



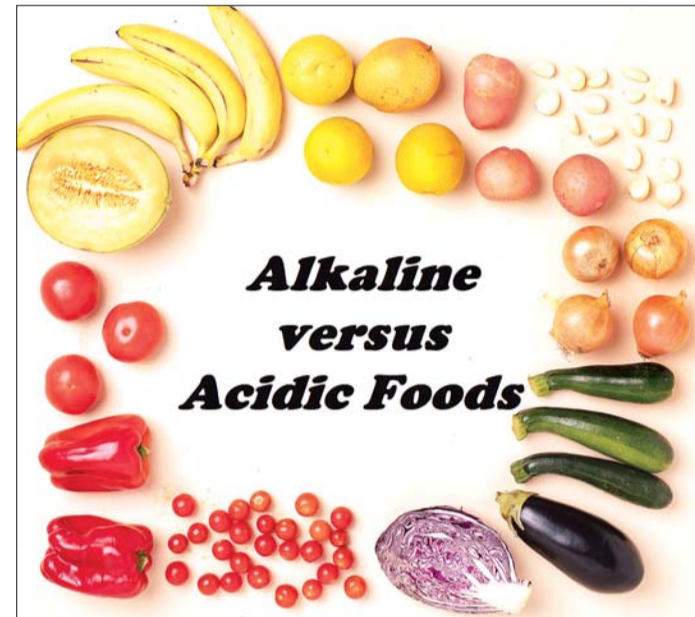
World Fair Trade Day: Championing Ethical Commerce

Observed annually on the second Saturday of May, World Fair Trade Day, falling on May 10, 2025, celebrates the global movement advocating for equitable trade practices. Established in 2004 by the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO), the day highlights the importance of fair wages, safe working conditions, and sustainable livelihoods for producers worldwide. This year's theme, 'Be the Voice of the #BusinessRevolution,' calls upon consumers, businesses, and policymakers to support trade systems that prioritize people and the planet over profit. Celebrate by attending local events, supporting Fair Trade artisans, or sharing the movement's message to inspire collective action.

#FOOD-TALK

The Summer Diet Showdown Between Acidic and Alkaline Foods

Choosing the right foods to stay cool, hydrated and energized during hot weather!



When the sun starts blazing and temperatures soar, our cravings naturally shift towards foods that hydrate, cool, and refresh. But beyond the usual advice of 'drink more water' and 'eat more fruits,' there's a trending wellness debate heating up: nutrition circles are asking, 'Should you eat an alkaline or acidic diet during summer? And which one truly helps you beat the heat?'

Understanding the Basics

In nutritional terms, alkaline and acidic diets refer to the pH level foods leave in the body after digestion, not their actual pH on the plate. An alkaline diet is rich in fruits, vegetables, nuts, and legumes, believed to leave an 'alkaline ash' in the body that helps maintain a slightly higher pH (around 7.35-7.45). On the other hand, an acidic diet includes more

meats, processed foods, dairy, caffeine, and alcohol, which may produce a more acidic internal environment. Although the body has a tightly regulated system for maintaining pH balance, proponents of the alkaline diet argue that what we eat can support or strain this natural mechanism, especially during extreme weather like summer.

Why Alkaline May Be Summer's Best Friend

Summer brings with it dehydration, fatigue, digestive sluggishness, and in some cases, increased inflammation due to heat stress. This is where the alkaline diet steps into the limelight. Fruits like watermelon, cucumber, lemon, and coconut water have an alkaline effect and are naturally cooling. They support hydration, reduce acidity, and ease digestion, which is exactly what the body needs in summer. Foods like spinach, bananas, avocado, sweet potatoes, and green leafy vegetables not only keep the gut happy but also help maintain electrolyte balance, which is often disturbed due to sweating. Many traditional Indian summer staples, like chaach (buttermilk), mint chutneys, and lime water, also align with alkaline food principles.

What About Acidic Foods?

Acidic foods aren't 'bad' per se, but excess consumption, especially in summer, can leave the body feeling sluggish, bloated, or dehydrated. Heavy meats, fried snacks, and sugary sodas tend to increase internal heat and acidity, making us more vulnerable to heat exhaustion or indigestion. That said, not all acidic foods are villains. Citrus fruits like oranges and lemons are acidic outside the body but have an alkalizing effect after digestion. Moderation, as always, is key.

