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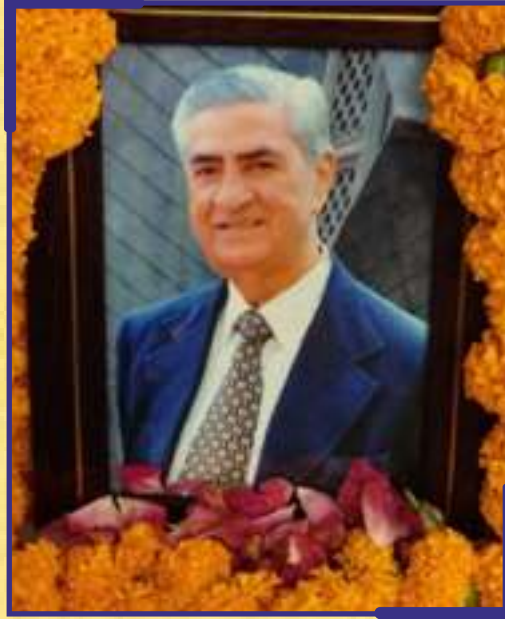
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DDC ELECTION DEMOCRACY AT DOORSTEP

Shraddhanjali



Sqn. Ldr. B.L. SADHU
Jan 17th 1933 – Sep 7th 2020

Sqn. Ldr. B.L.Sadhu, a decorative Air Force Officer, outstanding in his technical/AF academic profile was endowed with an extra ordinary commitment & drive for his community service. Here mained President Kashmiri Sahayak Samiti Chandigarh for long and after retirement took over as President Kashmiri Welfare Sabha Ludhiana. As Chairman Kashmir Medical Emergency Charitable Trust (KMECT) till last, was instrumental in enlivening innumerable lives from traumas/ accidents/ calamities providing life support medical attention to the victims from prestigious Super Speciality hospitals.

A sincere guide, a role model for the clan –The Bhisma Pitamah. Dear beloved brother we cherish your guided paths, your joyful moments, your enduring charm, your laughter echoing in our hearts & mind, your altruistic personality that shall keep us inspiring. Pray ever for your "सद्गति" and for more emancipated work in the brighter world.

हरी ॐ शिवाय नमः, ॐ नमः शिवाय।

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THIS MONTH'S COVER

This month cover page
is showing the citizens
voting for DDC
elections

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From the

Editor-in-Chief



Political Change at Grass Root Level in JKUT

Dear Readers,

The UT of Jammu & Kashmir is going through a quiet transition after the ball was set rolling for DDC elections. So far, the response of the people to the democratic process is encouraging; 50% of the registered voters have cast their votes. The violence-free elections have given hope to common man that rule of law will prevail. These elections assume importance since these were held post-abrogation of article 370/35A. The mere participation by a decent percentage of over 50% voters would mean people's acceptance of central governments approach towards Kashmir. Therefore, these elections cannot be seen in isolation as this will have a strong impact at the ground level in coming days.

Grassroot Democracy

Citizens of Jammu & Kashmir are earnestly looking forward to grass-root democracy flourishing, like what is prevalent across the other parts of the country. Peoples' participation in contesting and voting is an indicator of their willingness to be part of this great democratic exercise. Common peoples' concerns revolve around their basic amenities i.e., roads, drinking water, basic health facilities and electricity. People are looking forward to these elections to enhance and improve connectivity, education, health-care and other necessary amenities which, till recently, had eluded them, despite huge amount of funds allocated to the erstwhile state by successive central governments. People are repeatedly asking their erstwhile legislators about their performance and accusing them of swindling of funds. People

are also getting convinced that they were cheated by few dynasts all along these years. Overall, one can safely assume that this exercise would strengthen democratic institutions and a new grassroots leadership would emerge, who are committed to serve people in true sense.

Initially the mainstream political parties like NC, PDP, PC had shown no inclination to participate in these elections after they formed a new alliance under the banner of PAGD to oppose neutralisation of Article 370/35A and had vowed to fight for its restoration. However, after Jammu Kashmir Apni Party decided to contest the elections, the PAGD alliance was compelled to jump into the fray. The reasons for this are not far to seek; the Alliance constituents felt that they would lose political ground to Apni Party, which would render them irrelevant. This would have made them powerless to influence Kashmir's politics in future. Hence, better sense prevailed among them and as an after thought, they too jumped into these elections. The news from the ground level indicates that election results would certainly throw some surprises this time as people yearn to see some change.

Disruption of Elections

The evil state of Pakistan was, as usual, itching to disrupt the election process in valley. The increased ceasefire violations and infiltration attempts from Pakistan are the signs of its desperation. The failed Nagrota and Pulwama encounters are clear indicators that their planning and execution were both foiled by Indian Army and State Police.

However, it is possible that there may be some more attempts, to disrupt the ongoing elections, but so far, Indian security forces have been able to keep them at bay. Pakistan is worried that if people in Kashmir get the taste of real democracy and development, then all their future plans of continuing to wage jihad in Kashmir would go haywire. Therefore, security forces must keep high vigil and make sure Pakistan is not allowed to shatter peace in the valley. Security agencies should also step up their efforts to detox the administration from the 'league of separatists and communal' elements. These elements need to be removed from the setup to prevent them from creating hurdles in establishing healthy democratic institutions in the Union Territory.

What Does DDC Election Mean to Kashmiri Hindus?

The larger question is - how would these democratic exercises benefit the internally displaced Kashmiri Hindus? Their may not be straight answers to this question, which has

been often debated. For larger national interests, Kashmiri Hindus in Jammu and elsewhere, have participated and strengthened this election by casting their votes in their erstwhile constituencies. Few Kashmiri Pandit Panchs and Sarpanchs, elected earlier, have genuinely worked for the development of their villages, despite huge threats faced by them. Elected Kashmiri Hindus have braved jihadi threats; some, like Martyr Ajay Pandita, were even killed while they were trying to uphold the democratic process. However, the community takes solace in seeing that grass root democracy is once again trying to take roots in the valley, hoping that one day they would see peace returning to their beloved valley, which would eventually see their return. Kashmiri Hindus' situation can be summed in the couplet;

*Har Waqt Milte Hei Muje Aanjani Si Saza;
Mei Taqdeer Se Poochun Mera Kasoor Kya Hei*

भनील गैर गणक

Cartoon Corner

- Anil Nakhasi

MYONUY PAKNUY PRAZNAAV TO DUURIYE





DDC Elections in JKUT

The more than decent voter-turnout in the recently-conducted DDC elections in JKUT has once again reinforced the truism that in 'Kashmir there is nothing straight except its poplar'.

In the bone-chilling cold of Kashmir, during this part of the year, more than expected voter-turnout as seen through serpentine queues in front of polling stations, was quite in contrast with what Kashmir witnessed only few years back. Stone pelting, lakhs turning out to attend the funeral of slain militants, massive crowds at Jama Masjid baying for the blood of security forces are events so close to us that seeing such great enthusiasm among those participating in District level elections, both as candidates or voters, seemed unbelievable.

I am of the opinion that irrespective of the results of these elections, particularly in Kashmir Valley, it is a win-win situation for the central govt. The very fact that all those opposed to BJP were compelled to form a new outfit, the Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), vowing to stand by the 'Gupkar Declaration', is itself a huge turn around in the political landscape of Kashmir. Disparate political outfits had come together to

demand repeal of Aug, 5, 2019, constitutional amendments that neutralized Art 370 and 35 A and reorganized the State into two union territories. They had categorically stated that they will not take part in any election unless their demands are met. Therefore, it was a huge come-down for these valley-based parties to fight these elections, that too, not to become members of the Legislative Assembly but of the District Development Councils. What a loss of face!

Similarly, the separatists too have been opposing holding of elections in Kashmir unless their demands were met. Only a couple of years back, the valley-based parties had boycotted the elections on many occasions and in the last parliamentary elections Farooq Abdullah, the former Chief Minister and the Chairman of PAGD, had barely got a total of ten thousand votes which saw him enter the Lok Sabha.

Actually, these mainstream political parties, particularly the Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) faced a Hobson's choice. Had they boycotted the elections, they would have lost complete hold over the political power structure of the state; what with the UT Legislative Assembly

having already been dissolved. As it is, without political power, they had almost become irrelevant to the existing situation in Kashmir. Therefore, fighting these elections had become a dire necessity. In the process, both parties went back on their well-stated policy of not fighting any election till the restoration of Article 370 & 35A. This time they did not even possess a fig leaf to cover their shame of having surrendered so meekly.

It is quite clear that Pakistan, the Separatist and their proxies in Kashmir are mortally scared of letting BJP establish any roots in Kashmir. Nearly 15 BJP workers have been killed by the Jihadis in run-up to these elections in Kashmir valley. This clearly proves that BJP seems to be making a dent in the political strongholds of Kashmir's traditional political parties. BJP supporters taking out big rallies in Kashmir and holding public meetings also proves that gradually BJP has started making inroads into the complex polity of Kashmir. It is, therefore, possible that BJP might spring some surprises when the election results are announced. However, irrespective of whether BJP wins any seats or not, the party will consider the active and enthusiastic participation of people in the elections, a victory of sorts.

It is likely that the newest party to enter the poll-fray, the Jammu & Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP), which owes its allegiance to the centre, is likely to win some seats. It is, therefore, likely that Kashmir Division will this time see new faces emerging on its political firmament. In a way, this will reflect a desire of the people to elect those who they feel will deliver, rather than choose those people/

parties who have created oligarchies over the years and represent vested interest.

It's a well-known fact that J&K, which has always counted among the most corrupt states in the country, has allowed the so-called mainstream parties to keep the state in their strangle hold mainly by speaking with a forked tongue. While never allowing to loosen their control over the state's political power, these parties have cared little for peoples' welfare, while building empires for their own selves. The election to the District Development Councils provides a way of circumventing the politician-bureaucratic nexus that has been responsible for giving birth to the scourge of corruption and its perpetuation. Those getting elected to the DDC's will hopefully be far more answerable to the people in their own districts compared to the erstwhile MLAs, who were never available to the common people to resolve their small/big problems. With Sarpanchs/Panchs now forming the main links in chain of Panchayati Raj, it will be difficult for the DDC to avoid accountability. People will ask questions, seek development, decide on what they want and will ensure that funds allotted are wisely and purposefully utilized.

Such a political turn-around will be good for the Union Territory. If Kashmiris vote to elect honest, committed and sincere people in place of oligarchs, it will be a huge victory for the common Kashmiri and a slap on the faces of those who call themselves mainstream but are actually the masters of double-speak, ambivalence, subterfuge and deceit.

- Col. Tej K. Tikoo

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General Secretary's Column

AIKS Intercommunication

Because of COVID-19, AIKS cannot carry meetings with its members in the physical form although the office remains open on working days with a skeleton staff. The President and some key office bearers attend office on specific days. In the pandemic, most of the meetings were conducted over virtual platforms. A few webinars were also held to deliberate on key issues. The President and other members of the core-committee interact frequently through con-calls or hold virtual meetings. The AIKS managing task force members have done their utmost not to hamper the routine work and resolve the important matters concerning the welfare of the community.

Letter to the Hon'ble Home Minister

The Union Home Minister, through a letter was informed that the delimitation commission needs to pay attention to the displaced community and strengthen their democratic right by empowering them.

HM was apprised that the Government has issued instructions for reservation of seats for several disadvantaged sections of the society in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, includes Gujjars, Bakerwals, Paharis, other nomadic tribes, etc. AIKS also pointed out that Kashmiri Pandits are no less disadvantaged than these groups mentioned above.

Under the circumstances, the Home Minister was requested that the Delimitation Commission treat us as a disadvantaged section of the society and provide us with reservation of seats in the State Legislature/Parliament. Kashmiri Pandits be allotted three reserved seats in the State legislature and one seat in the Lok Sabha was the demand put forth to the union government. We hope the genuine demand made on behalf of the community is considered by the government.

Review of Donation

On the appeal of President AIKS, to help the deprived members of the society, many community

philanthropists contributed to this noble cause so that help can reach certain unprivileged members of the community who have been impacted by COVID-19 particularly those we lost their means of livelihood due to impact of the pandemic. A few cases were considered for help and beneficiaries were identified and paid reasonable amount initially for three months and consequently for three additional months.

A series of meetings were held to review and consider how to move forward and give relief, to more families. AIKS is identifying such needy cases and will continue to support such persons. At the same time we appeal to our brethren to come forward and supplement our efforts through their contributions so that none suffers for want of money.

KOA, USA Elects New President

Kashmir Overseas Association, USA (KOA) has elected Dr. Archana Kakroo as its new president. AIKS President, through a greeting message has congratulated the elected President. The congratulatory message signifies, "AIKS conveys its warm felicitations to Dr. Archana Kakroo on being elected as President of Kashmir Overseas Association, USA. KOA has been a steadfast affiliate of our organization and has actively participated in all AIKS activities/ initiatives over the years. KOA has worked tirelessly to render humanitarian assistance to our displaced community members residing in various camps at Jammu and other places. AIKS is privileged to have KOA as one of its most valuable affiliates.

We hope that under the new President, KOA will continue to strengthen its bonds with AIKS towards the good of our displaced community.

We convey our best wishes to Dr. Archana Kakroo in her new assignment and assure her of our support to KOA"

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Acharya Kshemaraja Jayanti Celebrations (28th to 30th November 2020)

November 30th marked the birth anniversary of Acharya Kshemaraja, a luminary in the sphere of Kashmir Shaivism. Hailing from Bijbihara in Kashmir, Acharya Kshemaraja, lived around 10th-11th century. He was the student of famous saint scholar Acharya Abhinavagupta, the Shaiva yogi par excellence from Kashmir, who gave the precious jewels of Shaiva literature such as Tantraloka among others. Acharya Abhinavagupta, had many worthy disciples, and chief among them was Acharya Kshemaraja. This year, for the first time, several organizations, led by the Ishwar Ashram Trust and including Swami Ram Shaiva Ashram, Anuttara Trika Kula Organization and Himalayan Heritage foundation came together to celebrate this event.

The celebrations spanned over three days beginning from 28th November through 30th November. Eminent faculty were brought in to hold a series of educations and research talks online. The inaugural session was taken by the eminent scholar of Kashmir Shaiva Philosophy, Dr. Navjeevan Rastogi, who dwelled on the philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism and presented several examples of the great contribution of Acharya Kshemaraja in his talk.

Sh Moti Lal Pandit gave a very lucid talk on Sunday related to the Kashmir Shaiva Philosophy and Acharya Kshemaraja. Mr. Rattan Parimoo, a noted artist, took pains to make an illustration of Acharya Kshemaraja. On Sunday, 29th Nov a handmade painting of the great Shaiva master was released by the noted artist Mr. Ravi Dhar.

On the final day, several talks and events

were organized. On the final day, there were two important talks. One by Prof M L Kukiloo, a well-known scholar and disciple of Swami Lakshmanjoo Maharaj and second by Dr. Mark Dyczkowski, an eminent scholar of Kashmir Shaivism. All the talks were very well received by all the listeners. The event concluded by the singing of Bhairav Stotra and Lal Vaaks by the noted Kashmiri Singer Sh. Dalip Langoo.

The entire programme over three days was anchored by Sunil Raina Rajanaka and well supported by Sh Rakesh Kaul and Ms Sarah Gates.

A series of talks was also organized by Department of Sanskrit, SDHDR&T center of S D College, Ambala Cantt, Darshan Yoga Sansthan Dalhousie, Himalayan Heritage Foundation and Ishwar Ashram Trust

Acharya Kshemaraja's contribution to the Kashmir Shaivism Philosophy has been immense. He was amongst the very few disciples of Acharya Abhinavagupta, who apart from being a practicing Yogi, contributed a lot to the propagation and literature of Kashmir Shaivism. His works include the commentaries of serious Shaiva text such as Swachandatantra and Netratantra on one hand, and devotional texts such as Shivastotravali and Stavachintamani, on the other, thus conveying the vast dimension of his intellect and understanding.

We sincerely hope and pray that his Birth Jayanti takes all of us one step closer to the final aim of self realization.

*Compiled by Dr Anusheel Munshi
(Trustee Ishwar Ashram)*



A Decisive Moment for Kashmir Leadership

The decision of the Peoples' Alliance for Gupkar Declaration to participate in the grassroots election process viz. DDC, Local Bodies and Panchayats in the Union Territory, is a sensible and pragmatic one. What has made them break the jinx is the realization of the damage they chose to inflict on their respective political parties by adopting an indifferent attitude towards the democratic

present. No doubt this is a healthy sign of the revival of democracy in J&K.

Some political analysts are of the view that the mainstream political parties have abandoned their earlier reticent and even non-cooperative attitude because of the lurking fear of erosion of their popularity in a prospect of the boycott call. By leaving the political battlefield vacant for the BJP, as in previous Panchayat elections, the



process in the past. By abandoning the negative approach the alliance partners have shown political maturity which the masses of people will certainly appreciate. It also indicates lessening of pressure hitherto exerted by the separatists in the context of elections. The mainstream political leadership should feel emboldened to take a considered decision particularly at crucial stages like the one at

present. No doubt this is a healthy sign of the revival of democracy in J&K. Some political analysts are of the view that the mainstream political parties have abandoned their earlier reticent and even non-cooperative attitude because of the lurking fear of erosion of their popularity in a prospect of the boycott call. By leaving the political battlefield vacant for the BJP, as in previous Panchayat elections, the

We are aware that Kashmiris are eager to dovetail their cause to a wider Islamic resurgence phenomenon in the Asian region. Of course, most Muslims are conscious of various Islamic resurgence movements and the *Arab Spring* is its latest manifestation. On a psychological and historical basis, there is nothing wrong in that. But the point is that Kashmiri Muslims cannot underestimate that after independence India adopted the path of democracy, secularism and egalitarianism as the political arrangement of the Indian nation with a Hindu majority. The travesty is that some Valley-centric leaders, blind to the dynamics of history, would go to the length of accusing India for not talking to Pakistan because “the latter is a Muslim State.” They forget that Bangladesh, a Muslim dominated region separated from Pakistan mainland by giving the sacrifice of millions of people.

For a country like India with immense diversities, the adoption of secular democracy is of utmost significance. It indirectly means conceding the rights and privileges of the minorities of various hues in the country. No Islamic country has any commitment of that kind with its minorities. Rather, the history of the Caliphate is clear about the State policy towards religious meaning non-Islamic minorities.

Apart from this, the political environment in the South Asian region at this point of time is not comparable to what it was during the previous elections for the assembly, or the parliament or the local bodies in our country. The fissures in the unity among the members of the OIC and the revolt of some non-Semitic Muslim nations spearheaded by Turkey, Pakistan and Malaysia pose a serious challenge to the influence of the OIC. Being a creation of Saudi Arabia, the centripetal force for the Muslim world, a revolt directed against the OIC cannot be expected to sail smoothly through the disturbed waters of the Middle East politics.

The expectations aroused by Pakistan for the Kashmir Valley majority group that the OIC's resolutions on Kashmir would bring

solace and strength to their “freedom movement” are difficult to materialize in given circumstances. There is a new and realistic view of the Kashmir issue with many Arab Islamic States. Western powers, including the US, assess the Kashmir issue from a different trajectory after the UN and the US State Department slapped a ban on some terrorist organizations based on Pakistani soil. Osama bin Laden was found hiding in a residential complex not far away from the GHQ in Rawalpindi. Pakistan Prime Minister was honest in conceding that 30 to 40 thousand radicalized terrorists were roaming the length and breadth of that country. Moreover, owing to Pakistan's failure to contain and control illegal funding to the home-based terrorist organizations, she has not been able to escape from the “grey list” syndrome of FATF.

Perhaps the time has come for the ordinary Kashmiris to look around and also inwards rather than become euphoric about chasing an unattainable wild dream. Unfortunately, it has been the bane of most of the less developed West Asian and Middle East societies to remain glued to a politicized rather than a reformative religion. Though belatedly, even Saudi Arabia, the known bastion of orthodoxy, has begun to feel the necessity of keeping pace with the fast

advancing scientific and technological achievements of the developed countries with tremendous impact on life.

Religious, emotional and social connectivity apart, the people in the valley need to make a dispassionate and realistic appreciation of the evolving socio-political construct in the neighbouring country and dovetail it to their perceptions. The first onslaught of modernism or the age of advanced science and technology on the Islamic mind is that it throws a serious challenge to the exclusivist ideology of any community because of geo-economic constraints. Nations do not and cannot work with an exclusivist hangover.

The argument that by embracing inclusiveness, the Kashmirian or for that matter

By abandoning the negative approach the alliance partners have shown political maturity which the masses of people will certainly appreciate.

the Indian Muslims will lose their identity or distinctiveness is only a figment of the imagination. Democracy and openness are contrary to exclusiveness, rather its antithesis. Because the economy is the sheet anchor of survival for any society, Kashmir is need to think of long term policy particularly when the economy of the region is not only fragile but entirely dependent on external boost up.

Efforts are made in several Islamic countries to water down the fundamental criteria of the Westminster type democracy or at least to dovetail it to what is obtainable from the skulduggery of interpretation of the Quranic verses. The kid-glove treatment to the scriptural fundamentals seems difficult to succeed. Democracy, secularism and egalitarianism are deskbook versions of long experience through which the political theoreticians have journeyed.

Often, a question is asked by the younger generation that if India was partitioned in 1947 based on religion, why the Muslims should continue to be in India and such large numbers? The answer is simple. Indian National Congress-led the freedom struggle against the colonial power not based on religion but on the basis of democratic rights of the people of India. The Muslims of India contributed to the national struggle as ardently as the people of any other faith did, the Sikhs, the Parsees, the Buddhists etc. How could they be ignored or sidelined if they desired to continue to live in India and not migrate to the newly formed Dominion of Pakistan? After all, Pakistan was the new avatar of colonial ideology where the landlords, either living in Pakistan or migrated from India, harboured feudalist mentality and the construct of that society. Kashmiris had waged a freedom struggle of forty long years to get rid of feudalism. How come they would find comfort and reconciliation with a feudalist system evolving

after the British left India?

