

KASHMIR GOVT. SAYS SIKH MASSACRE
SAMPLES FAKED

(By Ashok Pahalwan)

JAMMU, India (Reuters).—The state government of Kashmir admitted on Friday that forensic samples taken in an attempt to confirm the guilt of five young men blamed for a Sikh massacre two years ago were faked. The killing of 36 Sikhs in remote Chitisingpora village in the violence-racked state of Jammu and Kashmir in March 2000 occurred hours before a visit by U.S. President Bill Clinton to India and drew strong condemnation from him. Indian newspapers have alleged that soon after the massacre security forces picked up five innocent youths, killed them in a stage-managed gun battle, burned their bodies and then claimed they were "foreign militants" responsible for the Sikhs' deaths. The bodies of the five youths were exhumed and forensic samples taken only after massive demonstrations in Kashmir by protesters. Kashmir state chief minister Farooq Abdullah told the legislature on Friday "it appears fake samples were sent" to laboratories and apologized for "the injustice done to the people for which I feel ashamed". "We strongly suggest those responsible for collecting and sending the samples had something to hide," he added, promising an investigation into the tampering. India had identified the five youths blamed for the Sikh killings as belonging to the militant separatist groups Lashkar-e-Taiba and Hizbul Mujahideen.

Both groups denied responsibility and, with Pakistan, blamed India for the massacre which they said was aimed at discrediting the Kashmiri independence cause during Clinton's visit. The laboratories to which the samples were sent to establish the youths' identity said they were mislabeled and showed serious discrepancies. Abdullah said a judge would lead the probe, which would take two months. He also said fresh test samples would be taken under the supervision of police and doctors. The Times of India, one of the newspapers which investigated reports that the samples had been falsified, accused the state in an editorial on Friday of a "brazen" cover-up. "From knowingly foisting the charge of terrorism on innocents to eliminating them in a fake encounter . . . (it) is an example of the worst kind of state high-handedness," it said in an editorial. More than 33,000 people have been killed since 1989 when Islamic guerrillas seeking either independence or union with neighboring Pakistan launched a revolt in Kashmir.

Human rights groups have frequently accused Indian security forces of abuses such as summary killings and torture. India has always denied systematic human rights abuses and said that any allegations are investigated and the guilty punished.

IN HONOR OF DR. STEPHEN
LIPMAN, SENIOR PASTORIAL
COUNSELOR FOR HOSPICE OF
PALM BEACH COUNTY

HON. MARK FOLEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 2002

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a man who has been a true asset to his community. His caring and guidance have touched many families and friends in need of support.

I speak of Dr. Stephen Lipman, Senior Pastoral Counselor for Hospice of Palm Beach

County for the past 19 years. Fortunately, Steve is not retiring, but is offering his services as the Pastor of the Jupiter Medical Center.

We all know of the fine work Hospice offers and what kind of a person it takes to counsel the individuals and their families whose loved ones are in the transition for their final stages of life.

Dr. Lipman's services have gone beyond that: whether it is counseling young children, lending kindness to the terminally ill or simply offering a smiling face, you can always count on Steve. He exemplifies all that is good in a individual.

I would like to join the communities of South Florida and thank Dr. Lipman for his sincere dedication and years of service.

Mr. Speaker, please let the record reflect the 107th Congress' appreciation for all he has done.

HONORING MOLLIE TAYLOR STEVENSON, SR. AND MOLLIE TAYLOR STEVENSON, JR.

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 2002

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Mollie Taylor Stevenson, Sr., and her daughter, Mollie Taylor Stevenson, Jr., who are the first living African-American women and native Houstonians to be inducted into the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame. The organization honors and documents the lives of women who have distinguished themselves by exemplifying the pioneering spirit of the American West. The Stevensons were inducted during a ceremony at the Renaissance Worthington Hotel in Ft. Worth, Texas, on November 9, 2001.

