

# **Eyes of Different Colours Bring Fame, But Not Fortune, to Kashmir Boy**

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Faizan, the seven-year-old boy hailing from the picturesque district of Kupwara nestled in the enchanting Jammu and Kashmir region of India, has captivated hearts worldwide with his mesmerizing heterochromia iridium—a rare condition bestowing upon him eyes of distinct hues. One adorned in a shade of azure, the other in warm tones of brown, Faizan's gaze has emerged as a beacon of fascination, drawing attention from across the globe.

The journey to Faizan's internet stardom commenced when a vlogger shared a video of him on Instagram, igniting a wildfire of viral sensation. Local media outlets swiftly caught wind of this remarkable tale, amplifying Faizan's popularity manifold. Even tech titan Vivo India recognized his allure, featuring him in an advertisement campaign for their latest smartphone, an opportunity for which Faizan received rightful compensation.

However, amidst the whirlwind of fame, Faizan encountered individuals seeking to exploit his uniqueness for personal gain, promising revenue from videos featuring him but failing to deliver. Despite such setbacks, Faizan inadvertently became a source of livelihood for numerous creators and self-proclaimed journalists in Kashmir. Within the confines of an aged, two-story traditional Kashmiri abode, Faizan resides with his family, a robust assembly of twenty members.

Enveloped within the ethos of a joint family system, Faizan's lineage traces back to his grandfather, Abdul Razzaq, a patriarch overseeing a familial tapestry comprising his four sons, three daughters, and their respective progeny. Though marred by tragedy with the loss of two daughters, Abdul Razzaq's legacy endures, with one surviving daughter and a multitude of descendants. Faizan stands as the lone voice amidst silence, his father, mother, and younger sister ensconced in a world of deafness and muteness.

Despite his father Reyaz Ahmed's earnest efforts to acquire a trade for sustenance, the inability to comprehend his tailor master's instructions thwarted his aspirations. This linguistic barrier renders communication arduous in a society predominantly fluent in speech. Tragic echoes of heterochromia iridium resonate within Faizan's familial history, as his late aunt Mumtaza Akhter, born with the same condition, navigated a life devoid of sound and speech.

Her untimely demise at the age of twenty-one in a forest tragedy echoes a poignant reminder of life's fragility. Amidst the complexities of his familial landscape, Faizan finds solace within the confines of Kupwara Model School, conveniently nestled adjacent to his dwelling. Guided by his grandfather Abdul Razzaq, a spiritual luminary, and his uncle Muhammad Saeed, an educator at the same institution, Faizan receives both academic nourishment and emotional support.

Bonding over shared tales and tender care, Faizan's affection gravitates towards his uncle and grandfather, pivotal figures in his formative years. Yet, financial constraints loom over Faizan's horizon, casting shadows of uncertainty. Muhammad Saeed, a private tutor in a village school, acknowledges the precariousness of their economic reality. While presently capable of providing for Faizan's needs, Muhammad Saeed harbors apprehensions regarding sustaining this support amidst escalating expenses.

Faizan nurtures aspirations of donning the mantle of a police officer in adulthood, a dream staunchly championed by his uncle Muhammad Saeed. However, the specter of financial adversity threatens to eclipse Faizan's aspirations, instilling fears of dashed dreams and despondency. Oblivious to the trials that await him, Faizan's innocence veils the harsh realities lurking beneath the surface.

Despite their financial tribulations, Faizan's family refrains from soliciting external aid, harboring hopes of securing sponsorship for his education from a prestigious institution. In such an eventuality, they pledge eternal gratitude to their benefactors, envisioning a brighter future for Faizan unshackled by the burdens of economic strife. Faizan's narrative transcends the confines of a Kashmiri hamlet, resonating as a testament to resilience amidst adversity. Amidst the cacophony of fame and the whisper of financial woes, Faizan emerges as a beacon of hope, his unwavering spirit illuminating pathways towards a future brimming with promise and potential.



Faizan posing for a portrait.



Faizan communicating with his father using sign language.



Faizan is standing outside his residence, before going to a walk.



Faizan taking a leisurely stroll in the company of his uncle.



Mohammad Saeed demonstrating the mountains located in the vicinity of their village to Faizan.

