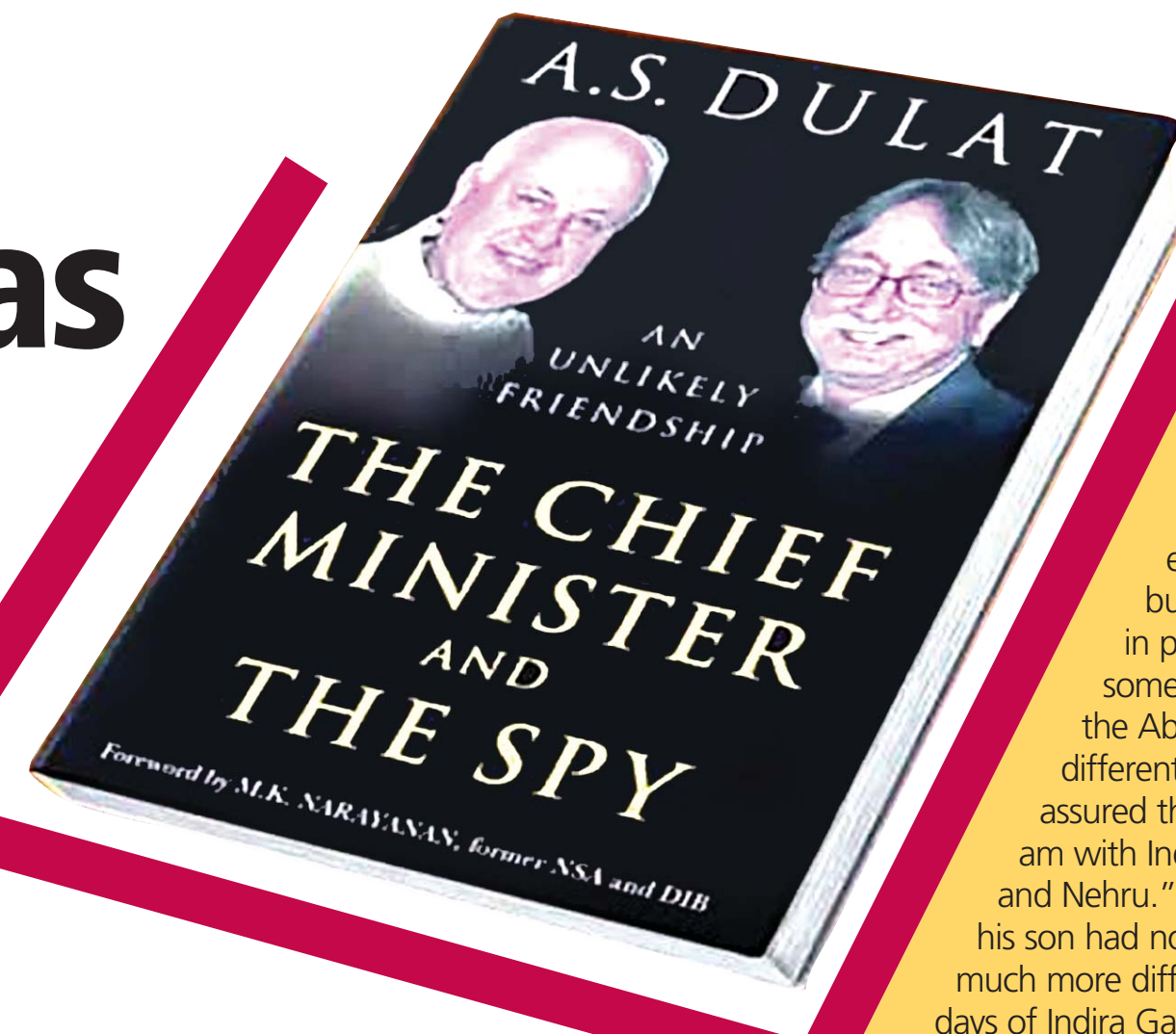


At the launch of The Spy Chronicles in 2018, Farooq shares the stage with Hamid Ansari, Manmohan Singh and Yashwant Sinha.



World Ego Awareness Day: Reflecting on the Self

Observed annually on May 11, World Ego Awareness Day encourages individuals to examine the role of ego in their lives and its impact on relationships and society. Established in 2018 by the Ego Awareness Movement, the day aims to raise awareness about egoism, promoting humility and self-awareness. Ego, while essential for self-identity, can lead to arrogance, defensiveness, and strained relationships when unchecked. World Ego Awareness Day invites people to reflect, practice mindfulness, and engage in open conversations to foster empathy and understanding.



PART: 5

#A.S. DULAT



Farooq and Mollie at dinner.

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But it's written about Kashmiris, though you might discriminate against them or give

them their due, the Kashmiri is not easily cowed. Instead, they learned, over years, to be purely devious. It is for them, the key to survival. They will not trust you easily and they will trust each other, not at all. As Brajesh Mishra often used to say, "The only thing straight in Kashmir is the poplar tree."



News maker: A S Dulat, the 'spy' who never left Kashmir



Mallikarjun Kharge, Farooq and Ali Mohammad Sagar at tea after Swearing-in as CM in October 2024.