Friends and family know them as "Mollie" and "Lil Mollie". The 89-year-old Mollie, Sr. and the fifty something, Mollie, Jr., reside on their family-owned Taylor-Stevenson Ranch within the city limits of Houston. These women possess grit and determination inherited from Mollie, Sr.'s grandmother, Ann Taylor, who was purchased in 1856 as a 21-year-old slave by Edward W. Taylor. Ann and the owner's son fell in love and because laws of the day forbade interracial marriage, they lived together and reared six children and sent them to college.

Mollie, Sr., the first born child of Major and Hester Taylor, not only inherited her parent's love for the land, but the tradition of pursuing higher education. In 1934, Mollie, Sr. graduated from Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, majoring in music and classical piano studies. After graduation, she traveled with the Fisk Jubilee Singers and was a regular guest pianist at Houston's historic Rice Hotel. It was at Fisk where Mollie, Sr. met the love of her life, Benjamin "Big Ben" Stevenson, a seventeen All American from Tuskegee Institute, who earned a B.S. in agriculture and animal husbandry in 1931. They were married in a lavish lawn wedding in 1937.

Mollie, Sr. spent most of her adult years fending off attempts to wrest oil-producing property from her through lawsuits, theft, or crafty persuasion. After the death of Mollie Sr.'s grandfather in 1929, relatives, both white

and African-American, began to make claims on the oil-rich land. With the death of her father in 1949 and her mother in 1950, the struggle to preserve her birthright escalated and was much like the ranch wars seen in the old west. Cattle were stolen and attempts to acquire the valuable oil leases became a frequent occurrence. Mollie took on challengers in and out of court and preserved for her descendants their right to the Taylor-Stevenson lands.

During segregation, Mollie, Sr., and her husband, "Big Ben", created a haven for African-American children barred from all but one of the city's parks. At the Stevenson ranch children could ride horses, play with the ranch animals, eat farm-fresh meals, and spend weekends and summers on the ranch. The Stevensons became well known for their philanthropy and generous spirits. Believing that education was very important, they not only educated their own children, but countless others with food, books, tuition payments and entire college educations. There are regularly scheduled field trips to the ranch and museum, which provides an opportunity to those who would not otherwise have a chance to experience the true nature of a working ranch.

Mollie, Jr., worked as a professional model in Houston, Kansas City and New York, but she was drawn back home where she worked side by side with her mother to preserve their legacy. She established the American Cowboy Museum, a 501(c)(3) organization in 1987. It honors the contributions to Western culture of African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, and women. Mollie Jr. has been featured on radio and television and in articles in *Ebony*, *Essence*, *Texas Highways*, *Horse Talk* and many local newspapers. She has been honored by numerous schools as a motivational speaker and event coordinator. Mollie, Jr. is also a journalist and an active volunteer with the Sugar Shack Trailride and various other rodeo trail ride associations. She is also a member of the Speakers and Black Go Texan Committee of the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo, the Professional Black Cowboy & Cowgirl Association, the Landowners of Texas, and her favorite, the Diamond L Riding & Roping Club. To acquaint a new generation with this rich history, Mollie offers school tours, leather crafts for visiting children, lectures, a traveling exhibit with quilt display, horseback riding, a mobile petting zoo, and living history presentations. She also encourages young people to consider careers in agribusiness and land ownership and sponsors FFA and 4-H students.

The Taylor-Stevenson Ranch is a treasure that seven generations of the family have fought hard to preserve and on which they still live or maintain various areas. The 150-year-old working ranch is one of the oldest Black-owned ranches in the United States, complete with an assortment of livestock. In the shadows of the 4th largest city in the country, the Stevensons have carved out a legacy that can provide a momentary escape from the hurried pace of the city. About 100 tours and field trips are conducted each year. Heritage tours and family reunions are also a part of the activities arranged by the ranch. During the 1940s and early 50s, the ranch was home to Sky Ranch, an aviation school operated by Tuskegee graduates who were mechanics for the famed World War II Tuskegee Airmen. The property is also officially listed as a Texas