Finding a Summer-Friendly Balance

Instead of obsessing over every food's pH score, the best approach is to tune into how your body feels. A diet rich in seasonal fruits, water-dense vegetables, light grains like millets, herbal teas, and cooling spices like fennel and cumin works wonders in summer. Ayurveda, too, recommends a 'pitta-balancing' diet during hot months, emphasizing bitter, sweet, and astringent tastes over sour, salty, or spicy foods.



Farooq with Son, Omar Abdullah.



Rajesh Sharma

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

How can you talk peace with a guy who has come to kill you?" Toba Mir talking to "these fellows" was the principle that Dulat, as an intelligence officer, lived by in Srinagar. Recently, Dulat fondly recalled Doctor Sahib, and he shared this trait. They both believed far more in the power of dialogue than in the zap of a bullet. They both liked that model and the optimism that lay behind it.

Both never believed in closing doors, especially if they are doors of conversation. "You can only move forward by just talking to someone."

In December 1990, Dulat was put in charge of IB's Kashmir Operation Group, known jocularly as the K-Group. While working on Kashmir, Dulat too became confirmed in his observation that, in

essence, there were three types of actors in Kashmir. One type was on the periphery of the movement in Kashmir. They were, in fact, a simply hangers on; supporters and sympathizers, but not active within the movement itself.

The second type was the political prisoner. By early 1990, the former United Front leaders, who would later form the All Party Parties Hurriyat Conference, or the JKLF boys, they were in different jails across the state. The IB thus had the chance to establish contact with whomever of them it chose.

The third category consisted of the militants. This was a slightly more difficult group, for how do you get to someone who is in the field or underground. Simply put, as Dulat says, the answer lay in nurturing and cultivating relationships.

It is a difficult process, though it sounds easy with the militants, it was along and a circuitous dialogue, ranging from topics like the futility of violence to an honourable peace. It would be a considerable amount of time before IB officers could even begin speaking about some kind of settlement with India. Moreover, Dulat has written, Farooq was the number one on the militants' hit list, and the ISI's largest bounty was being offered for Farooq's head. Just as Pakistan never forgave the Sher-e-Kashmir (Sheikh Abdullah) for siding with

India, it never forgave Farooq either. Farooq always said on this subject, "I am not my father. I have not joined politics to spend 12 years in jail. I will always be with whoever is in power in Delhi."

It is a fact, militant separatist and Farooq are on the opposite of political spectrum and ideology, probably, bitterly hostile to one another. At no point, he discouraged the Centre (LB) from talking to the separatists, even though it went against the grain for him. He was no fan of anyone who believed in carving up the valley in anyway. "I will continue to fight them (separatists). They have fought continuously." In Farooq's, talking of azadi was akin to flagging a dead horse.

But all said and done, 1994 was a bad year for Pakistan. That year, the West, US changed its position on Kashmir by openly declaring it a disputed territory. This was a change from its previous stance, which was not to publicly challenge the legitimacy of Kashmir's accession to India. Pakistan was very

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Farooq with Paran and Dulat at one of many parties.

Rao dispatched a team, led by opposition leader Atal Bihari, to Geneva. Salman Khurshid, then deputy to the foreign minister Dinesh Singh and Farooq (as the pointsman) an emergency EMISSARY in the Vajpayee's team, along with I. K. Gujral. The delegation performed brilliantly, with Farooq, as Shekhar Gupta described, Farooq was full of 'beans and butter.'



much in the picture at the time, having moved a resolution at the United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) to send a fact-finding mission to Jammu and Kashmir. The allegation, as always, was India's violation of human rights in the state. In this backdrop, Pakistan was taking India's 'some severe human rights violation in Kashmir to the United Nations.' In response, Narasimha Rao, the Prime Minister, got the Indian parliament to pass a resolution that firmly declared that the State of Jammu and Kashmir has been, is, SHALL BE AN INTEGRAL part of India. Five days after the Indian Parliament resolution, Pakistan tabled a resolution at the UNHRC through the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) that CONDEMNED India for human rights abuse in KASHMIR. If passed, the UN Security Council would have imposed economic sanctions on India. To counter the move,

Gujral was to be the prime mover on the advocacy of India's cause but Gujral shook his head at the end and told Farooq, "Aap baat karo." (You talk.)

A Man Full Of 'Beans And Butter'

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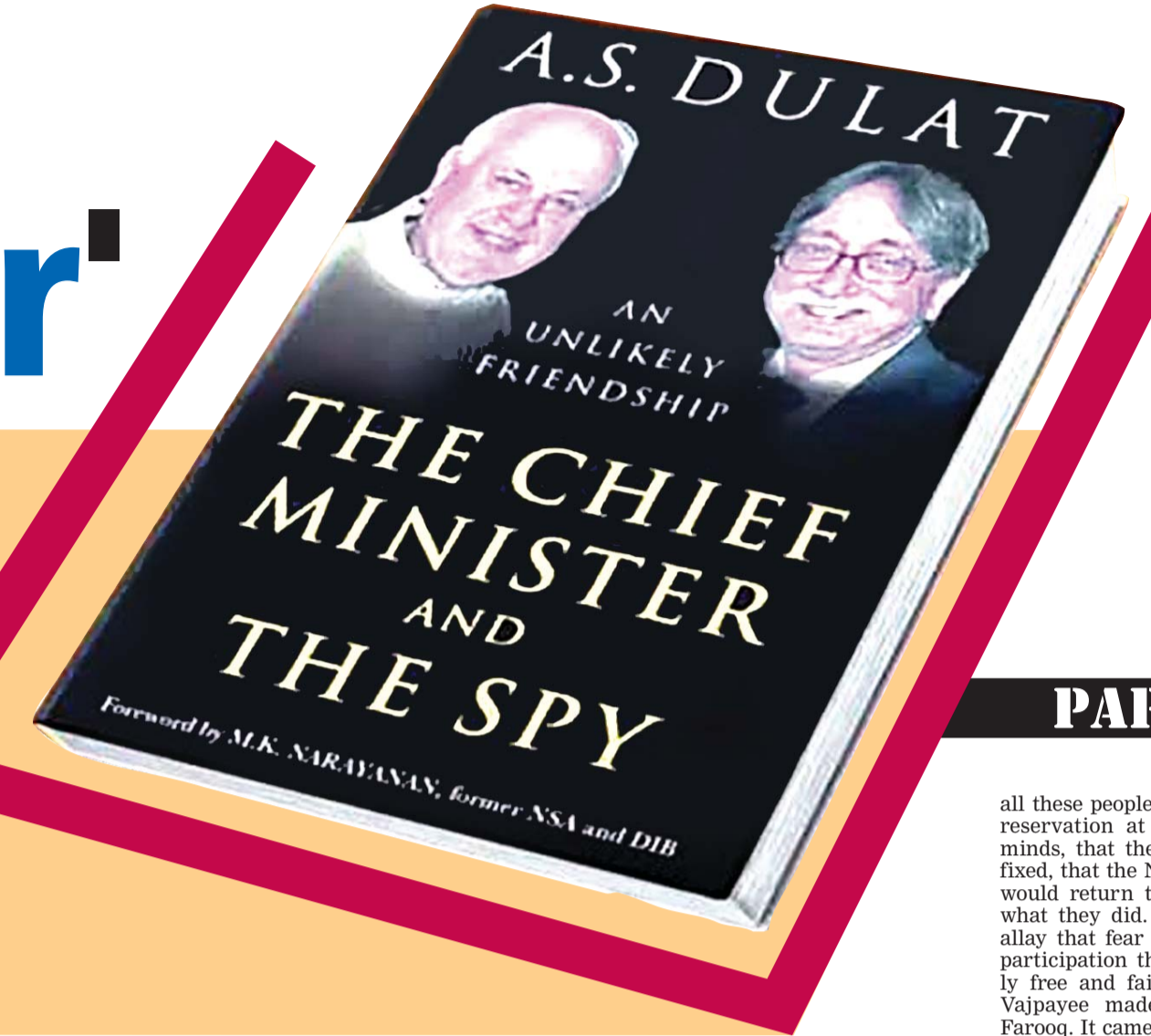
#A.S. DULAT



The Intelligence Bureau (IB) centenary celebrations in Srinagar, 15-17 October, 1988. Director of the Intelligence Bureau (DIB), M.K. Narayanan, presents a memento to Chief Minister (CM) Farooq Abdullah in the presence of Governor Jagmohan.

to do. "Anything you like." Brajesh said, "But we want you to focus on Kashmir," said Brajesh Misra, secretary in charge of P.M.O and also Vajpayee's right-hand man. A few days later, Brajesh Misra and Dulat had a longer chat and Dulat asked, "Okay, what in Kashmir?" "Elections are coming up next year," he said. "We want as much participation as possible, as many people you can get in. Try and get these separatists." Vajpayee and Brajesh Misra had asked Dulat with complete, free and fair assembly election, if possible with the participation of separatists.

Pakistan's diplomatic volleying was at its most tense in the marble halls of the United Nations. Farooq relied upon his wit and presence of mind. As the discussions were ongoing, he nonchalantly told them "We will sort out this problem soon. Then, you come down to Srinagar for a round of golf. The view is beautiful." A delegate would recall that he offset his sangfroid by chiding his opponents to 'speak Kashmiri with him, to prove their Kashmiriyat.' "Not many politicians today have that kind of aplomb," comments Dulat on the episode. 1996, after years of president rule, elections were held in Kashmir, and Farooq's party swept the polls. Farooq became the chief minister. In 2001, Dulat was into P.M.O after retirement as a special advisor on Kashmir, partly to facilitate Farooq to Delhi for 2002 election. Dulat asked on the first day of joining that what he was supposed



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all these people, Jamat et al, had a reservation at the back of their minds, that the election would be fixed, that the National Conference would return to power no matter what they did. It was in order to allay that fear and attract greater participation through transparently free and fair election that the Vajpayee made a suggestion to Farooq. It came up during the time Farooq was promised vice presidency. In those days, Farooq and Brajesh talked freely as 'Doctor Sahib', Brajesh said, "Sir-ji, this time we want election to be free and fair. Omar to chief minister Banega hi."

For the brief moment, Farooq believed that he might actually be made vice president of India.

But it was an illusion. So, Farooq finally asked Dulat point blank, "What are Delhi's plans. Do you believe the guys will make me vice president?"

"Why not," asked Dulat. "I don't believe it that's why I am asking you."

"What do you believe," Dulat. "Sir, you have spoken to the home minister about this, haven't you?" Farooq said yes.

"You have spoken to the prime minister about this."

"Yes."

"If both have given you their word, then you will be the next vice president." Dulat later said, "But I don't trust them," Farooq said. "I don't trust Delhi."

"As it turned out, he was right. The moment A.P.J. Abdul Kalam was sworn in, Farooq's fears were confirmed. The president and the vice president both could not be from minority communities. He was proven right.

The result? Farooq had to be ditched.

To be continued...

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Cordially invites you to an unforgettable talk with

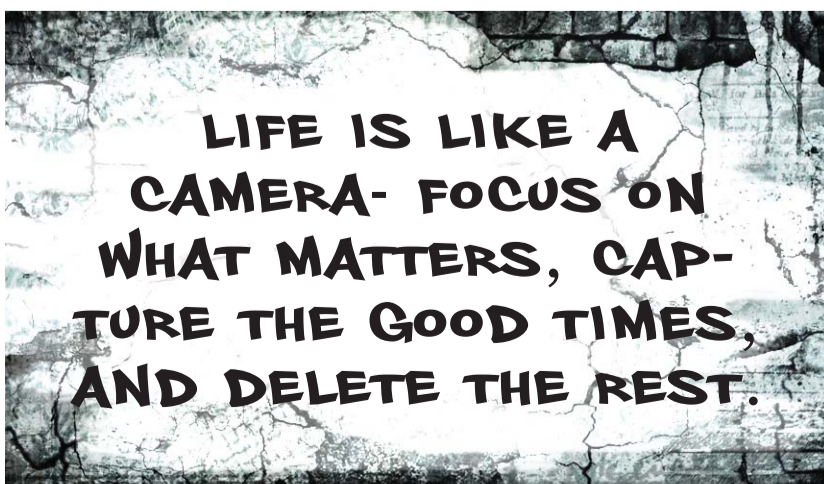
Shri AS DULAT

(Former Special Director IB & Chief of RAW)
On his EXPLOSIVE NEW BOOK

"THE CHIEF MINISTER AND THE SPY"

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



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