Unfortunately, Kashmiri mind has been polluted to the extent against democracy that it cannot think beyond a half-century or a century from now. It is very uncharitable on the part of the propagators of political philosophy to be on the wrong foot.

Democracy is a long and trying process. It has no quick fixes and no cut and dried solutions. Democracy is an experiment undertaken with patience and forbearance. After a thousand years of democratic rule, the UK continues with its history of bringing amendments, new laws, discarding the old ones and reforming the society just because they have a living, vibrant and result-oriented democracy. India is also pursuing the same path and expects the same results.

What Kashmiris need to do is to study the Islamic history dispassionately and find out if there was any Islamic regime at any point of time in the history when such regimes ruled in a democratic and secular manner? I don't think there was any. The Saracens, the Turks, the Ottomans, the Timurids, the Mughals, the Safavids, the Mamluks, take any of them; none ever practised democracy and secularism as the loadstar of statecraft. Not only that. The non-Muslim communities called the *dhimmis* were treated outside the pale of ordinary subjects of the

Islamic State. Numerous restrictions were imposed on their religious practices; they were to wear a specific black or green armband to distinguish them from the rest of the populace and hence entitled to a different treatment. The history of the Caliphate is replete with such sordid stories.

Islam polarized human population into two broad segments – the *Ahl-e-Imaan* meaning the faithful and the *kafirs* meaning the heretics. The treatment meted out to the heretics was universally followed by the *moments* or the



Democracy is a long and trying process. It has no quick fixes and no cut and dried solutions. Democracy is an experiment undertaken with patience and forbearance.

pious Muslims. Therefore, in such a prospect the question of giving equal treatment to non-Muslims in an Islamic State did not arise. Consequently, democracy and secularism were not choices.

A significant change ushered in by modernism is that the importance has shifted from religion to economy. The relationship among nations essentially depends on the quality and quantity of economic transactions that take place between or among them if the trade is multi-cornered. The Industrial Revolution of 1688 A.D in Europe is a landmark event in the evolution of modernity and the age of reason.

Secular and democratic India is making the greatest experiment ever made in the 14 century-

old Islam. It is to bring about slow, silent, rational and hurtless reform in the very mindset of the Muslims of India. There are many takers and there are many who oppose it. However, the consolation is that all these changes though touching the bottom of social structure, are undertaken silently and without fanfare. That is the right way how the reforms can be absorbed and how their impact can be indisputable. We also need to learn from the Soviet experience in the Central Asian Islamic States. Of all Islamic countries, the Central Asian Republics have shown remarkable maturity in putting religion and politics in their respective compartments.

(The writer is the former Director of the Centre of Central Asian Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar)

The Tale of Bess, The Lion



-Diya Bhat

Misha was brave
She lived in a cave
Let's listen to her story
That she wrote in her diary

Her pet cat loved her.
Misha loved her fur.
She lived with a lion and a parrot
Parrot loved Misha but hated a carrot.

The lion was not fearless.
His name was Bess.
Being a boy he was called a girl
Since he cannot even scare a Merle
He used to fear a lot
He never fought
As Misha, Tess and Jess thought

Misha used to laugh at Bess.
She even brought Bess a dress!
Parrot whose name was Tess,
Laughed and laughed and laughed on Bess.

Cat who was called Jess,
She supported Misha and mocked Bess.
Bess also laughed when they mocked him,
He didn't care when they used to grin
He only cared about Misha, Tess and Jess
Unlike the other three, he never used to fuss

Furious now Misha Tess and Jess were
Tess said to Jess, use your fur
They taunted each other
Jess said to Tess, you use your feathers
Tess said to Jess you use your cat brain
Misha angrily threw Jess and Tess in the rain

She went to Bess
And gave her a kiss
Bess went to Tess and Jess
And they left the cave

Misha regretted,
And she lamented.
A fox came by,
And he in his muffled voice said cry and cry and cry.
Misha was his new target
Misha was fidgeting

Bess saw him
And gobbled him
Misha saw Bess' brave act
And then she made a pact
That no one would ever taunt anyone
And then all the four hugged and played with fun!



DDC Elections in Kashmir

Elections in Kashmir, always throw something unique, and it is immaterial whether the elections are held for Panchayats or the LOK Sabha. Elections to DDCs' – District Development Councils (being held for the first time in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir) are keeping the tradition of throwing something different alive. These elections cannot be seen in isolation, People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) and DDC elections are complimentary to each other. It appears, as if the PAGD was born for DDC elections-making these elections, colourful, bitterly contested with no holds barred, seeing three ex-chief ministers, besides any number of ex-cabinet ministers, ex-legislators and political 'touch-me-not', adding flavour to otherwise, an election, that is not going to elect a legislative assembly and none of these elected, is going to be the Chief Minister either.

Let us start with "Garland Tactics" – a new coinage. Well, it started in Bunkoot village of Bandipora District, where PDP, claimed that it had won 2 Sarpanchs and 34 Panchs, unopposed. The truth is however, different. These elected Panchs/Sarpanchs, were from Jammu Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP). Wearing the garlands offered by the PDP, these newly elected guys coolly walked into their office of JKAP, surprising every one over there, by their appearance with garlands on. So the word, spread – Garland Tactics, and witty Kashmiris, started mocking their erstwhile colleagues, (in PDP, NC, Congress) – Sarpanch Nahin – Posh Maal Sahih.

We will go back a year or so, August 4, 2019. The so called seven main stream political People's leaders of the valley, after sensing the possibility of Central Government meddling with Article 370 and 35A, met at Gupkar

residence of Dr. Farooq Abdullah on this day i.e., 4 Aug 2019, one day prior to the decision of the Parliament abrogating Art 370 and 35A. These parties made a joint declaration, called the Gupkar Declaration. They resolved, in the Declaration, to unite and collectively fight for defending the 'identity', 'autonomy' and 'special status' of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. It seems, Altaf Bukhari, the President of Jammu Kashmir Apni Party, has a point. When being accused of having met the Prime Minister and the Home Minister of India, after the State was downgraded to UT and divided into two UT's, he said in a public speech that, days before Aug 5, 2019, some VVIPs (he didn't name them, but he was pointing towards Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah, etc.) had had a long meeting with the Prime Minister in Delhi, and then asked the audience, "Do we conclude, that they were in collusion with or in know of, the GoI's move to abrogate the Art 370 and 35 A and also divide the State into two Union Territories"?" He stopped at that, but dropped broad hints that he

color only when the state flag is hoisting like it used to.

While the UT administration was running smoothly, with hardly any protests, not a single stone pelting incident, the separatists and the half separatists Under Ground and Over Ground workers of banned anti-national groups, having gone into hibernation. It seems, the government wisely thought it fit, to call for elections to DDCs, probably for two reasons. First, these DDCs would be represented by those elected by the masses and second and more important, the general masses could approach these elected leaders for redressal of grievances, more freely than, the present system of getting any job done at the bureaucratic level. Earlier too, when the elections to Panchayats to elect Panchas and Sarpanchas, or elections to Urban Local Bodies were conducted, after the Panchayat Act was made applicable, to the erstwhile State of J&K, mainstream parties of the Valley had, by & large, boycotted these elections. Most of the Panchs/Sarpanchs got elected, unopposed or

Omar Abdullah was emphatic, when he, on behalf of all these 'main stream' parties, declared that, they will not Participate in any of the elections, till they did not achieve the goal of restoring the Art 370.

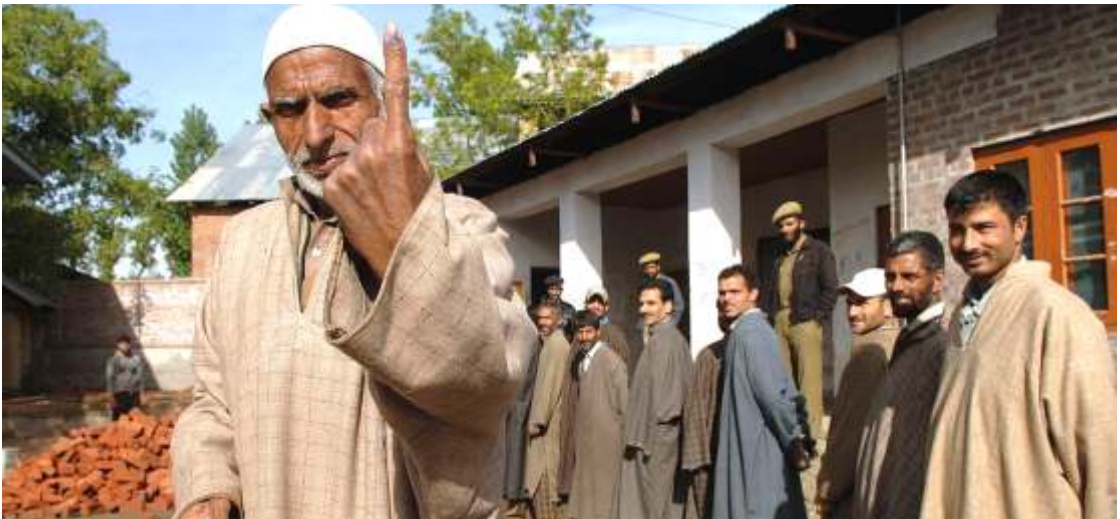
was in know of much more, that could expose these "DYNASTIES". Incidentally, Congress was not physically present, when these seven so called mainstream leaders met at Dr. Farooq's Gupkar residence. These leaders again met, on 22 Aug 2020, after the release of their leaders and reiterated their resolve to fight collectively and untidily to achieve the goals set in the Gupkar Declaration. Omar Abdullah was emphatic, when he, on behalf of all these 'main stream parties, declared that, they will Not Participate In Any Of The Elections, till they did not achieve the goal of restoring the Art 370. Mehbooba Mufti, soon thereafter, went a seditious step further, she was furious, aggressive in her press conference, where she spectacularly, mocked Tri-color and treacherously displayed her love for the flag of erstwhile State of J&K. She too declared that, they will not participate in any elections, till Act 370 is restored and she would recognise the tri-

after winning a token contest. Kashmiri Pandits, living as refugees in their own country for the last 30 years, were easy cannon fodder to fight these elections and most of them got elected too, to head or represent Panchayats or Urban Local Bodies of those vary villages from where they were forcibly evicted by Islamists in 1989-90. Visiting their villages regularly, it goes to their credit that they did an honest job and improvements in their villages, neglected for decades were quite visible. They had to pay a price, sometimes, with their lives, for keeping the grass root level democracy alive in the valley. Worse is, the radicalized state administration, didn't co-operate with these genuine peoples representatives, whose all efforts were aimed at ameliorating the lot of residents of their respective Panchayats all of whom were Kashmiri Muslims. In our kind of electoral democracy, you have to put up with its hazards, like it is immaterial whether you get

elected un-opposed, or by even a single vote cast in a Lok Sabha constituency, you represented the whole constituency in the Parliament. However, the PAGD had a rethinking, soon after the elections to DDCs were announced. They thought, and wisely so, that boycotting these elections, would further isolate them, and they would have no say in the local administration, secondly, their estimation was that they were a monolith, a Goliath, an entity that couldn't be defeated, besides, their well wishers and 'handlers' in Delhi advised them not to miss this opportunity to prove their 'mass popularity' well, they decided to fight the DDC elections in full force.

Distribution of seats amongst them, was done, apparently, smoothly to the satisfaction of all, however, Congress decided to fight the

residence Fairview – an old palace of Maharaja Hari Singh, situated on the foothills of Zabarwan, overlooking majestic Dal Lake. This Fairview is spread over acres of priceless land. She goes campaigning, guarded by elite Black Cat Commandoes and she spews venom against India. When I talked to someone in the valley, to find out, why PAGD Candidates were not allowed a free movement for canvassing, I was told there was no truth in it, all candidates were given accommodation in protected and secure hotels/lodges, and requested to inform the officer in charge Security, about their tour programmes 24 hrs in advance, most of them chose to enjoy the hospitality of the state and stay put in the free lodging (boarding too) provided by the government.



elections as part of the PAGD yet not counted as one of them. NC got the lion's share and their campaign was vitriolic, aggressive, sometimes bordering sedition. They went for the kill, whole-hog against BJP and JKAP that they named as King's Party.

Initial stages of the campaign, after filing the nomination papers by candidates of various parties and independents, seemed quite normal, but then one fine morning, Mehbooba Mufti publically accused the civil administration (though handpicked by her earlier only) of not allowing the PAGD candidates, free movement in their constituencies. Facts are otherwise, she enjoys Z+ security, over a 1000 security personnel are on 24/7 security at her official

First and second phase saw sizeable turnout in the valley, when compared to elections held previously, but it also started ringing alarm bells in PAGD circles. Voting percentage in the strongholds of PDP (Jamaat-i-Islam) in South Kashmir was abysmally low. Not only that, more and more candidates, jumped into the election fray, against the official PAGD candidate, as Independents though they are known as important workers of these 'mainstream' parties, which goes by the PAGD name. Fissures developed – Congress Candidates, in many constituencies are fighting openly against PAGD Candidates. This trend continues, even in 3rd & 4th phase, the voting percentage in JI strongholds of PDP, like

Pulwama was barely 2%.

Something spectacular is happening in Kashmir, it is both delightful and surprising, Top BJP leaders like Shah Nawaz, Mukhtar Naqvi are campaigning in the valley. Shah Nawaz is staying but, he has been there for almost a month and he is in no hurry to call it a day. He must be enjoying the hospitality – typical and traditional Kashmiri style, whether in far flung villages of Kupwara district in North Kashmir or in the pocket borough of Muftis – Khannabal Anantnag in South Kashmir. He must be pleasantly surprised, when he is received by enthusiastic crowds, with women singing folk songs, while dancing ROUF dance and all of them, men and women, raising rhythmic slogans, vociferously'

Naqli Shera Vatth Wyan Dera

Asli Shera Aa Gaya

Rashvat Khora Vatth Wyan Dera

Asli Shera Aa Gaya

All these dancing, BJP flag hoisting, sloganeering, boisterous reception crowds, were

Trivita as they hold up their worked fingers after casting their votes on Friday, Dec 4, “today, our wish to vote once in our life-time was fulfilled”, said the couple. Chand and his wife are West Pakistan refugees, who fled to India during Partition in 1947. Along with nearly 1.5 Lakh others, they became eligible to vote in J&K local elections, after the abrogation of Article 370 last year. Their village CHAK JAFFER wore a festive look. People, old and young, danced to drumbeats as they celebrated “independence” and shedding the “unwanted citizens' tag”.

Everyone gains in these elections, these elections will ensure the developments of all the districts, funds are aplenty and those elected, belonging to any party or even independents, are answerable to their electorate once their term is over, so they, in all probability will work hard and honestly to achieve their goals. However, There Is One Large Section, That Will Not be Benefitted at all, by these elections – and they are us – The Aborigines of Kashmir – Kashmiri Pandits, because we have no districts.

Imagine, a public meeting held in Bandipora, where an enthusiastic crowd of near 2000 (the ground could hold no more) braved the falling snow and extreme cold for hours to listen to their JKAP leaders, Altaf Bukhari, Ghulam Hussain Mir and Usman Majid.

not hiding their identity, nay, they were keen to be seen in front of the video camera. Or imagine, a public meeting held in Bandipora, where an enthusiastic crowd of near 2000 (the ground could hold no more) braved the falling snow and extreme cold for hours to listen to their JKAP leaders, Altaf Bukhari, Ghulam Hussain Mir and Usman Majid.

Something extra-ordinary and unimaginable too happened this election and it happened this side of Pir-panchal, a large number of J&K residents, living in Jammu area for over 70 years, voted for the First Time in local elections. Their joy knew no bounds. I talked to one of them, he was reluctant to speak, all that, he said, “Sir, vote dala yakeen nahin hota.” He didn't, even want to identify himself, “I am keeping my fingers crossed, till my vote is counted.” But it was different, in CHAK JAFFAR (Jammu), Tears well up in the eyes of 87 years on Lal Chand and his 82 years old wife

Government of India could have easily declared Jagti and other Kashmiri Pandit refugee camps in Jammu as an additional though temporary district (in Exile) for the sole purpose of DDC Election but they did not do so. Why? Because Kashmiri Pandits are expandable.

“Rumour mill in the valley is spinning out that top leadership of PAGD has reached some kind of agreement with an influential section of powers that be and common Kashmiri who voted against them is apprehensive that it might be a repetition of 1987. Hopefully not.

“PAGD locally mocked as Pagal and Ghatkar while Shah Nawaz called them Gumrah.”

It all goes well, PAGD – called by any name, is Going in a big Shock when results are declared.

(The writer is well known Political Analyst and writes for various national dailies)



Elections in Kashmir and Pakistan

The encounter last week, wherein four Pakistani terrorists were eliminated at Nagrota, while attempting to infiltrate into the valley from Samba, with large quantities of arms and ammunition displays desperation within Pakistan. Surge in cease fire violations, targeting pro-Indian civilian population in Uri and Tangdar, increased attempts at infiltration, all failing, has added to Pakistan's desperation. They see their Kashmir strategy going up in smoke.

As per reports only 20-25 Pak trained terrorists have managed to infiltrate into the valley this year, most of whom have been killed, leaving most terrorist groups leaderless. Total terrorists eliminated this year has crossed the 200 mark, most being locals. With no funds being inducted through Hawala, overground workers have failed to invoke violence and incite fresh recruits needed to keep terrorism alive. Violence to support terrorists trapped in encounters has receded. Even areas which were

pro-Pakistan are now witnessing a change.

Pakistan releasing the dossier, blaming India for supporting terrorism within their country, is aimed at enhancing pressure on India, which has also failed. In the dossier, it blames India for cease fire violations and targeting of civilians. It was hoping that Chinese actions in Ladakh would push India onto the defensive, but that too failed adding to their woes. India has not only held the Chinese at bay but gained advantage by claiming the Kailash Ridge. To display its confidence, India is not rushing for talks or accepting limited withdrawal with China and is prepared to continue with the standoff through the winters.

There is no doubt that Pakistan is aware that time for infiltration in the valley is fast running out as winters are setting in. With snow falling, tracking sneaking terrorists becomes easier. Hard Indian retaliation, targeting terrorist camps and supporting Pakistan posts, with little



concern for collateral damage has pushed them to the brink. They are simultaneously unwilling to risk any major operation which could lead to an Indian counterstrike.

Any counterstrike in Pakistan would adversely impact the power and control of the Pak army, which is already facing intense internal pressure from the People's Democratic Movement and other rising protests across the country. There are demands from every quarter for the army to return to barracks, which it has so far managed to stall. In case, it is embarrassed by an Indian strike, it would either be compelled to counter or face internal political humiliation. Comments by Ayaz Sadiq, in the national assembly, projecting panic within the Pak military and political leadership post the Balakote strike, continues to haunt the Pak leadership.

Aware that it can no longer play the nuclear card, the deep state is being careful in its approach. It has realised that its global support base has reduced with even close allies including Saudi Arabia and UAE singing the Indian song. China is already stalled in Ladakh and would be unwilling to enhance pressure to support Pakistan. Economically, Pakistan is in

employ drones to drop weapons in the region have met with limited success. Narco-terrorism is equally ineffective as monitoring is effective.

To add to Pakistan's misery is the conditions created by the central government leading to the participation of all major political parties in these forthcoming DDC elections. The PAGD (Political Alliance for Gupkar Declaration), a grouping of 11 valley based political parties have realised that if they do not participate, they would lose control of the state to the BJP ending their political future.

While the PAGD continues to rant on restoration of article 370, this election would determine their fate. The elections would be a battle between the BJP and all other political parties. For the globe, it would display return of democratic process in the valley and put paid to Pak's cries of resistance and forced incarceration of the region.

Victory by the BJP would indicate that the population has rejected Pakistan and accepted abrogation of Article 370. It would end Pakistan's claim to the region as also prove that the valley is peaceful, and the population unwilling to support terrorism. This scenario is a

The elections would be a battle between the BJP and all other political parties. For the globe, it would display return of democratic process in the valley and put paid to Pak's cries of resistance and forced incarceration of the region.

dire states. Its oil reserves cannot even sustain a few days of operations. The same is the state with its ammunition stocks. What is hurting Pakistan even more is the announcement and conduct of the District Development Council (DDC) elections in the Union Territory. The announcement of elections displays the confidence within the Indian government that the situation is near normal and terrorism is on the wane. To add to Pakistan's woes is that their favourite proxy, the Hurriyat, is currently in a state of near collapse, with no ability to either enforce violence, protests or bandhs. Its silence since the abrogation of article 370 indicates this.

With increased surrenders of local terrorists, their reduced lifespan after joining terrorist groups, shortage of arms and ammunition available in the valley displays Pakistan's failing strategy. Its attempts to

nightmare for Pakistan. Hence, it would make every attempt to stall the elections. The latest encounter is a desperate attempt by Pakistan to push in terrorists to disrupt the peaceful election process currently underway. Every election announced for the valley will be challenged by Pakistan. It must be made to lose.

If India is to change the global narrative on Kashmir, then the election process, commencing from the DDC and moving onwards, must be launched and conducted violence free. Pakistan would make every attempt to disrupt them as their Kashmir strategy depends on violence, intimidation and terrorism, all of which are waning. The game is on and India cannot afford to lose. It has gained the upper hand and it must ensure it does not lose it.

(The writer is retired Army General and writes on strategic and political affairs)



- Dr. R L Bhat



Temple Heritage of Kashmir Record of Vandalization

(Adapted from Book *Hindu Shrines of Kashmir* -Dr. R. L. Bhat)



Hindu shrines and temple in Kashmir have seen extensive destruction, demolition and decimation over the past several centuries. The details from the Persian histories of Kashmir written over the last four centuries given in this work, are graphic illustration of how this destruction was undertaken. Most of the studies undertaken in the modern times, have focussed on the identification and listing of the ruins which littered Kashmir till the early 20th century. The temples lay half demolished, the carved stones of the shrines were scattered around, the marvellous *murtis*, broken and disfigured had been thrown pell-mell. Some of them could be

seen even to middle of the 20th century. There are wide mentions by Stein, Lawrence and other European visitors to Kashmir often speak of these, giving specific locations where the *Murtis*, *Shivalings* and other remains of the destroyed temples lay scattered in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The ruins at Vaangat still bear these tell-tale signs of the destruction. English scholars visiting Kashmir often took photographs of the ruins as a curious interest as well as to document the history of this land.

The first work by a Kashmiri in this regard is Anand Kaul's *Ancient Remains of Kashmir*, published in 1937. In his introduction Kaul also points to the poignancy of the much recited

couplet of the famous Persian poet of Kashmir, Gani Kashmiri:

Shudsangi aastaani diin har buteeki buud

Kaafar biyaava sajda kuniinaastaanraa

[Every idol there was put in the foundation of the *aastaan* of *diin*; come ye *Kaafir* and bow to this shrine, now.]

As is well known, Pandits in Kashmir have been paying due respects at all the *asthaanas* there! Though it is difficult to say what exactly the famed poet was intimating through this couplet, his couplet could be an explicit declaration of the large scale decimation of the ancient shrines of Kashmir. The Persian histories repeatedly state that the material of the demolished shrines were used to build *masjids*, *ziyarat*s, *roozas*, *dargahs*, their boundary walls and the pavements leading to them. There is enough evidence to hold that this was done primarily to desecrate the sacerdotal icons. *Tarikhi Sayyid Ali* (Persian text page 12), describes with great pride the razing down of Kaalishvar temple, destruction at Poonpar and Vejibroor (pages 14-15) by Sayyid Ali Hamdani. *Tohafatul Ahbaab* chapter 4 singing paens to Mir Araki for razing countless temples etc. similar references are found in Baharistani Shahi and other chronicles.

They are competing with others in telling how destructive they or their pirs, preceptors and ancestors have been in this endeavour. Haidar Malik Chadurah, extolling the activities of his ancestor Malik Musa, says: "Nobody after

Sultan Sikandar has exerted so much for the spread of Islam as did Malik Musa" (Persian text of *Tarikh* of Haidar Malik of Chadurah, given in the English translation of the work titled *History of Kashmir*, by Razia Bano, published by Bhavana Prakashan, New Delhi, page 65). None of it was because of any paucity of building materials. As it is, there are whole mountains of rock known for supplying building materials and used for the purpose all along. The huge *kaarobaar* of stone works at Pantha Chowk, is testimony to it. And, so is the extensive use of *giirykani* for foundations and raising structures, to this day.

Justifying the destruction of Hindu temples on the plea of dearth of building material can only be seen as a perverse rationalization of the religious bigotry. It was a mission to destroy as a declaration of superior prowess, even superiority of the deities. Gani Kashmiri could be asserting this superiority of the mission which endeavoured to stamp out all traces of *kufur*, as Sayyid Ali calls it, extolling the 'pious' icon classicism of Sikandra (TSA, Persian text, *ibid*, page 20). In any case, it does not refer to the standing temples and shrines and other Hindu religious places of Kashmir. There are references to them in Merza Haidar's *Tarikhi Rashidi*, who says that grand shrines of Hindus still dotted the valley in the middle of the 15th century: 'Foremost among the wonders of Kashmir stand more than 150 temples built of hewn stone. The temples are all built on the same



plan' (*Tarikhi Rashidi* by Merzaa Haidar translated by E D Ross as 'A History of the Moghuls of Central Asia' published by Abi Prints & Publishing Co, New Delhi, Volume II, page 426).

Writing in 1594 CE, half a century after Merza, Akbar's minister Abul Fazl noted in his *Aayini Akbari* the splendour the temples and remarked that "the ancient temples inspire astonishment. At present many of them are in ruins" (Volume II, translated by Jarret, edited by Sarkar, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, page 353). Confirming Kalhana Pandit's observation, he informs that "the whole country is regarded as holy by the Hindu sages... In seven hundred places there are graven images

to the shrine, this author, particularly asked the local Muslims who now have built houses on the skirts of Parbat, whether they have ever seen any snakes in the area and they all replied in the negative, emphatically. Speaking of the splendour of these shrines the earliest Persian historian of Kashmir, Sayid Ali says "... *Mir Sayyid Ali Hamdani was wonder struck at the splendour of the Bijbihara temples... built ... by Parbal, the first king of Kashmir...*" (TSA, Persian text, *ibid.* page 16). Of course, Abul Fazl's is not the first admission of this grandeur. However, Merza Haidar and Abul Fazl, only tell of the most conspicuous of the temples there. They do not tell of all temples, not even all the major ones.



of *snakes*, which they worship and regarding which wonderful legends are told" (*ibid.*, page 356). Though the Kashmiri word '*naaga*' would be translated as '*snake*' in both Persian and English, in Kashmiri it implies both a '*snake*' and a '*spring*'. The words '*images of snakes*' refer to the *Murtis* that would have stood all over, including the peripheries of the holy springs which dotted the whole landscape of Kashmir.

It would probably have been on the basis of these grand icons that the Persian chroniclers renamed the hoary Pradyu managiri Parbat, as Kohi Maran, the hill of snakes. On a recent visit

The temple heritage of Kashmir is as fabled as it is extensive. Kalhana Pandit, describing the founding of the land, also tells of its holiness and the consecrating it with shrines and sacred grooves. Those edifices of stone still stand witness to the craftsmanship as well the veneration that was expressed by the people. Kalhana has also provided an extended listing of this heritage. Indeed temples and shrines holy to the people were so extensive and dotted every bit of land so as to turn every speck of the land into a virtual *tirtha*. In the very first verses of his *Rajatarangini* spread over eight *tarangs*,

Kalhana celebrates (*tarang* 1 *Shlooka* 38) this widespread acidity of Kashmir :
Chakrabrit-vijayash-aadi-keeshava-ishaana-bhuushitee
Tila-anshapina yatra
astiprithvyahthiirthahbahishkritah ||

MA Stein in his monumental translation of the eight books of Rajatarangini of Pandit Kalhana, undertook the major work in identification, history and detailing the then status of the ancient Hindu shrines of the valley. He traces every mention of the shrine(s) in each *shlooka* of Rajatarangini on the landscape of Kashmir, ascertains their status and collates the references in other works. It is a tribute to the acuity of Pandit Kalhana that this modern researcher could precisely trace the locations and attest to the truth of the historians descriptions. Equally laudable is the perspicacity of this researcher from far away Europe in searching out these hallmarks of Kashmir culture and heritage. Dr Stein is pleasantly bereft of the missionary slant visibly patent in most of the Orientalists. His notice is also untrammelled by the colonial politics that colours the approach of the Raj Scholars, if not formatting their points and perceptions. Stein's work is the primary source here, for the meticulous scholarship as well as its comprehensiveness.

Dr Raghu Nath Singh, the next scholar in that same mould, has produced a comprehensive listing of the shrines of Kashmir. Using Kalhana Pandit's work and the subsequent continuations of Rajatarangini by Jonaraja, Shrivara and Shuka together with the mentions in the religious literature and the Persian works, Dr Singh has produced a reliable listing of the Hindu temples and shrines of Kashmir, mentioned in at least one historical work. The lists, carried as appendices to his Hindi translation of Jonaraja's Rajatarangini, are categorised as *deevasthaanas*, *aashrams*, *ksheetras*, etc. With painstaking research, Raghu Nath Singh has pinpointed the historicity and antiquity of most

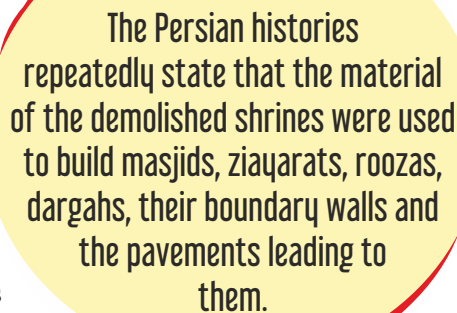
of the prominent temples and shrines of Kashmir. The most valuable thing about this compilation is establishing the continuity of the tradition and faith in Kashmir, over thousands of years, underlining the reverence associated with the holy shrines. Though some of the shrines may have been renovated later, their antiquity, sacred nature and the historical appeal is obvious.

My book, Hindu Shrines of Kashmir, from which this paper has been adapted, tabulates all these shrines together with the references in the historical records. R N Singh has also listed some of the shrines around the city that have been converted into mosques and *khanakahs*. However, this listing is not a complete record of these conversions. The first Persian history of Kashmir, Tarikhi Sayyid Ali, tells how impinging this conversion was: "in every village and town, where there existed a temple, he

[Sikandar] with the connivance of Sayyid Muhammad, demolished it and raised a mosque on the foundation, till Kashmir became a heavenly place (Persian text, page 27)."

Writing half a century after Sayyid Ali, Haidar Malik of Chadurah tells: "during his rule, Malik Musa demolished most of the temples and built mosques at their foundations" (Tarikhi Haidar Malik of Chadurah, Persian text, page 65).

Then, there is the hagiography of Shamsudin Araki which lists the temples and shrines which were demolished by him and converted into mosques and ziyarats, over two chapters. Sayyid Ali in the *tarikhi* mentioned above tells that the *khanakah* at Zadibal was actually a temple, which Araki first occupied and then converted into a *Khanakah* (Persian text, pages 46-47). Most of these erstwhile temples and *asthapanas* exist now as the *asthaanas* and *ziyarats* spread all over the countryside of Kashmir valley. These are the shrines which the Persian chronicles speak of in an inclusive way. However, their erstwhile character is evident in their structure, the tell-tale foundations and



The Persian histories repeatedly state that the material of the demolished shrines were used to build masjids, ziaqarats, roozas, dargahs, their boundary walls and the pavements leading to them.

building materials, as well as the folk memory which still identifies them by their original names. All of them stand on the *ashttadal* foundations, which are a characteristic feature of the shrines of Kashmir.

Most of the changed names are easily traceable to the original ones, as they have been only slightly modified to yield a Persio-Arabic sounding name: Bhiimas vaamiin, through Bumu' Saad, to Bamudin. A peculiarly telling instance here is *ekadashi rudra* being called *kahnoov*. Then, there are the ancient practices like observance of specific holy days, the practices of vegetarianism which were associated with the shrines and are still extant in the areas around the shrines. These evident pointers connect the converted shrines and temples to the ancient lore. A large number of sacred locales, including the shrines therein, have been converted into graveyards. There the religious connections have largely been lost.

As Kalhana points out, there was hardly any place over the length and breadth of the valley of Kashmir that did not carry a manifest sanctity for the indigenous people of Kashmir. This holiness is celebrated with the obvious founding of a *devalya*, establishment of an *asthapan*, investment as a *tirtha*, a *gufa*, or serving as a general place of religious gathering and discourse. Dinanath Yaksha, the late antiquarian of Kashmir, told this author during a session, that Hindus still remembered the compound of *Khanakahi Hamdaniya* as Vyasa Pyu'nd, the seat of Veda Vyasa. Accumulated over thousands of years of faith and devotion, the temples, shrines and sacred religious places shaped by skilled craftsmanship, would have been too numerous to be counted.

They definitely were too numerous to be totally obliterated over long centuries of fundamentalism that supervened in the valley. Persian histories, TSA, VK, BS, THMC, clearly state 'demolished all the temples and shrines in the area' and converted them to mosque or laid mosques over the demolished foundations. Often, they talk of the destructions and



replacements being carried out over a wide area, as in *Tohfatul Ahbaab*. These specific mentions of the temples demolished have been detailed in Hindu Shrines of Kashmir, mentioned above. One important point that needs to be mentioned here is that the demolitions did not happen, with the locals looking on in passivity. They resisted and even fought pitched battles with the demolishing squads. Such has been the travesty of the times of Kashmir, that this resistance has generally been forgotten even effaced from the records, even as it is there in the earliest records. Joona Raaja tells how the indigenous Kashmiris resisted the attempts of Sikandar. They fought his son out and brought in Shahi Khan.

Shrivara tells that Hindus actually fought Zainulabdin's son Haidar Shah and even demolished some structures raised on the ruins of their shrines with their material. The persecution they suffered thereafter, brought in the cries of *nabattoohm*. *Tohlfatul Ahbaab*

carries at least ten instances of the Hindus in different parts of the valley fighting pitched battles with the Sufi demolition squads of Mir Araki to carry out the destruction of temples and shrines (translated by K N Pandit, pages 200-78). These resisters have

got very less credit for the sacrifices made to preserve the holdfasts of faith and culture of Kashmir. An idea of the hardships faced by them can be found in *The Valley of Kashmir* by W R Lawrence (pages 190-99). Under great duress they have preserved for us the numerous shrines that venerate today. As it is there is hardly any shrine or venerated place in the whole of the country, which is not represented by one or another of the shrines of the valley. Since this excludes the countless shrines that have been lost for ever, the original sweep would have been even more extensive. From *Vyasa Pyand* to *Sita Kond*, there is hardly any signpost of Indian veneration that is not represented here. The same goes for the *tirthas* that are associated with different places of Kashmir valley.

(The writer is a well known Kashmir researcher and has authored various books)



- Dr. Ramesh Tamiri



Maqbool Sherwani 's Role in 1947

(Politics Behind National Conference Narrative)

During Chiefministership of GM Sadiq school textbooks in J&K carried a chapter on Maqbool Sherwani of Baramulla, Master Abdul Aziz of Muzaffarabad and that of Pushkar Nath Zadu. It extolled contribution of three heroes during 1947 Pakistani invasion.

Sherwani-The Communist View

Who was this Sherwani and what made him a national hero? In 1974 I happened to meet a professor, who had joined Communist movement somewhere in 1944. I asked him how did Sherwani become a national hero from just a ground-level National Conference worker of **amoffusiltown**. The learned professor left me stunned. Not that professor was way off the mark but because Kashmir's complex politics had many layers which the professor failed to fathom.

The professor disregarded Sherwani as a superhero. He said Sherwani was a bully whose sole politics revolved round his strong personal loyalty to the person of Sheikh Abdullah. The professor was partly correct and partly not right. He was correct. Sherwani indeed was a brave man who would go to any lengths to counter his political rivals even physically. This he had done on a couple of occasions. He was pure at heart and quite emotional. The professor was wrong. Sherwani did have fierce loyalty towards the person of Sheikh Abdullah but to say that he had no politics beyond that loyalty was outlandish.



Shaping of Sherwani's Political Views

Sherwani joined National Conference in 1939 when he was 32. A right age to decide political issues clearly. 1939 was the time when British support to Sheikh Abdullah had cooled off post-1935 lease of Gilgit Agency by J&K Govt. to the

British. Jinnah was unwilling to crown him as a regional Muslim satrap. In Jinnah's politics regional Muslim satraps had to agree to total surrender.

The absence of support from the British and Jinnah left only the Congress door open for Sheikh Abdullah. Sherwani's politics was shaped by this particular context. Sheikh Abdullah's distrust of Jinnah became political ideology for Sherwani at personal level. This when Sheikh Abdullah's opposition to Jinnah was neither ideological nor strategic but purely tactical. In 1940's Sheikh Abdullah tried to build bridges with Jinnah at least on four occasions but Jinnah spurned the offers of rapprochement. But

humiliating treatment he meted out to Jinnah in 1944. This episode symbolized Sherwani's brave persona as well as ideological opposition to Jinnah.

Adhikari Thesis

Ironically, initiative for inviting Jinnah to Kashmir was taken by the local communist group. It was in line with CPI's Adhikari thesis which justified creation of Pakistan and accorded legitimacy to religious sub-nationalism as basis of formation for new states. Adhikari thesis called for break-up of India into 16 states. The following year the local communist group at Sopore session called for self-determination for Kashmir to carry forward



Sherwani's opposition to Jinnah was ideological as well as political. Sherwani was personally secular. Sheikh Abdullah was not.

Humiliation of Jinnah

In July 1944 Jinnah addressed Baramulla people in the Post Office grounds, the present Higher Secondary School. **Sherwani, who was listening nearby, tried to put a garland of shoes around his neck.** Muslim Conference workers in the audience ran after him but he jumped into the flowing Jhelum. A Muslim Conference volunteer took hold of a boat to chase him but Sherwani managed to evade him. A section of the majority community in Baramulla was annoyed with him over the

the Adhikari line. Nehru was alarmed over this approach of local left group and Sheikh Abdullah's tacit support to the left position. He began building closer relations with DP Dhar.

Attempt to Revive National Conference

Soon after Jinnah left Kashmir National Conference proposed to reconvert National Conference into Muslim Conference. This was dropped after Raja Akbar Khan strongly opposed the move. Veteran communist leader KD Sethi has recalled this episode in his memoir.

So, neither the local left nor Sheikh Abdullah were consistent in opposing two-nation theory.

Communist Approach on Sherwani

Why did the learned professor make such observations about Sherwani? There was major discord between Sheikh Abdullah and local Communists. Not on Adhikari thesis but simple organizational rivalry. Sheikh Abdullah wanted to use communists for furthering his agenda but was unwilling to tolerate their supremacy. Sherwani's role was seen by the professor through Abdullah-Communist discord. Possibly, Sherwani was also not well-disposed towards communists. At no point of time Sherwani ever praised communist role or supported their political agenda.

Sherwani's Actual Role

What really was Sherwani's role that made him a national hero:

1. The main reason is that no one else among Kashmir's political leaders stood up against Jinnah and Pakistan ideology as strongly and as clearly as Sherwani did, not even his leader Sheikh Abdullah.
2. Sherwani's sacrifice and refusal to bow to the Pakistani invaders. Neither the local communists nor Sheikh Abdullah were consistent in their opposition to Pakistan and two-nation theory. Sherwani was not only clear about sinister politics of two-nation theory but also laid down his life in contestation against this. Circumstances around his death and his steadfastness in not bowing even when subjected to worse torture make him a super-hero.

Martyrdom

Sherwani had learnt motorbike driving some days before the Pakistani attack. Shiv JeeKoul had lent him his bike. On 20 October 1947 Sherwani and NC chief of Sopore Sofi Mohammad Akbar had left Sopore on the motorbike and reached Srinagar, taking the Sumbal route. After dropping Sofi at Srinagar Sherwani was returning to Sumbal. At Duderhama the local National Conference leaders- Mohan Lal Tikoo Shahpoori and Sheikh Ghulam Qadir Baboosa forcefully pleaded that he should not go back as Sumbal and Vaskura were under the control of the Pakistani invaders. A brave man Sherwani did not fear bullets. He was taken captive by the raiders at Satkreri near Zazun badampora,

2 kms. from Vaskuraand was reportedly kept in the house of a Pandit family in Sumbal before being taken to Baramulla.

After being taken captive and subjected to several days of interrogation & torture he was tied to two pillars near the Regina Cinema in the centre of the town. Nails were driven into his hands forehead and back. Even while being nailed he continued to shout 'Sher-e-Kashmir Zindabad.' Finally, he was shot dead. He was just 40 at the time of his martyrdom. 14 bullets were recovered from his body. The invaders called him a 'traitor.' It was only after Baramulla was liberated by the army Sherwani's body was removed from the pillars and burial done.

A verse recalling this sacrifice became popular:

Kujay Sher Sherwani, Dichath Kithkyan Kurbani, Khudaya Vanya Kar Ahsan, Kashir Baniyav Hindustan, Yoti Ayi Pulhor Choor, Korakh Varan Yi Gulistan, Kasheer Banyav Hindustan.

(Hail Tiger Sherwani! How he gave supreme sacrifice! God, now have mercy upon us. Kashmir has become Hindustan. Looters who invaded this place did not spare even grass-shoes. They ravaged this beautiful garden. Kashmir has become Hindustan.)

A play Shaheed Sheerwani, scripted by PN Pardesi and directed by Ved Lal Vakil, was staged to recall Sherwani's great sacrifice. Artist GR Santosh played the role of Sherwani, while Nissar Aziz Beg as a raider.

Sherwani Role in Sopore

Another role which has received no attention at all is his role vis-à-vis Kashmiri Hindus. He considered himself as part of Kashmiri Hindu fraternity, even cutting across political barriers. He had close friendship with many RSS activists of Baramulla town.

His role in saving the Pandits of Sopore town will be written in the golden letters. Soon after the Pakistani invaders entered Baramulla town Sherwani escaped to Sopore and lashed out at Sopore NC leaders for stopping the Pandits from leaving. He was shocked on the killing of his neighbours –Sudarshan Watt and Balak Ram and was inconsolable. He said, "What I saw today in Baramulla nobody should have the misfortune of seeing it again". Sherwani must have personally visited 10-15 Pandit families in

““

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””

Sopore and asked them to save their lives. He stayed in Sopore town from evening of 27 October 1947 till morning of 29 October 1947. On 29 October a Pandit family could not make any arrangements to leave. Sherwani reached the family's mohalla and lashed out at Muslims, asking them couldn't they protect a single Pandit family. Sherwani was last seen in Sopore on 29 October when he cautioned a kafila of Sikhs of Hamal region not to take Sangrama-Srinagar national highway for Srinagar. They disregarded his advice and rest is history. Over 400 Sikhs were killed at Choorabulgam and many abducted.

National Conference Narrative on Sherwani

Why did National Conference distort the narrative, underplaying his anti-Pakistan and secular role and thrusting the role of savior of Kashmir on him which was untrue.

National Conference narrative claimed:

That Sherwani saved Srinagar by diverting the invaders to Kruhn (Tangmarg-Budgam) region and made them wander aimlessly in Sumbal area.

What really is the truth?

Pakistanis already had a plan to take Baramulla-Tangmarg-Budgam route to capture airfield. In fact, Capt Sher Khan left Baramulla on 27 October itself. Sherwani had left Baramulla soon after the invaders entered the town. So where did Sherwani have a role? Secondly, Pakistanis continued to target Indian army along Baramulla-Srinagar highway but our jawans stood firm. After tactical withdrawal from Sangrama on the evening of 28 October 1947 our forces defended positions at Pattan till 4 November. Then our army vacated Pattan to force the invaders in to open confrontation in a battle-field at Shalteng. This battle turned the tide against the invaders and saved Kashmir.

Sikhs at Ichhama blocked the raiders for two days to give ample time to army to save airfield. Our army saved Srinagar. Sherwani had

no military role in that.

It is also claimed that he along with many others were tasked to work underground behind the enemy lines and delay the advance of the Pakistanis to Srinagar. What NC volunteers did in this regard has never been documented? Had there been some major role it would have been recorded. NC and other volunteers worked as guides and at few places kept track of the invaders. Some of them later joined J&K Militia, which was a regular force.

Sherwani was in Sopore between 27 to 29 October 1947. He was seen at a few places in vicinity of Sopore town where he misinformed the invaders to save the Pandits of those places. Then on 29 October 1947 he left for Srinagar. He remained there till 2 November 1947 and thereafter he left for Sumbal possibly on way to Baramulla. So where did he work behind the enemy lines?

Maqbool Sherwani had no military knowledge. He had not allowed the Pandit families of Baramulla town to leave till afternoon of 26 October. He and also most NC leaders believed that the invaders would straightway head for Srinagar and not touch non-Muslims at places which were away from the highway.

Politics behind NC Narrative on Sherwani

Sherwani's political and secular role was underplayed and so-called military role overplayed to:

1. To build a myth that not Indian army but National Conference saved Kashmir for India and NC had sole right to decide Kashmir's future. NC Propaganda pamphlet shows Sherwani in action. Where and when is not mentioned.
2. By not highlighting anti-Pakistan and secular role of Sherwani NC kept space open for dabbling in communal-separatist politics when needed.

After Sheikh Abdullah returned to power in 1975 Sherwani was totally ignored. Chapters from school textbooks were withdrawn. Even the signboard Sherwani Road (Residency Road) was not seen.

(The author is a keen researcher on Kashmir's history and politics. His books on Pakistan invasion of Kashmir in 1947 will be out early next year.)



- Vuzmal Nehru



KASHMIR

“Once Land of Saints and Sufis Now Echo Hue and Cry”

When I was child, I would often hear my elders saying- *“Yemen Miltantan Loug Naar Asye Pany Travun Panun Kashir: Soun Aah Karnayakh Chah!”* which means “these militants made our lives hell, we curse them that one day their lives will also become hell”.

Whenever something would be there about Kashmir, they would recall their heritage and smile, and then suddenly their eyes would become teary, voice choked and limbs numbed. I could sense that something wrong had happen with them but didn't know that what at hander clap had fallen to the Kashmiri Pandits which left the community scattered with eternal engraving wounds that could not be ever healed by general console.

As I grew up, my inquisitiveness made me to assimilate reality and facts about our exodus

from Kashmir. I would ask to my parents and grandparents about it. They would share their experiences. Gradually my conscious made me to realise and aware myself about the pain of my roots and community. So, I started searching facts, reading books, collecting materials and watching documentaries. When I came across these, only then I could relate to the pain of Kashmiri Pandits, minority in number but major in qualitative inculcations.

Kashmir which was once the abode of Saints and Sufis which had now converted into the land of hell. Political rivalries were adding fuel to the fire and the two communities who once lived as hither to brothers were now targeting the minorities. They were subjected to “Spree-Killing” which included barbaric ways. No one was spared not even young ones. Men were mercilessly tortured and maimed and

women were inhumanely raped and brutally amputated. Such was the terror that the victims would ask for death but militants would enjoy watching them in dreadful state and then finally they were killed cold bloodedly.

But what was more painful for me was that most of our people didn't know what exactly happened with Kashmiri Pandits. They had an impression that Kashmiri Pandits left their mother land instead of knowing the fact that they were forced to leave their mother land.

I was searching for an opportunity where I could bring up the pain of my community. Meanwhile I came in the final year of my integrated law course where I had to submit a dissertation. I availed this opportunity and decided to dedicate my dissertation to my community who were victims of ethnic cleansing and mass genocide and exodus.

I visited Kashmiri refugee camp where vulnerable Kashmiri Pandits were made to live miserable plight. When I entered in camp, I saw a room which was hardly of 10x10 feet space in



Kashmir which was once the abode of Saints and Sufis which had now converted into the land of hell. Political rivalries were adding fuel to the fire and the two communities who once lived as hither to brothers were now targeting the minorities.

toto which was allotted to refugee families. Three generations were living under one roof. The roof was covered with asbestos sheets



supported by brick walls. At one corner there was kitchen at other bathroom divided by cloth.

Every room had hard and painful realities to tell. Some lost their sole bread winner and some saw the robbing of their family women honor's in front of their eyes, some were victims of conspiracy and some were targeted openly, some were left to bemoan their loved ones and some were unlucky to see their loved ones lastly, some lost their lives from sun stroke and some were bite by poisonous creature's. Things would come in front of my eyes rolling down tears to my cheeks. I could feel pain and hear the hue and cry of my community. I would become anxious. Somewhere deep in my heart and mind all that made accord between me and my community. Meanwhile the Supreme Court on 25 July 2017 gave the verdict rejecting the plea for probe into massacre of Kashmiri Pandits. The Supreme Court dismissed a Public Interest Litigation filed by an NGO – Roots in Kashmir seeking an

order to investigate and prosecute various people for clutch of offences including the massacre of over 700 Kashmiri Pandits although the figure was uncountable between 1989-1990, saying it was too late.

The court said that “it was heart wrenching but you should have moved the court 27 years ago. Organisation alleged that 215 F.I.R’s had been lodged relating to the murder over 700 Kashmiri Pandits. Plea has also sought a probe and prosecution of various persons including separatist leader Yasin Malik and Bitta Karate and various others the main onus in the ethnic cleansing and exodus of Kashmiri Pandits during the height of militancy in valley in 1989-



1990. The PIL filed by NGO on the behalf of Kashmiri Pandits has sought reinvestigation in the criminal cases and transfer of these cases outside the state. It is also contended that none of the murder cases filed in the matter seemed to have reached at logical conclusion.

A bench of Chief Justice J.S. Keher and Justice D.Y. Chandrachud said almost 27 years have passed and it will be very difficult to gather evidences in cases of arson and looting which had led to mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the valley. You (petitioner) sat over it for last 27 years; now tell us from where the evidence comes.

The council for the NGO, Vikas Padora said Kashmiri Pandits were forced to leave their homes in the valley and could not join the investigation. While he conceded that there has been a delay, he also said neither the centre and state government nor the judiciary took adequate note of it to do the needful. The Apex

Court also asked the petitioner to come up with the evidence if possible.” After reading the verdict I was broken but at the same time I gathered zeal.

Finally, the dissertation submission and viva day came. I knew that it was difficult to convince them about reality, but I had already thought that I will make it my day. My roll number was called and I entered the room where 7 invigilators from renowned university were sitting and now all eyes were on me. When they saw my dissertation the first question which I had to counter was “why did you choose the topic which was and will be always in controversy?” I answered “being a Kashmiri

Pandit, I was searching for an opportunity where I could bring up the pain of my community which has been ignored since past 27 years.” My answer made them to enquire more. Then they went through the cases after the silence of a minute or two they asked me “where did you get these facts?” I told them about my journey of year which I had dedicated to my dissertation. They seemed more interested. It was a platform where I was the speaker and rest people were listener. When I was speaking there came a point where my eyes were filled with tears and my voice was almost getting timid. Suddenly the head invigilator offered me his glass of water. I felt relaxed. He appreciated me for my efforts and work. He even extended his invitation to me as a guest for future debates on Kashmir at university. I felt like social achievement for my community and I am proud to be a Kashmiri Pandit!

Writer is Advocate, Social Worker and Blogger



- Chander M. Bhat



Brari Maej of Village Murran



Murran is located within the jurisdiction of Pulwama District. The village is about two kilometers to the west of Pulwama town. The original name of Pulwama was Panwangam, which comprised four patties namely Malikpora, Dangeropra, Chatpora and Dulipora. At some stage, Pulwangam became to be called as Pulgam, which with the passage of time changed to the present name Pulwama. Two kilometers to the east, is village Matrigam, the birthplace of renowned patriotic poet Pirzada

The word Brari has developed from Bhattarika, the venerated Mother. Brari Maej is synonymous to Divine Mother Uma.

Ghulam Ahmad '*Mahjoor*'. Nearby is a hamlet of Haarpur, the last abode of ascetic Nidhan Sahib. The natural scenery of Murran is very charming. Surrounded by green pastures, untrimmed meadows, trees and shrubs and paddy fields, the village breathes a typical rural atmosphere.

The temple of Brari Maej is situated in the North West of the village in Mohalla Brarimaejpur. The word Brari has developed from *Bhattarika*, the venerated Mother. *Bhattarika* in Sanskrit means revered or venerated. Brari Maej is synonymous to

Divine Mother Uma. This Temple came into existence when the Bhat dynasty migrated from village Sumbal to this village in 1775.

Sumbal, a beautiful village in North Kashmir was the birthplace of the great-grand ancestors of the Bhat dynasty. This village used to be often submerged during the rainy season. Pandit Bhawani Bhat (1760-1840), a pious and orthodox person, had a celestial dream, on *Magh Ashtami*. A diving effulgence filled his muddy room as the Divine Mother looked affectionately at Pandit Bhawani Bhat, beckoned him to approach and said: "Your great devotion has made me happy. The time has come to shift you from this place, as you are facing a lot of hardships during the rainy season here. Early the next morning, there will appear a cat in your compound. Pack up your belongings and follow her and settle down where she will give you an indication. That will be your next place of settlement but, remember, your seven generations will live at the new place of settlement with dignity and honour and your eighth generation will no longer stay there." The Divine Mother disappeared after revealing the story to Pandit Bhawani Bhat.

Early next morning, the divine cat appeared in the compound of Pandit Bhawani Bhat. By that time he had already packed up his little belongings and followed the cat till both of them reached a village. The Divine Cat gave an indication to Pt. Bhat by waving the tip of her tail and disappeared. When she was gone, a small spring emerged on the spot. The spring was afterwards expanded by laying a single piece of some (*Pather Kein*) and a temple was built on it. This was later called Brari Maej (Cat Mother) and an icon of the Divine Mother was installed by Shri Loket Bhat (1801-1876) in year 1875.

This is a beautiful temple surrounded by mighty chinars all around with a big, and beautiful spring having crystal clear water having a diameter of about 15 meters. The temple is facing towards the east of the upper bank of the spring. The spring is attractive at every hour, in every season. Whosoever sits in its side in a devotional prayer gets entranced and spiritually transformed. Some years before 1947, a great saint Swami Ramji spent some two decades at Murran. He was transformed and became an exalted soul. Swami Madhavananda

Ji was Swami Ramji's contemporary. He came from Varanasi and spent much time practicing Yoga here. It is said that some saint also spent some five years in a cave behind this temple while practicing different paths of God realization. The cave still exists in the temple.

Adjacent to the Brari Maej temple is a *Shivalaya* dedicated to Lord Shiva. Behind the main temple, there is a marshy land locally known as *Saar*. There are two *dharmshalas* on the right side of the main entrance built for the



accommodation of the pilgrims, wandering monks, *pujaris* and other wayfarers. There are many walnut and almond trees in the premises of this temple comprising about ten *kanals* of land. On one side of the marshy land, there is a *braedmushuk* (*salix caprea*) tree, the flowers of which were used to be procured by us a day before *Navrah* or *Soanth* for placing these for the traditional *thaal barun* ritual and to have its first glimpse on the morning of *Soanth* and the New Year's Day (*Navrah*).

Many people have experienced spiritual experiences here while many had the darshan of Goddess Uma. Many have seen the spring in its divine glow at the dead of night.

The annual *Yagna*, which also included the cleaning of the spring after autumn, was performed here. The stock items needed for this purpose were collected from amongst the villagers, especially the Pandits. The *Uma Natak Mandli* used to stage a drama on this occasion. Prior to migration, it was a routine for the elderly members of the community to perform the daily *puja* at the temple.

Many people have experienced spiritual experiences here while many had the *darshan* of Goddess Uma. Many have seen the spring in its divine glow at the dead of night.

One day a cow belonging to Pandit Sarwanand Bhat (1901-1977) did not return from the pasture and at dusk all the members, excluding the womenfolk, went for its search. Late in the evening, his wife, Smt. Sampakuj, went herself to search for the cow. As she reached near the Brari Meaj temple from *Devspat* paddy fields (back side of the temple) in her search, to her surprise, she noticed some little girls all in silk playing in the temple and amongst them was a most beautiful girl. The atmosphere was so bright that the light reflected onto her eyes. As she went ahead after giving humble salutations to the Divine Mother, who was playing with the little girls, she found the cow some yards away from the temple. She went home with the cow with a gratitude-filled heart.

Prior to partition, all the womenfolk of Murran used to get to the temple very early in the morning, before the menfolk would go there. It

was the tradition with every woman of the Pandit family to give *brandeh fash* (cleaning of the stairs) to their houses early in the morning. The practice was also applicable to the temples and other sacred places in the Valley and the womenfolk would vie with each other to perform this sacred act first. One day Smt. Haarmal, wife of Pandit Zinda Bhat (1876-1917), woke up in the wee hours of the morning and thought that she was late. Since there were no watches at that time, she rushed towards the Brari Meaj temple, washed her face and went to the spot where the *liven-dul* (cleaning pot) was being kept. She put some fresh water into it and started rubbing the brand. Afterwards she went inside the temple and paid obeisance to the Divine Mother.

Smt. Haarmal was not aware of the fact that she had come too early. After leaving the temple, she noticed a little girl all in silk near the gate of the temple. The girl directed her not to come too early henceforth and disappeared. She rushed towards her home and told the story to her husband. It was later disclosed by the elderly persons of the village that the little girl was no other than the Divine Mother Herself.

In dark nights, under the shade of the chinars, the sacred places present an atmosphere where one becomes one with God. And in moonlit nights, devotees experienced something mystic all over in the temple of **Brari Maej**.

(The writer is documenting the shrines and temples of Kashmir)

Letter to the editor

Dear Sunil Raina Rajanaka
Editor-in-Chief

Thanks for including my article in this edition. Sure, in future I will be sending articles as desired. I appreciate your effort of projecting the community, its affairs and Kashmir issue in your valuable magazine.

Your Sincerely
- K N Pandita



Trigger Finger



Trigger finger is a fairly common problem of the hand. It is a condition where there is obstruction in the free movement of the finger. It is caused by thickening and constriction of the sheath i.e., the covering of the flexor tendon of the finger at the base of the finger i.e. at the level of metacarpophalangeal joint. This results in the narrowing of the space within the sheath surrounding the tendon which affects the free movement of the tendon and the finger thereby. With the obstruction of the movement of finger, there is a snap during these movements.

Aetiology : Exact cause of trigger finger is not known. It is supposed to be due to some chronic inflammation of the tendon sheath which leads to its constriction. At times, a secondary nodule can develop on the tendon just proximal to the site of constriction.

Clinical features : Trigger finger can affect any

finger including thumb, however ring finger, thumb and middle finger are more commonly involved. Sometimes several fingers are affected at the same time and occasionally both hands can be involved. It occurs more often in the middle age and women are more frequently affected as compared to men. The patient complains of difficulty in bending and straightening of the finger. There is pain and catching during movement of the finger. The patient notices a click or a jerk as the finger is bent and active straightening is not possible. However, it can be straightened passively with force and straightening is sudden with a snap and severe pain. In short, finger is bent and straightened with a snap like a trigger being pulled and released. In severe cases we cannot straighten it even with force and finger gets locked in a bent position. In late stages we can feel a thickening or a nodule in the substance of

tendon at the base of the finger. There is tenderness i.e. pain on pressure of the nodule and tendon sheath. The click can also be reproduced at the site by alternately bending and straightening the finger. Recurrent triggering can occur in around 30 % of patients especially in younger patients and those with diabetes. It is also known that spontaneous resolution of the triggering can occur in some of the patients without any treatment over a period of some months or so.

Risk factors : Certain factors that increase the risk of having a trigger finger are—

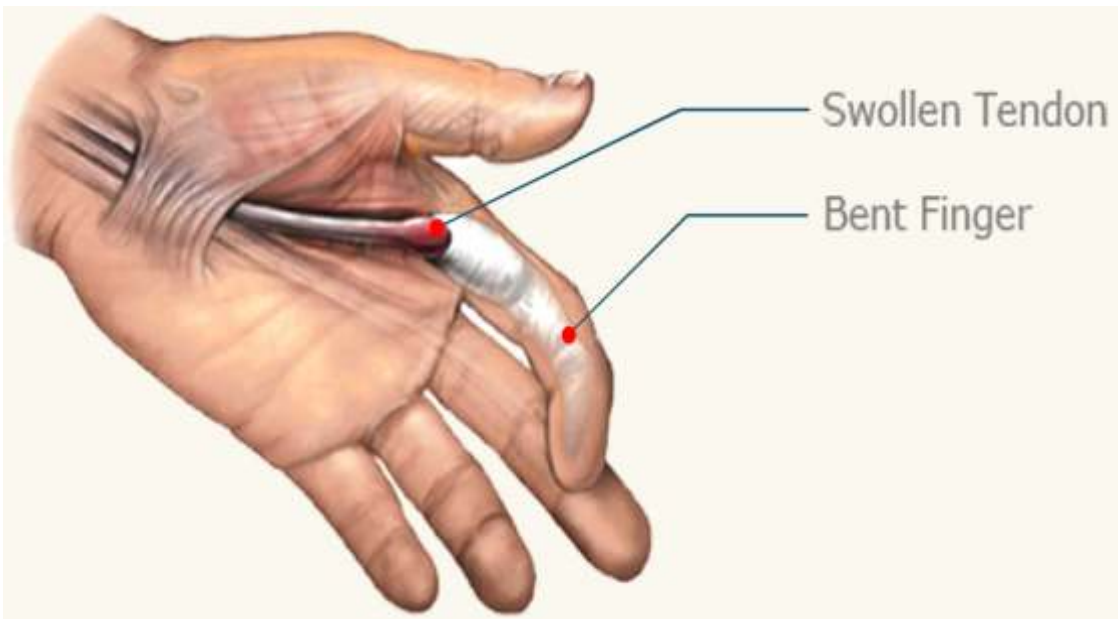
i) People involved in work or hobbies that

Treatment:

Nonsurgical – Gentle stretching exercises help in relieving stiffness and improving the movement of the finger. Anti-inflammatory drugs – NSAIDS given for few days or so help in reducing inflammation and pain.

Local injection of hydrocortisone mixed with a local anaesthetic, carefully given into the tendon sheath near the nodule gives relief in majority of the patients by reducing inflammation and the constriction. If symptoms do not resolve within a reasonable time second injection can be given.

Surgical : Surgery is done in patients that are refractory to nonsurgical treatment, when the



require repetitive gripping actions are certainly at a higher risk of developing trigger finger.

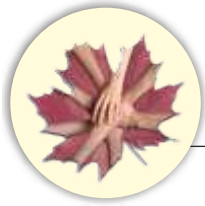
ii) Medical conditions - Trigger finger is more common in patients with diabetes or rheumatoid arthritis.

iii) Trigger finger can also occur after a forceful activity of the hand.

Diagnosis is made on the basis of history and clinical examination. Normally X-Rays or other tests are not needed. Lab tests are done especially when multiple fingers are affected in order to rule out any specific cause like rheumatoid arthritis and diabetes etc.

constriction is very tight, the finger is locked and is not reducible. The constricted sheath is released surgically until the tendon moves freely. Surgical release can be done by an open or percutaneous method. Open release is the “gold standard” of the treatment of the trigger finger as we can very well see the surgical area and it is highly effective with low complication rates, however percutaneous release is getting popular as procedure time is shorter and recovery of function is quicker. Surgical release results in significant relief from the pain and improvement in the function.

(The writer is Formerly, Vice Principal, Professor. & Head Deptt. of Orthopaedics, CMC, and Ludhiana)



- Shivani Bhan Dhar



An Interview with Community Artist (History From the Strokes of Brush)

I was always lured by the scenic beauty of Kashmir from the very childhood. The lush green fields, mountain scape, the snow on the mountains, the lovely Chinar trees. Not only this, I had a great fascination for the Gods and Goddesses of Kashmir from the very childhood.

Naad decided to take an interview with community artist Sh. Ravi Dhar whose paintings is making a huge impact in the community. On behalf of Naad, Shivani Bhan Dhar decided to take an interview with the artist and get his views on his works.

Born in 1958 at Safakadal, Srinagar in a joint family in a famous Dhar clan of Balkak and Shyam Lal Dhar, Ravi passed his schooling followed by graduation from Kashmir University and thereafter Master's in Hindi and English Literature from Rajasthan University.

Presently Ravi Dhar is working as a freelancer professional artist making paintings in oil, water and acrylic, besides making sculptures in cement and fiberglass and have painted more than seven hundred portraits and a vast number of paintings in abstract and realistic since then. Apart from this he has acted in many plays staged in Tagore Hall, Srinagar. He has done several one man shows of his paintings across the country.

He received J&K State Award in 1982 from the then Chief Minister Sheikh Abdullah.



SBD: - Tell us about yourself, your education, background & love for your roots?

RD: - Being an elder kid in the joint family, I was brought up with great care and luxury. I was the most loved one among all. I was admitted in Rupa Bhawani Memorial School, Nawakadal, about one and a half kilometers away from my house where I studied up to class eighth because it was a middle school. Then I joined National High School, Karan Nagar from where I passed class 10, which was the highest class at the school level at that time. We had Mr. M. L. Misri as the drawing teacher in National high School. I was so fascinated with his drawing that I left biology and took up drawing as one of the subjects with science. I think this was the start of my journey to opt painting as my profession.

As you know parents are very peculiar in shaping the career of their children, so I too was pursued to join college and have degree in science. So, I got admission in Amar Singh College, Srinagar in PUC having subjects Geology, Chemistry, Mathematics and English. But the fate had something else to store in. After completing one year in college I joined Institute of Music and Fine Arts Jawahar Nagar, Srinagar, which was affiliated to Kashmir University, to pursue a degree in painting. My parents too were not happy as every one would think there was no good career in this field. But I stuck to my decision and continued my studies. This was something which made me happy. I went on doing commercial jobs during my training period along with the studies I was pursuing till I finally got a degree in Fine Arts Painting and was a topper of that batch. Before leaving Kashmir in 1982, I was felicitated with J & K State Award for my painting "TENSIONS IMMEMORABLE" in the Annual State Art Exhibition presided by the then Chief Minister Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah.

I will always remain indebted to my teachers Revered Sh. Bhushan Kaul Sahib and Sh. Gokul Dembi Sahab under whose able and sympathetic guidance I could learn the minuteness of the painting. What I am today is because of them only. And here I would mention one more name of Late Sh. Bashir Ahmad Shora, a fine sculptor and great water color artist, who would take me along with him to make water color paintings and guided me too. Here I would



mention another name Mr. Zahoor Hassan, a great sculptor, whom I never saw sitting idle, he had always a chisel and a hammer in his hand, sitting before a raw stone sculpting stones, a great man and great artist.

Being very passionate for reading books, I have done Master's Degree in Hindi and English Literature also from Rajasthan University.

I was always lured by the scenic beauty of Kashmir from the very childhood. The lush green fields, mountain scape, the snow on the mountains and the clouds covering the tops at many places making them disappear. The lovely Chinar trees at the time of the fall during autumn season made me wild. Not only had this I had a great fascination for the Gods and Goddesses of Kashmir from the very childhood. We used to go to Hari Parvat to have a "Parikrama" on foot, which most of the Kashmiri Pandits used to do. Hari Parvat was about three and a half kilometers from our house. And we enjoyed that very much.

SBD : - Being from a Kashmiri Family, a kid from his very childhood is pushed to either be an Engineer or a Doctor. What inspired you to be an artist?

RD : - Since my very childhood I used to copy pictures from the comic books, popular in our times was Chanda-mama, Motu Patlu, Chacha Chaudhary and of course Phonic etc. we were provided with all these comic books by our parents and an English Newspaper The Blaze. All these were the source of inspiration for me. On the walls of our house on paper bits and where ever I could find the space to draw. Many a times I was scolded not to do that.

This was perhaps the inner passion. I remember one incident when I was in class 10. During the board exams I once woke up throughout the night to make illustrations of Tabla, Saraswati etc. to complete a B.Ed. note book of one of our neighbors. This was the interest I had in this field and I thought I was already an artist at that time. My parents too were very keen to see me an engineer, but the fate had something else to do.

SBD : - As an artist, you convey a lot from your art, what do you think are your responsibilities towards modern KP society?

RD : - Human being is the most intelligent of all the species existing in the world and I am very



thankful to the Almighty for providing me the opportunity to be a human being. Having good food, enjoying life, bringing up children and a nice house, doesn't mean that you are a good human being. You have got a different intellect, the thought process and of course a great sense to do something not only for yourself but for the whole human society as well. If you don't do that you are not worth being a human being. And I am lucky enough to have chosen a profession like this in which there is a great scope of helping the society. When I realized that, I was alarmed and I decided to dedicate my art in painting the people of our society who have made us pioneers and placed us among the world's most intelligent races. This was enough for me to be inspired.

I have decided to write Kashmiri Pandit history with my brush. I want to record all such events which have been ignored and deliberately bypassed and hidden by the pseudo historians of the past. I want all of us to be the torch bearers in this cause and come forward to give their contribution. Our posterity must know our rich cultural, literary and spiritual heritage. When we honestly provide them the facts of our struggle and triumph, they will feel proud of their illustrious ancestors and would want to be like them.

SBD : - Did your art practices change with time? What has been your most memorable experience that changed you and the artist within you?

RD : - It depends on the requirements of what has to be made. The second thing is the intuition which is the primary thing that a painting requires. When you are doing a painting the canvas itself demands what should be done. The colors, the forms and the thought, all these play a great role in the completion of a painting. The balance of colors and the composition makes it aesthetically perfect. You must have seen that the faces I make are not the ones traditionally made in god paintings. The faces I chose are the ones often seen in our neighborhood. I want to portray them as if the god is one among us. But I must reveal that doesn't work. Everyone wants to see his deity with a beautiful face therefore it becomes necessary for me to paint them in that way. From now on you will see the faces with a beautiful look.

I remember one incident, some three years

back I had painted a God in my own way. The painting had come out very nice but I was surprised when the buyer sent me the photograph of Hema Malini (film actress) and asked me to paint the face of that actress. I feel it was okay, because as I said, everyone wants to see his deity with a beautiful face. This particular incident gave me the impression that it hardly matters whether the deity is from your neighborhood, the face should be beautiful. No aesthetics, no art works withstand in front of that.

SBD :- Your recent portraits of Shiva Yogini Lal Ded are the most talked about these days. You have received appreciation and you have received criticism.

RD :- Lal Ded is the most revered figure in Kashmiri Pandit community. Every KP has a picture of his own in his mind. She is not only the most regarded one but people follow her too. Everyone wants to see her from their own perspective thus have different point of view. There is a broader concept of her having a Taranga (head gear) and a Dejhor in their minds and I also wanted to see her in the same attire which I did. The most talked of was not the attire but the Shivlinga in her hand. I must confess that people in general did not have any problems with that but the ones who believed that she practiced Nirakar rather than idol worshipping.

Secondly, there is a sect among Muslims who want to change the concept of 'Her' being a Hindu purely out of the nefarious design to malign the Hindu community. They wanted to prove that she had converted to Islam, which I couldn't bear and which is totally wrong.

I had a different concept of painting Lal Ded. I always wanted to portray Lalleshwari entirely in Pandit woman attire. I did not want her to be high jacked by the Muslims in the name of Sufism. As far as the Shivlinga is concerned there is no harm in that. She didn't hate Shivlinga, so keeping a Shivlinga killed two birds with one stone. One Muslims couldn't resist it and second she looked purely a Hindu woman.

SBD :- We have seen very different picture or I should say a true picture of Lal Ded which is entirely different from what has been painted in our minds. What was in your mind while you



have been making Mata Lalleshwari's portraits?

RD :- As I told you earlier that I always had one thing in mind that is to paint a purely Hindu woman in her Kashmiri attire. And I did the same but then the controversy about the Shivlinga came to my mind and I approached Sh. Shashi Shekhar Toshkhani ji, (renowned thinker and scholar) who explained the various minute details regarding Lalleshwari, her attire, and the Shivlinga. And the new Lalleshwari had appeared before us which was completely different from that of the traditional one painted till now.

Frankly speaking the way I painted that was a different concept which I knew people would not digest. But its portrayal was important to make people believe that she was a yogini and she did not wear Dejhor and the pheran was not the actual attire of those times. It was forcefully introduced lately as a symbol of slavery by the Muslim invaders and therefore, is not the real attire of Kashmiri Pandits. But now it has become a part and parcel of our community attire and we are recognized because of this attire in the globe

SBD :- What do you want to tell to the critics who think you have mutilated Lal-Ded by showing her fully clad in traditional costume with Shivlinga in her hands?

RD :- I think I have already answered this question. But adding to that I must say I paint all our ancestors with great passion. For me Lal Ded is not an ordinary Yogini but an institution in her. Her concept of Shiva is not what we ordinarily think of, but it is something that can't be explained simply. We need to have a deep study to understand her. For her the costumes do not matter at all she is above all this. We have stories of her without costumes too. I don't want to go into the stories but the fact of the matter is that I always wanted to see Lalla as my grandmother, the attire she used to be in and on special occasions she would carry Shivlinga for the family. In fact Lala is the divine mother of all of us and I have no doubt about it. I hope no one will differ from me.

SBD :- Your each piece of art oozes love for your roots, your love for our own motherland Kashmir. What do you want to say/what message you want to convey to the world from your art?

RD :- That is very much true. I am always fascinated towards my motherland, Kashmir. That is why, without any intention, it finds a place in my paintings. I, till my last breath, will not be able to forget it. My paintings are incomplete without its mention. Not only my paintings but a collection of my stories in Hindi which are ready to go in press for publication (but due to financial constraints I have still to wait a little bit more) and has the memories of my boyhood in Kashmir narrated in the form of a stories and again a collection of my short stories in English is underway in the same way in which I have displayed the radical Islamic face. Not only this but I have a collection of my poems in English too, I don't know how they will be reacted by the readers but they are the honest expression of my subconscious mind. Three one

act plays in Hindi for children have also been written by me apart from translating two English plays in Hindi which have been staged many times.

In response to the next part of your question I would simply say that I will be the last person to forgo the claim of my motherland at the hands of those who have hurt my community. And I am not going to forgive those too who support them even if they are from my community. I will go on taking up this matter of exodus with all my might through my paintings and stories. I will not rest till the goal is reached. No matter what hardships I have to go through.

SBD :- Have you chosen art as your career? Are you already having a collector base or you are doing it as a hobby and your love for art?

RD :- Of course, I am a professional artist. I earn bread from it. But I am happy my paintings are bought by the people. I am working hard to make a collector base for myself and I am getting good results also. As you know I am not only a painter but a sculptor too. I make sculptures in cement and fiber glass on commercial contracts. You must have seen some of my sculptures in cement which I have posted on Facebook recently.

SBD :- Does your work comment on current social or political issues or are you planning to have such things addressed via your art?

RD :- All my work which I do is social and I like to make people remember our great saints and sages who have created an impact on our culture. They are the backbone of our community. We have to propagate them and spread the light of spirituality in our community through their teachings. They are our pride.

Secondly, I have taken up the task of painting the atrocities of our ancestors and we have faced at the hands of the terrorists. This cannot be forgotten. And at least me, I will not forget and will never make it happen that we are lured by anyone to compromise on our ideals of a homeland safer for our posterity.

I am always fascinated towards my motherland, Kashmir. That is why, without any intention, it finds a place in my paintings. I, till my last breath, will not be able to forget it. My paintings are incomplete without its mention.



- Usha Munshi



Take Aways From Our History – Part II

In history, times don't remain same. History is dynamics of events - events, which are decided by past and current situations; which have bearing on the future; and which are outcome of a number of factors in constant inter-play. The history at any time is shaped by the character, intelligence, vision and go-get attitude of the person who takes over the charge of the affairs; state of well being and moral of the people living in those times; and prevailing internal and external threats. The history of Kashmir post Karkota dynasty was also shaped by the factors such as above.

Kashmir kingdom, which was at pinnacle at the time of King Lalitaditya rule (624 – 661 AD), was brought down to nadir state by the trailing kings of Karkota dynasty and kings thereafter. King Lalitapira (great grandson of Lalitaditya) was under the evil influence of prostitutes and likes, hardly attended his royal duties. Unable to reform him, his wise minister stopped attending the court. After a brief stint of his and his step brother's rule, his infant son Chippata jayapira from Jayadevi ascended the throne. The Kingdom was virtually ruled by the five brothers of Jayadevi amid the murders of various contenders to the throne. The five brothers squandered the wealth of the Kingdom. Their nephew died mysteriously.

Evil people get together to carry out their evil designs, but ultimately they are bound to fall apart. Same happened to these five uncles of Chippata jayapira. They started quarreling among themselves, and could not agree on the

next puppet king. Somehow, these brothers ruled Kashmir indirectly for 36 years after the death of their nephew. During this time, Karkota lineage became extinct.

Meanwhile, one of the Uncles of Chippatajayapira named Utpal emerged stronger. Minister Shura, found Avantivarman, grandson of Utpal, fit for ascending the throne. Thus, King Avantivarman (A. D 855-883) established Utpala dynasty and this marked the formal end of Karkota dynasty.

King Avantivarman's coronation was done in a grand way. It appeared as if "Sun and Moon descended from heaven to bless him." One of the most impressive Kings of Kashmir, he first cleared all his enemies from his Kingdom. He won the hearts of nobles by his good behavior. He was forgiving, kind and without vanity. He never forgot his humble past and believed that regal grandeur does not last and one shall not become slave of it. He considered the wealth left behind by his predecessors as impure, and to use their gold ornaments and utensils as shameful. He believed that wealth can be purified when given to deserving people. He donated gold and silver from the ornaments and utensils to Brahmins, distributed wealth among his friends and servants. His reign was marked by consolidation and bringing prosperity to the Kingdom.

Avantivarman was a just king. He and his ministers built towns and temples. It seems that one of his Ministers had a parrot, which along with other parrots brought large number of

The history at any time is shaped by the character, intelligence, vision and go-get attitude of the person who takes over the charge of the affairs; state of well being and moral of the people living in those times; and prevailing internal and external threats.

pearls. The Minister then built a town Shukavali to celebrate the bird. In one of the temples built by Minister Shura's son, Ramaja (Sanskrit Gramarian) was employed as expositor. Minister Shura raised many edifices including the one for Hari Parvati. The temples and towns built were of the architectural splendor.

Minister Shura patronized and encouraged learned ones. Many authors flourished in these times. One bard Minister would often recite a couplet for king, which meant "This is the time to do good, while fortunes last; for fortunes are naturally fleeting, and danger is always at hand; and when danger comes, there will be no more opportunity." This was the time when people were of religious. Some of them had gained extraordinary powers through religious practices. Some people had powers to even cause rain. It seems, even animals did not kill each other in this era. The relationship between King and his ministers was very cordial.

One of the famous anecdotes of these times is how Suyya saved Kashmir from ravages of flood and famine, which often caused sufferings to the people of Kashmir. Suyya was found by a woman of Chandal caste in a basket. It seems that when this woman lifted the lid of the basket, she found a baby boy doing Japa. She took this boy to a wet mother in Shudra family for his care taking and even paid for his maintenance. The boy grew up into an educated and intelligent person, and would often be found in intellectual circles. It was the time when Kashmir was ravaged by floods – the people and cattle were dying. Suyya said to his friends that while he had intellect, he did not have money to redress this problem. The King heard about it and kept all the money at the disposal of Suyya. Suyya filled urns with Dinars and went to different places in a boat. He threw Dinars at strategic places - in submerged villages and rivers - where the flow of water was obstructed. People jumped in waters to salvage the money so thrown and in the process removed the silt and rocks obstructing the flow. He further constructed canals to divert water from Vitasta at the points of obstruction and raised stone embankments for miles along the river banks. Substantial land was reclaimed and subsequently used for farming. Suyya seemed to have repeated what Kashyap Rishi had done thousands of years ago. Thus, Suyya's role was

significant in the development of Kashmir during the rule of Avantivarman. These were again glorious and happy times for Kashmiris.

Good times don't last forever. King Avantivarman was struck by a deadly disease. He retired to a temple and spent his last days in devotion of Lord Vishnu.

Shankaravarman, the son of Avantivarman ascended the throne with the help of a Royal Guard. He had to first subjugate his family members who aspired for the throne. Then he set out for the conquest of other countries. Starting with the less impressive number of 900,000 foot soldiers, he was soon commanding other kings. He easily walked over country after country with least resistance. He was seen as a brave king, who could capture lions.

When he returned from his conquests, he set up a beautiful city in Kashmir and constructed temples. Unfortunately, soon greed took over him. He extracted money from his subjects by unfair means. He appropriated temple money—supposed to be used for worship. Once his son tried to reason out with him that he should stop torturing his subjects, but that did not impress him.

The King was ill advised by people close to him. He reduced salaries of his courtiers to one-fourth and imposed heavy fines for small offences. Due to curses of his oppressed subjects, it is said that his 20 - 30 sons died mysteriously without any disease. He himself got killed unceremoniously and accidentally by the arrow of a hunter when he was on one his conquest expeditions. As per his instructions, his faithful carried his dead body in a palanquin without disclosing his death till they lead the army back to the safe territory of Kashmir. His dead body was cremated after six days of his death. His three queens and four other persons perished on the same pyre.

The following years saw total anarchy - conspiracies, family feuds, murders and mysterious deaths of kings and potential kings; debauch and greedy kings; queens having extra marital affairs, widow queens living with paramours and the later squandering state treasures. There were regular fights among the contenders of the throne.

*To be continued.....
The writer is a blogger*



- Suraj Krishan Koul



Swami Krishan Dass (Kintothji of Ichikote, Budgam Kmr.)

Born to Smt. Kuji Maal *alias* Rukhmal and Shri Shankar Dass, Shri Krishan Dass, popularly known as “Kintoth”, was born in village Ichikote (Badgam) in the year 1908-1909 in the month of April, *Vaishakh Shukla Paksha*, twelfth moon day. As was ordained by Swami Bal Kak of Ichigam (Badgam), the boy born was at a cost and the cost was early death of his father Shri Shankar Dass. Krishan Dass was a special and a different child and those who saw him grow in their midst could well see the distinct difference. When it was time to be mischievous and prankish, he would be recluse, ever brooding and looking for something deep and sublime, yet unknown.

My mother, Lt. Smt. Kamalawati, who happened to be Krishan Dass's niece and was closely associated with him, told me that for weeks and months Krishan Dass would remain without proper food and at times he would eat like a glutton and frighten his family members with his actions. The lady folk in the neighborhood would feel it a privilege if they could feed the loitering wonder boy with a cup of milk, a fruit or a glass of water. Anxious parents sent Krishan Dass to Jogi Lankar, Rainawari to the house of his *Massi* so that he could be educated and distracted from his other worldly behavior. This attempt did not succeed for the desired objective but, on the other hand, further quickened his quest and search for the unknown. Krishan Dass used this opportunity in establishing contacts with some spiritually awakened persons, besides taking some interest in regular education.

It is said that one day he expressed his



desire to be of some help to his family and earn some money. He had some shopkeeper in mind and there, it is said, he further improved upon his *Sadhana* under the benevolence of that shopkeeper. This further made the family members distraught and they thought and decided to get him married. After huge persuasion and pressure, marriage was thrust upon him but the boy had already expressed his disinterest both to his family and the family of the bride. But the times being different then, Krishan Dass was married to Prabhavati, daughter of Ramji Padhey of “Chitru”, Badgam. Marriage was performed but not consummated as Krishan Dass had no body temptations and hence no scope for conjugal relationship. Prabhavati died after sometime and the recluse and the lady, both were relieved by destiny to track on their different paths.

Krishan Dass started as a *Shree Ram bakhta*, initiated by some layman who advised him to love *Ram* as much and with such fervor as *Hanumanji* did. There are speculations that this Guru was a village rustic who teasingly mocked at the behavior of Krishan Dass, and this sarcasm became his *Guru Mantra*. Swami *Aatma Ramji* is also being described as his possible Guru, for whom he showed great a urge and commitment. Many anecdotes are doing the rounds about his childhood craze in meeting the Master, even when the distance he would tread was above thirty miles at a stretch. He had tremendous affinity and soulful relationship with Swami *Ganesh (Gan) Kak of Ichigam* and this relationship flourished for decades. Swami Kintoth would read from scriptures and the two would feel pleased in the *satsang* as at times the elder saint would fall into trance for hours together. At times seeing Swami Kintoth just waiting for the saint to open his eyes, I would get a bit annoyed, not knowing the language of spiritualists, much less, these intimate ones. Meetings among saints have a hugely different take and the *satsang* at that level is completely heightened bliss, I just try to comprehend now. Being fully established in His *Bakhti*, this devout saint also expressed himself in love and devotion of divinity in all its facets. He would wake up at 3 in the morning, go to the stream for *Sandhya*, come back at 4 a.m. and remain in meditation and *Samadhi* for around three hours. He would also read religious texts like *Bhagwat Gita*, *Yog Vashist*, *Bhagvat* besides *Purans* and other *Shastras* for an hour or so daily. In his early days, he would sing *bhajans* of Swami Parmanaji, Krishanjoo Razdan and Prakash Ram's Ramayana. His love for flute has also been taken note of by the people who listened to him then. Those were the days of exacting *Sadhana*. He had devotion for *Laleshwari* and *Abhinavgupta*, calling them as *Jagatgurus*. *Ichikote* was blessed with ancient *Sharda Mata Asthapan* and the saint had a mother-son relationship with the divinity. He would each day visit the shrine till his *nirvana*, setting precedence for entire village *biradari* to visit the shrine almost daily.

Krishan Dass believed in harmonious continuity of positive customs and traditions but wanted people to be aware of the time and space

they are in and use their intellect to mold and modify those customs, ensuring a mix of continuity and change. He exhorted people to acquaint their children with our rich cultural ethos and foster in them a belief system based on high spiritual and moral values. He wanted youth to emulate Swami Vivekananda and his oft-repeated quote used to be "Action speaks louder than words". He had all the qualities of *Grahasta Ashrami* saint and, besides keeping an eye on the family chores, albeit with sublime disengagement, he embraced his visitors with humility, honesty and sincerity, almost unnerving them. His life was *Bhagwatagita* personified. It may not be out of place to mention here his love for cows. One day my mother Lt. Kamalawati threw some loose grass over the heads of cow from the veranda, prompt came the reprimand, "treat them as your in-laws and feed them with respect and dignity". He was a vegetarian all through but never thrust his likes and dislikes on others.

Kintothji was a contemporary of *Swami Nand Lalji of Hashru* (Badgam) with whom he had highest level relationship possible in spirituality. This, I could see one day when the Great Yogi Saint Swami Nand Lalji invited Swami Kintoth on the eve of his Guru's birthday. Accompanied by Swami *Ganakakji* of Ichigam (Badgam), when the two reached *Hashru*, Swami Nand Lalji wanted *Kintoth* to sit on his *Aasan* which the latter refused and the three of them moved away from the *Aasan*, sat at some distance and engaged in eye contact communication which left the people around spell bound and transported.

Swami *Kintoth* believed that each *prani* (creature) has to reap the fruit of his actions and nobody can escape this truth. The grace of saints only helps in minimizing the pain or lightening the liberation route.

He was against pomp & show and hollow activism and was never inclined for any show of spiritual prowess as he believed such activities are pretentious, hardly desirable, unless required under divine scheme of things. It was under tremendous pressure of some family members and close devotees that his birthday started being celebrated as a family affair, joined by only some close people. He was not in favour of his photograph being exhibited and for two

years continuously one of his devotees failed to take a click. It was after some real tears and talks that Kakaji Zutshi could manage a few photographs. He was assisted in this endeavor by Dr. Peshan who after a medical check-up described *Kintothji* as a saint living on his will and keeping his own time. His blood pressure machine just failed to read the saint's pressure and the machine just did not stick to the saint's arm. The full hall of around sixty odd people saw the event happening. Dr. Peshan, in awe, prostrated and murmured, "I have yet to see a saint like this man".

I may revert back to the days when Swami *Kintothji* showed evidently that he had completely outgrown body consciousness and would move out of the body frame at will. We could see this feat on the *nirvana divas* of Swami Gankakji when Krishan Dass was seen simultaneously in his meditation room and also attending to the last rites of the departed saint. Towards the later part of his life, Swami Kintoth had developed some unknown body ailment which he kept to himself up to his last days. This was evident to all those who came into his close contact besides to some doctors, including Dr. Peshin, who was brought by devotees for treatment of the saint's ailment.

This was the period when two things of immense consequence could be seen moving on the time scale simultaneously. One, devotees outside the family fold entered and the canvass of spiritual activities increased. *Satsang* and *bhajans* began to be conducted regularly. Lt. Shri Krishanji Koul, Shri Raj Nath Bhat, Shri Girdhari Lal Bhat (Bittuji), Shri Dwarka Nath Koul and many other locals formed the nucleus of regular *Bhajan mandali*. This was the time when the devotees of Swami Gobind Koul of Wanpoh, mainly Swami Prithvi Nath Bhagwan, Swami Shamboo Nath Raina (alias Raina Kashmiri), Triloki Nath Raina, Swamini Nirmalaji, Phoolaji, Brij Kishori, Lalaji, Triloki Nath Hashru, Kakaji Zutshi, Rajaji Naqeb and scores of others would regularly visit Swami Kintoth and the circle widened with more people joining the blessed company.

And when the *nirvana* time came, his family was away to attend a marriage ceremony and the only person at home was my *Mami*. At the appointed time, after taking early meals, the

saint asked her to prepare a space for him to lie down and ask the elderly lady in the neighborhood to be present. Within a flash, the cap from the head slipped a bit and body became motionless. All the arrangements for funeral were done, mostly, by the Muslim members of the village in conjunction with my elder maternal uncle – Lt. Shri Niranjan Nath Koul and other *Pandit biradari* members, till all of us returned from the marriage. Nature was mourning the departure of one of its blessed souls from the *karam bhoomi*. Winds, rains and thunder engulfed the entire area. We had to change the route onwards *Razbal (shimshaan bhoomi)* and yet when the elements were a bit peaceful the pyre was lit and the entire place was full of peace, and enticing breeze. One Pir Mohd. Yahya, one of the top *Ahil-e-Hadis* leaders of Kashmir, who lived at village *Ichikote*, very near the cremation site, said "I could feel the messengers of God coming down and being part of the spectacle". These words coming from one, who hate idol worshippers, speaks volumes about the height Swami Kintothji had attained. It would be appropriate to summarize his loftiness in the words of Swami Radhey Shyamji:

"*Sat bhaav satogun prakrat ChaneyKam krodh lobh moh vochmai hormut, choshvin kormut ikwata grass.....khass chukka aasith bas na divani.....Krishna Tathi Zaar boz myney.....*"

(A person of truth and naked truth without any protestations, with poise and equanimity of highest order, this saint has conquered all the forces of senses and is seated in eternal, pure, divine consciousness. His face always emitting joy and loveliness.....)

The *Nirvana Divas* and the *Voharvod* of Shree Kintothji are being celebrated on *Ashaadh Krishna Paksh Saptami* and *Vaisaakh Shakul-paksh Duwadashi* respectively every year at H. No. 7, Lane No. 1/A, Udheywala, Bohri, Jammu. Arrangements for these events are being made by the extended family members and some close devotees who form the trust.

The author of this article is (Retd. KAS), son of Late Smt. Kamalawati (main source of material who happened to be neice of Swami Kintothji Maharaj.



- Ramesh Manvati



Tribute

Prof. Chaman Lal Sapru

Prof. C.L.Sapru's passing away is a great loss to our community in exile. He was a living encyclopaedia; always ready to share some interesting anecdotes of community as well as literary affairs as and when an opportunity presented itself - be it in private or at public forums.

One such anecdote that Sapru Sb. revealed to me, once, while we were discussing some literary matters, was the background / inspiration behind penning down by Master Zinda Kaul one of his famous poems:

*"....sumran panne'n ditsa'num,
premuk kkhazaan' avessiye;
rutsa'run togum'na rovim,
osum'na baana vessiye....."*

It so happened that a young girl in the family had gifted a hand -embroidered handkerchief to the distinguished poet. Unfortunately, while drying it one winter day on a kangri by 'Master Ji', the handkerchief got burnt; and thus was born the much celebrated poem of the first Sahitya Academy Award winner of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir (1956).

Prof. Sapru was a true lifelong activist at heart and in action too - a rare combination. I feel fortunate to have shared the activism; and, to have received his affection and blessings in good measure during the last over three decades ever since this writer came in contact with him following the forced exodus from our place of origin - Kashmir valley. And, he would always admire my humble work.



My respectful tributes to this great social and literary icon of our community. And, my heartfelt condolences to Prof. C. L.Sapru's entire clan of family, friends and admirers. May his seminal work keep on inspiring the future generations.

.....Om Shanti!



-C.L. Kaloo



The Science of Knowing God

The science of knowing God is to understand the tenets of Bhagavat Gita, in order to be able to know consciousness of God's presence in a human body and to protect the people from material knowledge which turns instrumental in understanding the basic truth that every human being is essentially a soul covered with a veil of "Maya" (delusion). In reality, human life is essentially meant for cultivation of spiritual knowledge, in eternal

planet and forefather of Rugu dynasty in which Lord RamChandra appeared. Therefore, Bhagavat Gita existed in human society from the time of Maharaja Ikshvaku. It may be clarified here that the science of Bhagavat Gita has to be accepted from the disciple succession as the Lord Krishna spoke to the Sun God, the Sun God spoke to Manu and Manu spoke to his son Ikshvaku. Thus, the Lord says in the Bhagavat Gita (Adhaya 4th, Shloka 2nd):



relationship with the Supreme. In the beginning of the millennium, known as "Treta -yuga", this science of relationship with the Supreme was delivered by Vivasvan (Sun God) to Manu, being the father of the Mankind, who gave it to his son Maharaja Ikshvaku, the king of the Earth

"*evam parampara praptam – imam rajarsayaviduh
Sa kaleneharmahata – yoganastah param tapa*"
Means: This Supreme science was thus received through the chain of disciple succession and the family kings understood it in that way. But in

course of time, the succession was broken and therefore, the science as it appears has been lost. It is explained here that “Ikshvaku” is a vedic name appearing in both the Rig-veda and Atharva-veda. In the Upanishads “Iksh” imply a state of seeing and knowing as a creative omnipresent consciousness- thus, it is not ordinary seeing (eye) as we understand literally. In Shloka 1&2 of Adhya 4th in the Holy Bhagavat Gita, the Lord proclaims that the eternal science of uniting soul and spirit- means “Raja Yoga” and gave concise description of that science- the steps by which the soul descends from cosmic consciousness to the mortal state of identification with the human body and the route it takes to its sources- the all blissful eternal spirit. Now, during the descent of a human being from a spiritual age to a material age, the knowledge of the science of yoga declines and is forgotten. But since the spirit is Eternal, so the yoga of the art of uniting the soul with the omnipresent spirit is also imperishable. The above Shlokas explain the genesis of yoga. The first manifestation of spirit is cosmic light. God vibrated His cosmic consciousness as

identification with human consciousness in general. This is termed as Manu state of the descending soul. The Omnipresent cosmic energy (vivasvat) becomes manifest as life-force or life trons in a human being through the influence of mind. The cosmic energy (vivasvat) is the source of life-force that becomes manifest in the astral body of a human being through the process of mind, means Manu. Thus, life-force and mind are closely associated for the body of a human being. One cannot exist without the other when they descend from cosmic consciousness and cosmic energy; their manifestation is through the eye of intuition (spiritual eye). Thus, from the Manu state, the soul flows down into a specific channel of the intuitive sense, and then into the astral channels of life-force and consciousness (the astral eye). From the intuitive astral state, the soul then further descends to the various powerful sense perceptive states- : “Jnanendriyas” and then flowing into the gross physical manifestations of the senses. This is called sense-identified state. Thus, the yoga signifies the union of spirit and soul. The spirit as cosmic consciousness is

The first manifestation of spirit is cosmic light. God vibrated his cosmic consciousness as intelligent cosmic energy or cosmic light referred by the Lord.

intelligent cosmic energy or cosmic light referred by the Lord in these Shloka as Vivasvat- one who shines forth or diffuses light, say the enlightened Rishi of ancient times who came to be known as Sun-God. This Omnipresent cosmic energy or light exists in human being as the microcosmic sun of the spiritual eye which becomes visible during meditation when the concentration deepens at the point between the eyebrows of two physical eyes. All the intelligent creative power of cosmic energy is present in spiritual eye (microcosmically). Various states are experienced through this spiritual eye (consciousness in the physical astral and casual bodies).

Every soul emerges from cosmic consciousness when the descending soul comes under the influence of mind; it becomes limited by

united to the omnipresent cosmic energy which is limited to the spiritual eye of life and consciousness in human being. Life and consciousness are linked to the mind. The mind is linked to the astral eye and the intuitive mind of the astral body and astral life and mind are linked with the five sensory instruments of knowledge. The lord teaches us through the above narrated Shloka that links of union (yoga) with spirit are indestructibly present within him. A man is not aware of or does not remember how the spirit vibrated into different states; the soul is forgotten after having descended into the senses. In conclusion, it is stated that this yoga or the supreme science of knowledge (knowing God) is revived again whenever a devotee detaches his true-self from the senses by practicing meditation and thus re-unites the soul with spirit.



- Vinod Tikoo



Bhargashika Mata of Martand

Bhargashika Mata is Aadhi Shakti Peeth located on the hilltop overlooking Martand which is presently called as Mattan. Mattan is a Town and Notified area Committee in South Kashmir district of Anantnag. Of late, it has become Tehsil. Historically it was a pilgrim village as it is one of the stopovers for the Holy Amarnath Yatra. The road from Martand Mattan leads to picturesque Pahalgam and finally to Amarnath Cave. Till this day Holy Chaddi is brought here in Mattan for "Charri-Snan", i.e the holy mace is immersed in holy waters of Martand springs.

Mattan is a tiny town having roughly a population of 20,000 people, due to migration of Pandits and terrorism. Literacy rate of this town is 54% which is even less than National average. The coordinates of this place are 33.77 deg North & 75.20 deg East. Residents of the adjoining villages of Mattan, like Krangsoo, Akura, Nambal, Hutmura, Nanil, Ranbirpora, Achabal & Wantrag etc would also visit Mattan for day-to-day activities. These villages also had a sizable number of KP Population before our migration. The Tirth complex is situated near the main Bazar of Mattan. The market of Mattan used to be abuzz with activities. Tourists and pilgrims would throng here from different states & even from foreign lands.

The Pandits of Martand were always close to Power corridors as this place was visited by VIP's, be it Bollywood celebrities or political personalities. Bargha Shikha Mata's Temple is situated on a hilltop. There is a small Temple constructed way back before our displacement and it still stands tall. The locals call this Mandir as Devi Bal. This temple is like Adi Shakti Peeth. There is a holy rock inside the temple (Shilla).



“ Bargha Shikha Mata's Temple is situated on a hilltop. There is a small Temple constructed way back before our displacement and it still stands tall. The locals call this Mandir as Devi Bal. This temple is like Adi Shakti Peeth. There is a holy rock inside the temple (Shilla).

Normally the locals, mostly Kashmiri Pandits visit that place twice in a year during Navratras. The path leading to this shrine is in dilapidated condition. The terrain is tough as the mountain has steep elevation. Like all places of our worship, this temple has also faced the neglect of State Administration. Ever since 2010, when sizable number of Kashmiri Pandits, like those working as PM Package employees, as non-migrant Pandits also started this yatra again, no facility is being provided to them from the local administration. Everyone visits this temple on his/her own risk.

“We have written to Government hundreds of times but all our pleas have fallen on deaf ears”, lamented a local resident.

A Brief History about Martand

Martand in Hinduism is the eighth and last of the Vedic Solar deities called Aditya. He is known as Aditya by virtue of being born to Aditi.

According to legend and in texts "Martand Katha" and stories coming down from one generation to another, Martanda (Sun God) was born from Aditi, the wife of Kashyap Reshi. Kashyap Reshi is the saint on whose name the Kashmir valley is named.

Aditi had given birth to 12 children in the form of eggs which later produced 12 Suns. However, when she gave birth to the 13th offspring in the form of an egg before time, it created a rift between the couple. She had an argument with husband, Kashyap Rishi and in the fit of anger; she abandoned her egg in the waters of Satisar. Thus her 13th Sun remained lifeless under water somewhere in Satisar (present Kashmir) for generations.

Then Kashyap Rishi was entrusted with the task of draining water from Satisar so that water demon Jalodbhav would be killed. Jalodbhav was nearly immortal under water. When Kashyap Rishi tried to drain water from Satisar, he recalled his 13th Sun Martand. As soon as he tried to touch him, he was warned of dire consequences. Kashyap Rishi knew it was impossible for him to do that task and he prayed to Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh & Parvati Mata for help. Mata Shakti sought Lord Vishnu's help and Lord Vishnu cut that egg with his sudarshana Chakra into 2 Pieces. In the process, the two

pieces of egg transformed into two beautiful springs and mysterious glowing flames beamed from the broken egg. The first ray of light is called Martand and that light hit four places and those places became Shakti Peeths. Those four places are known as:

1. Bhargashika Devi
2. Bheema Devi
3. Baswati Devi
4. Shree Bhawani Devi.

These shakti peeths are situated on four sides of Martand spring.

I have vivid memories of 1980's when Smt. Indira Gandhi visited Mattan and people in Thousands assembled here to have one glimpse of their leader, nobody at that time would have thought that they will leave behind this land and will be homeless and nameless in their own country.

Martand Mattan has produced two personalities that are known to all the Pandits of Kashmir and also find mention in history.

They are Pandit Kripa Ram Dutt and Kashmiri poet Pandit Parmanand. Pandit Kripa Ram Dutt saved the Pandits during the tyrannical rule of Aurangzeb. Pandit Kripa Ram Dutt was a great scholar who taught the 10th Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, Sanskrit. Martand finds its place in the Vaakhs of Lalleshwari (Lalded) also.

Martand is a very pious place for Hindus, which has same sanctity as the Ganga. One can perform the shraads, i.e., the ritual performed for departed souls. The religious festival of Malmass-Banmass is still held every two-and-a-half years when pilgrims, mostly from Northern India assemble and perform shraad of their departed souls near the springs or along the rivulet Chaka Nadi. The ancestors of Mattan village used to keep record of all the visitors in their books which they called "Bahee". Nowadays only few have retained this custom.

This area has been a religious, social and cultural center from generations. Now, with a sizable number of PM Package employees also putting up at this pious place, the Government should cease this opportunity to try to reverse migration from this place.



(Part 2)

- Upender Ambardar



Brutalized Shrines & Temples Wailing Echoes from Kashmir

The communal onslaught let loose on the miniscule religious minority of Kashmiri Hindus was a sort of deluge for them. It also broke the umbilical cord of the trust and confidence reposed in the majority community. The immediate neighbours, acquaintance and the civil society of Kashmir either acted as mute spectators or in many cases tactfully collaborated with the killers and the ravagers. In genocidal wordage, those who remain close mouthed are tight lipped on the gruesome killings and atrocities are also counted as culprits and perpetrators. The Taliban type medievalism inflicted upon the Hindu holy places in Kashmir has not only robbed history of

its rich Hindu past but has also blemished the fair name of humanity and the virtues of humanness.

The often parroted rhetoric of dignified return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Hindus becomes devoid of any purposeful standing and meaning until our holiest of the holy shrine of the Hari Parbat is not restored to the pre 1990 year position and is fully cleared of the encroachments and illegal constructions made on its traditional ancient Parikrama route post exodus.

Vicharnaag, a suburb of the old Srinagar city was both a historical ancient shrine and a thriving Kashmiri Pandit locality of about 110



households upto the year 1990. It was famous for its two Shiva temples and especially seven holy springs, which surrounded it. It derived its name from the practice of discriminating reasoning, contemplation and reflective discourses organised here on the Hindu religious matters in the earlier times. Jagat Guru Shrankachariya is said to have visited the place and participated in a deliberative discourse as per an oral tradition. The other folklore also holds the view that the Kushan King Kanishka had also organised an engaging oration at Vicharnaag. Vicharnaag has a prime land of seventy eight kanals running into thousands of crores at the present day market rate. It has four three storied Dharamshala buildings comprising about twenty rooms and eight set of shops. A part of it's prized land comprising about thirteen kanals is presently used as a playground by the neighbourhood. It's adjacent cremation ground has an area of about five kanals and twelve marlas. Painfully enough, post exodus, a road has been constructed on it which has divided it into two halves. No permission was either taken or compensation given for the land so acquired .About six to eight maralas of the cremation ground land has illegally been converted into the graveyard by the locals near the vicinity of Bilal Colony. Another one and a half kanal's of it's land on the same side has been encroached upon earlier ,where residential houses have come up .It's holiest two Shiva temples along with its enclosed courtyard, pathetically enough is today submerged in the knee deep accumulated water. The inundation is partly due to the encroachment of the land near the holy spring of Mokhta Pokher, where two residential house have been built illegally after 1990 by one named as Paetgaroo. The ancient Shivling of the main Shiva temple is said to have been uprooted and thrown into the adjacent spring. The other Shivlinga of the side temple is reported to be intact so far .One of its Dharamshala building which housed the Govt. primary school prior to the year 1990 has collapsed. The other bigger three storied Dharamshalla construction having about twenty rooms had a private school by the name of M.R.K. School (Madhav Ram Kak School). It was put on fire after the year 1990. Every trace of its existence has today vanished from its site as it's building material comprising



of bricks, stones and surviving wooden structures were looted in entirety. In earlier times, Vicharnaag boasted of having a large number of the majestic chinar and willow trees. Painfully enough they too suffered the onslaught of the tumultuous times as accepting about less than a half dozen chinar trees and almost all willows have been mercilessly axed out.

The temple situated at Drabiyar, Habbakadal srinagar has been burnt down completely. It's courtyard housed a three storied Dharamshala building and another two storied Dharamshalla was situated adjacent to the temple. The temple also has one more two storied building situated on the inner lane of Purshiyar - Dalhassanyar route. It has two shops at the ground level and two rooms in the upper storey. The second storey was spotted sometime back to display a board indicating a majoritarian religion teaching centre; indicating there by that it has illegally been occupied. The Drabiyar

temple had a mystic Shivling, which was said to change colours during the day. It was this mysterious aspect of the Shivling that used to make then Maharaja Pratap Singh to visit this temple during his kingship days. The inside temple sanctum had a wooden door measuring 8x8 feet followed by an entry arch of about 6x7 feet, which contained an image of lord Ganesha with an underlying inscription in Sharda lipi. A highly spiritually evolved tantrik Acharya Shri Makhan Lal once lived in the temple Dharamshala. He had done his rigorous sadhna in the Himalayas .According to the temple lore, he was instructed by his Guru to go to kashmir for getting rid off the cycle of birth and death. One more revered spiritual saint Shri Maanakak Zadoo of Karifali Mohalla Srinagar would also come to the temple for the daily pooja. He, according to an another lore is said to have foretold about the date and timings of his demise in a dream to his foremost disciple Smt. Tulsi Devi Raina of Drabiyar. His foretelling latter on turned out to be true to the astonishment of all the neighbouring residents. There is no trace of the Drabiyar temple and the Dharamshala buildings visible now as they were set on fire by the religious fanatics. Today, painfully enough, only a huge mass of debris and rebels can be seen. Additionally there is no trace of the mystic Shivling, which either has been thrown into the river or is buried deep in the destroyed temple wreckage. The near by temple of Purshyar has escaped damage and disfigurement due to the presence of a few KP families who have presently taken shelter in its adjoining Dharamshala building post exodus.

The neighbouring Somyar temple across the Vitista river presents a forlorn and deserted look. It is being guarded by the security forces presently. Before exodus, it was a thriving temple blooming with religious liveliness. It was famously known for the Soma Amavasya teerath and the connected festival, which was celebrated at its Yarbhal ghat since ancient times. Apart from the magnificent temple, its sprawling courtyard possessed a huge three storeyed Dharamshala building having a big hall. The then known artist Sh.Kaka ji Sopori used to run classical music classes under the banner of Institute of Fine Arts from the premises of the said hall. The second room of this building had a

branch office of the V.H.P. Another temple building facing the Habbakadal chowk was two storeyed. It had a chain of 6 shops at the ground level, with the same space shop outlets situated in the second storey. The Post office was run in it's upper storey space. It's one more construction had a big 60x25 feet hall known as Geeta Bhawan. It housed the Murti of Lord Krishna and Panch Deva's. Sh.Maheshwar Nath Santoshi Raina, the katha vachak used to do Geeta Satsang in the Geeta bhawan. Latter on, the reputed Jyotish Acharya Sh.Prem Nath Shastri would also conduct satsang and Shrimad Bagwat Geeta teaching classes from the said premises. The entire road side building block of the temple along with the shops was burnt down in the wakeup of the terrible anti Pandit riots of Anantnag in the year 1986.

In Shallakadal area of Habbakadal, there existed two adjacent Ashrams on the names of famous saintess Sati Ded and the reputed mystic Sh. Nand Bub. It was originally a residential house owned by Smt. Sati Ded, which was spread on two kanals of land. The mystic Nand Bub used to visit the house to meet the saintess Smt. Sati Ded. Her daughter Smt. Deka Ded was also a spiritually evolved saintess in her own right. She had donated a piece of her residential land for the construction of Sh. Nand Bab Ashram, which was built with the efforts of one Sh. Shreedhar Dulloo. Both these Ashrams existed in the Tickoo mohalla. Another small Shiva Temple was situated in the interior part of the same mohalla. They too have borne the brunt of traumatic onslaught of the 90's.

One more Shiva temple was situated in the Tarae Boien area of the nearby Karfalli mohalla. It too has been Vandalised. It's Shivling has been uprooted and the Shiv murti totally destroyed, sparing only its pedestal base. It was disclosed to the author during his visit there that the Shivling has been dumped into the nearby Kaetakoel streamlet. The author also found two Muslim families residing in the temple Dharamshalla premises illegally. The ownership of the holy spot of the Tripura Bagwati situated in the same mohalla has now changed hands. it has come to light that its scared well has been filled up, there by defiling its scantonomous ambience.

(To be continued.....)

(The writer is regularly writing on Oral traditions of Kashmir)



Future Business Opportunities and Collaboration

The genesis of Global Kashmiri Pandit Business Foundation (GKPBF) is the vision its founders have for their fellow KP entrepreneurs. The Foundation is a unique platform that provides an opportunity to emerging KP startups and small businesses to receive guidance and support from a pool of profound experts and venture capitalists, and in turn provides such experts and investors with massive human capital as well as a medium of strengthening the KP community.

Global Kashmiri Pandit Business Foundation ('GKPBF') was launched virtually on 22 October 2020 by its seven founding directors – DK Bakshi, Ravinder Kachroo, Supriya Kaboo, Jyotsna Fotedar, Vidya B Dhar, Vinod K Pandita and Ash Raina. The founding members are based out of different parts of

globe, with a common passion for the cause of creating sustainable ecosystem for Kashmiri Pandit business community. The launch, which was a historic step in bolstering the KP business community, was commemorated by the presence of esteemed KP dignitaries, Mr. Moti Kaul, Mr. Ashok Koul and Mr. Uday Challu.

The Foundation Strives to Achieve :

- ❖ Up-Skilling and Up-Scaling up MSME businesses;
- ❖ Building investment worthy business models; and
- ❖ Fundraising for the businesses on basis of equity model.

GKPBF has its registered office in Sector 10, Noida (India), however the foundation has a clear roadmap to establish key offices in various



Figure 1 - GKPBF team with Hon. LG Shri Manoj Sinha



Figure 2 - GKPBF team with Principal Secretary Mr. Nitishwar Kumar

parts of globe in the coming years. The foundation has a robust plan for next three years starting with on-boarding of advisors, mentors and investor panels.

GKPBF is a team of internationally acclaimed professionals and plan to have the best advisory support system for the businesses, in preparing detailed market & financial feasibility report and facilitate required due diligence. GKPBF will be acting as facilitators throughout the journey from setting up of business venture in terms of developing business strategies, talent acquisition and establishing end-to-end operations. With its mentors, advisors and investors, GKPBF will help businesses to achieve the desired growth.

Vision of the Foundation

The vision of our foundation is to create a sustainable ecosystem for incubating start-ups, scaling up existing enterprises, restructuring stressed businesses and create new business ventures to create global success stories for Kashmiri Pandit business community and with a spirit of inclusivity of other business communities in the world.

Objectives of the Foundation

- ❖ To nurture entrepreneurship among Kashmiri Pandits
- ❖ To guide aspiring entrepreneurs and existing businesses
- ❖ To create wealth and assets for Kashmiri

Pandit community by building successful businesses

- ❖ To generate jobs through successful businesses

Roadmap

- ❖ Empaneling a pool of Investors, Advisers and Mentors
- ❖ Maintaining Online Database of KP Entrepreneurs
- ❖ Registration of Users (Aspiring, Existing)
- ❖ Webinar Series
- ❖ Program Management
- ❖ IT Infrastructure
- ❖ KP Manufacturing Cluster in Jammu
- ❖ Academic Institute Campus in Kashmir
- ❖ Skill Development Centre in Kashmir
- ❖ Online Training Portal (Pre-recorded LMS)
- ❖ Contributing to the Smart City in Jammu & Kashmir

Meeting with Honourable Governor of Jammu & Kashmir Mr Manoj Sinha at the Raj Bhavan, Jammu on 10th of November 2020.

GKPBF, represented by Mr. DK Bakshi (Founder), Mr. Ravinder Kachroo (CEO), Mr. B.B. Bhat (Coordinator J&K) and Mr. Vinod K Pandita (Director), had a historical meeting with the Hon'ble Lt. Governor (LG) of J&K Union Territory, Sh. Manoj Sinha. The delegates apprised him of the vision and purpose of the Foundation, and how it aims to accelerate the creation of wealth, employment and economic

opportunities in J&K and various migrant camps, and facilitate business ventures for Kashmiri Pandits. The Foundation believes that this development will function as a game changer for the Union Territory, and for the Community's honorable return.

Further, through this meeting, the team identified business opportunities for startups, aspiring and existing entrepreneurs among Kashmiri Pandit community in India and possible routes for Kashmiri Pandits living overseas to invest in UT of J&K. The members spoke with the Hon'ble LG regarding special business zones, monetary & financial packages for businesses, concessional loans for NRI and KP investment (domestic and international), which was duly acknowledged by his Excellency, and that his office would revert with the necessary action in due time.

GKPBF received best wishes from the LG and his support in ensuring its success, which will not only re-establish KP's as business professionals but also help with monetary and cultural connect with the roots of KP's Dev

Bhoomi. The focused industry segments are Manufacturing, Agro based Commodity Trading, Travel & Tourism, Hospitality, Smart City, IT/ITeS, Educational Institution, Entrepreneurship Development Incubation Centres, et al.

GKPBF followed it up with the 1st of multiple virtual "Digital Business & Investor Summit" and attended by GKPBF Board of Directors, 30 top businesses and investors, and government represented by the Principal Secretary and his team.

Upcoming Events of the Foundation

GKPBF plans to hold the 2nd virtual "Digital Business & Investor Summit" attended by GKPBF Board of Directors, businesses and investors and government represented by the Principal Secretary. This meet is to be held in December, wherein our tentative pool of investors and potential projects in the J&K Union Territory shall be discussed. The Summit aims to provide a common platform to further out roadmap, strategy, planning and implementation.

**I Will Succeed in Life
not Immediately but Definitely....**



Events of the Month

Ashtami	22 nd Dec 2020
Ekadashi (Shukla Paksha)	25 th Dec 2020
Purnima	30 th Dec 2020
Ekadashi (Krishna Paksha)	09 th Jan 2020
Kheche' Maavas (Chaturdashi)	12 th Jan 2020
Amavasya	13 th Jan 2020

Note

Panchak Starts on 19th Dec, Ends on 23rd /24th Dec

Panchak Starts on 15th Jan, Ends on 20th Jan

Margshirsh (Monjhor)(Shukla Paksha) from 15th Dec to 30th Dec 2020

Poh (Krishna Paksha) from 31st Dec to 13th Jan 2021

One Day, You'll Reproach!

Maybe I was born bad luck,
definitely never scrounged for it.
Maybe was it foretold by Almighty,
but didn't let me starve to bits.

They came for errands,
which longed to be perpetual.
I never knew for right,
till the licit grew sensible.

They made it worse,
to the heights it was possible.
Such myopic they are,
and their nature, plausible.

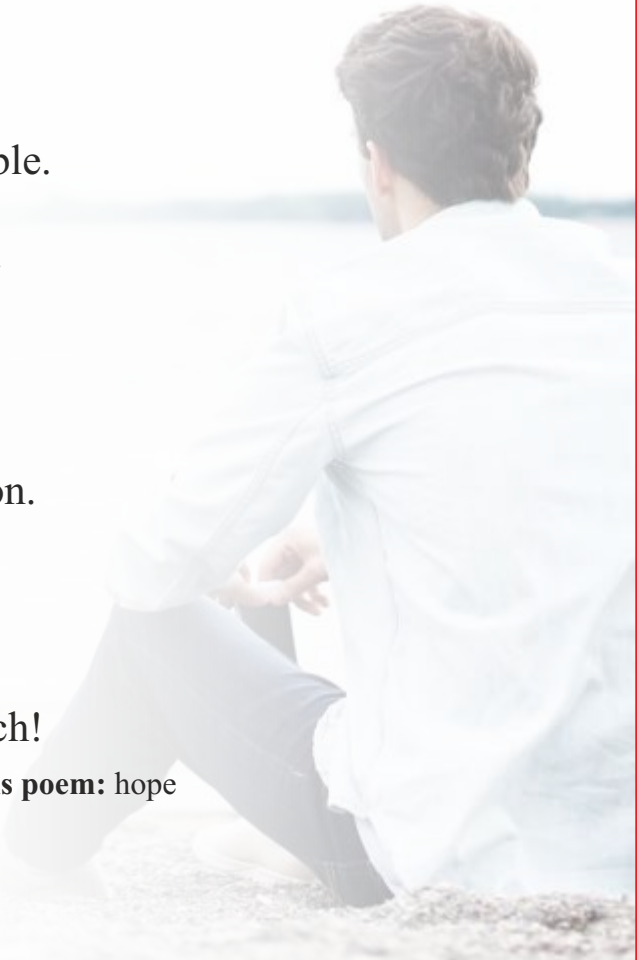
It is said very well,
by the fairies of heaven,
you get what you sow,
and your dears soon beckon.

For what you did to me,
you'll soon be poached.
You get what you deserve,
and one day, you'll reproach!

Topic(s) of this poem: hope



- Smakshi Bhat



Ten Studies in Kashmir History and Politics

Author : Kashi Nath Pandit

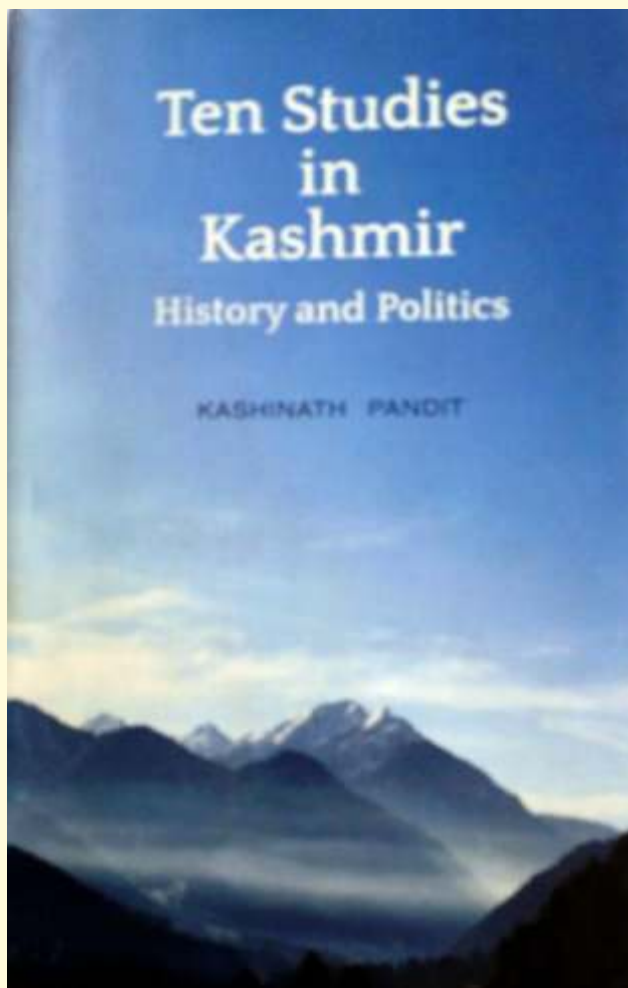
Review By : Dr. Tej Nath Dhar

New Delhi : Indian Council for Social Science Research in association with Academic Foundation, New Delhi, 2019; pp. 337; price: Rs 850; HB

Ten Studies is a collection of essays in which all but one deal with the history and politics of Kashmir. Though the book is silent about their exact provenance, their content clearly reveals that the essays have been written at different times and for different occasions. Because of this, there is considerable overlap in them. So instead of looking at them individually, it is appropriate to look at them together, as an attempt at presenting an account of the political history of Kashmir from the earliest times, but mostly from 1930s onwards, to the present.

The motive for putting the essays together has been clarified by the author in his Introduction, in which he writes somewhat lamentably that “Unscrupulous stakeholders have used unfair means to influence the views and perceptions of historians. In the process, true and hard facts of Kashmir history have been a casualty” (12). This is an extraordinarily bold statement and even disputable, because in our times, the notion of the “true and hard facts” is open to question. And the idea of influencing the historians may also not find many takers, though it is true that historians have often served power structures or their pet constituencies through their written accounts. Pandita is like an old-style hard working scholar who is conscious of the politicization of history; he disputes some known positions about events and people and discusses some new ones too.

Even if one might object to Pandita's stated motive for compiling the essays, one cannot deny the credibility of the Kashmir narrative built in them, for it rests on strong foundations.



It is based on his first-hand experience of events and people of the post-1947 history of Kashmir. He is a historical witness to most of the events that figure in them and has also an acute analytical mind to assess their significance. He complements his experience with details culled from archives in India and Europe and written sources from virtually all parts of the world, including Pakistan. Because of this, the essays are rich in detail and reveal many new and interesting aspects of happenings and events that have been in the public domain for long and also about the main actors involved in the history and politics of Kashmir.

In his synoptic account of the history of Kashmir from the earliest times, the author traverses the familiar ground about the coming of Muslims in the Valley, about which he makes two significant points: the widely accepted conversion of Rinchan to the Muslim faith because of Bulbul Shah and the details about Shah Mir's royal ancestry and the dream that led him to Kashmir are controversial. They were made current by the Farsi historians.

Because of his access to the manuscripts of Baharistan-i-Shahi and ToftulAhabab, which he has translated into English, Pandita disputes the thesis put forth by many historians that conversions of the Hindus to the Muslim faith were spontaneous and not forced. He also reveals that from the available manuscripts of the Baharistanin the Valley, many pages that contain vital information about this have been torn. These issues have been discussed in detail by him in the essay "Medieval Kashmir Historiography." Pandita also states that the work of Alistair Lamb and Victoria Schonfield is heavily tilted in favour of Pakistani viewpoint on Kashmir.

The major strands in the history of Kashmir after 1947 that emerge from the essays are: a) the partition of India, the tribal invasion of Pakistan, and the creation of POK; b) Kashmir's accession to India and the role of Sheikh Abdullah in the evolving crisis in Kashmir; and c) the rise of radical Islam and the ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Pandits.

The announcement of the partition of the country by Mountbatten in 1947 set into motion a flurry of activity, in which local leaders and international powers became very active. Pandita explains how Hari Singh's delay in deciding about the accession of the state to India or Pakistan frustrated Pakistani leaders, who also felt threatened by Sheikh's hobnobbing with leaders of the Congress party. Because of this, they engineered a rebellion against the Maharajah in Poonch, with the help of Muslim Conference leaders, set up the Azad Kashmir Government in Muzaffarabad, and planned and executed a raid on Kashmir to take it by force.

Pandita provides a detailed account of how the raid called Operation Gulmarg was organized by the Pakistani military and operated by the lashkars, and how they succeeded in their plans because of the complicity of the local Muslims. The raiders captured the bridge linking Muzaffarabad with Abbottabad in quick time because the Muslim Guard Platoon of Jammu and Kashmir Infantry deserted and joined the tribesman, affecting thousands of non-Muslims there. They were killed, their homes looted and their women raped.

When the raiders entered Baramulla on October 27, the DC Chowdhury Faizullah welcomed them and the local Muslims helped them move around, locating Hindu and Sikh houses for loot and plunder, and also gave them a list of prominent Pandits who were shot dead by them. He also provides vital information about their three-day stay in Baramulla, the complex military manoeuvre of the Indian army which pushed back the enemy, and the circumstances in which the ceasefire was announced on December 31, 1948.

The announcement changed a part of Kashmir into POK. Pandita traces the changes that have taken place there, and shows how closely they have been connected with changes in Pakistani leadership. In spite of its democratic exterior, the region, in effect, is under the control of the Pakistani Army and ISI, and used mainly for running terror camps that are meant for creating problems in Kashmir.

Pandita dwells on how the Maharaja begged Nehru for accepting his plea for the accession of the state to India and how he did not relent till he released Abdullah from jail. Another revealing detail is related to the Maharaja's plea for military help to fight the raiders. The British army generals expressed their inability to send troops at a short notice and Mountbatten remained visibly indifferent to Maharaja's pleadings. Patel's timely intervention saved Kashmir, because he ordered Gen Cariapato send troops to Srinagar.

Since a part of the state remained with Pakistan because of the ceasefire, Nehru took the matter to the UN, where the Security Council in its Resolution of 1948 recommended that Pakistan withdraw its troops and then holds a plebiscite, though the Maharajah had set no such condition. Mountbatten personally went to meet Jinnah and requested him to withdraw troops, but he refused.

Pandita documents the Kashmir case in the Council, analysing all the debates and resolutions, and shows how the Anglo-American block leaned heavily in favour of Pakistan. Because of this, Pakistan succeeded in changing the very nature of the case: the issue of aggression in Kashmir changed into one of India Pakistan Question. This in spite of the fact that one of the fact finding missions confirmed Pakistan's aggression and the presence of three brigades of Pakistani army in POK.

Though Hari Singh signed the instrument of accession without any preconditions, Nehru's faith in Abdullah made it problematic. The problems multiplied after Pakistan's raid and India's complaint against Pakistan in the United Nations. Abdullah went to the UN as part of the Indian delegation, and was emboldened to think differently about his position after he saw that the Anglo-American block was visibly anti-India.

In a way, this proved a crucial moment for Abdullah to move ahead with his plans, which Pandita has sketched in detail. Because of the influence of Pandits, who organized a movement in Lahore in the 1920s for democratic rule in the state, he converted the Muslim Conference into National Conference and established links with the Congress leaders. In spite of this, he persisted in his efforts to join Pakistan on his terms, but Jinnah did not accept them. Abdullah banished Premnath Bazaz and Kanhayalal Kaul from Kashmir because they had pleaded for independent Kashmir. Before leaving for the UN, he entered into an understanding with Chaudhari Abbas to work on the possibility of a new arrangement. His meetings with Adlai Stevenson made him dream of becoming the head of an independent Kashmir. Because of his prevarications and open threats to secede from the Indian union, he was arrested in 1953. With the help of his associate Beg, he let the Plebiscite Front consolidate its hold in the Valley.

The most stunning revelation made by Pandita is that after his release and visit to Pakistan, Abdullah told the intelligence chief of Pakistan in Mecca in 1965 that he would not like to go back to India but stay in Sinkiang wherefrom he would urge the Kashmiris to rise in revolt to support "Operation Gibraltar," but Ayub Khan did not accept his help. The Operation met with failure in the Valley. After Pakistan launched Operation Topaz in 1970, in which it lost its eastern wing, Abdullah and Indira Gandhi signed an accord in 1975, a move

that Mir Qasim did not like. In the election of 1977, NC opened itself up to the secessionists: rock salt, green kerchiefs, khan dress were visible signs of this new bonhomie between the NC and the Jamaatees.

The Jamaat infiltrated the different cadres of the government, including the police. Jehlum Valley Medical College, set up with Saudi help, turned into a den for money laundering. The staff there were found involved in crimes. Sheikh's speeches in 1979 and 1982 acquired a palpable communal tinge. He changed the Hindu names of 2500 villages into new Muslim ones. In his autobiography, he called the Hindus mukhbirs, which was used later as an excuse by the terrorists for their selective killings.

The work of Abdullah was carried forward by G M Shah and Farooq Abdullah. People were encouraged to acquire guns. Literature was imported from the other side of the border to inflame passions. Abdur-Rahim Rather, the NC MLA, produced a pamphlet in which he wrote of a conspiracy to change the Muslims into a minority. Ladakh was divided into two districts. A ring of Muslim colonies was set up around Jammu. In Shah's time two battalions of police were recruited from among the Jamaatees. NC contributed liberally to the process of alienation of Kashmiris from the "Indian national mainstream," and Kashmiriyat acquired a sectarian Muslim identity.

More than 300 Madrasas became centres of indoctrination. Allah wale gave a new twist to Islam in Kashmir, by purging it of its indigenous links. They organized conferences and had a clout even in the central government. Jamaate Tulaba organized Conferences asking for the implementation of the UN resolutions and voicing slogans like Islam, Quran, Jihad, and victory. Everything collapsed in 1990. Since then there has been a steady erosion of the secular base in the Valley.

Pandita's signal contribution in tracing this phase of Kashmir politics is that he sees these developments in the larger perspective of the changing contours of the Muslim polity in Kashmir, to which he devotes an exclusive essay. He argues how the upper classes in Kashmir, who were economically rich, contributed money and effort to align themselves with the masses, who had been subjected to the growing influence of indoctrination in mosques and madarasas.

This growing menace led to the eviction of the Pandits from the Valley in 1990. Tracing its roots, Pandita writes how Pandits were killed by militants in a highly charged atmosphere of fear and menace, which was compounded by the virtual absence of governance in the Valley. Threats to them became endemic; they were issued from mosques, printed in newspapers published in the Valley, and sent through notices pasted on the doors of their houses. Their exodus was ascribed to the Governor of the state, a myth that was given wide currency in the Valley and by political parties in the country.

Pandita has provided evidence from different sections of the UN documents to show how the exiled Panditseminently qualified for the status of the IDPs, which would have entitled them to help from the UN, but the callous governments in the state and at the centre just did not let that happen. So they were made to suffer in refugee camps, in the sweltering heat of the plains, and back home their properties were vandalized. Their return to their homes was used as a slogan by political parties, at the time of elections.

Ten Studies is a must read for all the citizens of the country, so that they can understand how the so-called mainstream political parties and the forces of disruption in the valley worked in tandem to create a totally non-secular polity in Kashmir and worked havoc with human lives for their petty gains.

AYUSH Courses in India

Students across the nation have been looking at pursuing higher education in Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy, as an alternative to MBBS and BDS.

Aspirants will be able to pursue one of the AYUSH programmes, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels in India. At the postgraduate levels, like other medical programmes, aspirants will be able to pursue an MD and MS as well.

Admissions to the AYUSH courses will be based on an entrance exam, which will be conducted differently for both UG and PG courses. Candidates will be required to attempt entrances such as NEET-UG 2020 (for UG Courses) and AIAPGET 2020 (for PG Courses), in order to pursue an AYUSH course in India.

AYUSH UG Courses in India (Undergraduate Level)

If you wish to pursue a course in AYUSH at the undergraduate level, then there are plenty of courses in each field. In other words, the candidates will be able to pursue UG courses in Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy. Here is a list of AYUSH UG courses in India.

- ❖ Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery
- ❖ Bachelor of Homeopathic Medicine and Surgery
- ❖ Bachelor of Naturopathy and Yoga Sciences
- ❖ Bachelor of Siddha Medicine and Surgery
- ❖ Bachelor of Unani Medicine and Surgery

AYUSH PG Courses in India (Graduate Level)

In other medical fields, graduates of MBBS and BDS can pursue courses in MD (Doctor of Medicine) or MS (Master of Surgery). Similarly, graduates in the field of AYUSH will be able to pursue the postgraduate programmes in AYUSH courses as well, i.e. in MD and MS.

AYUSH Admissions in India

As mentioned above, the candidates who are interested in pursuing any of the above-mentioned programmes must appear for an entrance test for either UG or PG courses. In India, there are two entrance exams that are conducted, one each for UG and PG courses.

Here are the entrance exams that the aspirants will need to attempt in order to take admission to the AYUSH courses in India.

For UG AYUSH Courses : National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Exam NEET

For PG AYUSH Courses : All India AYUSH Postgraduate Entrance Test (AIAPGET)

Eligibility Criteria

The candidates who wish to pursue any one of the programmes will first need to meet the AYUSH eligibility criteria in India. The eligibility criteria for the courses will be set by the college, institute or University that offers the programme. However, aspirants will still be required to have satisfied the general eligibility criteria for AYUSH in India.

For admissions to the undergraduate programmes in AYUSH, interested candidates will need to ensure that they meet the AYUSH UG eligibility criteria 2020. As mentioned above, candidates must appear for an entrance test in order to take admission to any one of the AYUSH UG courses in India.

Candidates will have to qualify the eligibility criteria for the NEET 2021.

Candidates should have cleared class 12 board examinations in the stream of science with subjects such as Physics, Chemistry, Biology/Biotechnology Along with English from CBSE or any other recognised state board.

Candidates who are to appear for class 12 board examinations will need to ensure that they have obtained a minimum aggregate score of 50% (for General Category) in the qualifying exam. Candidates from reserved categories will be offered relaxations as per the government guidelines.

For admission in AYUSH UG courses like BAMS, BUMS, BHMS, there is no entrance exam. It is mandatory for the candidate to appear for NEET-UG and qualify the exam in order to apply for admission in AYUSH courses.

The counseling authority, AYUSH Admission Central Counselling Committee (AACCC) conducts the counseling for 15% AIQ seats for Government; Government aided Central Universities, National Institutes, Private colleges and 100% seats for Deemed Universities. Admission in State AYUSH colleges is done by the counseling authority of the respective state.

- ❖ Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery (BAMS) 5½ years
- ❖ Bachelor of Yoga and Naturopathy (B.N.Y.S) 5½ years
- ❖ Bachelor of Unani Medicine and Surgery (BUMS) 5 years
- ❖ Bachelor of Homeopathic Medicine and Surgery (BHMS) 5½ years
- ❖ Bachelor of Sidha Medicine and Surgery (BSMS) 5½ year

Candidates declared Qualified/Eligible for All India Quota Undergraduate Seats (BAMS/BUMS/BHMS/BSMS) only will be eligible for online allotment process for All India Quota Seats, which is conducted by the AACCC. Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India. For State Quota, Private Ayurveda/Siddha/Unani/Homoeopathy college seats the candidates are required to contact the appropriate State Government/Admission Authority & Directorate of ASU & H Medical Education.

There are about 854 Institutions in India, offering the AYUSH courses

Admission Alerts

Delhi University Admission to MBA (Business Economics) and MBA (Finance) Program 2021-22

Department of Financial Studies and Department of Business Economics, University of Delhi, South Campus invites applications from eligible candidates for admission to 2-years MBA (Business Economics) and MBA (Finance) Program for the academic year 2021-22.

Program Offered

- ❖ MBA (Finance)
- ❖ MBA (Business Economics)
- ❖ Last date for submission of online Application form
- ❖ 10th January 2021
- ❖ Reservation of seats as per the University rules.

Interested Candidates can apply online through the official Websites [http:// www.dbe-du.org/](http://www.dbe-du.org/) or www.mfc.edu

Azim Premji University Bangalore Admission to UG Courses 2021

Azim Premji University, Bangalore invites application from eligible candidates for admission to 3-years full time Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) and Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) and B.Sc.B.Ed. - Dual degree in Science and Education for the academic year 2021.

Last date of apply : 25th December 2021

Date of Entrance test : 10th January 2021

Candidates should apply through online or offline mode.

Eligible candidates can apply online only through the official website: <https://azimpremjiversity.edu.in/>

Application Form can be downloaded from the University website The details on the form can be hand written and sent to the Admissions Office along with the Demand Draft in favour of "Azim Premji Foundation for Development" and photographs on or before the last date. The completed application form should be mailed to the Admissions Office, Azim Premji University, PES Campus, Pixel Park, B Block, Electronics City, Hosur Road, Bengaluru – 560100.

Government of Maharashtra

State Common Entrance Test Cell

Counselling Dates for admission for B.E./B.TECH, B.Arch, MBA/MMS for Academic year 2020-21 to Migrant students of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir

Course	Counselling at	Dates
B.E./B. TECH	Director, Sardar Patel College of Engineering (SPCE), Versova Road, Munshi Nagar, Andheri (West),	28-12-2020 to 30-12-2020
B.Arch	Sir J. J. College of Architecture, 78 / 3, Dr.D.N. Road, Fort, Mumbai	22-12-2020 to 24-12-2020
MBA/MMS	Sydenham Institute of Management Studies & Research & Entrepreneurship Education (SIMSREE), B-Road, Churchgate, Mumbai	22-12-2020 to 24-12-2020

MCA	Counselling Round at to “Director, Sydenham Institute of Management Studies & Research & Entrepreneurship Education(SIMSREE), Churchgate, Mumbai 400020”	28-12-2020 to 31-12-2020
B. HMCT	Counselling Round at “The Principal, Maharashtra State Institute of Hotel Management & Catering Technology 412-C, K.M.Munshi Road, Shivaji Nagar Pune 411016”	22-12-2020 to 24-12-2020

Scholarships

Samsung Star Scholar Program 2020-21

Samsung India invites applications for Samsung Star Scholar Programme 2020-21 from students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNVs) currently pursuing a full-term B. Tech/Dual Degree (B.Tech + M.Tech) course in an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) or a National Institute of Technology (NIT) in India.

- ❖ New Applicants (1st year) admitted in the course in FY 2020-21
- ❖ January 25, 2021
- ❖ Renewal (Star Scholars of FY 2019-20)
- ❖ December 20, 2020

Samsung is offering a scholarship for student(s) graduating from all Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, run by the Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti, an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

The Scholarship Candidate(s) should be first year students, or last year's scholarship holders in a full term B. Tech/Dual Degree (B.Tech+M.Tech) course at the Institute.

Read the instructions carefully and download the application form from the official website Last date to apply January 25.

Additionally original application form and signed receipts of documents should be sent by Speed Post to Samsung Star Scholar, Samsung India Electronics Pvt. Ltd., Corporate Citizenship (CRO), 20th ~ 24th Floor, Two Horizon Centre, Golf Course Road, Sector – 43,, DLF Phase V, Gurgaon, Haryana -122002

SDEF School Scholarship Program 2020

Swami Dayanand Education Foundation invites applications from the students of Class IX to XII of the Delhi/NCR region for the School Scholarship Program 2020. The scholarship will be awarded for studies in India in a government or private school from class IX TO XII

Applications for the same can be submitted through online or offline mode till December 31, 2020. Read further for more details on SDEF School Scholarship Program 2020

Gross annual income of the family of the candidate from all sources should not exceed Rs. 2.00 lakhs per annum.

The applicant can register by filling the online application form.

Fill the form and send it with all the supporting documents to Scholarship Officer, Swami Dayanand Charitable Education Foundation, A-74, Ground Floor, Sector-2, Noida-201301, UP (India).

For any queries write to scholarships@swamidayanand.org

CBSE announces Merit Scholarship Scheme 2020 for Single Girl Child for Plus 2 Studies

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) invites 'online applications' from eligible students who have passed Class X Examination 2020 from the CBSE affiliated Schools for the CBSE Merit Scholarship Scheme 2020 for Single Girl Child for + 2 Studies and Renewal of CBSE Merit Scholarship Scheme for Single Girl Child awarded in 2019.

The objective of CBSE Merit Scholarship Scheme is to provide Scholarships to the meritorious Single Girl Students, who are the only child of their parents; and have passed the CBSE Class X Exam with 60% or more marks and are continuing their further school education of Class XI and XII.

- ❖ The rate of the scholarship shall be Rupees Five Hundred (Rs. 500/-) per month.
- ❖ Last date for submission of online application 10th December 2020
- ❖ Last date for submission of Hard Copy 28th December 2020

The Application Form is available on Board's website www.cbse.nic.in at Scholarship Link

Education News

NTA to make fresh syllabus for JEE Main, NEET and other competitive Entrance Exams to be held in 2021

Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank has directed the National Testing Agency

to make fresh syllabus for JEE Main, NEET and others competitive entrance exams to be conducted in 2021 by the agency. NTA will assess the situation across different states and education boards before finalizing the syllabus.

JEE Main is conducted to offer admission into B.Tech/ B.E/ B.Arch /B.Plan in various Engineering institutions.

NTA officials have told that the first session of JEE Main 2021 is likely to be held in February instead of January.

AKTU scraps Uttar Pradesh State Engineering Entrance Exam (UPSEE)

Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam Technical University (AKTU) Lucknow has scrapped the Uttar Pradesh State Engineering Entrance Exam (UPSEE) from the academic year 2021-22 onwards. As per the notification released by AKTU, the admission to engineering colleges would be on the basis of the JEE Main 2021 score. AKTU took an official Twitter handle to share the information. Candidates can check the official notice on the official site at upsee.nic.in.

JEE Main is conducted twice a year for the admissions to the Undergraduate engineering program offered at the IITs, NITs and other top engineering institutions across the country. Application process for the JEE Main 2020 January session is expected to begin any time soon.

Candidates are advised to keep visiting the official website: jeemain.nta.nic.in for regular updates.

NIOS Board Exam 2020 for classes 10, 12 to be held in January/February 2021

National Institute of Open Schooling has released the schedule of registration, payment of examination fees for Senior Secondary. As per the schedule, NIOS will conduct Class 10, 12 October Board Exam 2020 during January- February 2021. The complete date sheet for the exam would be released by the Institute soon.

- ❖ For all learners with late fee of Rs 100/- per subject: December 11 to 15, 2020
- ❖ For all learners with consolidated late fee of Rs 1500/- per Learner: December 16 to 21, 2020

Visit the official site of NIOS on sdmis.nios.ac.in.

GCET 2021 Entrance Exam date

The Directorate of Technical Education, Government of Goa has announced the exam date for the Goa Common Entrance Test (GCET) 2021.

As per the notification, the entrance test will be conducted on May 4 and 5, 2021. The test of Physics will be held on May 4 from 10 am to 12 noon and the Chemistry exam will be held in the evening shift on the same day. The Mathematics exam is scheduled for May 5 from 10 am to 12 noon.

Candidates seeking admission into BTech courses must appear for all papers and candidates seeking admission into BPharm courses do not require sitting for Mathematics paper.

For further details regarding the Schedule, Centres, pattern, application form and other relevant information, candidates are advised to refer to the relevant website. Admissions to B.E., B.Pharm. courses in the State of Goa for the academic year 2021-22 shall be carried out on basis of GCET-2021,(Goa Common Entrance Test),which shall be conducted in various Centres, across Goa State.

Admissions to B.Arch. course shall be on the basis of scores obtained at NATA (National Aptitude Test in Architecture), conducted by Council of Architecture, and qualifying exam(Std. XIIth/HSSC/Diploma.)

Prospectus containing details of GCET-2021 and admissions to Professional Degree courses will be duly notified on the website of this Directorate

www.dte.goa.gov.in.

Tentative dates for Class 12 Practical Exams 2021

The Central Board of Secondary Education has released the tentative dates for the Class 12 practical exams 2021.

As per the report by various news media the practical exams for Class 12 will be conducted from January 1 till February 8, 2021. A detailed schedule will be released by the board soon on its official website, cbse.nic.in.

The board has fixed a standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for conducting the examination. According to CBSE Class 12 practical exams SOPs

Feedback: vijaykashkari@gmail.com



AIKS Matrimonial Service



Seeking suitable alliance for my son, Name: (Optional), Date of birth : 11th August, 1991, Time : 5.31PM (Day Time), Place of Birth: Jammu, Height: 188cm, Qualification: B.Tech (Karnataka) & M.S in : Computer science-Artificial Intelligence (UCD Dublin Ireland), Job Description : Software engineer in a reputed MNC IT (at Dublin), Permanent add (valley): Rainawari, later at Shivpura, Srinagar, Present add: Bohri Jammu, Email: ramesh_tamiri@rediffmail.com, Mobile no.: 9419309913, Any other relevant information like Manglik, Divorce etc: No, Father's Name: Dr. Ramesh Tamiri (Sadhu), Res. Phone no: 01912554428



Seeking suitable match preferably with Finance background / Banker / CA for our elder son DOB...05011993, TOB...1135hrs, POB...New Delhi, B.E (Chemical) BITS, PILANI. EMPLOYED with GOI, Dept. Of Science in Technology (BARC) Mumbai, Non Transferable Job. Interested may please respond on coach4lifet2@gmail.com, 9910076101



Suitable alliance invited for our son born on 8th April, 1989, 1110 hours, 5 feet 10 inch tall, at Anantnag Kashmir. The boy is B tech Mechanical with MS applied mechanics from Ecole central's, DeNantes, France and is presently working as senior business Analyst, Sopra Steria India at Noida (UP). Interested may please call for tekni and biodata from WhatsApp number 9419765031, 7051961209.



Looking for alliance for our son born in New Delhi on 1st Sept 1989. Height 186 cm. He is a Computer Engineering from India and M.B.A from U.S.A. Presently working as Senior Consultant with IT company based in New York, USA. The girl should be Masters/MBA from USA and working in USA on her work visa. Parents based in Dubai. Interested please contact on mob no +971506196474, EMAIL deep190058@gmail.com .



Looking Suitable Match for my Son, Born on 22.10.1992, 13.52 Hrs at Jammu, Height 5'11". Done B.E from Mysore and MS from USA. Working as Software Developer in USA on H1B Visa interested may contact raina50@gmail.com, Mobile 9419191462, 9419114335.



Suitable Alliance for our daughter Born 22 August 1993, Height: 168 Cms. Bachelor's in Architecture from I.P University Delhi, working with an MNC at Bangalore. Please send Tekni and kulawali at Email: dhruva62@gmail.com OR Mob. No: 9868901676 & 8383032306.



Seeking Suitable Alliance for our daughter Born on 04.09.1984 in Delhi, HT 165 Cms. Economics Honours Graduate from Delhi University and MBA (Finance and HR) from reputed institute Delhi. Working in Govt. of India Institution at Manesar, Gurugram as consultant in Human Resources Development Deptt. With good Annual Package. Interested may please send Kulawali and Tekni at Email:- arunraina50@gmail.com OR WhatsApp at 9873787189.

Parents seeking marriage proposal for their daughter. Our daughter is a physician and is based in the US. She is a US citizen. We are looking for a suitable professional Kashmiri Pandit match. Our daughter is talented, humble, and has been raised in Kashmiri and Indian culture at home. She is willing to relocate to India or other countries for the right match. Date of birth October 12, 1982 at 1:30 am, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA. A recent photograph would be very helpful. Please correspond with a brief writeup of the family and a tekni to: kkher50@msn.com. WhatsApp: +1 202-765-5444.



We are looking for a MEDICO Match with MD/MS for our Daughter who has done MBBS from RGUHS, Bangalore presently working as MO in a Private Hospital in Delhi and also preparing for MD, born on 30th March 1991, 17:37 at Udhampur. Interested may contact with Tekni and Biodata on 94191-30214, 94191-13288.



Wanted a suitable alliance for my legally separated daughter born 22.04.1986 at Srinagar , time of birth 10.25 hrs ,height 173 cms who has perused BE(CSE) from MIET college Jammu and M.Tech(IT) from KSOU Mysore. She is working as an Executive in a Govt of India Enterprise and presently posted at Jammu. Her job is transferable to any part in India. Her earlier marriage lasted for a brief duration only . Merely Lagan dosha. Interested may kindly send the tekni and kulwali per return mail to R.K.Raina on email id rkrjgk@gmail.com or can whatsapp the details to 9419264309.



Seeking Alliance for Our Daughter born 2/1/1991 at Jammu, B.Tech (IT) M. Tech (computer Science) Presently Working as Assistant Professor In Engineering College (NCR). Previously Worked At MNC Cognizant Pune. Interested May please send Tekni / Kulwali on Mob/What's App- 9419209499



We are looking for MEDICO MATCH with MD/MS/DN working in DELHI – NCR match for our Daughter, beautiful & tall , Born-June 87 / Ht.- 167 Cm qualified as MD in Obs. & Gynae. & Specialization in IVF & working as IVF Consultant with Hospital in GURGAON. Interested may please contact on e-mail at: bergen.kaulsk@gmail.com Mob. +91 9873452557/9414012557.



Looking for a Suitable Match for our Son Born on 13th July 1991, 11.40 AM at Jammu. Parents are presently living in Roop Nagar, Jammu. Height 5'11", Qualified as BE in Computer Science. Working as Application Developer in Dhyey Consulting Services Pvt. Ltd. at Vadodara, Gujrat. Interested may contact on MB- 9419141511, Email id: ratanpur1990@gmail.com for Tekni & Biodata.



Seeking suitable alliance for our son, born at Srinagar on 23rd July, 1988 at 11.59 AM, 173 CMS. He is pursuing his own business at Valsad, Gujarat having a decent annual income in seven figures. The family is currently based in Faridabad. Interested may please contact for further details on email: rajindermagazine@gmail.com or Mobile/WhatsApp: 9810847376

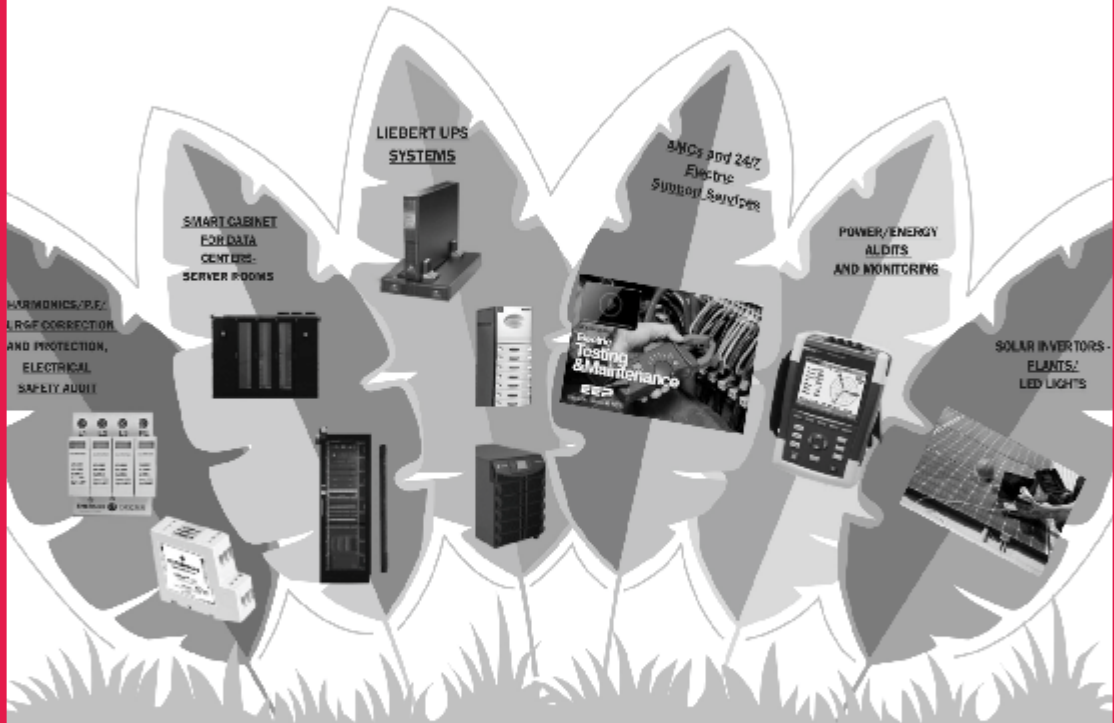


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BECOME A LIFE MEMBER
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Application Form for Life Member
All India Kashmiri Samaj (REGD.)

244, Sector 3, R.K. Puram, New Delhi - 110022,
Telephone : 011-26107431, Mobile : 9958154848
Web : www.aiks.org E-mail : hqaiks@gmail.com

Application No. :

Date :

The President
All India Kashmir Samaj
244, Sector-3, R.K. Puram
New Delhi - 110022

Dear Sir,

I hereby apply for Life membership of the All India Kashmiri Samaj.
My Particulars are as under :

Name (In full) :

Date of Birth : **Father's/Husband's Name :**

Address :

.....

.....

..... **Pin :**

Tel : (Res.) : **Office :**

Mobile : **Email :**

I have studied the AIKS Constitution and agree to abide by the policies and programmes of the AIKS.

With best wishes
Yours Sincerely

Signature

A Cheque of Rs 5,000/- (Rs. Five Thousand) only favouring All India Kashmiri Samaj is enclosed here with.

Cheque No. : **Drawn on (Bank) :**

Amount : **Date :**

AIKS Receipt No. :

(Life Members will receive a free copy of Naad for Fifteen Years)

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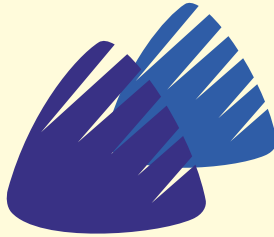
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