MISTRUST

In India, history is never a dead subject. In this context, Kashmir's accession to India has been questioned by Pakistan; its territory acrimoniously decided, its emotional integration with the rest of the country remains less than desirable; and it reverberates with parochial problems of community, language and region.

In July 1952, the Government of India and the Government of Jammu and Kashmir signed the Delhi Agreement, which gave the state autonomy within India and within itself. The agreement also gave the President of India the right to declare a state of emergency in the state. In November that year, the constituent assembly abolished the monarchy and replaced it with an elected Sadr-e-Riyasat, or Head of State. Karan Singh, the son of Maharaja Hari Singh, was elected the first Sadr-e-Riyasat. In fact, the Sheikh obtained a few more concessions, the right to resettle refugees from POK in the state and a separate flag.

But then, after Pt. Nehru's death in 1964, Sheikh Abdullah's death was interred from 1965 to 1968. This had been ordered by Nehru's successor, Lal Bahadur Shastri. The Sheikh's party, the Plebiscite Front was banned in 1971. This had been allegedly done to prevent him and the Plebiscite Front from taking

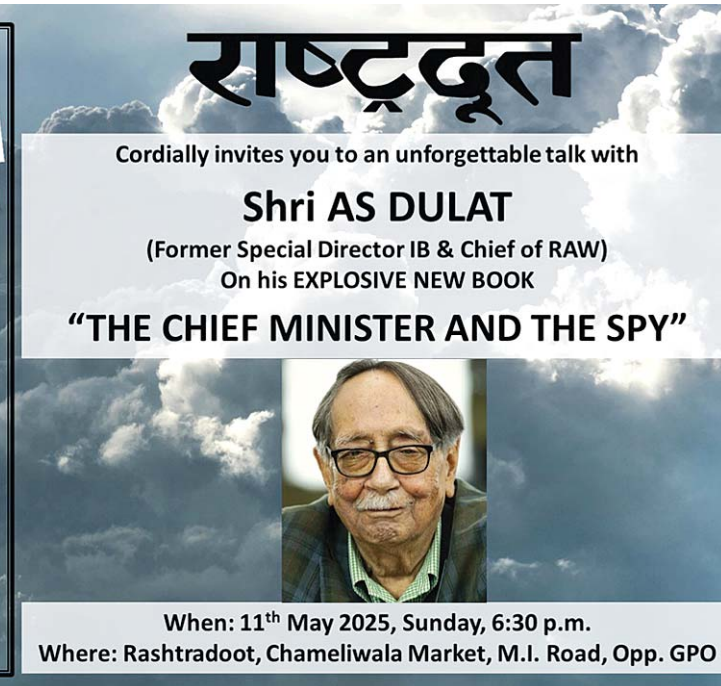
part in the election in Kashmir. The Sheikh was exiled from Kashmir during 1971-72 for 18 months.

As Dulat says, "Truth be told, the Congress, led by Mrs. Gandhi, was not willing to live with the real centers of power in Jammu and Kashmir. It didn't help that a small coterie of people surrounding Indira Gandhi didn't allow Farooq to build the bridge he wanted to. In those days, the principal actors within the Congress, who wanted Farooq's dismissal, were Arun Nehru, M.L. Fotedar, Gulam Nabi Azad and Mufti Mohammad Sayeed. This cast was presided over and directed by Mrs. Gandhi. The same cast, albeit minus Mrs. Gandhi, were responsible for Farooq's removal once again in 1990. Jagmohan was the convenient pliable instrument in both the cases.

General Musharraf also remarked, when commenting on Omar. From his point of view, Omar was a smart, different Kashmiri who spoke well and appeared honest, quite the opposite of the Hurriyat guys who said one thing, did another, and meant something totally different. To be Chief Minister of such a state many times is no mean achievement. So, my vote is also for Farooq for Presidency.

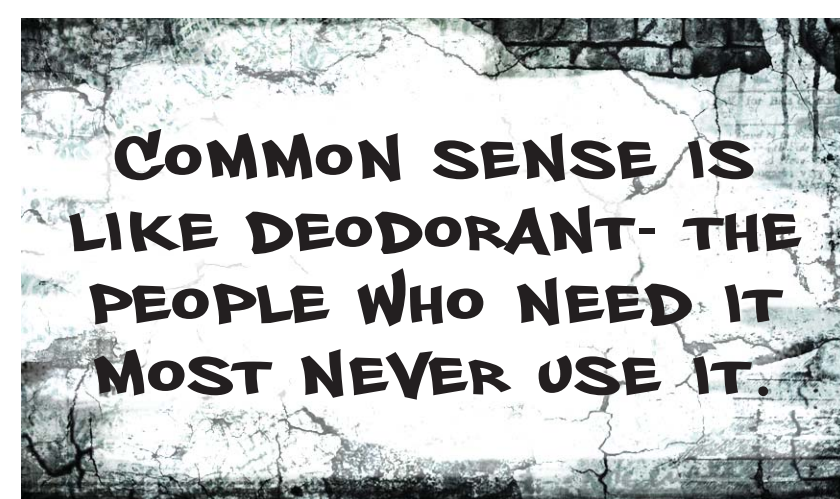
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rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com



When: 11th May 2025, Sunday, 6:30 p.m. Where: Rashtradoot, Chameliwala Market, M.I. Road, Opp. GPO

THE WALL



BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman