

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society (Regd.)

B-36, Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi- 110 048

Website : kecss.org

e-mail : kecssglobal@yahoo.com

Prof. Bharat B. Dhar

Ph.D. McGill (Canada)

President

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society (Regd.)

Welcome to Shuhul Taaph-2015



The KECSS's annual **Cultural Extravaganza**, which till date was known by its annual serial number, will henceforth be known by the year during which it will be held. To begin with Shuhul Taaph-VI will now be known as **Shuhul Taaph-2015**. This was done on the suggestion and advice of our well-wishers to change over to the annual system as it has become an accepted annual event for the community and others.

The success of Shuhul Taaph has forced us to maintain the broad format for three days beginning this year on 6 February, 2015 afternoon with the **Inaugural function, Awards function** followed by **cultural entertainment** and so on. The subsequent two days are full of various cultural activities, besides focus on personalities of the community, who are no more with us, but have left a mark in the history of Kashmiriath. **Master Zinda Kaul** is one such personality, who is the focus of our second day of Shuhul Taaph-2015.

The cultural content for the three days has been specially designed by a **group of artists from Jammu & Kashmir** depicting various facets of our **culture, traditions, language, folk music** and related items. Our practice has been not to repeat any item and as such we always **look out for introducing** and **providing a platform** to a **new group of artists**.

The **Art Workshop** under the guidance of our famous artist, **Shri Veer Munshi**, that was started last year, will continue this year as well from **4-8 February, 2015** giving an opportunity to the budding artists of the J&K, NCR and other parts of the country.

The KECSS thus is looking forward to host this three days Cultural Extravaganza that our community at large will enjoy it together with a dinner of Kashmiri cuisine.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B.B. Dhar'.

Prof. B.B. Dhar

President



Elixir of Exile

Daaliya Batta!!Bhagodey Kahin key!! These invectives keep echoing in my head.

For years it has gnawed at me, this question. In the choice of **fight or flight** why did we choose the flight??? Why could we not take a stand??? Why did we not fight it out when we saw our kin being shot down, our homes set ablaze, our places of worship desecrated and our women threatened with humiliation.

We chose instead to take the first flight out from our homes and landed as refugees in our own country with no podium to voice our woes. We chose quietly to live in migrant camps and dungeons with as much dignity as we could muster.

And we heard mutely ,tales of how this was the nth exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from their homeland. Terrible, I thought. Huh, what history????So, we were genetically and historically programmed to run. Essentially a bunch of losers!!

Suddenly the temper inside me threatened to rise like a tempest. Why could we not just take an "eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"????????????????

.....Because said a meek voice of reason inside "an eye for an eye "makes everyone blind!!

Turn back and see, said that voice of reason, and feel the pride of the gardener who sees his garden in full bloom bursting forth with myriad colours after he has toiled for seasons together.

And indeed! When I looked back I could see my garden in full bloom. I could see a Mohit Raina and Praneet Bhat deliver their histrionics flawlessly. I could hear a Nidhi Razdan churn out her cut throat news analysis. I could see a Rohit Pandita string pearls with his pen. I could see a countless number of our children crunching numbers in boardrooms, drawing up globally impacting strategies, conceiving and creating international designer labels.

I could see my garden in all its brightness from Jammu to Johannesburg and suddenly I was glad we had made that flight.

For if we had chosen the fight we would be staring at graveyards and mourning doubtlessly. We would have also been equally responsible for contributing to the atrocities which have reached bone chilling proportions today and most certainly we would have joined the Dinosaurs in their journey of extinction! And then what would this fight be worth???

The Exile had doubtlessly proved to be the Elixir of life not just today but through ages. It was a time tested formula .It is this flight which has kept us going not just today but since the very first exodus. It is not cowardice but better sense of reason which has prevailed and kept our civilization intact. It is not an easy path for it is fraught with its own perils, the peril of homelessness but it has kept our essence alive.

The Shaarda peeth was relegated ages ago and may perhaps be a militant hideout today but the Saraswat Brahmin of a dried up Saraswati has managed to survive through the onslaught of time . From Kashmir to Kanyakumari he has been spreading his fragrance and keeping his culture and value system alive.

And above all he has managed to survive and make the world his stage, the ocean his backwater and the sky his limit!

I am reminded of Charles Darwin today who very aptly remarked:

"In the struggle for existence only the fittest shall survive and by fittest we do not mean the strongest of species, it means the species which are most responsive to change"!!



GOVERNOR
JAMMU & KASHMIR

RAJ BHAVAN
JAMMU-180001



MESSAGE

I am happy to learn that The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society (KECSS) is shortly organizing a three day "SHUHUL TAAPH" (2015) at New Delhi.

I am aware that, for preserving and promoting the art, culture, language, literature and heritage of Kashmir, the Society has been organizing varied such activities in the past years, involving the participation of artists, writers, poets and notable personalities from the cultural arena. Such programmes provide an opportunity to the people of Kashmir, presently settled in different parts of the country, to be reconnected to their roots.

I compliment KECS for organizing "SHUHUL TAAPH" (2015) and trust that its endeavour shall meet with high success.

11th November, 2014
Jammu

(N.N. Vohra)

डा. महेश शर्मा
Dr. Mahesh Sharma



राज्य मंत्री (स्वतंत्र प्रभार)
पर्यटन मंत्रालय
संस्कृति मंत्रालय
राज्य मंत्री नागर विमानन
भारत सरकार
Minister of State (Independent Charge)
Ministry of Tourism
Ministry of Culture
Minister of State for Civil Aviation
Government of India

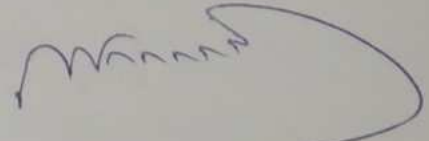


MESSAGE

I am pleased to learn that the **Kashmir Education Culture & Science Society (Regd.) (KECSS)** is organizing the annual **Cultural Festival** the **February 6-8th 2015**.

Such activities are the binding force for any community and I further understand that the KECSS has been organizing such events since last six years.

I wish the organizers of this year **Cultural Extravaganza "Shuhul Tapph"-2015** a grand success, and I am confident the Kashmiri community will enjoy the festival



Dr. Mahesh Sharma

Dr. Karan Singh
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
(RAJYA SABHA)



3, NYAYA MARG
CHANAKYAPURI
NEW DELHI - 110 021



MESSAGE

I am happy that the Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society (KECSS) is holding a Kashmiri Cultural Festival of Arts and Crafts. I warmly commend this initiative and send my warm greetings to the organisers as well as the participants.

Karan Singh
Dec. 12, 2014

Tel. : 2611-1744, 2611-5291 Fax : 2687-3171
E-mail : karansingh@karansingh.com



The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society (Regd.)

D-31, Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi-110048.

Website : kecss.org

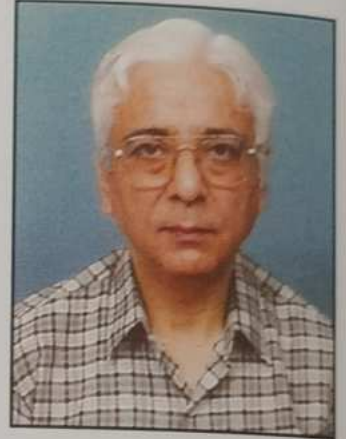
e-mail : kecssglobal@yahoo.com

Maharaj Krishen Kaw (I.A.S. Retd.)

Member

Former Secretary (HRD) to the Government of India

Former President KECSS and AIKS



MESSAGE

I am greatly pleased to learn that the Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society is organising the Shuhul Taaph in February this year. This event has got converted into an annual cultural extravaganza that is eagerly awaited by members of the biradari. It has been meticulously planned year after year by Professor Bharat Bhushan Dhar, President of the Society and his dedicated team, with the close collaboration of noted artists, singers, dancers, poets and litterateurs of the community.

I wish the event all success and congratulate the organisers for their dedication and enthusiasm.

(M. K. Kaw)

03rd January, 2014

Dr. S. N. Kaul

Former Vice President

Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society (Regd.)



MESSAGE

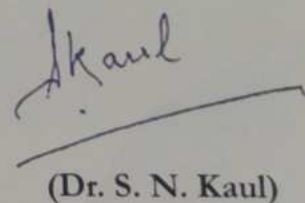
Dear friends,

I am sure you are all eagerly waiting for the yearly spectacle of “Shuhul Taaph” presented by KECSS. Art, science and culture are essential ingredients of human life which differentiate us from lower forms of life. Most human beings have special talents which need an outlet to be noticed and enjoyed by other members of society. KECSS has been providing this outlet effectively over the years. Prof B B Dhar and his team have been doing a commendable job of successfully managing this event and we must congratulate and thank them for doing the job.

We invite all members of society be they young or elderly to come forward and exhibit their talents in art, culture and science.

So, folks, brace yourselves up for another three day soul elevating Kashmiri extravaganza.

With good wishes to all



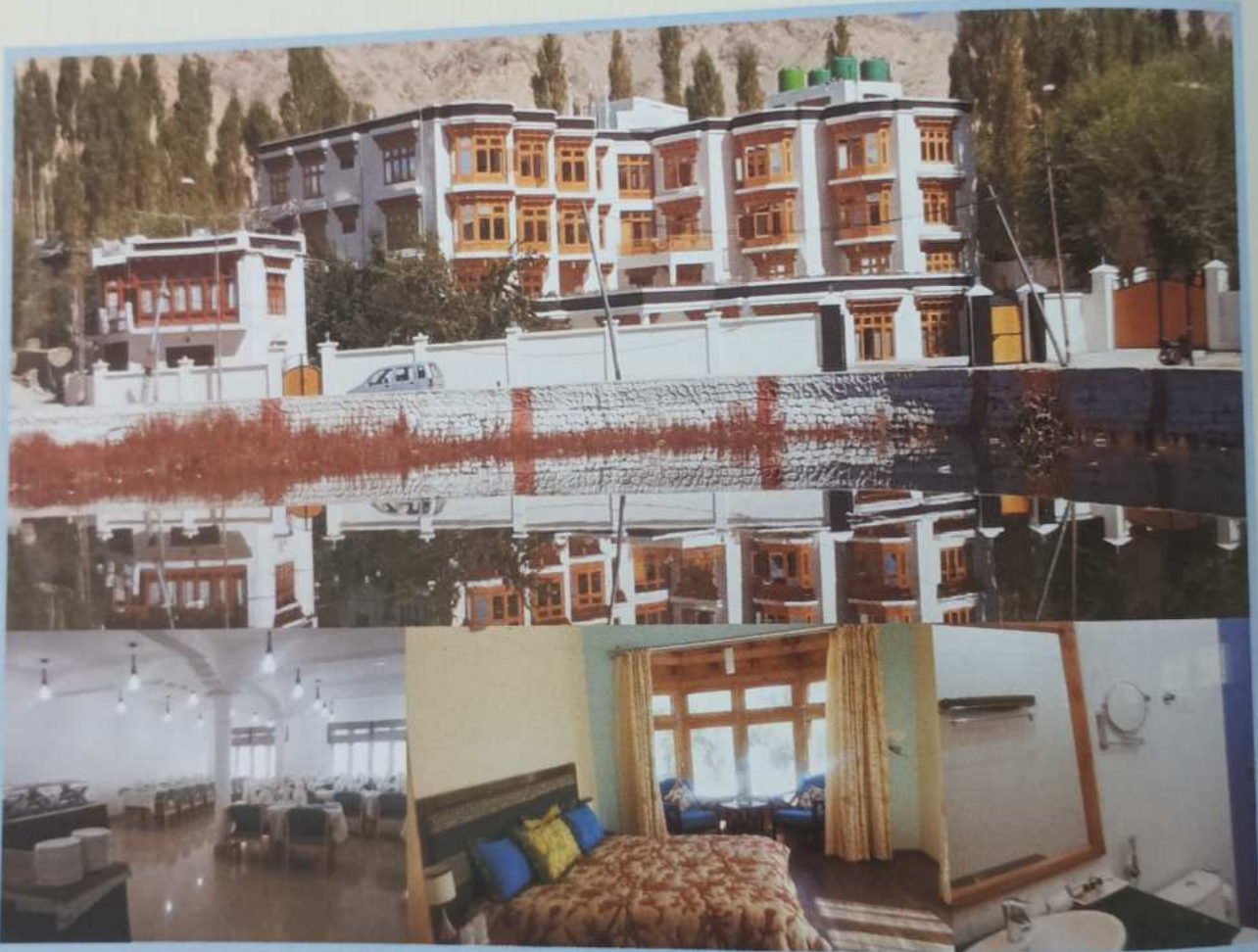
(Dr. S. N. Kaul)

Prof. B . B. Dhar
President, KECSS
Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi.

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26/12/2015
With best compliments from

Hotel Glacier View

KARZOO, LEH-194101, LADAKH (INDIA)



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E-mail : ravinderbadam@gmail.com

VISIT : WWW.HOTELGLACIERVIEW.COM

SERVICE BEYOND IMAGINATION

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society (Regd.)
New Delhi

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society
is pleased to confer the

**DISTINGUISHED
KECSS Award - 2014**

on

Prof. Kailash Mehra

*for her outstanding contributions in the field of Music in general
and Kashmiri Music in particular.*



Prof. Kailash Mehra received her Master in Music (Vocal) from Prayag Sangeet Samiti, Allahabad in 1975 and also obtained M.A. (Vocal) from Punjab University, Chandigarh 10 years later in 1985.

She became an instructor of music in Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, J&K State in 1978 and presently is a Professor of Music (Head of the Department) at Government M.A.M. College, Jammu. She is the convener of "Board of Studies" in Indian Music University of Jammu, Jammu. She is the Member of North Zone Cultural Centre (An autonomous body under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.)

She is the best known singer and titled as Lata Mangeshkar of J&K, the Kokila of Kashmir, the melody queen and Malika-e-Gazal by the listeners, Electronic and Print Media. Prof. Mehra has enthralled music lovers virtually in all States of India and several foreign countries. Her amazing range and versatility is reflected in the fact that she has sung not only in Kashmiri but entertained the masses in different languages like Dogri, Pahari, Gojri, Sanakrit, Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu etc. Prof. Mehra has performed in various parts of the world to name a few, USA, Canada, London etc.

The Cassettes and CDs of Kailash's Song are highly popular. She has lent her melodious voice to Kashmiri Film "BAB" which was awarded National and Nargis Dutt Award.

She is the recipient of several awards including Ustad Mohamad Tibat-Ullah-Baqal Award by All India Radio, Srinagar, Kashmir, Sher-e-Kashmir Sheikh Moh. Abdullah Award (2012) by SaMaPa etc.

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society feels proud to present the distinguished KECSS Award-2014 to Prof. Kailash Mehra for her outstanding contributions in the field of Music in general and Kashmiri Music in particular.

R.K. Koul
General Secretary

Prof. B.B. Dhar
President

New Delhi, February 06, 2015





The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society (Regd.)

New Delhi

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society
is pleased to confer the

**DISTINGUISHED
KECSS Award - 2014**

on

Dr. Suresh Saraf

for his outstanding contributions in the field of Medical Sciences.



Dr. Suresh Saraf is a Fellow in Endo-urology, University of Tennessee School of Medicine, Memphis, Tennessee, USA, Fellow in Organ Transplantation and Laparoscopic Urology (2004), University of Maryland School of Medicine, Baltimore, Maryland, USA, D.N.B. (Urology), National Board of Examinations (1991), M.ch (Urology), Institute of Medical Sciences, B.H.U., M.S. General Surgery, Government Medical College, Srinagar (1985), M.B.B.S, Government Medical College Srinagar.

Dr. Saraf is presently Consultant Urologist, JK Medicity Hospital, Jammu, J&K. He is a specialist in Endo-urology and uro-oncology. He started his career as a consultant Urologist to Parmarth Mission Hospital, B.L. Kapoor Hospital and Agrasen Hospital in New Delhi. In between 1994 to 2004, he worked as Consultant Urologist at various hospitals in Jammu. He was one of the pioneers in introducing lithotripsy (E.S.W.L.), ureteroscopy, percutaneous renal surgery in J&K. He joined Government Medical College, Jammu in 2002 where he rose to become Associate Professor of Surgery and Urology and superannuated in April 2013.

He has done more than 4000 trans-urethral resections of prostate and 200 procedures involving ureteroscopy, P.C.N.L. flexible ureteroscopy and retrograde intra-renal surgery for management of stone diseases, 1500 procedures for removal of bladder cancer and about 40 radical cystectomies with urinary diversion for management of advanced bladder cancer.

His papers have been published in national and international journals and he has spoken at various conferences on urological problems. He was associated with one of the earliest kidney transplantation programmes in Delhi started at Parmarth Mission Hospital, Pitampura where he with Prof. R.V.S. Yadav who had initiated the first Kidney Transplantation programme in North India in early seventies.

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society feels proud to present the distinguished KECSS Award-2014 to Dr. Suresh Saraf for his outstanding contributions in the field of Medical Sciences.

R.K. Koul
General Secretary

Prof. B.B. Dhar
President

New Delhi, February 06, 2015



The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society (Regd.)
New Delhi

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society
is pleased to confer the

**KECSS Artist
Award- 2014**

on

Shri Subhash Razadan

*for his outstanding contributions in the field of Fine Arts in
general and Black & White Drawing and Paintings in particular.*



Shri Subhash Razadan, born in 1952 at Purushyan, Habbakadai, Srinagar, Kashmir, had his initial schooling at Hindu Middle School, Zaindar Mohalla and later at Hindu High School, Sathu Sheetal Nath. Shri Razadan while studying at Institute of Music and Fine Arts, Srinagar got strongly motivated to study Fine Arts at the Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S. University of Baroda, where he got himself enrolled in 1973 for the five-year course in Applied Art. In 1974, the J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Language granted him a scholarship to pursue his studies there and he obtained his BFA degree in 1978. He was appointed to teach at the Institute of Music and Fine Arts, Jammu in 1979. After a nine year stint at the Institute, he was appointed in 1988 as Assistant Professor, Graphic Design and Photography at Media Education and Research Centre, University of Kashmir, Srinagar.

Endowed with an intensely philosophical bent of mind as well as high sense of artistic ingenuity, Sh. Razadan has carved out a significant niche for himself in the field of neo-tantric art. Fascinated by the magic of ritual setting created by his father's configurations, which he felt like drawing himself, young Razadan would often ask him about the secrets of the sacred geometry and the Tantric tradition that was its basis.

Samarasya, Subhash Razadan's art is a product of the serene silence of meditative moments, seeking to give spatial representation to that which is beyond space as well as time. His drawings and paintings touch the threshold where the indeterminate, formless, undifferentiated, pure consciousness assumes the diversity of names and forms. In his present series of B&W drawings/paintings, artist Subhash Razadan interprets the relationship and relishes the prakasha-vimarshamayarupa or reality through the medium of his mystic visions and psychic images appearing to him as part of his living experiences.

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society feels proud to present the KECSS Artist Award to Shri Subhash Razadan for his outstanding contributions in the field of Fine Arts in general and Black & White drawings/paintings in particular.

R.K. Koul
General Secretary

Prof. B.B. Dhar
President

New Delhi, February 06, 2015



The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society (Regd.)
New Delhi

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society
is pleased to confer the

**KECSS Life Time
Achievement Award- 2014**

on

Dr. Anil Bhan

for his outstanding contributions in the field of Medical Sciences.



Dr. Anil Bhan graduated from Medical College Srinagar (Best outgoing graduate-Gold Medalist), Post Graduated in General Surgery from PGI, Chandigarh. He did his M.Ch. in Cardio thoracic Surgery from All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi.

Dr. Bhan is the Co-Founder of Max Heart and Vascular Institute, Saket, New Delhi. Presently he is the Sr. Director, Cardio Thoracic & Vascular Surgery, Medanta – The Medicity Hospital, Gurgaon. He was a faculty member at All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi till December 2004. His areas of interest include On and Off pump Myocardial Revascularization, Aortic aneurysm surgery, Pediatric Cardiac Surgery, Valve Repairs and Replacements, Minimally Invasive Cardiac Surgery, Peripheral Vascular Surgery, Treatment and End Stage Heart Disease including Cardiac Transplantation.

Dr. Bhan has performed more than 15,000 Cardiac and Vascular procedures (including more than 1000 Redo-pediatric & adult procedure). He developed one of the largest Pediatric cardiac surgical programme in the country and largest experience in Aortic Surgery in the country. He designed and developed more than 50 surgical instruments in the field of cardiac surgery.

Dr. Bhan supervised the thesis of 12 post graduates at AIIMS and contributed chapters for four books. He has published about 150 articles in national and international journals and presented more than 100 papers in national and international conferences. He has made enormous contributions to Cardiac Surgery including the earliest reports on angiographic follow up of OPCAB (Beating Heart CABG) from India and third report in the world literature on Radial artery angiography follow up (Annals of Thoracic Surgery, USA)

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society feels proud to present the KECSS Life Time Achievement Award to Dr. Anil Bhan for his outstanding contributions in the field of Medical Sciences.

R.K. Koul
General Secretary

Prof. B.B. Dhar
President

New Delhi, February 06, 2015





The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society (Regd.) New Delhi

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society
is pleased to confer the

**KECSS Life Time
Achievement Award- 2014**

on

Prof. Shibhan Kishen Kak



for his outstanding contributions in the field of Higher Education and Research.

Prof. Shibhan Kishen Kak is presently the Vice Chancellor of Jaypee University of Information Technology, Himachal Pradesh. Born at Srinagar, Kashmir on 18th April 1947 his schooling was completed in DAV School, Amerakadal, and then B.Sc. Pt 1 from SP College, Srinagar in 1962. He was offered admission in REC Srinagar as a position holder of the State, but left the college to join BENCO at BHU wherefrom he completed his B.Sc. Electrical Engineering. He was selected in IAF, Indian Navy and Indian Army but did not join any of these though went to Air Force Academy at Jalahi, Bangalore for a brief period and then withdrew. He joined back at IT-BHU and did M.Tech and Ph.D from Electronics Department of IT-BHU. He joined the Department as a faculty member in December 1971 and since then has been working as lecturer (1971-79), Reader (1979-87) and as Professor since 1987 till the date of retirement in 2012. He was Director, Computer Center, BHU (1992-2000) and HOD of Electronics Engg. Dept, IT-BHU from 1996-99. The campus wide LAN and Telecom Network of BHU was completed during his period in Computer Center. He had various opportunity to join industry in 1969 (IBM) & 1979 (TELECO), but preferred to come to the teaching profession and found it extremely satisfying and rewarding.

Prof. Kak has been Advisor and Consultant to various Public and Private sector companies like UPTON, Lucknow, CEL, Ghaziabad, SSID, Lucknow, and also TV and Electronic Industry in Delhi and ECIL, Hyderabad. He was also active with India's leading R&D organizations like DRDO, ISRO and TEC of DOT and MIT, Government of India, New Delhi. He has two patents and about 70 research paper published in National and International Journals. Prof. Kak was also member of the Payload Design Team of ISRO for GSAT and INSAT-3B satellites. He has contributed to country's major effort in Electronic Warfare SAMVUKTA and Missile development programme NAG & PRITHVI. He has delivered various invited, Guest and Keynote addresses in India and abroad and attended more than 36 conferences with about 100 paper contributions.

He was appointed as Independent Director on the Board of BSNL by the President of India in 2008 and served till 2001. He joined as Vice Chancellor, Ch. Charan Singh University, Meerut in 2008 and served till 2010. In October 2010 he was appointed as the Founding Vice Chancellor of Mahamaya Technical University, Noida. He completed his term as VC of MTU in October 2013 and during this period the university created many new and important courses in Engineering & Technology at UG and PG and Dual Degree formats. Currently he is interested in using IT & ICT for expanding literary and education in rural areas through Distance Education and Web based Education.

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society feels proud to present the 'KECSS Life Time Achievement Award' to Prof. Shibhan Kishen Kak for his outstanding contributions in the field of Higher Education and Research.

R.K. Koul
General Secretary

Prof. B.B. Dhar
President

New Delhi, February 06, 2015





The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society (Regd.) New Delhi

*The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society
is pleased to*

Felicitate

Shri Chaman Lal Sadhu



for his outstanding contributions in the field of Community Services.

Shri Chaman Lal Sadhu, born on 30th July 1935, did his B.Sc. from University of Jammu & Kashmir in (1954) and Postgraduated in Education from Kashmir & Agra University. He completed 9 months Diploma course in Educational & Vocational Guidance/Counselling from N.C.E.R.T., New Delhi (1969) and five months Associateship Course in Education Planning & Administration at Asian Institute of Education Planning & Admn., IIPA, New Delhi.

He worked for long time in the State Institute & College of Education both as Senior Research Officer in the field of Non-formal (Adult) Education/Vocational Education and as Teacher Educator, B.Ed. Level, teaching B.Ed classes in College of Education, Srinagar. He worked as Associated Lecturer in M.I.E.R. College of Education, Jammu teaching B.Ed classes after superannuation.

He is associated intensively with AIKS from 1987 while being Executive Member of ASKPC Yuvak Sabha, Sheetal Nath, Srinagar and contributed later as life member of AIKS. As Founder Member of AIKS Trust, AIKS Trust Unit at Jammu was also set up under his convenorship. He worked as Bureau Member for 'Naad' at Jammu from 2006-07. He is a member of various KP organizations like K.P. Sabha, Jammu and many more.

Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society feels proud to Felicitate Shri Chaman Lal Sadhu for his outstanding contributions in the field of Community Services.

R.K. Koul
General Secretary

Prof. B.B. Dhar
President



The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society (Regd.) New Delhi

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society
is pleased to

Felicitate

Dr. Beena Budki



*for her outstanding contributions in preserving Kashmiri Culture,
Heritage and Traditions through Hindi Medium.*

Dr. Beena Budki, born on 5th August, 1955, obtained her M.A. degrees in Hindi, Economics, Social Sciences, Mass Media & Journalism and Ph.D. in Hindi.

She has over 31 years teaching experience as HOD Hindi, Wisdom Institute, Dubai, U.A.E., Senior Lecturer (Hindi), Indian School, Dubai and Senior P.G. Teacher (Hindi), Kendriya Vidyalaya. Her present assignments include, Senior Fellowship, Ministry of Culture, Government of India, Secretary, Hindi Kashmiri Sangam, Hon. Editor, Kashmir Sandesh, the only journal published in Hindi on Kashmir. She is a member of various organizations like Nagri Lipi Parishad, Surya Sansthan and All India Kashmiri Samaj etc.

Dr. Budki has over ten publications to her credit including Prastav (novel), Kashmir Aur Avadhi Ke Lokgeeton Mein Lok Tattava etc.

She has several Awards to her credit, to name a few U.P. Government Hindi Sansthan – Sauhard Samman, Gajnan Madhav Mukti Bodh Samman, Cash Award presented by Shri N.N. Vohra, Chairman, Amarnath Shrine Board, Best Translation Award for work done in Translation Arabic-Hindi-English, Best Floric Culture Award. She has been honoured by several Socio-Cultural organizations such as J&K Rashtra Bhasha Prachar Samiti, Srinagar (2001), Poorvottar Hindi Academy, Shilong, Meghalaya (2001), Indo Nepal Sahitya Parishad, Kathmandu (2013) etc.

She guided as an expert at all India camp of non-Hindi speaking Hindi Writers held in Srinagar from 10 September to 17 September 2012 conducted by Central Hindi Directorate, Government of India.

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society feels proud to Felicitate Dr. Beena Budki for her outstanding contributions in preserving Kashmiri Culture, Heritage and Traditions through Hindi medium.

R.K. Koul
General Secretary

Prof. B.B. Dhar
President

New Delhi, February 06, 2015



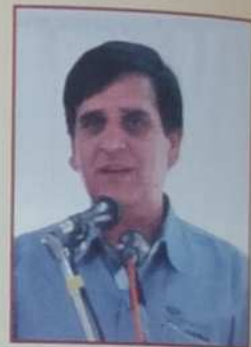


The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society (Regd.) New Delhi

*The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society
is pleased to*

Felicitate

Shri Ramesh Kumar Hangloo



*for his outstanding contributions in preserving Kashmiri Culture, Heritage and
Traditions through broadcasting media, Radio Sharda 90.4 FM*

Shri Ramesh Hangloo, born on 29th July 1960, is the Founder Director of Radio Sharda 90.4 FM. He is the Founder President of Pir Panchal (CESES) Organizations.

The passion of Shri Hangloo is to promote and propagate India/Kashmiri Language and Culture among the progeny and Showcase the entire world the rich Indian and marvelous Kashmiri Pandit Heritage and Culture through cultural activities and presentations and to connect globally KP Diaspora so that the rich and the only viable Trika philosophy can be promoted through learned persons by providing platform through Radio.

He has organized almost 18 big cultural events in Jammu and Delhi. He has organized 60 diabetic detection and awareness camps around Jammu in association with Dr. Jeetender Singh, former Minister of State, Science and Technology and In-Charge, Prime Minister's Office.

He has to his credit several Awards including the Best Cultural Activist (2008) by Mayor of Luton, Yashaskar Samman by Jammu & Kashmir Vichar Mach, Delhi, All India Kashmiri Samaj Award for contribution to Kashmiri language etc.

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society feels proud to Felicitate Shri Ramesh Kumar Hangloo for his outstanding contributions in preserving Kashmiri Culture, Heritage and Traditions through broadcasting media, Radio Sharda 90.4 FM.



The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society (Regd.) New Delhi

*The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society
is pleased to*

Felicitate

Shri C.L. Kaul



*for his outstanding contributions in preserving Kashmiri Culture,
Heritage and Traditions through his published work
'Encyclopedia of Kashmiri Pandit Culture and Heritage'*

Shri C.L. Kaul, born in 1948 at Srinagar, Kashmir, is basically an Electronic Engineer and a serious researcher interested in the study of Culture and Heritage of Kashmir. An M.Tech. from Calcutta University, he has served Government of India for more than three decades and held important positions in Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Ministry of Information Technology (MIT). As a Trainer and Quality Consultant, Shri Kaul has had wide ranging interaction with many industries and organizations in India and abroad, trained hundreds of professional ans supported industries and organizations in their Quality initiatives in implementing National and International Quality Standards. He has been a visiting faculty to China.

Profesionally, Shri Kaul is an EARA, UK approved ISO 14001 EMS Lead Auditor (1996); Capacity Maturity Model), authorized Trainer of Software Engineering Institute, Carnegie Mellor University, USA (1999), ISO 9001:2000 QMS Lead Auditor and ISO 27001:2005 ISMS Lead Auditor (2007).

Shri Kaul has authored 'ISO 9000 Implementation- A Practical Approach (1998), ISO 9001:2000 Update (2003) and 'Encyclopedia of Kashmiri Pandit Culture and Heritage'. Some reviews of his latest work 'Encyclopedia of Kashmir Pandit Culture and Heritage' have been published in 'Naad' (July 2009 by Prof. R.L. Shant, August 2009 by Prof. R.N. Kaul), Hindustan Times (28th November 2009) and Prabuddha Bharata, the prestigious Cultural Journal of Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata (July 2011).

Shri Kaul, a recipient of UGC National Scholarship during his B.Tech and M.Tech. studies at Calcutta University, has been honoured with the 'Scientist of the Year Award' (1994) 'Lal C Verma Award' (1996), Athwas Foundation Award (2010) and Pandit Krishan Joo Razdan Saraswati Award (2011).

Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society fees proud to Felicitate Shri C.L. Kaul for his outstanding contributions in preserving Kashmiri Culture, Heritage and Traditions through his published work 'Encyclopedia of Kashmiri Pandit Culture and Heritage'

*R.K. Koul
General Secretary*

*Prof. B.B. Dhar
President*

New Delhi, February 06, 2015





The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society (Regd.) New Delhi

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society
is pleased to



HONOUR

Shri Mohit Raina

for his outstanding contributions in the field of Films and Television.

Mr. Mohit Raina, a youth icon of the community, born in Jammu (J&K), is an Indian Television and Bollywood Actor. Mr. Raina played the lead role of Lord Shiva in the TV series, *Devon Ke Dev - Mahadev*, (2011-present). His acting career began in 2004 when he acted in a science fiction TV show called *Antarish*. In 2008, he starred as Jai Kishan in a comedy movie called *Don Muthy Swami*. He again returned to television in 2009 with *Chehra*, a suspense drama revolving around a handicapped girl. He was also a part of *Bandini*. In December 2010, Mr. Raina played the male lead, *Agantuk*, who played a pivotal role in eradication of the evil customs of the village in the show *Ganga Kii Dheej*.

The Society is proud to have given the country such a 'STAR' from the Community.

The Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society and the Kashmiri Community in particular feel proud to Honour Mr. Mohit Raina for his outstanding contributions in the field of film and TV industry.

R.K. Koul
General Secretary

Prof. B.B. Dhar
President

New Delhi, February 08, 2015




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New Delhi

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in appreciation of his valued support to the KECSS


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to

Mr. Mir Imtiyaz

in appreciation of his work in the field of Arts and Painting.

Wishing

K E C S S

best of luck for

Shuhul Taaph
2015

With Best Compliments from

Rakesh Kaul
(Yeer Ji)

Ph. No. 981 1660411



Shuhul Taaph 2015

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Activity Report of "Shuhul Taaph"-V



SHUHUL TAAPH-V, a three day Kashmiri Festival which was organized on February 21,22 & 23, 2014 at KECSS in New Delhi.

KECSS has been hosting the festival at its Lal Ded auditorium in Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi for the last five years now. A number of beautiful cultural programmes marked the three day celebration. The inauguration of Shuhul Taaph-V was declared open by CEO, Prasar Bharti, Govt of India, Mr. Jawahar Sircar.

Prof B B Dhar after welcoming the guest, gave a brief background of KECSS and its prime objectives. The organization he explained, is a non political global body catering to the growing needs of cultural and traditional short comings of our culture.

The highlight of the First day was the KECSS award function and following were honoured with KECSS Awards for the year 2014 for their achievements in various walks of life to name a few we had Prof. Ramesh K Kaul for the outstanding contributions in the field of Science & Technology. Dr Surinder Bazaz (Medical Science), Prof. Makhalal Kokiloo (Literature), Shri K. Khosa (Art & Printing), Shri Kesav Malik (Art & Art Criticism), Dr. Vinod Raina (Medical Science), Dr. H K Kaul (Library and Information Science), Dr. Surinder K. Tickoo (Agriculture & Horticulture), Pt. Gautam Kaul - IPS Retd. (Public Service & Community Service), Dr. Ashok Bhan-IPS Retd. (Public Service), Shri Puran Patwari (Community Service), Shri Makhan Lal Sadhu (Field of Dramatics), Shri Shail Lal Kaul (Dramatics), Ms Sunita Raina Pandit (Field of Poetry), Shri Prithivi Nath Shakhthar (Community Service), Col (Retd.) Janki Nath Raina (Community Services)

This was followed by book release.

- Ramayana in kashmiri Language.
- Halim about Kashmiri History
- Inauguration of Art Workshop by Eminent Artists of J & K & NCR from 18-23rd February 2014 organized by Veer Munshi, Artist.

The second day (22.02.2014) of the Festival was inaugurated by former Governor, J & K Shri Jag Mohan who chaired the discussion on Books of Prof Ashok Kaul (BHU) and Co- Chaired by Shri M K Kaul, former secretary Govt. of India.

There was discussion on life & works of Pt. Sarvananda Kaul (Premi ji) . Mushaira and Short Story reading was conducted by Vijay Saqi.

The former Governor of J&K, Shri Jag Mohan was the guest of honor, who thanked KECSS for inviting him on this event and appreciated the efforts made by the artists to exhibit their works which he keenly took to see.

Ashok Kaul from BHU who gave excellent presentation.

On the third last day (23.02.14) we had the Chief Guest Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Hon'ble Union Minister for New & Renewable Energy. He was received by the President of KECSS Prof B. B. Dhar, who introduced him to the Executive Members. He went around the Art Gallery and viewed the paintings of old veterans as well as the budding artists.

The function was followed by Films on Kashmir, open forum- discussion on diminishing dimension of culture, chaired by Prof B.B. Dhar & Shri Moti Kaul, President, AIKS.

Awards to Artists, Shibani Ji's Best Artist Award: were given to Ashutosh Sapru and Sabir Santosh. This was followed by Excellent, vibrant cultural programme & drama. The cultural programme was followed by felicitation of artists and presentation of mementoes to the artists.

In the end Dr. R. K. Tickoo, Convenor of Shuhul Taaph, concluded the three day event along with Shri R. K Kaul who gave the vote of Thanks.



Mr. M. L. Kokiloo receiving KECSS Award in the field of Literature



Mr. K. Khosa receiving KECSS Award in the field of Arts



Dr. Surinder Bazaz receiving KECSS Award in the field of Medical Sciences



Dr. Keshav Malik receiving KECSS Award in the field of Arts



*Shuhul
Taaph-2015*



Ms. Sunita Raina receiving KECSS Award in the field of literature



Mr. Jatinder Kaw receiving KECSS Award in the field of Community Service



Mr. Puran Patwari receiving KECSS Award in the field of Community Services



Dr. Ashok Bhan receiving KECSS Award in the field of Public Service



Mr. Makhan Lal Sadhu receiving KECSS Award in the field of Arts



Mr. Shadi Lal Koul receiving KECSS Award in the field of Arts





Dr. H.K. Kaul receiving KECSS Award in the field of Arts



Dr. Vinod Raina receiving KECSS Award in the field of Medical Sciences



Sh. Jawahar Sircar receiving KECSS momento from Mr. Arun Shalia, Vice President



Sh. Vijay Dhar receiving KECSS Momento from Sh. Bushan Lal Pandita, Vice President



Sh. Col. J.N. Raina receiving KECSS award



Sunil Shakhdar receiving KECSS award on behalf of Sh. D.N. Shakhdar



Shukul Taaph-2015



KECCS Memento being presented to Dr. Farooq Abdullah by President Prof. B.B. Dhar



KECCS Memento being presented to Sh. S N Kaul by Dr. Farooq Abdullah



KECCS Memento being presented to Nana ji Raina by Dr. Farooq Abdullah



KECCS Memento being presented to Dr. Romesh Raina by Dr. Farooq Abdullah



KECCS Memento being presented to Sh. Moti Kaul by Dr. Farooq Abdullah



Prof. B B Dhar presenting KECCS Memento to Sh. Jagmohan, former Governor





*Shuhul
Taaph-2015*



Dr. A. K. Kaul receiving memento from Sh. Jagmohan



Sh. Sunil Shakhdar receiving Memento from Dr. Farooq Abdullah



Sh. Vijay Dhar inaugurating the Art exhibition



Prof. Sopory inaugurating the Heritage hall



Glimpse of Heritage hall



Sh. Jawahar Sircar releasing the Shuhul Taaph Souvenir





Sh. Jagmohan releasing a book published by KECSS



Book release by Sh. Vijay Dhar



A book released by Sh. Vijay Nazki



Sh. Jagmohan being received by Vice President, Sh. Arun Shrivastava



Gathering of poets staged for Mushaira



KECSS members welcoming Sh. Jagmohan





*Shuhul
Taaph-2015*



Sh. Jagmohan interacting with the audience



Sh. Jagmohan being received by Sh. C.L. Gadoo



Sh. Jagmohan being accompanied by President B B Dhar in Heritage Gallery



Sh. Munir Mir and the party sings a song.



Dance group in traditional attire, performing



Cultural proramme in progress





One Day Seminar on "Nadim and his Poetry" - A Report



Nadim and his poetry, a seminar and musical programme was organized at Lal Ded Auditorium by KECSS on 12th October 2014, it was a part of centenary celebration of Dina Nath Nadim.

A large number of people attended the function, including some VIP's and Kashmiri music lovers. Prof. B B Dhar, President of KECSS along with the Executive Members received the guests and Prof. Dhar after delivering the welcome address invited Shri T N Razdan to speak his views on Nadim. Sh. Razdan described Nadim as a revolutionary poet who faced challenges from the society but did not dishearten him. Prof. Sudhir Sopori, Vice Chancellor JNU said that Nadim was instrumental in launching a progressive movement in Kashmir. Prof. Ashok Koul of Banaras Hindu University said that Nadim was an ocean of learning by himself. He went on to say that the poet was inspired by his mothers poems and thoughts and the way of her upbringing and guidance. Prop. Opinder Dhar, Vice- Chancellor, Amity University, Noida, opined that Nadim's poetry reflected the real values of life, which transformed the thinking of the youth.

Dr. Romesh Raina observed that Nadim's poetry reflected the poverty of people in Kashmir during that time. He added that his poems provide intellectual stimulation. He created themes of how the masses have been exploited. Shri Pran Pandita said that Nadim's poetry reflected the invasion of the Kashmiri soil and political injustice. The



Welcome address by Prof. B B Dhar



Speaking on Nadim



Felicitatation of Guests



Musical Evening - Kailash Mehra at her very best



Audience applauding the artists



Participants enjoying their food

poet presented the renaissance of the Kashmiri language.

Shri Upender Ambardar while describing Nadim's poetry said that he was also known as forerunner humanist and highly reflective poet, who had devotion for his mother tongue.

The seminar was followed by a musical balley, song of which were sung by Kailash Mehra, Darshan Mehra and Gautam Raina. The programmer lasted for three hours. It was anchored by P N Kaul 'Sayil' and the programme was conducted by Dr. R K Tickoo, the Convenor of the programme.

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Reshi Vaer

My birth place Kashmir has many names. The name I like the most is 'Reshi Vaer' or the garden of sages. This is the most appropriate of the names given to this holy land from time to time. This land has produced a galaxy of saints and sages, Buddhists monks, Rishis, Pandits, Shaivaacharyas, Sufis, scholars and spiritual luminaries. There have been sages with enormous spiritual powers, learned saints having erudite knowledge of *Shastras* as also lesser known household savants. Every village both in South Kashmir and North Kashmir had one or the other *swami* revered by the inhabitants of that area. The city and major townships like Anantnag, Baramula, Sopore etc. too had saints of repute, who were visited by a host of their followers. They used to ameliorate their hardships, solve their problems and guide them on the path of spirituality. It was for this reason that the KECSS had organized a seminar on the Saints and Sages of Kashmir, which was well received. The papers presented on that occasion by various scholars together with some more articles were compiled into a book, 'Saints and Sages of Kashmir', which I had the privilege of editing.

Some of these sages advocated worship of formless, attribute-less God. Some were in favour of idol worship too. One thing was common, however, that they preached honest and simple living with piety, purity and straightforward attitude. I had once written an article on idol worship for 'Prakash' and this is what Patrizia, Director Aeon Centre of Cosmology had to comment on that with reference to the tradition of Kashmir: 'If I want a taste of the true Kashmir I turn to *Prakash* where I find its praises sung as nowhere else. From time to time there appear especially inspiring articles, and I am filled with gratitude at being given the opportunity to share the experience of Kashmir through the eyes of a Kashmiri Pundit. It is an Eye that cannot be closed. Such has been the case with the last issue of *Prakash*, April-June 2007. Especially moving is *Idol Worship* of T.N. Dhar. Few pieces of writing have captured the essence of what it is to be a Hindu better than this one. Shri Dhar carries us deeply into the atmosphere of the Sanatan Dharma in

every paragraph, every line, and with every word. The message it conveys is that the Dharma arises out of the sacred Plenum and not from nothingness or voids. Therefore indeed *everything*, from the tiniest atom of matter to the highest mountain, from the rising Sun, heart of our solar system, to the distant galaxies, all is the Divine and cannot be otherwise. Logic alone, apart from the direct experience as Shri Dhar describes it, tells us this is so. No other civilisation in the world today can boast of having maintained this pagan tradition that was once the culture of all civilisations across the globe. Today only in India is a continuity maintained precisely because of the *idol worship* the author has so exquisitely described. For how can we deny to the Divine the *manifest* world as an intrinsic part of its Being? And why would we wish to do so? What do we gain by demanding that space be starkly barren and that the zillion *forms* that populate it be relegated to some inferior dimension at the behest of minds enjoying a less mature experience of Reality? God is everything and everywhere. There is no separation between Manifest and Unmanifest. This knowledge of Oneness is the essence of the Sanatana Dharma, and we are blessed to live in this *manifest* 'body' of the Lord, every bit as sacred as the emptiness the spiritual seeker strives to attain by contemplating the Formless alone. The Sanatan Dharma lives on because this knowledge of Oneness endures. T.N. Dhar has beautifully reminded us of these sacred roots in the manifest Divine. Indeed, every now and then we are reminded'.

The other day I thought let me recollect who the sages were whom I have seen or known personally. The earliest memory that I had was of Kasha Kak of Manigam. Our entire family, along with some near relatives, was invited by a family living near Manigam. After we had our lunch we went to see the sage who was sitting on the bank of the river Sindh. I faintly remember that he had predicted that a son would be born to my cousin, which eventually came true. I also remember that he gave me some sugar candy saying that that would help me get good education. The next thing I remember is that there was another sage of the same name who was called

Kasha Malla. He lived in the first floor of one of the two houses that the family had near second bridge, facing each other. Once, one of the two houses caught fire. His disciples came running to rescue the family and their belongings. They implored the sage to leave his room but he would not listen. After the fire was extinguished, everybody was surprised to see that the house where the sage had his room remained unscathed while the top floor of the other houses gutted, although the two houses were connected by a balcony-bridge.

Another sage whom I have seen in my childhood was one Rehman Saeb. My maternal uncle used to go to him often. He took me and his son there with him a couple of times. The sage lived near Shalimar Bagh. He used to move and rotate his head vehemently in extreme ecstasy and bless all those present. He was a Sufi engaged in 'Zikra' as I came to know later. I have also seen lady sages, Mathra Devi and Sati Ded and some other sages like Prithvinath, Grata Bab, Nanda Bab etc. But there was one sage at Anantnag whom I will never forget. His name though I have forgotten. I had appeared for my matriculation examination and was waiting for my result when a known family in Anantnag asked my father to send me there for a few days for rest and recreation. I went there and was well received and well taken care of by the family. I visited all the beautiful places in and around the township as also the holy spring and the temple. One day I saw a small crowd entering into a house. On enquiry I came to know that a sage lived there and these people would call on him for spiritual satisfaction. I too entered the house and bowed before the sage. Next day I went again to him. After the meeting was over and the people left, he asked me to stay back. I obeyed. He prepared some tea and gave me a little in a cup to sip. I did so. Then he asked me about my parents, family and studies. He dissuaded me from any idea of taking to sanyasa (giving up family life) should anyone ever suggest that. He advised me to devote my entire time to my studies and serve my elders sincerely and dutifully. This was a lesson for me for my life time.

I recollect once Swami Laxman Joo had visited our house and I had observed a glistening radiance on his forehead. In fact when my elder brother got married we came to know that his brother in law was a disciple of Swami ji. So through him a request was made to him to pay us a visit, which he graciously agreed and we had the good luck of welcoming him in our house in Srinagar. I remember him saying in some context that 'the logic carries us to a point after which we have to depend wholly on faith and belief'. How true this statement is! In my younger days I met two non-Kashmiri saints too, one at

Tula Mula and the other at Nishat garden. The former was young but highly elevated spiritually. This I could gauge from his voluntary utterances. The latter was sitting under a tree when some of my friends and I approached him while we were on a picnic. He advised us to take care of our possessions, books, equipment, clothes et al very carefully and kindly. Kashmir attracted many saints from outside the valley, particularly for the pilgrimage to Amarnath. It is said that some of these saints would visit Jagat Guru Gopinath ji and he would pay them one rupee each as '*dakshina*'. There were some South-Indian sadhus camping in an *Aashram* at *Barbarshah* and many others in *dharmashalas* of various temples. They would go for pilgrimage to various holy places including Swami Amarnath, Jwala ji, Tula Mula and Martand.

During a visit to Tula Mula I had the privilege of the company of Swami Trilokinath Dutt on my return journey in the boat that carried us back to Srinagar. On this trip he explained to me the significance of the seed syllable 'OM'. There were many hidden saints in Kashmir. One such exalted soul was working as a cook in our area. His employer was a patient of my father's and he would often come to our clinic to take medicine for him. I used to respect him very much knowing as I did his spiritual level. My father was not aware of that and, therefore, he once asked me the reason for giving him out of the ordinary respect. I promised him that I would demonstrate his heights to him one day. The day came when my father and I were alone in the clinic and this saint came to take medicine for his master. I asked him whether he had some time to spare. He replied in affirmative. I requested him to explain the meaning of a shloka from Bhagavad Gita, which briefly says that one cannot conceive of a thing that does not exist and what one conceives must necessarily exist. '*Naasato vidyate bhavah naabhavah vidyate satah*'. He obliged us and started explaining the purport of this verse. After three hours he realized that it was late for him to return and promised that he would resume the explanation some other time. Such was the depth of his knowledge gained mainly from his spiritual experience.

Apart from saints and sages Kashmir has had a galaxy of saint-poets, both Hindus and Muslims. While Hindus are invariably referred as Rishis, Muslims are given various epithets. One of the epithets given is Sufi, which I feel is a misnomer. Sufis have come to Kashmir towards late thirteenth century and fourteenth century. They include Sharafud-Din Bulbul and Sayyad Mir AH Hamadani etc. They were Sayyads, who had escaped the tyranny in their country of origin and had sought refuge

in Kashmir. With the advent of Islam and large scale conversion the demographic situation changed and the valley became Muslim majority place. Naturally, therefore, these inhabitants carried forward their Hindu tradition in the matter of their faith, customs, language, beliefs and so on. Kashmiris had a six hundred year old philosophy called Kashmir Shaiva Philosophy, which had seeped into the very psyche and the way of life of the populace. This philosophy is a non-dualistic doctrine, which emphasizes that the creation is the manifestation of the Creator and that in the ultimate analysis a being as a seeker can attain the Supreme and be one with Him.

That God is one is a universally accepted fact. There is no difference of opinion about the existence of one God, although there is some doubt about the existence of God itself in some faiths. All those who do not doubt the existence of God universally believe that only one Supreme Power exists. There is absolute unanimity on this point among the major religions, religious ideologues, philosophers and thinkers. This view is held by those who believe in Confucianism, Taoism and Shinto in the East, by the Christians, Jews and Muslims in the West and the Middle-East as also by Indians with Sanatana Dharma as their faith. Even Zoroastrians believe in one God, 'Ahur Mazda' although they also believe that there is another evil entity called 'Angra Manyu', which misleads people. This is more or less like Christian and Muslims' concept of Satan. Christians believe in trinity of God, Son and the Holy Ghost, who they believe are one like water, ice and steam are as clarified by Huston Smith in his book 'The World's Religions'. As regards Indian view point, the God is no doubt one called 'Brahman' but He is also perceived through various powers of the nature, which are viewed as 'Devatas' (Literally those that shine) as His different facets of one. Thus there is universal '**Ekeshwaravad**' or belief in one God. This is called '**Vahdat-ul-vajud**' in Islamic parlance. Sometimes this term is mixed up with '**Advaita**' or non-dualism of the Upanishads. Advaita actually denotes oneness of '**Jeevatma**', the individual soul and '**Paramatma**', the Universal Soul. This doctrine of the Upanishads is against the tenets of Islam and many other faiths. When a Sufi saint or poet talks of oneness he is referring to this doctrine and not to the existence of one God, for he says '**Anal Haq and Man Khuda**' I am the Truth and I am the God. The Muslim Rishis in Kashmir who are called Sufis too subscribe to this view.

Advaita as conceived in the corpus of Upanishadic literature, the *Brahma Sutra* of Badarayana and the *Bhagavad Gita* (The three together are called '**Prasthan Trayee**') has been interpreted and enunciated in a variety of ways.

Basically it is a doctrine explaining the relationship between the Creator and the creation. Some sages and philosophers have held that the two are really one and what we see and observe outside these, is all an illusion. Some of them believe that no doubt the two are one but individually they have their own identity. Some sages have likened the two to the phenomenon of an object and its reflection in a mirror, while others have explained the two as the ocean and its waves. The Kashmir Shaiva Darshan has not subscribed to the illusion theory. It propounds that since the creation is the manifestation of the Creator and since the Creator is real there cannot be anything unreal about the manifestation. What is unreal is the apparent difference observed between the Creator and the creation. This difference is actually an illusion and once this veil of illusion is removed from our vision we can clearly perceive the truth of the individual soul and the Universal Soul being one. This state can be achieved in a variety of ways including contemplation, devotion, spiritual pursuit and the like. This doctrine has appealed the thinkers world over, whether Greek and Roman philosophers, Eastern thinkers, Christian monks or Muslim Sufis. The Muslim saint poets of Kashmir also could not remain unaffected by this captivating doctrine. That is why one of them has said, '**Ognuy sapanto dognyar travo pana nish pan parzanavo lo** Believe in non-dualism, shun dualism and realize yourself by going inwards'.

I remember my old home in Chhattabal. There was a long lane leading to our house from the main road. On the one side of the lane there were cultivated fields full of vegetables and tobacco. The other side was a row of houses. One of these belonged to one Sheikh Mehmud, who ran a small shop in the ground floor, selling milk, yogurt and some pulses. Whenever I passed by this shop or went to him to purchase yogurt, I would observe a number of men sitting with him and talking about mystic subjects. Soon I came to know that he was also a holy person of the same Rishi order and had a number of disciples whom he guided in their spiritual pursuit. This '**Peer-mureed**' or '**Guru-shishya**' tradition in Hindu terminology, meaning a lineage of preceptor and disciple is an essential feature of the Rishi order. This holy person was revered and though illiterate, he also wrote mystical poetry to bring home to his disciples the secrets of mysticism, as was the practice with other holy persons of this order.

No wonder, therefore, that this land of Kashyapa is called the Garden of Sages, who have contributed to the culture of this holy place and given it a spiritual ethos that is our valued tradition. It is our bounden duty to nurture it and carry it forward so that this garden of sages turns into garden of peace, prosperity and brotherhood.



POETIC VEIN OF KASHMIR



At the very outset it is to remind our esteemed readers that we got nostalgic of Kashmiri poetry suddenly by the seminar held last time exclusively on Sh. Dina Nath Nadim, the native great poet of Kashmir. The reverberations of seminar must, I believe, still be echoing here and there.

It may be apt to say here that Kashmiris have poetic gene present in them. As per oral trickling in Kashmir from time to time, it has always surfaced that good chunk of poets coming from different shades and walks of life have evinced interest to have had indulged in poetry, be it a farmer or a tiller in the field, a weaver or a spinner, a potter or a blacksmith, a coolie or a shepherded, an old lady at charkha or a working ebullient lady, a punctual muezzin or a pious Mullah, a sapient Pundit or a priest, a Gyani or a Raagni, a canny queen or a whimsical ruler, a butcher or a wood cutter, a witty wazir or an alert attendant, a faithful domestic help or an evolved maid, a vendor on the road or a roaming street hawker, a boat man or a fisher women, an angelic damsel or a rustic youth, an elite or a hoi polloi. Though all their efforts might have been without any outstanding merit or quality of the poetic hue yet this is not to suggest that first rate or

second rate poetry did not come in such exercises. Essentially, therefore, the presence of such an innate gene embedded beneath the psyche of Kashmiris social strata bubbled out to produce glorified and dignified bunch of elated poets.

This is what has come to the fore when Lalded called the first shot and amazed all by her mystic poetry contained in her concise vaakhs then equally by Nunde Rishi by his enigmatic Shruks. The poetry later got outpoured by Mirza-Kak, Roop Bhawani and the like i.e. Parmanand, Krishan Joo Razdan et al. Habba Khatoon sang in fifteenth century, Arnimaal, Kutta Rani had their own style of poetry. Subsequently up to the pre-independent era, poets like Rasool Mir, Assad Mir, Sammad Mir, Ahmad Batwari, Mohammad Gammi, Ahmad Parrey, Abdul Ahad Zargar, Maqbool Shah Kralwari, Peer Abdul Aziz Haqanni appeared with several others on the scene and poetry went on getting generated. Realizing neglect to Kashmiri language first in 1920 - 1924 and till Kashmiri dictionary authored by Sir George Abraham Grierson encouraged many others to devote more attention to their mother language. Before that it was a monopoly of those who owed allegiance to

ruling clique or aristocratic class for whom they sang praises and eulogizes while lauding every now and then. Poems that reached the people were to be devotional verses in both Hindu and Muslim traditions. Further the poems praising nature, revolution, political affairs and other aspects from religious frenzy to other allied forms such as dancing songs, roving songs and the much liked Chakree, ballads called Ladishah etc. brought the poets to the forefront. Invader's unleashing tyranny would often substantially dampen the enthusiasm of poets. However, Abdul Sattar Aasi (coolie) took to writing in Persian who later wrote in Kashmiri and with his insistence Abdul Ahad Azad also started writing in Kashmiri towards mid 1935. The kindred spirit found in Mirza Galib, Aasid Beig Arif had delighted the twin poets.

As the wheel went on spinning and the canvas of poetry stretching itself went on attracting mainly Zinda Koul and Nadim. Then a star poet Mehjoor to whom Kashmir should remain indebted, appeared. Let fact be known here that Tagore had discovered him (Mehjoor) to be the Wordsworth of Kashmiri poetry. He being a lover of nature, whose eyes loved its living hues, never brooded over life's permanence and death.

If there is any media in which the basic and primal emotions of mankind ipso-facto find expression, it is the language in poetry. A poet does not know any barrier or barricade while sitting on earth Planet; he takes flight to skies Sun, Moon, stars and other planets in the poetic imagination not to speak of entire universe above or below cosmos. A mini book titled "Kashmir sing on" was published by Kashmir cultural Front - a Voluntary Non Governmental Organization of available patriotic talent in Kashmir which was more or less an anthology of patriotic time.

There is no doubt that it was George Ibrahim Grierson who had done a monumental work regarding survey of Indian Languages which is rich in idiom and racy humour with subtle nuances. It attracted Sanskrit and Persian words, before Urdu and Hindi also fell in the race.

Most of the poets followed Nadim and Rahi who dominated the scene and without any claim to the originality, a flood tide of poets came in existence such as Ariz, Nanad Lal Ambardar, Rassa Javidani, Nawaz Rattanpuri, Dilsoz, Majid Mir, Ghulam Ahmad Naz, Maqbool Shah, Prakash Bhat, Shamas Faqir, Ahmad Barwari, Firaq Muzzafar Azam, Nazki, Fazzil Kashmiri and many others. The significance of Nadim is known by the leadership given by him to Kongeposh. The new movement of progressive writers needless to say was influenced by T.S Eliot, Mayakovsky and Gorky, Josh and

Ehasan Danish. The political development from 1946 and after 1947 provided solid firmament for many poets in successive chain. The poets like Ghulam Nabi Khayal, Ghulam Rasool Santosh, Chaman Lal Chaman, Sajood Sailani, Moti Lal Saqi, Makhan Lal Bekas and several others in the chain together with the poets foregoing have shaped the Kashmiri poetry and the poets will never get tired who will go on singing their heart for amusement. The muse should not go to slumbers.

Below mentioned are some of the verses from eminent saints/ poets:

1. *Ami pana sadaras navi ches laman
Kati bozi dai myon meti diyi tar
Amen taken poen Zan sbeman
Zuv chum barman gare gatsbaha*

-Lal Ded.

2. *Yaem hyoet tebnze' bare' tal zaggun
Tas pan-ney sharbat pan chave*

-Sheikh Noor-u-u Din.

3. *Deehi anter sushuft sovum
Jagovum triyayee anabat aanand
Khilovum milovum anamuchy
Tadb deph mei pan alvalvum
Beichus savith kenb ravum naye*

-Roop Bhawani.

4. *Bandh aab gatche gandai
Pakwoun praiwounai
Pran chum pakwounai
Bandh gandb ram ramai*

- Swami Mirze Kak.

5. *Om gav kamanai
zev zaan teerai
Nishan brahmai
Bajan ram ramai*

- Swami Mirze Kak.

6. *Bakhtis dbai chu tcharan
Balkei tas pate chu laraan
Latchche manz tas chu tbraan
Bajan naam ram ramai*

- Swami Mirze Kak.

7. *Karam bhumikai dezi dharuk bal
Santush beyali bhave anand phal*

-Parmanand ji.

8. *Bel tai madhal vene gulab pamposh dastai
Puzai lagas parm shivas shiv natbas tai*

-Krisban joo Razdan.

9. *Sumran pannin ditbenum loluk nishaan vesiye
Ratchrun tagum ne rovim ousum ne baan vesiye*

-Zinda Koul.

10. *Uale ba bagvano naw baharuk shan paidba ker*
Pholan gul gath karan bulbul titli saaman paidba ker -
- Gh. Ahmad Meljoor.

11. *Suo riz yelli myon gaarath seene darith neiri tofaans*
Futtan dundh bandhe vaats zardh rang gatche kaal
asmaanas
Gatchan gagraye dhumset kbase zardaar shaitans
Truten shab loasie nabba greyen koul gatcheth balhe dour
vaeranas
-Dina Nath Nadim.

12. *Guli laala folith aay vanan manz ta dalun manz*
Pyar shoora tchopary yiye baagan ta kbalan manz
Kamren ta zaalan manz
- Mohd. Amin Kamil.

13. *Zindagi kya ingulaban beinz kitab*
Inqalab o inqalab-o inqalab-o
Zindagi buend asal manne iztaraab
Iztaraabuk manne matlub inkalab
- Ab. Abad Azad.

14. *Suo sundermaal feraan aes aarun kanan gav vignie*
vanvon sabzezaran
Tchalan thapi thari bouth tsboul aabshaaran
Dapaan teil taari nazrah ker baharun
- Gh. Rasool Nazki.

15. *Nabas pyeth taarekav kari maala mwokhas*

Me baaryav zan tchei chhkh pananyan amaan
lyena draametch
Kobav paty zooni kor tchal kaala obras
Me dop zaabir chbi chaanee preiny kaanh vyat taan kun
aamutch
- Ab. Rehman Rahi.

It may fascinate the reads to know ace all-round politician of Kashmir Late D.P.Dhar also would scribble poetry under his pen name 'Rounaq'.

Most eminent Kashmiri poets who have been honoured with Sahtaya Academy Award are enumerated year wise as under:

1. Zinda Koul-1956.
2. Ab. Rehman Rahi-1961.
3. Mohd Amin Kamil-1967.
4. Gh. Rasool Santosh-1978.
5. Moti Lal Saqi-1981.
6. Dina Nath Nadim-1986.
7. Fazil Kashmiri-1990.
8. Farooq Nazki-1995.
9. Hamidi Kashmiri-2005.
10. Naseem Shafalie-2011.
11. Shad Ramzan-2014.

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SANSKRIT CULTURE OF ANCIENT KASHMIR

European scholars searched for histories of India, from eighteenth century onwards, but could not find any that conformed to the familiar European view of what a history should be. The only exception, according to them, is history of Kashmir-*Rajatarangini*, written by Pandit Kalhana, a Kashmiri, during 1149 A.D. *Rajatarangini*-river of kings, is about dynasties of kings, their land, its people, culture, and about Hindu civilization of Kashmir. Kalhana is often described as India's first historian. Kalhana consulted at least eleven Sanskrit compositions on the history of Kashmir, like Nilmat Purana, Kshemendra's *Nrapavli*, chronicles of *Padmamibira* and *Chavillakaran* etc. while writing his own. These do not exist today, barring Nilmat Purana. Another 11th century Kashmiri poet-historian Pandit Bilhana wrote a detailed historical work *Vikramankadeva Carita* in honour of the patron king Kalyana, (south India) consists of 18 cantos (chapters) with 2500 verses. He also wrote a famous lyric of 50 verses known as *Cauraspanchasika* and a short drama of four acts in Sanskrit, *Karna Sundari*.

Rajatarangini, the history of Kashmir, traces the history of Kashmir to the epic age of the history of India, the time, when Mahabharata war was fought. Kalhana records that about twenty years before the Mahabharata war was fought, the kingdom of Kashmir was ruled by the king named Gonanda I. The initial years of the reign of Gonanda I, according to Kalhana, was 653 of the Kali era. Then the kingdom of Kashmir must have been one of the several principalities in the north of India. Gonanda I was killed in war with Krishna of Mathura, which he had joined to assist his relative Jarasindh, the powerful king of Magadh and an adversary of Krishna. By popular tradition, the Kali Age started with the death of Sri Krishna, 35 years after the war. The Kali calendar has a beginning of 3102 BC; therefore it is

thought that the Mahabharata War took place in 3137 BC. The two great Indian epics--- Ramayana and Mahabharata written in Sanskrit, speak volumes of histories of ancient kings, their dynasties, their kingdoms, wars they have fought, about people, their lands, culture and religion. Ramayana and Mahabharata are not only epics but are historical traditions in the epic form. The planetary positions narrated by Maharishi Valmiki in Ramayana, at different events in Sri Ram's life, have stood the test of the times. Indian history has recorded that Sri Ram, born in 5114 BC, belonged to the *Suryavansh* and he was the 64th ruler of Ayodhya of his dynasty. Professor Dr. Subash Kak of Louisiana University in his book, 'The Astronomical Code of the Rig Veda' has listed 63 ancestors of Sri Ram, King Dashratha, King Aja, King Raghu, King Dilip and their predecessors.

The oldest records were not written on parchment or inscribed on stone, they were written in the memory of people, who handed down the precious heritage from generation to generation. The most vital part of Indian history is the race memory of the Hindu society, which gave birth to great treasure of ancient Sanskrit literature in the form of Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, full of spirituality and ancient wisdom. The earliest scriptures of Aryans are Vedas and Upanishads known as *Smrtis*. Thomas Berry, a historian of cultures, made following remark about the Vedic heritage-- "In quality, in quantity, in significance for man's intellectual, cultural and spiritual life, this literature in totality is unsurpassed among all other literary traditions of the world."

The Sanskrit culture constitutes the great heritage of our country. It flourished mainly on the banks of great rivers, in different regions by socio-religious and cultural bonds. It was on the banks of the lost sacred river Saraswati, that the Vedic seers perceived the hymns of the

Vedas. Similarly, the Vedic culture spread over the banks of Indus and Vitasta rivers and it became integral part of Aryan culture.

Sanskrit is the richest and most ancient language. Sanskrit language is the root of Indian culture. While speaking to the Asiatic Society in Kolkata on February 2, 1786, Sir William Jones made a statement; "...the Sanskrit language, whatever is its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong, indeed, that no philosopher could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists".

The earliest Sanskrit written material, are the *Mahatmayas* and Purana literature in Kashmir. The various *Mahatmayas* were written at different point of time, but exact dates are not known, however, the *Nilmata*, which is *Atbala* Purana of Kashmir, is dated by scholars 6th century AD. The *Vishnubharmottara* Purana originated in Jammu region around the same time. The third Purana from Kashmir is the *Vasuki*, which mainly describes the Naga cult and is considered about a century later than the other two. The *Mahatmayas* of Kashmir are sources of early historical geography and describe the topography of the valley, also the various places of Hindu pilgrimage. This establishes that Sanskrit was well-developed in Kashmir, at the time this literature was written, so was Kashmiri Hindu culture.

The Kashmiri scholars, writers and poets have made highly significant contributions to classical Sanskrit literature and religious thought. The dedication of Kashmiris to Shiva and his powers in their prose and poetic writings is a golden chapter in Sanskrit literature. An early name belonging to Kashmir is Bharata Muni of the *Natyashastra*. The *Bhana*, a one-actor play described by Bharata is still performed in Kashmir by groups called *bhand patber* (*bhana patra*, in Sanskrit). The *Natyashastra* has a total of 36 chapters and it is suggested that this number may have been deliberately chosen to conform to the theory of 36 tattvas which is a part of the Shaivite system of Kashmir. The Shiva philosophy of Kashmir, also known as *Trika Shastra*, flourished in South India, and achieved an identity of its own. There are Sanskrit texts relating to Tantra, Kundalini Yoga, and Shaivism by Kashmiri scholars. Among the *Sages* who propounded the Kashmir Shiva philosophy, the names of Vasugupta (*Shiv Sutras*), Somananda (*Shiv Dhrishti*), Utpal Dev (*Shiv Stotravali*) Abhinav Gupta (*Tantra Alok*, *Tantra Sara*, *Iswar Pratibigya*, *Bhairav Stotra*, *Abhinav Lochana* etc) and Bhatta

Kallata, stand out as celebrated exponents. Both Vaishnava Agamas and Shiva Agamas have their source in Kashmir. So far as Sanskrit literature is concerned apart from *Alankara Shastra* in which Kashmirians seem to have excelled, the names of Somadeva, Kshemendra, Bilhana, Damodaragupta, and Kalhana stand out as a brilliant galaxy of genius adding luster to the history of Sanskrit literature. Kshemendra's contribution to Sanskrit literature is unique in one respect. He introduced humor with social satire. Some scholars and historians, record that Kalidasa, the celebrated Sanskrit poet-dramatist had his roots in Kashmir. Another Kashmiri, Vallabh Dev wrote commentaries on Kalidas's works. Other well known works are Bhim Bhat's *Ravan Arjuna*, Damodar Gupta's *Kuttmi Mata*, also during 9th century devotional poetry *Devi Shataka* in Sanskrit by Anandavardhan.

According to Bharttrihari and other early scholars, Patanjali, a Kashmiri, made great contributions to Yoga (*yoga-sutras*) and to Ayurveda. Kashmir also contributed *Charaka Samhita*, the earliest known work of Indian medicine, based on the works of Charak, a Kashmir-born renowned physician. The book on sex, *Kamsutra*, written by Vatsyayana, is widely acknowledged worldwide, even today. Another book on sex is *Ratirabasya*, also known as *Kok-Shastra* written by another Kashmiri, Koka Pandit, one-time Prime Minister of Kashmir. Noted scholars Ratna Kantha and Bhaskar Acharya are well-known names in the field of astrology. Similarly, during 13th century Sharang Deva, a Kashmiri, the author of *Sangeet Ratnakara*, wrote an authoritative book on Indian music. The famous 9th century, Kashmiri *Kavyas*, are *Haravijya* by Ratanakara and *Kapahina Abhyudaya* by Shivasvamin. Among other popular works from Kashmir are; *Katha Sarit Sagara* ---Ocean of Streams of Stories, by Somdeva and 6th century, work *Hayagrivavadha* by Mentha.

Kashmir has been on the threshold of foreign invaders, who not only destroyed most of its history but also adulterated the culture and social values from time to time. Buddhism, Shaivism and Sanskrit learning flourished in the valley and produced a remarkably rich culture till the Muslim conquest in 14th century, overturned the social structure of Kashmir. Kashmiri scholars not only contributed original Sanskrit texts to Sarvastivadin schools of Buddhism but also to the development of Mahayana Philosophy. One of the most remarkable books that Kshemendra, who was himself a Shaivaite, produced was on the *Avadanas* of the Buddha, a classic in later Buddhist literature.

Jonaraja's *Rajatarangini* (142070 AD), brought chronicle to the reign of Sultan Zainul-ab-din. Greater

part of his chronicle deals with Hindu rulers from Jayasinha to Kota Rani. His pupil Srivara wrote four chapters about the events from 1459-1486 AD. The fourth and last Sanskrit chronicle entitled *Rajavalipataka*, began by Prajyabhatta wrote till 1513-14 AD, and was completed by his pupil Suka, some years after annexation of Kashmir by Akbar in 1586 AD. Narayan Koul Ajiz, wrote *Twarikh-i-Kashmir* in 1710 AD, about reigns of Sultans and early Mughals. He wrote history of Kashmir under Mughal and Afghan rulers. Pandit Birbal Kachuru wrote history of Kashmir in 1835 AD, when Kashmir was under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, (1819-46 AD). In 1846 AD, the valley came under Dogra rule. It was from this time onwards that scientific survey was conducted by archaeological experts using modern scientific tools regarding geography, history, and composition of its people. Archaeological discoveries have given new definitions about the history of Kashmir, its origin, people, culture and ancient civilization.

The legends indicate that Kashmir was once a vast lake known as Sati-Saras, the Lake of Sati. The lacustrine or lake deposits locally known as Karewas, spread all over the valley, substantiate this fact of history. According to a tradition the drainer of this lake was Rishi Kashyap; hence this land was called Kashyap-pur or Kashyap-mar and latter Kashmir. On the basis of scientific observations, Frederic Drew, a famous geologist, wrote, "The traditions of the natives---traditions that can be historically traced as having existed for ages---tend in the same direction, and these have usually been considered to corroborate the conclusions drawn from the observed phenomena."

The Karewa formation occupies nearly half the area of the valley. Neolithic man settled on these Karewas, or Udhers in Kashmiri. Geologically, the Karewas provided natural settlements for earliest Kashmiris, as forests for hunt and lakes for fishing and fowling were in immediate vicinity. Neolithic period was followed by Megalithic period. This period is indicated by the erection of megaliths which are huge standing stones. The history of the development of human culture in Kashmir starts from hunting culture. Even as hunter the earliest form of religion was developed. The worship of rain-god, sun-god and Vedic fire-god, were earliest form of religion which were followed by Mother- Goddess, Shiva worship and other Vedic gods.

The extensive excavation conducted at Burzahom was the first of its kind in Jammu and Kashmir on the basis of stratified cultural deposits. Burzahom karewa is about 25km. north of Srinagar and about 3km. from Telbal Nala. It is a megalithic site situated on the Yendrahom Karewa (table land) revealed that earliest

settlers were pit-dwellers. The dwelling pits generally had a central post to support the roof. The pit chambers also showed partitions. Burzahom in Kashmiri means the place of birch, which was available during Neolithic times, is proved by burnt birch found during the excavations. Apart from the stone tools found at site, there were bone tools also. Twenty four soil samples from different levels of the Neolithic period were got examined and the plant remains so recovered belonged to the ancient crop of wheat, barley and lentil. The tools needed for digging, planting and thrashing of crops were found. Tools for hunting, bow and arrow were found. A stone slab bearing the hunting scene was also found.

From very ancient Mesolithic implements discovered in the valley of 'Sohaan' river (District Rawalpindi), in the Valley of Baanganga (near Kangra), in Pahalgam (Kashmir), in Peshawar and in Dholbaha (District Hoshiarpur), some historians conclude that Punjab may have been the home of the first humans born on this earth.

The Nilmat period, which commenced with the induction of the Calcolithic tools or metals into Kashmir, most probably from the surrounding Sind Valley civilization, indicates a cultural change, which was not dictated by any race movement. The people living in Kashmir, from the time of the Neolithic age of Burzhom, have been of a single racial stock. The Nagas and Pisachas were also people of the proto-Aryan racial origin. There is hardly any anthropological evidence to prove that ancient people of Kashmir were racially of a different stock than the people inhabiting the Burzhom settlements. Evidence is also available of the close contact between the people of the Saraswati civilization and people of Kashmir which flourished along the river Vitasta (Jehlum).

The *Mahatamayas* are an eloquent testimony of basic unity that permeates the Sanskrit religious culture of the Hindus of Kashmir and the Sanskrit culture of the Hindus of India. The most interesting aspect of the *Mahatamayas* is that they represent the quest of the Hindus of Kashmir to recreate a universe of spiritual experience, which is Sanskrit in outlook and composition. The *Mahatamaya* reveal a continuity of the Harappan, Burzahom and Saraswat cultures. This is an indicator that Nilmat, while keeping the Nagas in view has (mentioned) specific rituals connected with the Gods and Goddesses, who manifested specifically in India and by Aryans. Nilmat Purana narrates; "sixty five rituals and festivals, were celebrated with great devotion, faith, pomp and show. Some of the rituals and festivals find mention in other Puranas also. Some of these are celebrated even today in Kashmir, like *Kaw Poonim* and

Yaksha Manas (Keshi Manas). It is generally thought that the Purana talks of rituals and festivals of Nagas only, and these being adopted by Aryan Saraswat Brahmins of Kashmir, which is not so. Many of the rituals, festivals and days are common with those followed by Aryans in India or emanating from Vedas."

The ritual culture of the people of Kashmir grew from its Burzahom past and is, therefore, formed of several sediments; the basic sediments have their origin in the ritual structure of the Burzahom people and the people of Kashmir who lived through the Nilmat period. The Vedic Grah-Sutras and Kalpa- Sutras were adopted for the Kashmiri Pandits, by Laugaksha Muni, a great sage, sometime in the first millennium B.C. Before the adaptation of Sanskrit scriptures, Kashmiri Pandits had already a highly evolved and intricate ritual structure, which symbolized their proto-Aryan origin. A part of the pre-Laugaksha ritual was integrated into the Laugaksha adaptation. The rest lingered on and survived and in due course of time became a part of the religious culture of Kashmir. These rituals are still extant, and preserved and practiced by the Kashmiri Pandits even now. A vast number of rituals are practiced by Kashmiri Pandits, in

their birth, death and marriage. There are numerous rituals, traditions and festivals of proto-Vedic origin, which the Kashmiri Pandits follow. There are Vedic, Shaivite, Vaishnavite and Shakta religious performances in Kashmir, but Vedic ceremonies play prominent part. In performances of *Shradha* rites, the Vedic deities receive worship through fire, Shaivite through phallic emblem of cooked rice and Shakta through a lamp. Rituals have a phenomenal identity and theological content. On the marriage or *Yagnopavit* ceremonies of Kashmiri Pandits, ladies sing Kashmiri songs in Vedic accentuation even now. Kashmiris are singing people, even in exile; they sing the glory of their sacred land. Their songs are full of love, beauty, freshness and with fragrance of our fascinating valley. The Vedic civilization of Kashmir is represented by the rich geological, historical and literary contestations. These are interwoven and deeply interacted in the deep socio-cultural identity of the people and ancient culture and civilization of Kashmir.

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Cultural Heritage of Kashmir

According to Sir Aurel Stein who translated Rajatarangini the celebrated book of history of Kashmir from Sanskrit into English, "Kashmir has distinction of being the only region of India which possesses an uninterrupted series of written record of its history". The archaeological excavations of Bourzahama 15 kms from Srinagar establish its antiquity to beyond 3000 BC. It has been established as mentioned earlier that Nagas were the original inhabitants of Kashmir and Kashmiris built their cultural traditions on the habits and customs of Nagas. The traditions and customs of Nagas are prevalent in modified forms in various regions of the State even now. Abhinav Gupta the eminent Kashmiri philosopher, claims the primacy of agamas-religious texts of ancient Kashmir dating between 1st and 5th century AD-over the Vedas both in point of time and performance of rituals.

The interaction between vedic and Kashmiri traditions did develop in course of time but in Kashmir's religious literature the supremacy of Shiva over Vedic supreme God Indra has often been asserted. According to V.N. Drabu, the pre vedic people of Kashmir were admitted to vedic society with distinctive characteristics of their own life at different periods.

Buddhists and Jews have left tremendous influence on Kashmir history and culture. The transition from Nagas to Buddhism has been smooth. Influenced by Shaivite tantric thought of Kashmir, Buddhism got transformed into its Kashmiri version. The local religious beliefs, vedic concepts and Buddhism were synthesized by great Kashmiri philosophers, Vasugupta and Abhinavagupta into Kashmiri version of Shaivism called Trika philosophy. After that Kashmir has experienced situations of strife and Kashmiris had to struggle hard under alien rulers like Mughals, Pathans, Sikhs and Dogras. Muslim rule followed the conversion of a local ruler into Islam, which resulted into many conversions thereafter. The last native rulers of Kashmir were the Chaks. Islamic beliefs and practices enjoyed as much autonomy within wider Islamic tradition as pre-Islamic

Kashmir did during vedic and post Vedic tradition of India.

The amalgamation of Shaivism and Islamic thoughts resulted in yet another school of thought called as Sufism, which flourished for hundreds of years. Both Shaivism and Sufism are the prominent schools of thought which developed in Kashmir and left indelible mark on the psyche of Kashmiris.

Proclaiming himself to be spiritual son of Lal Ded, Nundrishi carried further her spiritual message in the form of Rishi order (as Sufism in Kashmir valley was called). Lal Ded and Nundarishi translated religion into Kashmir's spiritual and cultural idiom and converted it into massive emotional upsurge. The faith and tradition of preaching and worshipping of each others' religions and pilgrimage centres has been a very unique and glorious tradition of the people of the State. The famous Hindu shrines and the equally famous Muslim pilgrimage centres are held in highest esteem by the people of every faith. The offerings made and the obeisance paid at such places by people of all faiths has baffled and even bothered the conservative elements across the globe.

The entire valley is full of such shrines and pilgrimage centres which are respected and adored by both the communities. Some places house the shrines of both the faiths at close proximity to each/one another. The pilgrimage centre like one at Hari Parbat where monuments of all three religions with a temple, mosque and gurdwara co-exist, are the living symbols of communal harmony for people of the State.

The valley has seen many eminent saints and sages apparently from both the religious faiths ameliorating the social, economic and spiritual conditions of Kashmiris since ancient times. People bow in front of them irrespective of cast creed and religion and seek redressal of their worries and anxieties.

According to Dr. Arthur Neve, "Kashmiri Muslim has transferred reverence from Hindu stones to Muslim

relics. Similarly, Muslim saints are worshipped like Hindu Gods and Godlings. A unique feature of Kashmiri Muslim is that he has remained a Kashmiri as well as a Muslim."

Kashmir has been melting pot of ideas and races. G.M.D. Sufi observes "the cult of Buddha, the teachings of Vedanta, the mysticism of Islam have one after another found a congenial home in Kashmir. It has imbibed the best of Hinduism, the best of Buddhism and best of Islam."

Kashmir has remained a clearing house of several civilizations, it has made monumental contribution to Indian culture. There is hardly any branch of human knowledge to which ancient Kashmir did not make a pioneering and substantial contribution. According to Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, "Kashmir dominated the intellectual scene of India for almost 2000 years." Kashmir has a distinction of being a place where people from all walks of life and from all across the world have been coming to seek peace, knowledge and spiritual enlightenment. It has received the travelers of great significance to human history like Heun sangue. Traditionally called a place of saints, it has remained a seat of learning known as *Sharda Peetha* for years together. The contribution of the scholars of Kashmir to Sanskrit language and literature has been remarkable. Names like

Kalhanna, Bilhann, Mammat, Abhinav Gupta, Anadwardhan, Shamindra and many others have gone down as legends in the history of scholarship.

Maharajah Lalitaditya, Avantiverman and Zainulabdin the Budshah, are some of the most remarkable and glorious rulers of Kashmir whose contribution to human civilization has been outstanding. They not only conquered a major territory of the region but had carved a deep niche in the hearts of people of all religions. In Budshah the State had a great savior of the mankind in general who besides accelerating the developmental activities, initiated and patronized many forms of arts and crafts in Kashmir. History is witness that rulers who singled out a particular community or wanted to patronize one single faith have not been able to last longer. They not only invited wrath of people but of destiny too.

However, the recent past period of about twenty five years has not only shattered their years old faith but has posed a great challenge before all Kashmiris irrespective of religion whether to collectively defeat the divisive forces and maintain their ancestral heritage or get swayed away by the storm and loose the age old cultural moorings. I Hope Kashmiris would choose the first option



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Legends of Rama in Kashmiri

It is generally agreed that Valmiki was the first poet to compose Ramayana around the fourth century B.C., on the basis of some popular legends and episodes about Rama. His Ramayana covered the story of Rama's life from his banishment up to his return to Ayodhya after fourteen years. This forms the portion from the second book (Ayodhyakanda) to the sixth book (Lankakanda) of the present available versions of *Valmiki Ramayana*. Since the first composition of the *Valmiki Ramayana* was not in a written form, and its transmission was oral over the centuries, a number of changes, alterations and interpolations were made from time to time.

From the second book (*Ayodhyakanda*) to the sixth book (*Lankakanda*), Rama appears as a man, and at most an ideal man. In order to keep up to the interest of the people, various descriptions were later added to it in the form of first and the seventh book - *Balakanda* and *Uttarakanda* respectively. With the increasing interest and queries of the people regarding Ramakatha, it became necessary to describe the whole history of the characters. The new additions included the full-life sketches of the main characters of Ramakatha, particularly the long descriptions of their life after returning to Ayodhya from Lanka. Thus, in the first phase of development, Ramakatha did not remain only the description of Rama's travel, but it became a complete character-description of an ideal Kstriya hero Rama.

With the development of the concept of incarnation, it was around first century B.C., that Rama and his brothers were considered as the partial incarnation of Vishnu among Hindus. On noticing the wide popularity of Ramakatha among the people, Buddhists and Jains also adopted it for the purpose of preaching their own religious faiths. Buddhists described Rama as an incarnation of Lord Budha in their Jatak Literature - *Dasbrathajatak*, *Dhamakamjatakam* and *Dhamakamjatakam*. They made different alterations in Ramakatha to suit their own religious faith. Like Buddhists, Jains also made certain alterations in the

Ramakatha according to their own religious beliefs. They described Rama as the incarnation of the eighth Baladeva. In the third century, Vimala Suri wrote *Ramchariya* in Prakrit, which was followed by a large number of works regarding *Ramakatha* by other Jain poets in Sanskrit, Apahramsha, and other modern Indian Languages. The prominent works related to Ramakatha of the Jains are the following: Gunbhadra's *Uttarapurana* (9th Century), Hamchandra's *Jain Ramayana* (12th Century), Jaindas's *Ramapurana* (15th Century), and Padamadev's *Jaya's Ramacharita* (16th Century) in Sanskrit; Satyabhudev's *Paumchariya* (8th Century) in Apbhramasha; Nagachand's *Pampa Ramayana* (11th Century), Kumudend's *Ramayana* (13th Century) and Devappa's *Ramavijayachrit* (16th Century), in Kannada. Thus, Rama was given a place in three prominent religions of the period- Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism.

In the second phase of the development of *Ramakatha*, Rama did not preserve merely the character-description of an ideal Kstriya hero but transformed into the shape of an incarnation of Vishnu and other Superior Lords. The second characteristic of the present day renderings is the de-emphasis of the spiritual values and the emphasis of realistic and ideal values of humanity.

As compared to other Indian Languages, the first attempt to versify Ramakatha in Kashmiri started late. We do not get any *Ramayana* written in Kashmiri before eighteenth century. There are several reasons for this. Kashmir has remained a famous centre for the teachings of Shaivism from the very beginning. Most of the Shiva philosophers including Somanand (9th Century), and his followers were born in Kashmir. The predominant Shaiva philosophy had a great influence on the early Kashmiri poetry of Lalla and Sheikh Nuru-Din (14th Century), and influenced all the subsequent Hindu religious literary works. Amongst the Kashmiri Sanskrit scholars, Kshemendra was a Vaishnava. His *Ramayanamanjiri*, consisting of 5386 verse is simply an

abridged version from of the *Valmiki Ramayana's* north-western version.

Due to political reasons, Persian became the official language of Kashmir for about two centuries beginning with the fifteenth century. The foreign rulers patronized the Persian language and literature. The result was that the Kashmiri poets, instead of writing in their own mother tongue, started writing in Persian. Kashmiri works were very much influenced by the Persian language and literature. Under the influence of the Persian romantic poetry, Kashmiri Vaishnavas were more attracted towards Krishna than Rama. *Krishnakavya*, therefore stole a march over *Ramakavya* Kashmiri.

The *Ramabhakti* movement which permeated the whole of north Indian in the 17th century considerably influenced Kashmiri also. The Kashmir Vaishnava poets were attracted by the implicit devotion towards Rama, and to Ramakatha as popularly known in the valley. The main literary works on *Ramakatha* in Kashmiri are the following; Prakash Ram's *Prakash Ramayana* (known as *Ramautarcharit* and *Lav-Kushcharit* too, late 18th century), Shankar's *Ramayana* (1870), Anand Ram Razdan's *Ramautarcharit* (1888), Vishnu Koul's *Vishnu Pratap Ramayana* (1913) and Amarnath's *Amar Ramayana* (1940). Out of these Ramayans only *Prakash Ramayana* was first published in 1910 by Pratap Steem Press Srinagar in Perso-Arabic Script. G.A Grierson has edited an abridged form of it, which was published by the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1930 in Roman script. Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, Srinagar has published a complete version of it in the Perso-Arabic Script. Bhuvan Vani Trust Lucknow, has published it in Devanagri script with Hindi translation.

In general, Kashmiri *Ramakatha* is influenced by various Sanskrit works on Ramakatha including the Puranas and the Upanishads. None of these works is a translation of any other Ramayana. Various changes, interpretations and original descriptions of episodes, incidents, and characters make the Kashmir *Ramakatha* different from the Ramakatha of Sanskrit and other modern Indian Languages.

By the time of Prakash Ram the spiritual and supernatural values of Ramakatha were already widespread. The primary motivation for composing Ramakatha was the pleasure and satisfaction the poet would derive from writing about Rama, of his exalted character and noble exploits. Ramakatha is full of episodes that touch the heart and win the human feelings very easily. Such episodes are fully elaborated and presented with implications in terms of their morals and ideals, human and spiritual values. Most of the works are

the outcome of the deep and implicit devotion towards Rama. The mood of the times dictated that they be free from any sort of intolerance or trace of conflict with difference ideologies or religious faiths. The poets have tried to reconcile the worship of Shiva with the worship of Rama. The poets of Ramakatha are essentially devotees or Bhakhtas, but they freely acknowledge and respect the faiths and claims of the alternate of Karma, Raja and Jnana (knowledge). The emphasis is required on the simple way of devotion, which is characterized in different ways. Besides indicating and appreciating the role of Ramabhakti in the description of various episodes, frequent hymns are inserted here and there to emphasize it.

Thus the aim of *Ramakatha-kavya* in Kashmiri as in Tulsi Ramayana was not to narrate a popular story with wonderful episodes but to use it as a medium to teach the spiritual values of the implicit devotion towards Rama. In comparison to different works on Krishan-Katha and other related subjects-the Ramakatha has been the most potent and important factor in making Vaishnavism the second accepted cult of the Hindus in Kashmir.

The general outline of the story in the Kashmiri *Ramakatha-kavya* is similar to that of *Valmiki Ramayana*. Besides *Valmiki Ramayana*, different Sanskrit works on Ramakatha, the Puranas the Upanishadas etc., have also influenced the character and form of Ramakatha. They appear different from their original sources. The poets have made alteration in the descriptions and modified the main characters to suit their own devotional and other purposes. Attempts have been made to make the descriptions more and more localized, natural and appealing.

It is not possible to point-out all the alterations of the original descriptions here, only a few distinctions are indicated below.

The birth of Sita: In Kashmiri Ramakatha we get two accounts of the birth of Sita. In one, she is the daughter of Ravana and Mandodari and in other, she is raised from the blood of the Rishis (seers). In *Prakash Ramayana* when Mandodari gives birth of Sita, astrologers predict that she would be the cause of the destruction of her father Ravana and his whole empire. Because of this she is put in a wooden box and set afloat in a river. King Janak finds her and raises her as his own daughter. According to *Shankar Ramayana*, on the order of Ravana, Sita is buried in Mithila Nagar where Janak digs her out while plugging the land. In *Vishnu Pratap Ramayana*, Ravan puts seven drops of blood in seven Rishis in a bottle. On smelling it, Mandodari becomes pregnant and Sita is born. On hearing about the anticipated troubles from astrologers, Ravan becomes

angered and orders her to be set afloat in the river. In this *Ramayana*, Janak finds Sita in Niruhath. According to *Anand Ramawtarcharit* in his previous birth (*Purva Janam*) Ravana chases a young woman and she places on him the curse that she would take birth as his daughter and destroy him along with his whole family. In Sanskrit *Uttar Puran* also we get a similar description of the curse of a vessel full of blood of the Rishis and thinking it to be holy water; he gives it to his wife Mandodari. After drinking some of it, she becomes pregnant. Ravana is annoyed. He gets her aborted and the fetus is buried in Janakpur. Where king Janak finds Sita in the vessel.

In *Tarachand Ramayana* the description is a little different. Here Rishis offer vessel-full of blood to Ravan and tell him that from that vessel the cause of his death will be born. Ravan gets the vessel buried in Janakpur, so that his enemy king Janaka would be killed by it. In Sanskrit *Adhbhut Ramayana* also we get a similar description of Sita's birth. In different Sanskrit works such as *Vasudevbindi*, *Uttar Puran* and *Maha Bhagyat*, *Devi Puran* etc., we get the reference of Sita as a daughter of Ravan and Mandodari. The descriptions in Kashmiri are not completely similar to any of the earlier Sanskrit works.

Pinddan by Rama: In Kashmiri *Prakash Ramayana*, Rama observes every death anniversary of his father Dashratha, and Dashratha accepts the offerings of Pinddan (offerings for death) by Rama in person every time. One day when Dashrath could not come in person from heaven. Rama gets angry and kills Takshaka with his arrow in order to make things simple.

Death of Jatayu: In *Valmiki Ramayana*, there is a long description of the quarrel between Jatayu and Ravana, when Jatayu tries to release Sita from Ravana. The description of the battle is different in Kashmiri Ramakatha. According to *Prakash Ramayana*, after getting badly wounded by the wings of Jatayu, Ravan helplessly threatens Sita and asks for her advice in order to kill Jatayu. On her advice, Ravana feeds Jatayu the stones drowned in his own blood. After swallowing the stones, Jatayu becomes too heavy to fly and falls down on earth. Sita charms Ravana by telling him that Jatayu will die only after narrating the whole story of Ravana's mischief to Rama. In Tibetan the Khitanese Ramayanas, and in a Ramakatha of South India also we get reference to Ravana's feeding blood drenched particles or stones to Jatayu. In Kashmiri Ramakatha after narrating the incident to Rama, Jatayu dies and Rama joins his writs and burns his body on them, as Jatayu could not have been burnt on the ground.

The Description of Lanka: In Kashmiri *Prakash*

Ramayana, the description of the origin of Lanka and the construction of the huge buildings is original. In this *Ramayana*, Narada tells Hanuman the whole story about how the island of Lanka came into existence and how the huge buildings - Ravana's place was built. According to this description, on the request of his wife Parvati, Lord Shiva gets the huge unique buildings constructed for living there, but, it is given away to Ravana when he demands it as Dakshina from Lord Shiva on the day of its inauguration.

The Description of Battle: In *Prakash Ramayana* Ravana shows an artificial head of Rama to Sita's and tells her that Rama is killed and now she would marry Ravana. Sita cries increasingly until. Sarma assures her about the mischief of Ravana. This description is slightly different from that of *Valmiki Ramayana*. In Kashmiri *Anar Ramayana* Shuk and Saran show the artificial head and body of Sita to Rama and also they show the artificial heads of Rama and Lakshman to Sita.

The Death of Ahiravan: In Kashmiri Ramakatha, after the death of his son Inderjit (Meghnath) and brother Kumbkaran in the war, Ravana asks Ahiravan for help. Ahiravan takes Rama and Lakshman away to Patal Lok while they are asleep. Hanuman kills Ahiravan in heavy fighting in Patal Lok and brings back Rama and Lakshman. In *Sharma Ramayana*, Ahiravan is described as a son of Ravan and is king of Patal Lok. Also, the meeting between Hanuman and his son Makardhwaj also is described in a dramatic way.

In *Anand Ramawtarcharit*, Rama boasts about his powers and is proud about his brave army. Sita does not agree and describes the superior power of Ahiravana. In this episode we notice the influence of Shakti ideology. This episode is described in Sanskrit *Adhbhut Ramayana* and *Anand Ramayana* in details. This incident is referred to in Oriya, Bangla and Marathi Ramakatha-kavya in a different way. In a Braj folk-song after killing Ahiravan, Sita becomes Kalimaayii (the Goddess of Death) of Calcutta.

Sita's Banishment: According to the description in *Prakash Ramayana*, on the repeated requests of her husband's sister. Sita draws a picture of Ravana to show her. She complains against Sita to her brother saying that Sita worships the picture of Ravana. On this, Rama orders his brothers Laksjman to leave the pregnant Sita alone in some deep forest. According to Kashmiri *Prakash Ramayana* and *Vishnu Prakash Ramayana*, Sita gives birth to Lava only and Valmiki Rishi creates Kusha with his superior power.

Rama's Ashvamedh Yajna: In Kashmiri Ramakatha-kavya different reasons are given for performing and Ashvamedh Yahn by Rama. The Prominent reason are

Rama's longing for a son, Rama's anxiety on the separation from Sita, Rama's lamentation over the mass killing in his war with Ravana etc.

The battle with Lava and Kush: In Kashmiri Ramakatha-kavya there is an exhaustive description of the heavy fight between Rama's army and his two sons-Lava and Kusha. The reason for this fight is the catching of the horse of Rama's Ashvamedh Yajhna by Lava and Kusha. In the battle the whole royal army including Rama, Lakshman, Bharat and Satrugna are killed or wounded by Lava and Kusha. On Sita's lamentation, Rishi Valmiki gives life to all of them with his superior's power.

In *Vishnu Prakash Ramayana*, there is a long description of the Rajleela which includes the description of Ramaraja, the visit of Rama and Sita to all the holy places or worship, including Kashmir.

In other Kashmiri Ramayanas, Sita is once again asked by Rama to prove her purity. Sita proves her purity by an oath, and is immediately absorbed by earth as she desires. The place where she enters the lap of earth is named Shankerapur a village in Kashmir.

An important distinct characteristic of Kashmiri Ramakatha-kavya is the immense influence of Shavisim on it. The Vaishnav poets have tried to bring Shiva and Rama very close to each other so to say on an equal status, but their attempts could not save Rama from being dominated by Shiva on various occasions. Even though in the very beginning of the description of Ramakatha, Shiva is to concede to Parvati that true devotion toward Rama and his worship is the only way of salvation. However, most of the Kashmiri poets have described Rama as an implicit devotee. Rama seeks help from Shiva on occasions of grief and sorrow. For example, in *Amar Ramayana*, Rama prays to Shiva before and after breaking the dhanush (bow) for marrying Sita. After getting the sad news of his father's death, Rama asks Shiva for protection in his deep grief and sorrow. He repeatedly asks Shiva for help in fulfilling his missions of life. He believes firmly that without the help of his Lord Shiva, he cannot succeed in his mission. In *Vishnu Pratap Ramayana*, there is a long description of Rama's worship of Shiva, in which he requests for his help to protect him from grief and to show him the right way of success. Before crossing the ocean to get Sita back from Lanka, Rama worships Shiva, Shiva is very pleased with his implicit devotion and assures him of his success in getting Sita back and fulfilling his mission. In *Sharma Ramayana* during the period of war between Rama and Ravana, when Rama fails to kill Ravana, Narada advises him to seek Lord Shiva's help, before making an attempt to kill Ravana. Rama worships Shiva, and on being

pleased Shiva in person assures Rama of help.

In Kashmiri Ramakatha-kavya, Ravana is also described as a devotee of Shiva. It is due to Shiva's kindness that no power on earth hurts him for a long period of time. Being worried about Ravana's devotion toward Shiva, Rama's army diverts Ravana's attention from his worship of Shiva, and makes successful attempts to pollute his Yajna and his faith. To put it in other words, Rama's success in war is actually his success in winning the sympathy and kindness of his Lord Shiva and by making his rival's devotion weak. The poets have made best use of every opportunity to praise the superiority of Lord Shiva. Even Sita worships Lord Shiva and Parvati and seeks their help at a number of occasions especially while in grief.

The other important aspect of the Kashmiri Ramakatha-kavya is an adequate development in the characterization of the main characteristic features of Rama and Sita.

Rama: In his super-human character, Rama is presented as an omnipresent state imminent in the whole of the universe, nature, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva (*Prakash Ramayana*). He forms the joint trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. He himself creates, preserves and destroys the whole universe. He is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, the one without a second blissful, pure, peaceful, without modification and full of all spiritual powers (*Vishnu Pratap Ramayana*). Rama is considered as supreme Brahma and Sita His Maya-Shakti the power of illusion. He is described as the gist of the Vedas and superior to Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva (*Vishnu Pratap Ramayana*). They all worship him (*Sharma Ramayana*). In all the Ramayanas of Kashmiri, Rama is described as an incarnation of Vishnu. The different characters of Ramakatha such as Ahliya, Kaikeyi, Mandodari, Marich, Inderjit, Sulochna, Valmiki Rishi and many others worship him as an incarnation of Vishnu.

In his human character, Rama is an ideal son, brother, husband, kind and above all a brave Ksetri hero. The poets are not tired of singing about Rama's ideal human character, wherever they get an opportunity. They nevertheless fail to save Rama from some weakness inherent in his historical character - such as the killing of Tadaka, mistreating of Shrupnakha, killing of Bali and his suspicion of Sita. Rama shares all human emotions about the pleasure and sorrow of life. Like an ordinary human being, he cries bitterly at the death of his father Dasaratha, and at the time when his brother Lakshman loses consciousness in battle. He feels the separation from Sita very badly as in a very simple hearted fashion, listens to the advice of all his well-wishers and seeks shelter with Shiva in times of difficulty or grief.

Sita : In her super-human character, Sita is described as an incarnation of Prithvi (Earth), Vishnu himself asks her to be born as Sita. Vashisht describes her incarnated character to Dashratha, and Valmiki Rishi to Rama. Sita is described as the Great Illusion (Mahamaya) of supreme Brahma. She is worshipped as Uma, Jagadamba the mother of universe, Lakshmi the goddess of wealth, Saraswati the goddess of knowledge. In *Vishnu Pratap Ramayana* and *Anand Ramavatar Charit*, she is worshipped as Mahakali the Goddess of Destruction, also.

In her human character, Sita is an ideal daughter-in-law, wife, mother and queen; she is an ideal of Indian womanhood, an example of self-confidence, patience, purity, truthfulness, strong heart and kindness. Sita shares all the pleasures and sorrows of human life. Her ideal character is not free from some blemishes. She adamantly insists on Rama catching the magic golden deer, becomes suspicious of Lakshman, rejects the repeated request of her husband to accompany him to Ayodhya from Valmiki Rishi Ashram, prefers to be absorbed in Prithvi than to return to live with her husband.

The language of Kashmiri Ramayanas represents a standard form of the Sanskritized Kashmiri. The poets have used a large number of simple Persio-Arabic lexical items and expressions. In the narration of Ramakatha, mainly two styles are used, the description styles of the Persian romances and the lyrical style. They have not used the borrowed Persian styles strictly and have made frequent changes in it. They use different forms of the Kashmiri lyrical verse, including the folk songs. Similes,

metaphors and idioms are used to make the expressions more colourful.

The poets haven't described nature for the sake of decoration. Like Tulsi, Kashmiri poets are interested in the objects of nature in so far as they are manifestations of the divine will. The scenes of nature are described not because they are beautiful but because they reflect a particular mood of the moment and the divine image of the ideal characters. The poets have mostly used natural objects in similes and in the metaphorical descriptions. The natural objects share all the pleasure and sorrows with Rama and Sita.

Various allegorical descriptions describe the characters and different situations. For example, in *Paraksh Ramayana*, Sita stands for goodwill; Rama and Lakshman for truth; Hanuman for courage and strong determination; Ravana for sin and ill-will; Angad, Sugreva, Jamvant and Vibhishnana stand for divine knowledge; Kaikeyi stands for nature; Sumitra for birth; Kaushalya for destiny or fate; and Dashratha for Dharma. Furthermore, Ravana is described as ill-will of a person; Lanka is described as body; battle weapons as self-confidence and commitment; Rama's banishment as a didactic story. Only the arrow of good faith and self-confidence can kill ill-will and increase devotion to the Lord. In *Shankar Ramayana*, Ravana stands for anger and pride, the demons for illusion, Shrupanakha for falsehood in human heart, Lanka as a central place where ill-will grows.

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**Kyaah kara paantsan dahan ta kaahan,
Vakhshun yath leyji yim karith gay;
Saoriy samahan yeythi razi lamahan,
Ada kyaazi raavhe kaahan gaav.**

Lal Vaakh

Ah me! the Five (Bhutas), the ten (Indriyas),
And the Eleventh, their lord the mind,
scraped this pot and went away.
Had all together pulled on the rope,
Why should the Eleventh have lost the cow ?
(Why should the soul have gone astray?)



Preservation of Our Culture DURING EXODUS

It is believed that on the onset of first Manvantra (meaning 'the age of Manu'; an astronomical period of time measurement), the nine ancient Vedic Rishis namely Kashyap, Maricha, Atri, Angira, Pulastya, Vishvamitra, Bhardwaja, Gautama and Jamdagni were the first to inhabit Satisar, when it was drained of its water. The place came to be known as Kashyap Mar, meaning the abode of Kashyap. Over a long period of time, this name got corrupted to Kashmir, its present name.

The ancestors of Kashmiri Pandits, the Saraswat Brahmins, lived on the banks of the mighty Saraswati River which flowed in the northwest region of India. Subsequent to its drying up around 1900 BCE, these people moved north and found shelter in Kashmir, perhaps, coinciding with the drying up of Satisar. Kashmiri Pandits are the original inhabitants of the Valley of Kashmir, with a history of more than five thousand years, dating back beyond the *Neelmat* era, almost contemporaneous to the Vedic civilization of India.

Due to a very conducive environment during the reign of Hindu Kings in the first two millennia after these people settled in Kashmir, they developed a distinct literary culture that survives to the present day. Originally, they were and continue to be known as *Bhattas*. The term *Bhatta* is derived from ancient Sanskrit (Prakrit) name *bhartri*, which means doctor, scholar or intellectual. Pandit too means a learned person.

Kashmiri Pandits' religious thought and rituals, social customs and cultural moorings are deeply influenced by the philosophy of Kashmir's great Shaivite philosophers, Abhinavgupta (10th century) and Kshemaraja (11th century). Kashmiri Shaivism's Trika (three fold) philosophy, basically states that the 'Reality' is represented by 'transcendental' (ara), 'material' (apara)



The Shiva Temple at Pandhrethan

and a combination of the two (paraapara). The secluded location of Kashmir valley, its temperate climate and natural beauty, allowed great mystics, saints and *Rishis* to delve deep into this philosophy and explore the mysteries of 'reality' and the 'purpose' of life. Over the centuries, Kashmiri Pandits produced a galaxy of such mystic poets, philosophers and *Rishis*, who further enriched this religious thought. It was the Kashmiri Pandits who carried Buddha's philosophy and Buddhist religious tenets far away to Tibet, centuries ago. It was Pandit Kalhana who wrote one of the most authentic and

Kashmiri Pandit culture, which evolved over centuries, is vibrant and multi-hued, with its unique features reflecting its richness. Being a persecuted community for centuries, its culture has evolved by constant re-appraisal and its need to survive and sustain itself against heavy odds.

earliest known historical records of the events in Kashmir, called *Rajtarangini*.

From 14th century onwards, and for many centuries thereafter, Kashmir has rarely been left alone by invaders and adventurers, who tore apart the fabric of its society. Needless to say, the Pandits, its aborigines, bore the brunt of the ruthless religious persecution that resulted in their mass killings and many exoduses from Kashmir. Between the first quarter of fourteenth century and till the end of Afghan rule in Kashmir (1819), there were six major exoduses of Hindus from Kashmir. Almost all exoduses occurred when cruel Muslim rulers, driven by religious zeal and the spirit of Jihad, carried out ruthless genocide of members belonging to this community. The Pandits were offered three choices; to flee, die or convert to Islam. Lakhs got forcibly converted to Islam. But despite that, those who retained their original faith, continued to maintain their distinct identity, with their own religious rituals and social customs, based on Kashmiri Shaivism, which are a shade different from those observed by the Hindus of rest of India.

By the time the British left India in 1947, Kashmiri Pandit population in the Valley had reached abysmally low figures. Even after that, due to several reasons, their migration outside the State continued. When insurgency broke out in Kashmir in 1989-90, there were less than half a million Pandits left in the Valley. The radical Islamists held complete sway in the Valley. Killings of prominent Kashmiri Pandits on the one hand, and targeting ordinary Pandits in unknown and far flung areas throughout the Valley, on the other, created enormous fear, panic and overwhelming sense of insecurity. Through sustained campaign with the help of posters, boardings and public address systems blaring out from pulpits of the mosques, Pandits were offered three choices - *relive, galive ya tsalive* - meaning, join us (implying conversion to Islam), die or run away. State machinery was totally subverted, paralyzing those instruments of the administration which could be used to prevent their killings and instill a sense of security among the beleaguered community. Ensuring their own and their family members' survival became their top-most priority. This led to mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir.

Kashmiri Pandit culture, which evolved over centuries, is vibrant and multi-hued, with its unique

features reflecting its richness. Being a persecuted community for centuries, its culture has evolved by constant re-appraisal and its need to survive and sustain itself against heavy odds. Many myths and legends, dating back to pre-historic times when the Valley was still *Satnar*, form part of its socio-cultural landscape. Kashmir Shaivism or Trika philosophy, characterized by its depth of thought and originality, was the product of the vibrant environment of the Valley. A deep love of nature and its diverse elements has, therefore, got ingrained into their religious rituals and social customs. Pilgrimage to mountain peaks (Harmukh, etc.) and performance of a large number of religious and social rituals on the banks of Vitasta (river Jhelum) represent some of these sacred traditional practices. In short, nature's bounty in the form of gushing rivulets and icy springs that Kashmir is endowed with, inculcated in the community an immense love for nature, which got interwoven with their social/religious customs. In short, culture is a complete pattern of social behavior of an ethnic group, its practices and collective thinking, manifested through group behavior. An ethnic groups' culture and world view are inter-related. Religion, philosophy and value systems of the group have great bearing on it. Culture is not static as its dynamic nature enables it to adopt, reject and evolve constantly.

Once the whole ethnic group vacates the place that creates and sustains such culture, it gets unhinged from its moorings. Under the circumstances, for Kashmiri Pandits, to preserve their distinct ethnic identity has become very difficult. This difficulty has got further compounded because Kashmiri Pandits are a small community and after exodus are compelled to live in penny packets throughout the world. Due to these reasons, Kashmiri Pandits are in clear danger of losing their identity as a distinct ethnic group. This, despite the fact, that even after suffering persecution and being evicted from the Valley many times in the past, Kashmiri Pandits have retained their core beliefs. Sir Walter Lawrence writes in his book, *Valley of Kashmir*, "*Bhata, Bhata, Kaw Bata*" - (Kashmiri Pandits are knit together like a pack of crows)".

The exodus has forced the minuscule minority to take a hard look at preserving its centuries-old culture and its religious traditions. Numerous Bhavans, socio-cultural centres and replicas of iconic pilgrimage centres

that existed in Kashmir, were replicated at various places throughout the country, where the Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora came to settle in large numbers after their exodus. From Jammu in the north, which has the maximum number of such structures, to Bengaluru in the south, and from Kolkotta in the east to Mumbai in the west, these Bhavans have helped Kashmiri Pandits to continue holding on to their cultural moorings. It can safely be said that to a large extent, the displaced community has succeeded in preserving their distinct identity within the overall Hindu tradition which, like a huge garden permits every type of flower to bloom within its precincts. However, being a small minority, surrounded by numerically superior numbers having their own different culture and tradition, it is only a matter of time before the Kashmiri Pandit culture and tradition will gradually get submerged in the larger Hindu identity. This is particularly so in the changing social values in the country where inter community marriage has become a norm. Besides, the religious tradition and cultural identity of a community is deeply connected to, and influenced by the land and environment in which the community has been living for centuries. After their displacement, without that land now sustaining us any more, saving this unique culture from being diluted becomes all the more difficult. The signs of this dilution of culture are already visible.

Nevertheless there are some positive signs visible on the horizon which, if exploited judiciously, will help us preserve our centuriesold cultural heritage. With the situation improving in the Valley during the past few years, particularly as far as the violent occurrences are concerned, an ever increasing number of the displaced Pandits are regularly visiting the Valley, with many of them extending their stay for longer durations. Over the last six years, many religious places and those associated with their sages and saints have been repaired and restored to their original shape by various Pandit organizations. Such measures will go a long way in helping Pandits keep their religious and socio-cultural practices alive. By spending longer periods of time at regular intervals in Kashmir, the community can preserve their distinct culture and unique identity.

The other positive factor is the proximity of Jammu, where a large number of Pandit refugees are living, to our land in Kashmir. This proximity helps regular contact with our *Tirath Asthans* as also prevents mental disconnect with the land that inspires our uniqueness.

Two things, nevertheless, appear certain; first, the situation for Pandits from here-on is only likely to improve and second, it will be the attitude of our future generations which will determine whether we can preserve our rich and distinct identity or not.



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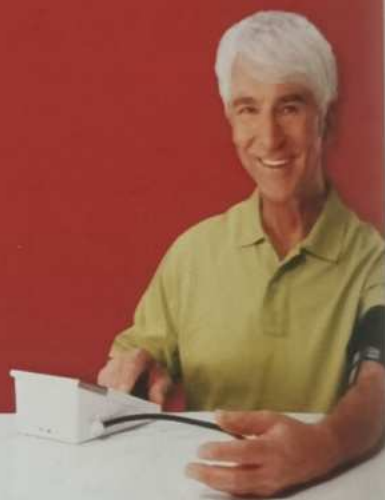
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RENOUNCE AND ENJOY

In spiritual way of life, there is greater enjoyment when we catch higher values of life than the enjoyment at the sensual level. In spiritual sense Renunciation also means taking up higher values of life and cultivating them so that they become a part and parcel of you – be it human, social, moral and spiritual values.

Renunciation, whose Sanskrit equivalent is Tyaga or to give up, forms an inseparable part of Vedanta or Hindu Philosophy. Renunciation is commonly used for Tyaga of fruit of actions which you perform in life. This is to ensure that your complete focus is on work in hand and not on the results of your work so that your focus on work is not disturbed by thinking about fruit of action. Thus we see that Renunciation is an inner attitude and has nothing to do with renunciation of works while living in the world.

The title of this write up says that when you live in the world, you should first renounce and then enjoy life. For a worldly person enjoyment means when his desires are fulfilled, when he enjoys when in contact with sense objects, when he is emotionally attached to a person of his choice, when he keeps his ego and take credit for all the works he does and when he has a selfish attitude in whatever he plans and does. A worldly man's thought process is always focussed on his personal needs. Such thoughts process ends up in formation of desires. In Mahabharata it is quoted "Desires thou are born of thoughts (called sankalpa in Sanskrit). I will not entertain selfish thoughts to eliminate desires from their root."

For spiritual evolution, one's motto in life should be Renounce and enjoy. This looks a paradox because when you renounce or let go things or give up your aptitude which gives you enjoyment, then how can a person still enjoys without possessing something he desires or without being attached to someone. In spiritual way of life, there is greater enjoyment when we catch higher values of life than the enjoyment at the sensual level. In spiritual sense Renunciation also means taking up higher

values of life and cultivating them so that they become a part and parcel of you – be it human, social, moral and spiritual values. When it happens the lower instincts loosen their grip on you. But our aim should be to eradicate our lower instincts and then only we can advance on the spiritual path. We shall see what are the lower instincts which we should renounce.

Desires: All desires are born out of selfishness. Selfishness is the cause of all evil that we do in life. Desires are always deep rooted and cannot be renounced by force. We have to examine our desires, reduce our desires, upgrade our desires so that we concentrate on noble desires and not on sensual desires. Desires to do good to others, desires to evolve your own self to a higher level of consciousness, desires to teach higher values of life to others in order to benefit them are all noble desires. When you upgrade your desires then your sensual desires become weak. Our Puranas say "Sum total of sense pleasures of this world and great pleasure of Heaven are not worth a sixteenth part of the Bliss which proceeds from eradication of desire".

Attachment: Attachment leads to bondage, the opposite of attachment is detachment. In attachment you have love for a particular person while for others you have no concern. Attachment is love plus selfishness whereas detachment is unselfish love. Detachment is living in the world but remaining unaffected and undisturbed by the happenings of the world. Detachment is like being a lotus in water which retains its original charm without being affected by the surroundings. To get detached to the world, you have to get attached to God. By constant practice one can bring mind to concentrate on God. One way to obtain :

detached outlook in life is to love all unconditionally in the same way as God loves all irrespective of caste or creed. Detachment also means performing your duties in life whole heartedly without bothering about the results. Mahabharata underscores that a true renouncer or Tyagi is one who works in a spirit of detachment. When you are detached you care for all. Detachment does not mean that you live the life of a recluse cut off from worldly affairs.

Ego: Ego means Me and Mine. Ego also means inflated self-worth, a sense of pride, selfishness or a sense of separateness which is to imagine that you are superior to others. Ego also means taking credit of all works you do by proclaiming that I am the doer. Ego means false identification of ourself with body ignoring that the soul or Atma is the essence of a living being. Ego hinders knowledge. More ego less wisdom is the correct equation. Ego can be erased by offering to God all what you do which includes the results of your doings. When you do that you get a feeling that you are working as per God's will.

Fuller aspect of Renounce and Enjoy: Our Upanishad (Isha Upanishad) says that everything in the world is covered by God or belongs to God. Therefore you should have no sense of possession of what you

have. You should rejoice in God alone with a feeling of Renunciation. The Upanishad further says that Renunciation is not of life but is of selfishness and ego.

The other thing one must remember is that when you are at a higher state of consciousness you do not exclude yourself from worldly enjoyments. When you participate in worldly enjoyments with you mind established in higher self, the worldly enjoyments would not leave any impressions on your mind. In this state you like every one or enjoy their company but you would have no bondage with any particular person. And if you feel unduly attracted or disturbed by any sense object, you will have the ability to withdraw your senses from the object of your attraction like a tortoise withdraws his limbs inside itself when it feels some danger. This, according to Bhagavad Gita, is one of the signs of a perfect person.

Conclusion : 'Renounce and enjoy' is a beautiful aspect of life which can only be experienced and not forced upon anyone. We must remember that life in world and life in spirit are not incompatible. If the concept of Renounce and enjoy is correctly understood, your life becomes a celebration. Life becomes a joyful event with each day brings newness in life besides inner development.



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DIDDA RANI

A Queen who Mastered the Art of State Craft

Didda Rani emerged on the political scene at a time when Kashmir was passing through a turbulent phase of its history. It was a period of grave disorder and disturbing atmosphere. Hindu polity of the state was manifesting signs of decline. Instability, moral turpitude and social degeneration had entered in all the conceivable areas of the society which deeply affected the course of social, cultural and political life in Kashmir. History therefore is a sordid record of conspiracies, plots, rebellions and murders. It is not very difficult to imagine as to what might have been the plight of the people who had been subjected to such atrocities.

Didda Rani's stay at the helm of affairs under the most trying circumstances for such a long period of time testifies to her administrative acumen and a thorough understanding of the politics of her times. She is considered as a lady of powerful frame, beautiful, courageous and capable of taking on her adversaries. Her reign is recorded by history as the most significant period of those times, because she was destined to play a game changer role.

1. Didda Rani-Who?

She was the daughter of Simharaja, ruler of Lohara (Poonch) belonging to Gupta dynasty and was not a Kashmiri by birth. She was also the grand daughter of Bhimdeva, Shahi Ruler of Kabul and married to Ksemgupta who ruled Kashmir from 950-958 AD. King Ksemgupta was a debauch who loved wine, women and hunting. Because of his habits, he gradually lost control of the affairs of the state and this paved the way for the queen to step in and to run the administration. This helped her to enlarge her area of influence and also pick up the threads of administration. This way she created a space for herself which ultimately turned out to be a

process of learning the art of Statecraft for her. As a consequence, she dominated over her weak husband.

Didda Rani and Chanderlekha were prominent among his wives. Chanderlekha was the daughter of Prime Minister Phalgun but the King loved Didda Rani the most because of her beauty despite she being lame. She had a limp in her one foot. Because of his love for Didda, he was nicknamed as Didda Kshema. His rule was short lived as he got afflicted with plague which took his toll and he died in Vamhmulla (Baramulla). As was the custom, all his co-wives offered themselves to the funeral pyre; Chanderlekha too was among them who after seeking permission from her father and Prime Minister Phalgun set herself on fire. Didda Rani also sought permission from Phalgun to do so thinking that he would not grant her the necessary permission but she was proved wrong. It was only at the intervention of Narvahana war and peace Minister who saved her life by preventing her from committing sati in the broad interests of the State as he had by then got convinced about her ability to run the affairs of the state smoothly and quite competently.

Kshemgupta was succeeded by his infant son Abhimanyu. He was crowned under the guardianship of Queen Mother Didda Rani. She ruled as the regent of an infant King during 11th century and held sway over Kashmir for half a century. Her ascendance to the power and continuity initially demanded the support of Ministers, influential people and large sections of the society. She succeeded by enlisting the support from important quarters necessary for her survival and the welfare of the State.

2. Divide and Rule as an Act of Diplomacy

Initial years were a testing time for Didda. As the events unfolded, she rose to the occasion and scripted her

own diplomatic skills to meet the challenges of administration. Though her Political journey is marked by deep palace intrigues and efforts to dethrone her but her matching response makes her a tall figure. She is recorded in the history as a celebrated queen and a tough ruler. She began her rule under the most arduous circumstances by facing tense situations.

A. To Get Rid of Phalgun

Her first major challenge was to confront Phalgun as she nursed a deep grudge against him on two counts:

1. For having married his daughter Chanderlekha to King Kshemgupta
2. For allowing her to commit suicide.

Her mind against Phalgun was further polluted by a backbiter Rakkaka. Phalgun was a far sighted astute diplomat who sniffed the mischief and opted for voluntary self exile by leaving Srinagar and settling at Parnotsa(Poonch) along with his large number of troops. Didda was adamant to seek avenge by sending ushers to murder Phalgun. On hearing this he was soon joined by soldiers loyal to him, who prepared for a clash with the queen. She and her counsellors on learning of the impending fight faltered and offered no resistance. Two things saved the situation one diplomatic negotiations with Phalgun and his sense of loyalty and service to the throne. He ultimately laid down his arms in the temple of Varaha. This was her first major diplomatic victory which put her firmly in the saddle.

B. Scuttles the Plot to Overthrow Her

Hardly had she recovered from Phalgun episode, large part of the capital was engulfed by the devastating fire. While managing the post-fire situation, she was confronted with yet another conspiracy hatched by the two princes-Mahiman and Pattala, sons of her husband's sister to overthrow her. They were soon joined by the warrior Himmaka, Yasodhara and the Brahmin residents of Lalitadityapura. As a next step, the rebels advanced towards Srinagar. Realizing the danger that lay ahead, security of the boy King Abhimanyu assumed significance, as such he was sent to sanctuary of Sumantha.

The situation was tense and the apprehensive Queen, while seeking the services of her advisors and Ministers, found to her disbelief that they had shifted their loyalties except War and Peace Minister Narvahana who stood by her side. Without waiting for the consequences, she herself took the charge of the battle field to fight the rebels. She could realize that the war cannot be won merely on the physical strength. She therefore, used diplomacy of divide and rule to the perfection. She was ably supported by Narvahana as he

was well versed with the strategy of war, he offered bribes(Heaps of Gold and much wealth) to the Brahmins of Lalitadityapura. It was a crucial diplomatic step to win over the Brahmins as they constituted the mainstay of support of the rebels. This victory gave her an immense confidence and made her position unassailable. To strengthen her position further, she won over Yashodhara by making him the Supreme Commander of the Army. Kalhana describes this victory as thus; "she whom none believed had the strength to step over a cattle track-the lame lady traversed in the manner of the son of the wind"

Queen witnessed yet another defiance by Shahi chief Thakkana of Udabhandpura who showed disobedience towards her. Yashodhara was ordered to proceed to handle the Shahi militarily. He defeated the Shahi and brought him to his knees. Didda was happy at the outcome but because of the pursuance of generous policies towards her enemies, she therefore pardoned Shahi and re-instated him. This set in motion a chain of events. Didda's ears were again poisoned by Rakkaka and other courtiers against Yashodhara who did not like his rise. They fabricated the charges of bribery against Yashodhara by alleging that he had accepted money from Shahi to re-instate him. Without ascertaining the truth, Queen decided to banish him as a punishment.

Yashodhara, seething with anger, as he was expecting a royal reception, instead impending exile made him to raise the banner of revolt against the Queen. He sought the help of Ermantaka and Himmaka. This fresh rebellion proved more threatening than the earlier ones. She had again to shift King Abhimanyu to safety as a priority. Seeing the disarray in the Royal Army, Queen was besieged in the Palace as the possibility of situation getting out of control was looming large. Narvahana again rose to the occasion along with other supporters and saved the day for the Queen. He re-inforced the Royal Army. As a consequence, Rajkulla Bhatta a General in the Army, fought bravely and won the war for the Queen. This hard fought encounter hardened her resolve to punish the culprits. Didda avenged her affront by capturing Ermantaka and Yashodhara and executing them, and also exterminating their families. This incident increased the profile of Narvahana before the Queen who conferred on him the title of Rajanaka (present day Razdan), as a debt of gratitude.

C. Administrative Overhaul

Growing in confidence she made sweeping changes in the administration

1. Appointed Narvahana as Prime Minister
2. Appointed Rakkaka as Commander in Chief of

Armed Forces

3. Purged the court of old corrupt Ministers and courtiers.
4. Appointed Sindhu (son of Palanquin bearer Kuyya) as Ganja, a newly created special post in the Department of Treasury. He turned out to be the most corrupt and to escape the punishment, he succeeded in poisoning the ears of Queen against Narvahana by describing him as the impediment and centralizing all the powers.

Narvahana felt desperate as Queen started avoiding him and refusing to meet him under one pretext or the other. Feeling frustrated, he committed suicide.

After the absence of Narvahana, she earned the wrath of powerful and influential Damara Chief threatening her downfall and he was beyond inducements. In the absence of seasoned Narvahana, things looked to go out of control.

The services of Phalgun were again sought, even though the normalcy was restored but he proved ineffective to control the situation.

D. Personal Life

Her personal life is dominated by ambitions and hunger for power. Her reluctance to hand over the reigns of the state to King Abhimanyu who was her only son, is demonstrative of her cruelty. However her subsequent actions speak about her life loudly

1. Abhimanyu succumbs to the disease of consumption in 972. This momentarily upsets and shocks her.
2. Places her grandson Nandigupta on the throne who is son of Abhimanyu and gets rid of him by killing him through witchcraft. Another grandson also meets similar fate.
3. Places another grandson Bhimgupta on the throne.
4. Around this time Phalgun dies and Tunga, a herdsman from the hills of Poonch, gains access to the Queen and subsequently becomes her paramour. He is also rewarded with the post of Prime Minister. With his rise, Bhimgupta too is tortured to death in 981.
5. Tunga's military achievement is measured by

defeating Prithvipala, the chief of Rajapuri (Rajauri). He led the Army and entered through a different route surrounding Prithvipala unopposed which resulted in his defeat.

3. Public Utility Services

She was momentarily shaken by the death of her only son Abhimanyu and it lasted almost a year. Her steel frame and hard exterior showed signs of melting. As a consequence, she took to religion for solace. During the period she built number of Vishnu temples and founded cities. She repaired almost all the temples damaged by fire. Her notable contribution includes:

1. One temple in memory of her deceased son named as Abhimanyuswamin
2. Two other temples in her name known as Diddaswamin
3. Installed number of Vishnu images at Shadipur
4. Built a temple in the name of her father called Simhaswamin
5. Built one sacred structure called Diddarnatha. Presently remembered as Diddamar situated between Nawakadal and Safakadal.

4. Transition

Realizing fully well that she was ageing and nobody from her own dynasty was living to succeed her. She soon started looking for her successor and her choice narrowed down to Samgramaraja, the son of her brother Udyaraja. Samgramaraja was appointed Yuvraj by Queen Didda. She left her mortal frame in 1003 AD and Samgramaraja becomes the King.

While concluding, we are driven to construe that despite her colorful personal life, she brought much needed stability to the state. Most of her energies were utilized to repel the attacks of invaders, quash the public revolts and crush the rebellion of Damars. It needs an iron fist and courage to do so. She therefore mixed brutality and ruthlessness as an act of diplomacy to the advantage of the State. Her reign is not matched by any of the contemporary rulers of her times. It is not an exaggeration to say that she has secured a place for herself in the History.

*Aa'mi pane soed'ras naa'vi chaes la'maan,
Kati bo'zei dai myon mae'ti diyi taar;*

Lalla Vaakh

*Aa'main ta'kain poeyn zan sha'man,
Zuw chum bra'maan gha're ga'tshe baa.*



THOSE GOOD OLD TIMES

Some Reminiscences

It is indeed surprising that while people at my age often tend to forget the events that happened a week or days earlier like the names of relations or friends whom they met or even what they had with dinner the previous night, they display a razor sharp memory when it comes to recalling the happenings in their lives six or seven decades earlier. Something similar has been happening with me too.

For instance, I still remember being taken for my first admission to a *Jabri* school in Tankipora near Habba Kadal, at the age of five by my maternal brother. I also distinctly remember the day when I passed my matriculation examination (equivalent to class X of these days) in the year 1946 from Punjab University, Lahore (now in Pakistan). It was a day of great rejoicing at my home in Srinagar. Swarms of relations dropped in to congratulate my parents and were greeted with hot cups of *Sheer chai* with *telvor* or *Katlam*. I do not recollect any cakes or sweets having been served. The results used to be available through supplements of *Martand* newspaper. Sarwanand Bhan's Stenographic Institute at Habba Kadal would also pitch in to announce the results after one could manage to push through his roll no. slip through the crowd. Kanwal Krishen Hakku, a sports activist, would take this entire operation in his hand. Those days it hardly mattered what percentage of marks or division one had got because every student was assured of admission in the Sri Pratap College, the only intermediate college we then had in the entire Kashmir Valley. Right till one graduated, no educational institution or authority would bother to check the student's age. In my own case, I came to know much later that I had passed matriculation at the age of 12 and graduation at 16, as per my university certificate. It was later discovered that at the time of my enrolment in a Primary school, my age was inadvertently recorded as 3 years less than the actual age in my horoscope as no documentary proof was insisted upon then. I got the advantage of this discrepancy at the

time of my retirement from Central Govt. having served till 61 while the age of retirement was 58.

No elder had accompanied me to complete the admission formalities in the college. Just a couple of former school classmates went together armed with a few passport size photos, clicked by the popular *Pyara Photo House* in upmarket Hari Singh High Street and a provisional certificate signed by the Vice Chancellor of PU, S. P. Singha those days and for many years thereafter. We filled the relevant form and got admitted without any hassles. College life for teenagers like me in those times was serious studies with no adventurism or diversions. Discipline was the hallmark and ragging was unheard of. It was home to college and back, no bunking of any classes was allowed. There were no restaurants or eating joints. *Khana Peena* strictly at home only. By and by, we became familiar with our new surroundings and the lecturers who were all called as professors, irrespective of their seniority or juniority. I remember Dr. Brij Krishen Madan as our Principal, a very celebrated educationist, a great administrator and above all, a strict disciplinarian. Having taken up Arts stream in my intermediate, I came closer to Prof. S. K. Toshakhani (father of Dr. Shashi Shekhar Toshakhani), a great scholar, linguist and a brilliant teacher of philosophy. He was nicknamed as "Passing Show" after a brand of popular cigarettes those days, because he always used to come to college on a typical lady cycle sporting a felt hat with his suit. Many of our teachers used to be given one or the other nickname but the teachers wouldn't get offended. We had other competent professors like P. N. Pushp, teaching Hindi and Sanskrit Govind Ram Shastri and Pandit Jagdhar Joo Zadoo, teaching Sanskrit which was the other subject I had opted for, and also many others like S. L. Raina of Chemistry and Arjan Nath Raina of Geography, all sporting perpetual smiles. Prof. Toshakhani's Philosophy class in those days was the smallest with just eleven students whom he would call by their first names. In the

Philosophy class I found Logic rather boring, but enjoyed the Psychology part very much. One Habibullah Kamran, a classmate, surprisingly was a brilliant student and took a lot of interest in philosophy and as such was a favourite of Prof. Toshakhani. I later lost contact of him.

Prof. Pushp was an extraordinarily gifted teacher of Hindi and Sanskrit who enlivened his class through his teaching skills. While all the lecturers including Pandit Govind Ram Shastri and Pandit Jagdhar Joo Zadoo used to come to college in western attire, Pushp Ji was an exception. He wore only *achkan* or khadi kurta pyjama and a Gandhi cap, which was rather unconventional at that time. College Hindi Parishad conducted by him was a popular literary forum and he would encourage all Hindi students to take part in short story writing and poetry contests. I still remember having once written a short story with the title "*Aha, Surya Ast ho gaya*" which was liked by Pushp Ji and published in the college magazine, *Partap*. That was perhaps my first and the last piece. A very close friend of mine, Triloki Nath Dhar was a brilliant student of Hindi and Sanskrit who used to enliven the Parishad sessions with his poetic compositions and this made him a darling of Pushp Ji. Adopting 'Kundan' as his pseudonym, he continues to dominate the literary firmament of the country, writing in English, Hindi, Kashmiri and Sanskrit.

Sports and Physical Training was a must for students those days. I remember the names of two dedicated teachers in this discipline one Mr. Rajnath who looked after the sports. His orders even to gardeners used to be in English only, like "Nabira, dig the *Khod* (pit). Then we had the short statured Mr. Hari Krishen, whose P. T. classes were a treat to watch and to be a part of.

We had just five or six girls in our class then, mostly Kashmiri Pandits, and all of them quite pretty. Some names that I can recall even now were those of Shanta Kadalabuju, Susheela Kak, Bageshwari Zutshi, to name only a few. None of us boys would ever dare to look straight into their faces, conversing with them or talking to them being out of question. There was one elderly KP, Pandit Sona Koul, he must have been in his sixties then, who was all along chaperoning these girls or looking after their requirements inside the college. All the boys envied this lucky old man who was so close to these girls and for this he was nicknamed as *Sona Koul, Kori Mol* (Sona Koul the guardian of girls). All the students, both boys and girls, would commute to the college on foot, irrespective of distances and mostly walk on either side of the road, exchanging only fleeting glances, with no mischief on their minds. Whenever, by sheer compulsion or chance, a boy or a girl student would venture to muster courage to exchange notes on any subject with one another, it would soon become the talk of the college.

During the latter part of 1946, when we learnt that Dr. Karan Singh, the then Heir Apparent, was to join our college to pursue his studies, there was naturally a lot of curiosity in the campus. When he actually joined, the boys and girls would crane their necks to have a glimpse of the charming Prince. The Principal had arranged for a special sofa-like seat in the classroom for him which he at once rejected on the very first day, preferring to sit on the normal wooden bench along with other students. Except that he used to come to college in a car, we never noticed anything special in his behaviour as a student. I was, however, not lucky to be in his class, which was just adjacent to ours, and as such couldn't observe how he reacted with other students in his class. Incidentally, Dr. Karan Singh and myself share the same year of birth, 1931, which I mentioned to him once; I was born 2 months before him.

In our younger days, very few homes could boast of a radio set. Telephone was a luxury. I remember having managed to procure and assemble a crystal set from a discarded headphone which would beam out film music which I would enjoy as a youngster. Life was too simple. Use of Chinaware crockery was a taboo then. Of course, social interactions were frequent. Gatherings at dinners or lunches hosted on occasions like birthdays, or even death anniversaries of elders, used to be very lively. The only pastime with college-goers those days would be to evaluate the teaching capabilities or mannerisms of a particular teacher while handling his subject. Such exercises would be critical but always turn out to be educative in every sense. Cricket and Hockey were popular sports in college those days and the upcoming players were also the subject of discussions among the youth. Kanwal Krishen Hakku and Janki Sahib were the popular KP hockey players those days.

I distinctly remember the SP College Annual Day event of 1946. Her Highness Maharani Tara Devi, queen of Maharaja Hari Singh and mother of Dr. Karan Singh, was the Chief Guest. The vast college grounds wore a festive look and when the graceful Maharani, a gorgeous beauty then, arrived in a tastefully bedecked and resplendent horse-driven buggie, the royal reception accorded to her was memorable by all standards. The welcome address by Principal B. K. Madan, the Prize Distribution by the Maharani and her inspiring address to the college staff and students on the occasion remain deeply etched in my memory to this day.

More such recollections from the past may follow in due course.

[The writer is a former Director, Lok Sabha Sectt. and former Executive Director, Rotary Awards for Service to Humanity India Trust]



Remembering Sarwanand Kaul "Premi"

POET, PHILOSOPHER AND A HUMANIST

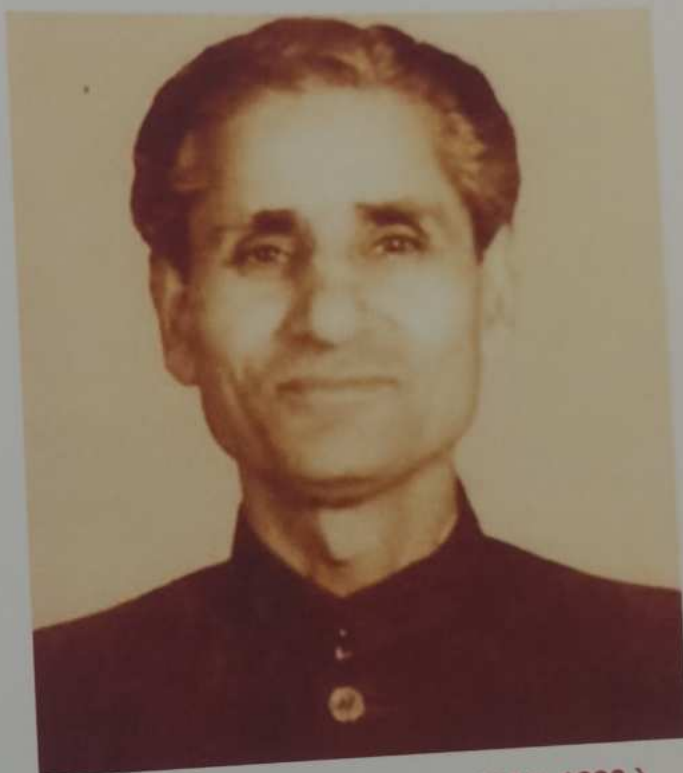
The Marauding Wind Threw All The Golden Leaves To Dust

A man with established secular credentials, A Gandhian in Thought and deeds and a man full of compassion for Humanity at large. Premi ji frequently quoted from Bhagwat Geeta and Holy Quran.

A man who's poem "Roodh Jheir" (Sudden Heavy Downpour) impressed Poet Mehjoor, a man who joined Gandhi ji's Quit India and then Quit Kashmir movement against Maharaja's rule. Premi ji was also associated with Shidmat News Paper and Cultural front in Kashmir. Not many amongst us know that Premi Ji wrote poems expressing his anguish over the arrest of Sheikh Mohd Abdullah in 1953 and also when the Holy Relic was removed by some miscreants from Hazratbal shrine in 1964. I have read some couplets from his masterly translation of Tagore's Geetanjali and have felt the depth of the scholarship of the man.

I remember a brief personal interaction with him at Mattan in 1987. Premi ji had come to meet somebody in Mattan town and after finishing his appointment, he stepped inside our Branch premises to meet Shri Sarwanand an employee of the Bank. Till then, I had only heard of him and not seen him.

"Ye Mahraa Chhu Master ji ta Beyi Chha Kashir Shaiyree Karaan, Zaaen Hunn na or He is a teacher and a Kashmiri poet as well. Don't you know him?" said Sarwanand (Bank employee) to me. I offered him a chair and he drank a glass of water. I also asked Sarwanand (Bank employee) to prepare Kehwa Tea and bring some kulcha etc. from the nearby Kashmiri baker. Premi ji sat comfortably. We had a local female employee Zeba who was a daily wage employed in the bank prior to my joining the branch. I had joined the branch in November 1986 as officer In charge in Assistant Manager Cadre. Zeba was extremely poor and lived with her family in a single room built with mud. Her single room dwelling



SARWANAND KAUL PREMI (1924 -1990)

had a thatched roof. Zeba had also met my wife in my absence and opened another front for her permanent appointment in the Bank.

"Zebuss Gaetchha Kenh Kin Baeill Chhavunn Bewkoof banaavaan or Shall Zeba's issue be decided or you are just befooling her?"

I had to attend to this query from my wife almost everyday at dinner time.

And now finding a saint like person inside the Bank, Zeba felt encouraged to seek his intervention as well. She told Premi ji "Yemiss Manager Saebuss voneitaav Mahraa Myein Chith Sozeihay Hyor Dafatar. Ba Gutch-haa Mustaqal. Ayaal daar chhuss or Kindly tell this manager

sahib to recommend my name to higher office for a permanent Post I have a family to support."

At this Premi ji intervened and looked at me "Kyaa Sa kyaa chhu amiss Bichaari. Tuluss Qalam ta Karuss Khaaer. What is the problem with this poor woman? Pick up your pen and do her a favour"

To this I clarified that I had already recommended for her permanent appointment and the issue is hanging at Srinagar controlling office where from query after query is being received with regard the sweeping area of the bank premises. I also added that some unrelated issues are being raised to deflect the core issue of her regularization. I further added that I also visited the office personally once for this issue but apparently no person is taking any decision over there.

"Who has to decide her case?" Asked Premi ji "Mr. Madan Lal Rekhi our Regional Manager" "Give me his Number?" said Premi ji.

My mind was flooded with many thoughts "What can he do where I failed?" "Is he connected with people in the Bank's Hierarchy?" "What is the harm in passing a temporary assurance to poor Zeba. He appears to be doing that." "Fine. I should have no issue in passing on the telephone number. Zeba may later say that I put some hindrance in her work" Accordingly, I gave him the number.

After just two or three days, I received a telephone call from Our Regional office in Srinagar. Manager(HR) was on line and advised me to send my recommendations afresh. He even dictated the operative part of the revised recommendations expected from me. I did the needful and dispatched my revised recommendatory letter. To my surprise, Zeba's issue was settled within some days without any further query. She was employed on one half scale wages in permanent cadre with all facilities including Uniform, Medical Assistance, LTC Benefit, Bonus and Pro Rata loan facilities.

Yes Premi Ji had done his job. I do not know how and when. But I came to know from some reliable colleagues that he had contacted Shri Girdhari Lal Dulloo (from Rainawari), a Senior Manager in the Bank and a saintly person. I never cross checked this information nor did I inform Zeba about it. That was the last and the only time I saw Premi ji.

And Zeba is a Permanent employee of the Bank now drawing a handsome salary. She has married all her children and constructed a Pucca /concrete House at Mattan. She is a happy grandmother. God bless her family.

Today is Premi ji's 24th Death Anniversary. This pious and innocent man fell to the bullets of armed

militants in his village in Kashmir.

Lollus byol gali titi na sa bani zaanh
Zoon peyi chhali-chhali titi na sa bani Zaanh
Apuuz kenh kaal yudway rathi khasi
Pazarus niyaal galli titi na sa bani zaanh
(Sarvand Kaul Premi)

("Love shall die out in toto?" "No, Not possible.

"Splitting into pieces, The moon shall fall to earth?"
"No, Not possible

"Falsehood may survive for some time?" Quite Possible.

"And truth shall vanish for good?" No. Not possible

RIP SARWANAND KAUL PREMI

As a tribute, I have translated his short story "Chalaak Groos" or "Clever Peasant" into English from Kashmiri. Premi ji wrote this story for children.

(CLEVER PEASANT)

There lived a poor peasant in a village who had a large family to feed. Except a duck, he had no other wealth to show off. He did not touch this Duck for quite some time. But then the pangs of hunger are cruel. One day, When he had nothing to eat, he decided to kill this duck for a meal. He looked around in the kitchen for some common salt and a piece of bread. Unable to find anything, he said to his wife

"Dear! How can we eat this Roasted Duck without salt or a loaf of bread? I think I need to carry this roasted Duck to the Zameendaar (Land owner) and ask for some food in exchange."

The wife nodded in agreement and said

"I think that is the correct assessment. Carry it and try."

The poor farmer now set out towards the house of the land owner

"Assalam U Alaikum. This is a small Nazraana from this poor fellow. You are a generous person. Favour me with some generosity." said the peasant as he saw the Zameendaar.

"That is a good gesture. I am really pleased. Surely! Surely! I shall help you. But my help is subject to a condition. You shall have to distribute this roasted duck amongst my family members in such a way that each person gets a piece of his choice and is satisfied. In case you fail in doing so, you should not expect any help from me. And in that event, I shall only be awarding a punishment" replied the Zameendaar.

The family of the Zameendar comprised of his wife, two sons and two daughters. In all he had to distribute the roasted Duck amongst six persons.

The clever peasant asked for a knife and then started slicing pieces from the roasted duck. He first cut a piece from head and offered it to the Land owner saying "Jenab! You are the respectable head of the family and you need a piece from the head only."

After that he cut a piece from the lower Back (Bokhturr) of the roasted Duck and offered it to the wife of the Zameendar saying "Madam! You stay inside the house and keep yourself busy managing the family affairs, accordingly you alone deserve this piece."

Thereafter he cut two legs of the roasted duck and offered them to the two sons of the Zameendar saying "You have to follow your father now. You have to walk on his footsteps. Whatever he has been doing, you need to do it. That is why I am offering these legs to you." After that he cut the two wings of the roasted duck and offered them to two daughters saying "Once you grow up, You have to fly away from your parental home. That is why I am offering these pieces to you." The reminder was the best and fleshy part of the roasted duck that comprised of some best pieces from the ribs and a sizeable part of plump back and all internal organs etc. Addressing the family, the peasant said "Now I am not in this house, so whatever is left shall be carried by me."

The Zameendar was happy with this distribution and smilingly offered some salt, bread and some eatables to the peasant. This story spread in the village like a wild fire. And another well off but greedy peasant also decided to visit the Zameendar with Nazraana. He slaughtered five ducks, roasted them and set out towards the Zameendar's house carrying the Nazraana in a bag.

Once he entered the Zameendar's house he said loudly "Assalam U Alaikum. This is a Nazraana from my side for you." The Zameendar repeated the same story and said "You shall have to distribute these five roasted ducks amongst my family members in such a way that each person gets a piece of his choice and is satisfied. In case you fail in doing so, You shall get nothing and I may be awarding a punishment as well." The greedy peasant kept playing with the roasted ducks but no way out emerged in his mind for a rational distribution thereof amongst the family members of the Zameendar. Having failed, he started beating his head in defeat.

Looking at this the Zameendar summoned the clever peasant and asked him to distribute the five ducks amongst his family members. The clever peasant now hit upon a distribution plan. He picked up one roasted duck and gave it to the Zameendar and his wife saying "Sir keep it. You were two and with this you have now become three." He now picked up another roasted Duck and offered it to two sons of the Zameendar saying "Look boys! You are now three, keep it." He then turned to toward two daughters of the Zameendar and gave them one roasted duck saying "Take it my daughters. You have also become now three". And finally he kept the remaining two Ducks for himself saying "look Jenab! I was single. Now with these two Ducks, I have also become three." Zameendar became happy at this distribution and smilingly said to the clever farmer "You are a very sharp and clever person. You took care of your own self also."

So saying, he gave some more presents to the peasant and sent him back.

(Translated from Kashmiri by Antar Mota)

Lalla Vaakh

Doeb yaeli chaev'nas doeb kani pae'they,
Sez tai saaban metsh'nam ye'tsey;

Sae'ts yeli fir'nam hani hani kae'tsey,
Ade Lalli mae prae'vem par'may gath

Lalleshuri says:-

"The next stage of my development came when the washerman took the cloth and beat it mercilessly on his washing stone slab after applying soaps and other detergents to make it soft and clean worthy to be made into a garment. Then the tailor took over who cut me into several pieces with his sharp scissors and joined them with his sharp sewing needle on his sewing machine so as to make it into a beautiful garment worthy to be worn by a king. It was only after I withstood all these trials and tribulations that I achieved my goal, total merger with my Lord."



The Breads of Kashmir

Adorable Exotic Legacies

Kashmir is famous for its time honored culinary traditions as it has an appealing reverie of ethnic bread delights. The hugely popular and immensely unbeatable *Tandoori* breads and tempting home made *Rotis* are an essential part of the rich food lexicon of Kashmir.

Food in general forms a part of every human culture and social set-up. However, love and adoration for a specific food item is purely based on the availability of the produce, native traditions and the local socio-cultural preferences. In Kashmir the daily diet centers around rice and the bread only supplements it. Steeped in the centuries old incredible history, the immensely relished bread types stand a silent testimony to the rich gastronomic treasure of Kashmir. The tasty bread delights apart from spreading mirth, cheer and auspiciousness also play a socializing role in our socio-cultural matrix by imparting resonance to our every occasion and the native event. Forming an intimate part of the social customs, cultural practices and religious rites, they are closely linked with the warp and woof of our lives. As per a conventional belief, breads stand for abundance, good fortune, social warmth, fellow feelings, familial intimacy and fertility. The breads also epitomize well-being, pleasant chi, positive mirth and merriment. They also lend grace to all our ceremonial occasions by creating a feel good ambience. The traditional breads are prepared in the earthen oven known as '*Tandoor*'. The fire wood driven earthen oven imparts a unique flavor and conspicuous taste to the bread. In the Kashmiri language, the professional baker is known as the '*Kandur*', the baker's shop as the '*Kandur Waan*' and the oven hot breads as '*Kandur Chochie*'.

The tandoori breads are classified as leavened or unleavened and are either sweet or salty. They are made from the wheat flour to which water, salt or sugar as per taste and yeast are added. In case of certain bread types,

baking soda and flour glaze are also added to the kneaded dough, which give a golden brown color and a crispy crust to specific bread types. The leavening agent of the yeast besides making bread smooth and tender also gives a fluffy appearance to the bread. The flat dough rolled out in circular shapes is stuck to the inner sides of the hot oven. The hot breads are subsequently taken out with the help of a hooked iron rod or tongs. The versatile flat breads are thin or thick, salty or sweet depending upon the specific type. They are either topped with the sesame seeds (white or yellow *Til*) in case of *Taelvor* and *Khuskhus* (poppy seeds) as in sweet bread types like *Modhur Kulcha* and *Tuktaech* etc.

The different Tandoori bread types are *Lavaas*, *Chout*, *Girdab*, *Gaev Chout*, *Bagaerkabni*, *Kulcha*, *Kutlam*, *Taelvor*, *Tuktaech*, *Modhur Kulcha*, *Shrimaal*, *Roth*, *Roomali Roti* and *Naan*. The bread varieties are common among both the Kashmiri Pandits and the Kashmiri Muslims expecting for the *Aaeb Chout* and the *Ha Kulcha*. Incidentally, the *Taelvor* is known as '*Chochivor*', *Modhur Kulcha* as '*Mitha Kulcha*' and *Gaev Chout* as '*Rogni Chout*' in the Muslim households. The *Aaeb Chout*, smaller than *Lavas* is an elongated and linear in form having a greater amount of the yeast added to the flour dough.

Breakfast Tandoori Breads

Lavaas, a popular and preferred bread in Iran, Turkey and Central Asian countries of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Azarbaijan and Armenia where it is known by the name of '*Labvaash*', is also favorite in Kashmir. Bigger in size than the *Chout* and the *Girdha*, it has a soft and flexible texture when oven fresh but dries out quickly, thereby becoming brittle with the passage of time.

Chout is the most widely used breakfast bread of Kashmir, usually enjoyed with the favorite steamy *Kehwa*. *Girdha* is a tasty, smaller and thickened bread variety in comparison to the *Lavaas* and the *Chout*. The *Gyar Chout*,

also known as the '*Ragni Chout*' by Kashmiri Muslims is a thick textured flat bread embellished with straight patterns on its upper surface. The oval or rectangular *Naan* is the most popular and enjoyable flat bread across cultures and geographical boundaries. Also known as '*Nan*', a Persian word meaning bread, *Naan* is said to owe its origin to India during the Mughal rule, during which it formed a most admired breakfast food item among the royals. The butter naan and the cheese naan are its other delightful variants. *Roomali roti* is another popular and delicious bread having a thin leathery texture. *Shrimaal* also known as the '*Sheermaal*' is a highly prized and adored festive bread made from refined wheat flour. It is enriched with milk, ghee, honey, saffron dyed water and dry fruits. It is an exquisite and imposing bread delicacy of Kashmir enjoying a sort of flagship status among the mosaic of the legendary native breads. The *Shrimaal* or *Shreemaal* owes its name to the Persian word '*Sheer*' meaning milk. *Roth* is another hallmark ethnic bread of Kashmir rarely found anywhere outside. It is an oval shaped, wide and elongated bread having a dense texture and thickened ends. It is stuffed with raisins, soaked and slashed figs, cashew nuts, apricots and coconut, which set it apart from the other breads. Known for its distinct taste and flavor, *Roth* is a special and celebrated bread for the weddings and other auspicious events. *Bagerkehani* is another flavorful celebrated bread, which besides being multi-layered, also has a soft surface appearance. The easily cut and chewed bread is meant for the designated guests and special occasions.

Evening Tea-time Breads

The salty small sized flat bread variety having a soft smooth and crisp surface is known as *Kulcha*. The *Kulcha* is an immensely enjoyed evening tea time bread. Its look alike type having a pleasant characteristic sweet taste is known as the '*Modbur Kulcha*'. It is known by the alternative name of the *Meetha Kulcha* in the Muslim households. The sweet version of the *Kulcha* is also known as the '*Kaendi Kulcha*'. In contrast to the plain and the *Modbur Kulcha*, the favorite *Kutlum* having a glossy and crisp golden brown curly crust has an adorable taste. The resembling small sized flat bread having a flair sprinkling of the sesame seeds (*Sesamum Indicum*) and a hard and brittle surface is known as *Taelvor*. It is also known by the additional name of the '*Chochivor*' in the Muslim households. The *Tuktaech* is an outstanding delightful sweet bread, which is a part of our every celebratory gesture.

Homemade Breads

The homemade breads are primarily made from the whole wheat milled flour or from the refined flour called

'*Maida*'. The unleavened Chapati also called *Roti* is a common everyday consumed flat bread. It is made from the kneaded flour called dough, to which a little salt and oil is added. The closely resembling variety of the *Roti* is known as '*Phulka*'. The thin and leavened *Phulka* is seasoned either with mustard oil or ghee, which gives it a soft texture and tastes best when taken fresh and hot. *Paratha* is a much loved three or four layered triangular, circular or square flat bread, seasoned liberally with clarified ghee. The immensely relished *Paratha* being high in flavor and taste not only stimulates but also make our taste buds zing. The deep fried top notch bread made from the *Maida* known as *Poori* is a breakfast bread usually enjoyed with curds or curry. The thin and lean *Luchi* is an exciting and imposing special occasioned oil fried bread made from refined wheat flour (*Maida*). It is a most sought after and recognizable bread at the yagneopavit ceremony of the Kashmiri Pandits and also a quintessential part of the pooja and *Naveed* items at the Tulamulla shrine

Homemade Ritual Breads

The *Roth* having a stunning taste and decorative appearance is an invocatory bread offering made as a token of devotion on the *Vinayaka Chutarthi*, locally known as '*Vinayaka Chorun*' in *Bhaderpath Shuklapaksh* for Lord Ganesha. The *Roth* prepared with inverted 'V' shaped edges on the circular sides is known as '*Kanyakvor*'. It is a special ritual bread, which is kept on the mouth of the pooja vessel during the *Pun Pooja*.

The *Gari Poori* is a flat bread of the size of the *Kulcha* made from water chestnut flour and deep fried in the mustard oil. It is consumed during the religious fasting. The *chochivor* is also a *kulcha* sized customary bread made from the rice flour which is dry baked on a tava. *Chochivor* is an important ritual bread and *Naveed* on *Shivratri* and the related *Doon-Mavas* pooja. The salty *Bubar* is one more indispensable part of the *Shivratri* pooja, which also serves as *Prasad*. It is made from the wheat flour, which is kneaded with milk instead of water and is deep fried in desi ghee. The rice flour bread cut into small pieces and subsequently deep fried in ghee is known as '*Dren*'. It is a part of the *Shivratri* and '*Doon Mavas*' pooja. The *Mongvor* having an exotic taste and flavor, is an integral component of the *Devagoan* function of the wedding and the '*Kabnayther*' function of the new born child. It is made from the pounded moong to which water chestnut flour, a little haldi, ginger powder, jeera and salt have been added. The sweet *pooris* made from the wheat flour and deep fried in Desi Ghee are invocatory breads during the *Satdeer Pooja*. The phenomenally favorite and much loved sweet *Ladoos* are an indispensable part of the festival of Ganesh Chaturthi,

locally known as '*Gan Chodab*'. Likewise the sweet and crisp, square or triangle shaped snack known as '*Shakarpara*' occupies an important place in the Yagneopavit Ceremony and religious festivals.

Seasonal Delight 'Yaji'

The flavorful and salty '*Yaji*' made of rice flour is an ethnic splendor of Kashmir prepared on the first day of the monsoon season, locally known as '*Vabrat*'. Taken with the native wild vegetable called '*Lissa*' on the first day of '*Vabrat*', it is said to keep intestinal disorders at bay for the entire rainy season. The Kashmiri version of the plain Dosa known as '*Tchirchout*' is an unleavened and irresistible local bread delicacy made from the rice flour batter to which jeera, walnut kernels and salt as per taste are added. The wheat flour bread to which fresh rose petals have been added is called '*Posh Chout*'. It is enjoyed with '*Kehwa*' again stewed with fresh rose petals known as '*Posh chai*'. The finely thin '*Kulcha*' laced with the poppy seeds is appareled both in taste and flavor known as '*Ha Kulcha*'. '*Makki ki Roti*' locally known as '*Makai Chout*' made from the corn flour and '*Tomula Chout*' prepared from the rice flour are much loved holiday breads in Kashmiri households.

Bread customs among Kashmiri Pandits

The water soaked '*Shivratri*' Walnuts accompanied by any of the '*Tandoori*' bread types are distributed as '*Prasa*' among the relatives and neighbours as they are regarded as harbingers of auspicious tidings. On the festival of '*Pun*', the '*Naveed*' of the '*Roth*' is always distributed with '*Phulka*'. The '*Kulcha*' or a '*Tandoori*' bread forms a part of the '*Navreh Thaal*' on the occasion of the New Year day of the Kashmiri Pandits, known by the local name of '*Navreh*'.

The '*Tandoori*' breads are taken as a gift by married ladies when they come back to their in laws from their parental homes at the time of the '*Shivratri*' or any other socio-cultural function. The sweet '*Tandoori*' bread '*Tuktach*' forms a part of the parting gift of the customary '*Sutraat trunk*' given to the bride by her parents. At the time of '*Shishur*', the ritual observed in the month of '*Posh*' (Poh), yellow meat preparation, locally known as '*Kaelya*' and '*Phulkas*' are distributed among relatives and neighbours. On the birth day of the son-in-law, the '*Bagerkhani*' or the '*Gaev Chout*' accompanied by curds are sent to the in laws by the parents of their daughter. On '*Shudmos*', the six monthly ritual observed in the memory of the deceased soul, '*Phulkas*' along with '*halwa*' or oil fried fish are distributed among relatives and neighbours. It is a part of the local '*Teel Duen*' custom.

Bread customs among Kashmiri Muslims

The '*Tandoori*' breads are an important food item at

the time of engagement ritual of '*Nisbaen*' and '*Phirlati*' custom. The breads given to new brides are known as '*Nishi Chochi*'. In contrast to it, the breads given as a gift on happy occasions are known as '*Mubarak Chochi*'. The '*Tandoori Roth*' is distributed during the tonsuring rite of the child, locally known as '*Zarakatsay*'. The '*Roth*' is also distributed at the graveyards in memory of the departed souls. The bread touched to the knees of the toddler, who has just begun to walk is called '*Koth Chout*'. It is said to ensure steady steps for the child. In the widely popular '*Kabnaev Saenz Chout*' rite, '*Tandoori*' breads supplemented with '*Kehwa*' or '*Noon Chai*' are distributed at the shrine.

The '*Tosbi Chout*' is another ritualistic '*Niyaaz*', believed to usher in divine favours and well being of the house inmates. The ritual is known as the '*Niyaaz Chout*'.

Breads in Shared Folk Beliefs

Breads also form a part of the common folk weave of both the Kashmir Pandits and the Kashmiri Muslims. According to a popular belief, '*Tandoori*' breads (usually in odd number) kept overnight under the pillow of a person supposedly under an evil spell, are fed to the dogs in the morning, to give immediate retrieval results. Likewise, these breads when circled around the head of an ailing person and later fed to dogs, are supposed to give spectacular remedial results. The '*Kabnaev Saenz Chai*' supplemented by '*Tandoori*' rotis for seeking divine favours and blessings is a common tradition both among the Kashmir Pandits and the Kashmiri Muslims.

Breads as a part of Kashmiri Language

The legendary breads have also made their entry into our mother tongue and have become an enduring part of the Kashmir Language. The bread related popular expressions are : i) '*Kathun (myanen)*', '*chochi Kerni*' (To care a fig for one's utterances), ii) '*Hoonuieyn Aethi Oat Maandravun*' (To assign a task to an erring person), iii) '*Chochi Daez Hayeth Chandun*' (to make huge searching efforts). The excessive fondness and adoration for the '*Tandoori*' breads have made the Kashmiri Pandits to stay faithfully with them even in their exile. They have taken both the professional Kashmiri bakers and the '*Tandoori*' breads beyond the confines of Kashmir region and have popularized them in unfamiliar locales. It is no exaggeration to say that buying the '*Tandoori*' rotis from the mohalla baker early in the morning is our daily ritual. Moreover, enjoying the morning tea with the '*Tandoori*' bread sitting on the floor-spread of the room is our time honored family tradition.. Undeniably every Kashmiri irrespective of his caste, creed and economic status continues to have an amazing appetite for them. Infact, serving steamy '*Kehwa*' and '*Tandoori*' breads to every stepping-in guest is our signature style of welcome and greetings even now.



Shiv Ratri

A Socio-Spiritual Festival

It is a requirement of a living human community to have faith in one form or the other, and therefore celebrate festivals, rituals ceremonies etc. It is since yore that Shiv Ratri is celebrated by Kashmiri pundits. Kashmiri pundit community has under gone ups and downs over the period of time. When the Kashmiri pundit community was in its high tone the festival of Shiv Ratri was celebrated in an upbeat manner. But history has forged tyranny on the community for the genocide repeatedly. The community has undergone exodus seven times as recorded in history. But celebrating Shiv Ratri has continued ever and always though it has gone changes in the form of celebrations. Community populations fled the place of ancestral habitation and adopted the celebrations according to the place of settlement but never gave up celebrating the ritual.

There has always been a section of the Kashmiri pundit community who stayed back in the valley either in hiding or by adopting other means. And whatever the reminders of the population in hiding, they would solemnize Shiv Ratri even in hiding and the auspiciousness of Shiv Ratri was maintained in whatever way possible. The Shiv Ratri has always been observed as a result of which the tradition of the ceremony is alive up till now. Shiv Ratri is celebrated all over the world by the believers. The celebration of Shiv Ratri all over the world mainly consists of prayers to lord shiva and observing a fast on the date.

But the Shiv Ratri in Kashmiri pundits is celebrated

in a particular form. Shiv Ratri symbolizes the marriage of ceremony of Shiva and Parvati. The personification of lord Shiva is not limited to any definitions so to say each and every definition that exists today or existed in past or will exist in future to define this universe and beyond, is part of the definition of Shiva. Shiva is a combination of two elements 1) SHAV and 2) SHAKTI. SHAV is mass and SHAKTI is energy. The universe exists because of the union of these two elements i.e. mass and energy. Mass as such cannot exist. It will only exist when energy holds it together. Energy cannot be set free. It will devastate. Therefore the energy is held in mass. It is this mass in the form of Shav and energy in the form of Shakti that marry to keep a bond to form the identity the identity of existence. This union of Shav and Shakti is the cause of existence and gives the stable and wholesome expression of existence: Shiva. Therefore Shiva is the complete expression of existence. This expression is perfect. It is this expression of existence that makes everything to exist i.e. nothing exists beyond this expression of existence which is created by the union of mass and energy i.e. shav and shakti to exist as Shive. And this is the manifestation of Lord Shiva. And Kashmiri pundits celebrate this expression of union of mass and energy through the marriage of mass and energy in the form of Shav and Shakti to have the tangible form of Shiva that exists everywhere for everybody to realize.

In Kashmir, Kashmir Shavism, which stands the scientific scrutiny and social explanations of the universe

as a subtle identity is very prevalent to constitute kashmiri, culture, rituals, customs especially with kashmiri pundits though the majority population of Kashmir, who converted under the tyranny and terror of invaders still keep the reminiscence alive in one form or the other. kashmiri shivism has extended its influence directly or indirectly to the religion of invaders in the form of sufism.

Shiv Ratri is the prime festival of kashmiri pundits and celebrating it adds charm to all dimensions of life of people who believe and practice observing Shiv Ratri. It is with the dimensions of the Kashmir Shivism thought that kashmiri pundits celebrate Shiv Ratri. It used to be a fifteen days long set of functions to begin on the first day of lunar calendar in the fortnight of "Fagun Gatpuchi" and on the thirteenth day festivity reached to the peak. On this day the celebration include preparing a variety of dishes, performing the hawan, offering oblations and sermonizing the marriage of Shav and Shakin to get one identity out of the two symbolized by Shiva.

Shiv Ratri has been the main social function in the cultural ambit of kashmiri pundits. It is spiritual and religious. It was great fun and festivity especially for the children to make merry. The environment of festivity and glee existed and spread in social circles at large because of rich sharing traditions. Shiv Ratri lost its sheen and is getting to lose its long traditions and cultural richness day in and day out because of the repetition of the mass displacements (genocide) of the kashmiri

pundit population from its place of home and hearth. The festivity of the fortnight has now condensed itself to a couple of days or just one day especially with the sections of the people having been forced to leave the land of their ancestral habitation. The feast preparations on the Shiv Ratri have seen a substantial change. The form of prayers have seen a substantial change. The participation of children for glee has seen a change. The changes are wholesome. A change is process of existence, but a change to give up ancestral affiliations is a process of collapse. Kashmiri pundits in the present day scenario of having been forced to flee from their hearth and homes are seen to lose the charm of shiv ratri, day in and day out. This is more true with the sections of the community that live outside the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Various institutions have come, strong which try to enshrine the cultural ethos of the Kashmiri pundit community in its progeny to arrest the collapse of the community. Shiv ratri is one of the community festivals that is and should be given high attention by institutions and families. The festival of shiv ratri is great socio-cultural asset with Kashmiri pundit community.

This social enthusiasm, spiritual experience and the festivity of the joys of celebrating Shiv Ratri can only be arrested for revitalization when the community gets to live in the ancestral place of habitation to call it own home in home land.

*Edited excerpts from authors
forth coming book "He and Me"*

With best compliments from

*Dr. 2935
15/11/15*

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Kashmir University Anthem

O Mother Kasheer! All founts of knowledge have been
at your bidding command;
O you! Who make the Vitasta gush forth,
whose wisdom profound flows perennially through our souls.

You willed, and this seat of learning came into being
in this paradise on Earth.
This fountain of knowledge made a leap at your will;
and yours was the intent which bodied forth
into what we behold around us here.
You are the wisdom of our past which kindly leads us on today.

This is the land that heard Khemindra's poignant tale,
and quickened Bilhana's fond memories.

It is here that Kalhana's Vitatsta sprawls far and wide, and Abhinav Gupta's ocean of knowledge surges high.

You are the refulgent flame of Lalla's verse;
you are the solemnity of Sheikh's sacred hymns.

On this campus dawns the benediction of Hazratbal,
and the Moon and the Dal-lake gift the dusk's tranquility.

Each sunny moment here is the beetle's dance,
each dusky moment the quiet narcissus.

When aspiring souls take their wing,
Badshah comes forth to greet them;
When devotion stirs within us,
we raise a song of praise to Iqbal.

Ghani who tore his shirt to shreds,
speaks for the conscience aroused.

The fresh and bold imagination of Nehru
wring milk out of perspiring rocks.

It is here that Harmukh's peaks cool the scorching summer,
and the Lion's eyes burn bright in the caves of snow.
Under the glory of this lighthouse we turn into various suns.

Playing ecstatically about the vernal bush,
we have the heightened sense of Beauty
and realise the dream of Love.

This soil shall blossom into diverse hues of the rainbow,
and the firmament shall feel restless as mercury.

[Translated from the Kashmiri jointly by the teachers of the
P.G. Deptt. of English, the University of Kashmir]

کشمیر یونیورسٹی ہند ترانہ

ای سون کشیری چمی آتقی وچه علی بکو ساگر ساری
وچه وزی اڑ سامین سپن منز محکمه عری ملا قلندر ییاجاری
چانی رخسون یہ دانش گاہ چھ سورگس منز تھہر پید

چانی الہامیہ یہ ناگ و زو، چانی رماک تعہد سپہ

چانی۔ تھ کا لچ آگاہی سانی از کا لچ پونا داری

ہی موج کشمیری چھی آہتو پہتہ وتھہ علی ہنکو ساگر ساری

وہجہ وازی اڈ ساعین سین منز چھکھ عری فاکلک ڈری یا چاری

پینہ شوخ شمعیند ر فی تروش باوتھہ پینہ یلہن سہد موت یاد و فر

پیتھ کاہن سزوتھ کاڈکڈان پیتھ اچھنوگپت سُنڈ گیان سوڈر

پیتہ للہ واکھن ہنز زلمہ و فی رہنہ پیتہ شیخہ شرکمن ہنز زلمہ و آری

ہی موج کشمیری چھی آتو پتہ وتھہ علو ہکو ساگر ساری

وہجہ و زری! پڑساہین سپن منز چھکھ عرفا نک ڈری یا جا ری

پیتھ مچ رحمت حضرت بل پیتھ شاچ فرحت زون تہ ڈل

پد تھ تاپہ شیبہ پیچہ پیری گتہ پد تھ تھ ہائیر گرتھوپ نیمبر زل

وہمچہ شوق، تہہ بدشاہس آلو، گریز عشق تہہ اقبالس یاری

ہی موج کشمیری چھی آہتر پتہ و تھہ علو ہکو ساگر ساری

وہتھ وڑی! اتر سامن سپن منز چھکھ عرفا نک وڑی یا حاری

بیدار ضمیرن ہنر ماوتھ بھاگ گریبان خاک غنی

انصارى خالزہ ہفتہ درو کول انہر و سفتر حکمہ نہر کو کہنہ

نیگز چشمه به یون که تال شمع شمع گو به مشهور احوال

چند روز بعد از آنکه من و پسرانم به کوهستان رسیدیم

بنی سون سپری پتی اندو پتی وھ گدو سار ساری

ن ابرسان پن سز مسک سرفا نک درو یا جاری

یہ لوہر منار کہ پر پوا کر اٹھا اس وقت تھ احاب ہو

نہ شوچے ہر پٹھہ وولہ سہہ سہہ سنک ظون اولک خاب وچھو

قمرس رنگ ژھلے سونولہ مکھلے، بیتھہ فطہس پار دی و پھواری

ہی موج کشمیری چھی آخری پتہ و تھہ علو ملک ساگر ساری

ہی موج کشمیری چھی آتی پتہ وتھہ علو مکو ساگر ساری

وہجہ وری! پڑ ساعین سپین منز چھکھ عرفا نک ڈری یا جاری



25 YEARS OF EXODUS

Achievements, Shortcomings and a Way Forward

At the very outset let me ask as to why the Kashmiri Pandits have always emerged victorious and come out with flying colours whenever there were onslaughts on them and they were subjected to sufferings and hardships for no fault of theirs. The answer is simple. Non violence, patience, endurance and above all trust make this miniscule community a harbinger of peace and tolerance. Use of food also plays an important role in their existence. To trust the most untrustworthy is the hallmark of this great civilization. The etymology of the words like Bata and Pandit presents an ample proof of being learned and visionary. Moreover it is quite clear that an unblemished and transparent entity is used to bearing the brunt and facing challenges to sustain. Sir Walter R Lawrence in his book "Valley of Kashmir" writes, "It is a curious fact that very few Pandits died in the great famine of 1877-79. Apart from the fact that Pandits had great authority in the country and were better off, there is another fact that the Pandits are the more dainty feeders, and that their religion accustoms them to abstinence from food, and thus perhaps they were better able to endure hunger." Resilience is one more aspect of Kashmiri Pandits, who stop not till they reach the mile stone. Here if I use hunger symbolically, it means a God fearing community Pandits doesn't go in for star wars to capture the sky and land and wants to amass whole wealth, instead has great contentment. Down through the ages Kashmiri Pandits have been advocating enrichment of our great Kashmiri brotherhood irrespective of religious affiliations to make the Valley of Kashmir a living paradise in its true spirit. But unfortunately this unilateral desire could not find any takers. The slogan of peaceful co existence raised by the Baradari fell to deaf ears. Ironically nothing is being learnt from such counter productive steps. There is no denying of the fact that at every level our Baradari extended the hand of friendship to everyone irrespective of any discrimination. The peace loving community got hounded out only because of its good nature as law abiding citizens of this great country. This is not a new

phenomenon, that we were forced to leave our "Vitasta Dev Bhumi" in 1990 for good or bad and had to abandon our homes and hearths, earlier also we had witnessed numerous such horrific occasions when the Valley spent its nights without its aborigines. Be that as it may, it is a fact that every litmus test has been successfully passed. Beyond the Jawahar Tunnel, whole of India was Punjab for us and we never knew the psyche of the people outside the valley. Yet we continued our journey for unknown locations only to save our honour and dignity which we preserved and protected at any cost. As a result of this greatest human tragedy ever, Kashmiri Pandits continue to be neglected, sidelined and unaccounted for because they follow the path of righteousness. History repeats itself, as a Kashmiri community we have made bridges, homes, schools and hospitals etc for human beings in return what we the self made people got is not worth mentioning. How come a small community, dictate terms and influence people. Down the ages we have nurtured values of universal brotherhood and religious tolerance. Being natives and aborigines of Kashapmar and peace loving at heart, Pandits never ever kept any grudge whatsoever against any other community. But ironically the trust and faith that was reposed in got automatically shattered and this hapless human race was shunted out. It may be recalled that a common Kashmiri Pandit never had any problem in settling in any neighborhood dominated by other people. At that point of time when we were kicked out of our beloved motherland, nobody had thought of the prolonged ordeal and trauma that followed the greatest human tragedy in the nineties. Even some forecasters had viewed this exodus as a temporary phase. Now almost fifty years including days and nights have elapsed, still we are far away from our roots. Vote Banks have played a vital role in ensuring existence of human races but unfortunately about 7 Lac votes does not matter when politics of such banks is played by the politicians. There is no hue and cry on our miseries and tribulations only a lip service when it warrants to suit one's interests.

Achievements:- One cannot deny the fact that a Kashmiri Pandit can make anything possible by virtue of his pure and perfect knowledge. A connoisseur, he can judge every step with sagacity and wisdom. Neither does he deceive anybody nor gets deceived easily. Getting accustomed to and settling in an alien environment is not an easy task. Moreover, adjustment in a hostile environment is the most difficult job. Pandits could do both these things without any problem. It is not that how you are adjusted but how you get adjusted. A Kashmiri Brahman (intellectual) is a firm believer, he does believe in God (Param Atman) and whatever he does, dedicates and devotes the same to the Bhagwan. He completely surrenders before the will of God and trusts in his destiny. Every Pandit worships daily come what may. When you believe the Great Almighty, you achieve what you want and crave for. A Kashmiri Hindu is an achiever even if he is in great trouble. I would like to quote Walter R Lawrence once again to prove my point. He talks of Kashmiri Hindus living in villages as well as city. "The later is a man who works in his fields, and he is often a simple hard working and healthy person. The Hindus of the city are a very intelligent and intellectual race of men, of excellent manners. They can undergo great strain and fatigue when need arises, in spite of their soft gentle appearance." Kashmiri Pandits have never been losers. History can bear it out. Every time, when there was a forced eviction, Pandits bounced back with full vigour and wit and metamorphosised into great achievers. During our oblivion, it was only the Maa Jagat Amba and Bhagwan Shankar, who protected and preserved us. There is no denying the fact that uprooted Kashmiri Brahmans achieved a lot, what could not have been imagined earlier. But this wealth in any case cannot be compared with what we had in our Valley of forefathers. The real peace of mind and solace that we would enjoy in our native land cannot be replaced with the synthetic and pompous expression upon our faces here on this arid surface. A Kashmiri Pandit can convert barren land into lush greeneries and a hell into heaven and even can make secular a sacred. He proved it, when he braved hostile weather conditions under open skies, was stung by snakes and scorpions while pitching tents and hutments to save his life and dignity. How come an esteemed being, an owner of valuable movable and immovable property living a princely life and enjoying the comforts of mother nature could cope up with the trying situations arising out of our mass exodus in the 90's. But this innocent and hapless Pandit Baradari showed to the so called champions of Human Rights that it can live even in an igloo like a prince. A small four walled rented room with no basic facilities housed every department of life in which small children, aged and frail parents and

daughters were looked after with no privacy. As they say, "Knowledge is Power". Kashmiri Bara (A learned man) never ever compromised with the education of his children. Giving them the best possible education is his goal. Miseries, hardships and sufferings teach man a lot about real life. Street lamp posts, lanterns, candles and batteries illuminated the minds of our children. With no source of income, except a meager relief amount, Baradari people could hardly afford to send their children to good schools. But the maxim, "Where there is a will there is a way" kept our spirit high. These concentration and incarceration camps gave birth to our brightest stars, who now fire the imagination of knowledge seekers in almost every part of the globe. These one room settlements created IAS officers, IITians, Engineers, Scientists, Doctors, Jurists and great educationists and others. Above all we could keep our Batil (A way of life based on practical and deep knowledge) alive at any cost. We can boast of such achievements in our Wan Wags. Apart from this we are now being roped in for decision making process. Whether it is USA or Europe, our voice is taken into consideration, thanks to our energetic and charismatic sons of the soil, who have been on the forefront to highlight the plight of the original inhabitants of Kashmir. During these last 25 years in exile, if there is one more accomplishment that we attained is that we did not lose our cool. Our consistency was like a beacon light, holding out a hope for a bright tomorrow.

Shortcomings :- Veteran Gandhian, Freedom Fighter, Educationist, Poet and Author Sarwanand Kaul Premi had once said "For a prosperous and cohesive community; three things are a must and these are Courage, unity and an able leadership." There is a need of self introspection and self appraisal to establish that are we really real sentinels of our Kashap Bhumi, culture, language and heritage? This is also a fact that in the past, on several occasions Baradari stood up against injustice and forced the system to change its mindset. This ensured some dividend and positive outlook. There are glaring examples to show when minorities like us rose to the occasion and made great strides in almost every area of life. Some civilizations were at the verge of extinction but timely intervention and rejuvenation saved them from being extinct and these civilizations are again flourishing. Russian, French, German, Chinese always speak their own languages proudly and don't give any weightage and priority to English. First of all we have to bear it in our mind that Language never dies instead it is made to die. If we take the example of Bengalis or south Indians they always speak their mother tongues whether they are at home or in any developed country. They take pride in speaking the language of their ancestors. Being

proud Kashmiris we shy to speak in our mother tongue. For us speaking in Kashmiri means depreciating and devaluing our identity. Our craze for English is not unknown. The daughter of Dev Bhasha Sanskrit, Kashmiri epitomizes our great civilization. Culture also never perishes instead it gets renaissance. Culture whether overt or covert makes a community feel great. A baba Culture is indeed a unique thing to have manifested. There is hue and cry everywhere about our culture being annihilated and language being suppressed. Let me say with authority that come what may our culture and language will never ever die. For 25 years now we have been listening that our culture and language have virtually come to an end and this we say not in any alien language but in Kashmiri itself. That is the irony. The fact is that our culture and Language have not ended nor are these going to end any way. Convergence of opinion, voicing in unison, unanimity and accommodation are the hallmark of a united, cohesive and a progressive society. There is a huge communication gap between Baradari people. Let me confess that hardly do we meet eyeball to eyeball to share our courtesies and pleasantries. We would rather change the route to avoid any eye contact. Mushroom growth of our political and social organizations also does not augur well because agendas are neither unanimous nor broad based. Yes we have leaders in numbers. If we sum up what we achieved politically during the last 25 years the achievement is a big zero. Palatial houses, flats, costly cars, smart phones and dining in five star hotels does not make any sense when there is no real or permanent address to write or share.

Way forward :- Collective approach, united stand,

firm determination and vigorous pursuance are keys to success. We have to bear this fact in our minds once for all that Pandits are incomplete without their birth place, Kashmir. We have got every right to be there and have our own houses in the same localities where we used to live and where from we were uprooted. It may be recalled that taking majority community members into confidence is of paramount importance. Overtly we say that when Kashmir has hounded us out, what is the fun in returning then. But our hearts are always there and at least a couple of trips a year are made. Come what may we have to ensure a regular contact with our brethren living there. I salute them for braving every odd to remain rooted with the land of their ancestors. We can't afford to be negligent when it is a matter of our roots. A University in the Valley for minorities named after Sharda, Kashap, Laltadatiya or Shri Bhat on the pattern of Islamic University in Awantipura will be a goodwill gesture. Moreover daily live telecast of morning as well as evening puja and aarti from Mata Kheer Bhawani and Chakreshwar Parbat sanctum sanctorum will go a long way in imbibing our great Kashmiri Sanskaras in our folks especially children. A new beginning has to be made somewhere for a bright future. Lets believe, "An enemy of today may turn a good friend tomorrow." Mahatma Gopi Nath Kaul (A great spiritual guide, philanthropist and an academician) had said, "We have to move forward like a swan which pushes water back with its webbed feet and rows ahead." Swami Vivekanand quoted, **"If faith in ourselves had been more extensively taught and practiced, I am sure a very large portion of the evils and miseries that we have would have vanished."**



M.K.Kaw

Shuhul Taaph

February is the gentlest month
When spring beckons with pleasurable breeze
The sun neither cruel nor cold
But shining with an agreeable warmth
A cordial luminosity
A genial affection
A muted radiance

While nature erupts into a blaze of colours
In all the shades of the spectrum
And alien Delhi puts on an amiable aspect
Of temperate friendliness,
Temporarily to beguile the benumbed hearts
of these unfortunate exiles from the northern climes.



The Name Game

All bleary eyed and groggy, I woke up to a chaotic morning. As my aunt poured me a freshly brewed cup of tea, I could see a storm brewing in my teacup.

So what was the mayhem all about? Some were swearing, some visibly upset and some others looked so grumpy that you wouldn't want to touch them with a six feet barge pole, lest they burst out in a stream of tears.

Way early in the morning what was it that had managed to stir my family so visibly?? What had managed to impact people from all age groups??

And then... I chanced upon that news item which stated that Shankaracharya and Hari Parbat had been rechristened to Koh-e-Sulaiman and Koh-e-Maran respectively!!!!

Oh my God!!! When did this happen??? Why did this happen??? And they were even letting this happen with a legitimate approval. The storm had moved from the teacup to my insides. How could this possibly happen? How was this even allowed? And I was jerked wide awake from my semi slumber state.

My moods changed with insane frequencies. From anger to sadness, my moods fluctuated like a pendulum. I recalled all those childhood trips when Shankaracharya served as a first lesson at hiking and going to Hari Parbat meant racing up the stairs with siblings to grab the lion's share of the freshly offered 'teher-charvan'. And now all of a sudden I was expected to relate to these places as

Koh-e-Sulaiman and Koh-e-Maran. Impossible! It sounded so alien. I felt like an old time bride who was expected to change everything when she got married including her name to ensure that it finished her identity. It was an awful feeling and it felt as though Kashmir had further slipped into a black hole for us. Ever elusive!

And to top it all Shakespeare had the gumption to say What's in a name? I was even angrier with the bard for

having coined that phrase. How could he say that? There was everything in a name; attachment, memories, association and above all a sense of identity.

I recalled how often desecration and rebranding had happened in Indian history and it plunged me further into a vortex of sadness. And then like warm soothing sunrays on a dreary wintry day the Buddha smile at me. From a nook of my memory the Buddha peeped at first, smiling a naughty knowing smile and then slowly reached a towering height with a condescending smile as if making fun of my turmoil.

Yes, they were the Buddhas of Bamiyan !! And they had managed to jerk my mind from slipping into sadness. They bore testimony to the fact that no matter what you do to destroy the identity of such places; history will always retain the realms of their reality.

They were bombed, disfigured, desecrated and destroyed but they will continue to remain just that; "The Buddhas of Bamiyan" through the annals of time and nothing and no one can take that away from them. When the Taliban had just finished destroying them, 50 more such caves were discovered in the same place and it also had the entire world community from Japan to Sri Lanka vow to restore them back to their former glory. But despite the destruction you could never take them away from the History of Afghanistan. They will continue to be the finest works of Gandhara art. So no matter what anyone does legitimately or otherwise, the essence of a place will forever remain etched in the grains of history.

So today it was the Koh-e-Maran, tomorrow a Kheer Bhawani could be Takht-i-Khatija but when that diligent student of life scratches the surface, the real waters of the spring will always burst forth with changing colours of life. The Shankaracharya will continue to be the seat of learning and spirituality. The Hari Parbat will also stand this test of time with its rock solid determination and continue to remain what it is; the presiding deity of Srinagar!

I laughed at my knee jerk reaction. The bard was right! What's in a name after all???

(Shivani has been a telecom professional for over a decade and writes in her spare time. Write to her on Shivani.Khazanchi@gmail.com)





The Revisit Encounter with Voices

Bola's visit to his home in 2010, after two decades of displacement, was a peculiar discovery of his world view, construed with 'manufactured uncertainties' and a feeling of fear but an acute desire to see his childhood friends, neighbours, teachers and finally his home, the ancestral abode. Decentring has its advantages. Boundaries eclipse and circumferences could be redrawn. The new social might not be the old limit, but it therefore needs that episteme, which could give its ranges and at the same time make it aware of stretchable without harming the roots. Religions would live with cutting edges, but it could be a common philosophy that would be for accommodative pluralities, based on compassion and altruism without branding it. It would be philosophy of nativity and nature disciplining science and confessional codifications to give best and desirable knowledge to the world full with diversities bended in colour and culture. That is not a big deal for these newly established institutions, provided that identifies second-generation resource personnel and agencies in concurrence with the curriculum mandate. It would be intermediate technologies and not the high grip scientific instruments. It could be Kashmiri native wisdom and lived philosophy and not the codified promises. Religious have capacities to give us that, let us take our own share. These were the questions that would rankle his mind, besides, a mixed bag of fear and excitement.

It was an encounter with his place after twenty years of separation. Bandipur had changed a lot. From beautiful thinly populated town, amidst Madhumati and mountains, where temples and mosques would awake one and all to start the day had grown thickly populated geography. Shops after shops and house after house had made it a town without planning. Madhumati had shrinkage, so looked the lingam and images in the temple

shortened. Greenery had given way to asymmetrical concrete constructions and social seemed defaced in charm and look. Bandipur and Kalusa had become one town. Most of the known families of his time, like Mirs, Jans and Nazikis; all had migrated to the city. His elderly neighbours, father's friends and some of his close friends, who would hug him whenever he would be back from Banaras, were not there to greet him, consumed by time. Social demography had changed the traditional geography. The rich families from Gurez had taken all the land cultivable for building their houses. The town had become small. Far in the mountains, it was looking still serene and beautiful. Nearness was not soothing to the eyes. Possibly mentally; he was where he had left this place. It was the first time experience to Bola that his own life looked beautiful but the world looked ugly. Normally, it would be vice versa. Some of the elderly persons, who were his seniors in the school, interacted with him in detail asking about the common pandit acquaintances and about his own family. It was meeting with warmth and emotions. They were depressed with the developments that led to the change of the social formation. Nothing would give them peace unless their memories would find some solace. "What would they now want to happen", asked Bola to his teacher, Prof Zargar, who was quick in his reply, "Well, common persons never had their opinion. They believed what they were told. Ensuing times too would not bring any geographical change. However, people want peace to prevail and the leadership wanted its face saving". Bola told him that there were write-ups after write ups just about that there should be some solution to the Kashmir problem and Bola enquired what that solution could be visualise. Prof. Zargar was evasive on this question. He replied, "I personally feel that they want India and

Pakistan to come to some final decision. Kashmiris by and large would accept that. For Kashmir, no longer is now a cohesive society. Pandit minority, though displaced, still wants a share in the land and resources and so were the other factions. To bring Kashmiris in the dispute would mean to make pieces of Kashmir. Besides, Jammu and Ladakh, already two distinct entities, would not like to be a part of that settlement". Zargar Sahib was a conscious and popular teacher, who was teaching English literature in the Government Degree College, Sopore. It was a nostalgic meeting with Prof. Zargar. Zargar Sahib had grown thin and weak. It was his turn to ask Bola that how he perceived the change in Bandipur after decades. Bola replied, "Sir, you would agree, that the definitions have changed now, though the essences remain the same. Social relationships were spending time within own spaces. Even if crossing spaces, it still would mean 'nature constrains social activity'. Ownership and access to land has become qualitatively different from our times. Transformation of time, nature and space were then identifiable where as now remain fractured." Zargar Sahib agreed that changes over the decades were abrupt impositions which were more confusing than accumulative. "I know it was difficult for you to take a decision to return, but why do not make it a possibility", said Zargar Sahib. Bola, after a captivating smile, replied, "Sir, thirty years ago I was here, not because you wanted me to but because we were of the same core. Today, that core is fractured and we are part- apart, cut out. Now on our choice it cannot become a whole again, for the preference has no consensus and social is also fractured. If I join you now, it would not be possible to mingle up completely. I do not know what I would be called, but I certainly would be part-apart, a different part and that 'different' would be a political difference which would finish me finally." "If you are liquidated, I would not be complete" "True, the only option I have is to survive and minority cannot be liquidated. It has to be accepted but may be in a different zone... difference to be accepted in consensus, not to be confronted or rejected, for I shall not be liquidated. I need home and not a perpetual house of disagreement, which would again split".

Bola found time to meet his father's friend, Prof. Fazli; a respected person now in his late seventies. Prof. Fazli warmly patted him. Conversations went on. While his daughter in-law brought some tea in a kettle that looked like a Samavar. "It looks like a Samavar". "Now samavars are ornamental, like our secular traditions." He continued that the cultural capital was there, but without the educated erudite Pandit community, it would not have its blending impact. A few good persons were there but nothing significant to have any impact. Ornamental

Pandit community had become defigitive community now. They were always small in number, but they were functional and referent points in the history. Now, in secular India and for Kashmir also, they were to be preserved. Bola was not surprised that Prof. Fazli was speaking a language of loss. He explored him further with a question, "How about Mushraf's four point formula that was in vogue till recent times." Fazli Sahib gave a pause and replied, "I would not see it as a face saving mechanism; I would look at it as dangerous and confusing. They were very happy when Pandits left this place, presuming it would lead to the process of Islamization and so forth, and then Pakistan. What did we get from your displacement, a huge loss of human lives and a broken society riddled with corruption and fractured relationships? Neither we had Pakistan nor was there any Islamic society. Now this four-point programme is sold to us that it would bring peace in this region. These political elites, whether with India or with Pakistan, independent or with no judgement have their material benefits secured and intact. Beyond that they are not bothered. To me, it would lead to further uncertainty and it will absolve India from its financial and state welfare credibility and answerability, which will have a devastating impact on the valley. Pakistan is in no position to absorb or share the burden as India does. Kashmir is a white elephant. These people have no pro-poor agenda. They only sell dreams, without any vision and not knowing its ramifications on poor Kashmiris. Then, we will not only have an acute lawlessness but we will have a turnout of a primordial society. I am worried that after losing mutual admiration and accommodation; we have gone back to ages. We have become stone pettlers." He was not wishing further erosion of Kashmiri tradition, if anything was really left. He spoke in pieces that bargain and development could only be attained from India alone. The main political leadership knew it well. Bola knew that in his youth, Prof. Fazli was a leftist. He was a Muslim, but would have respect for all the religions. In an alight vain remark, he said, "Not in distant past, when we had a good number of Pandits, did we find that names, other than signifying faith, had any impact on life. Rahim died at the age of seventy and so was Gopinath's life span. Whatever problems Sham Lal had, so had Manzoor Sahib. We all lived in the same nature". While Bola finished his tea, a little child of about eight years old came running into the lap of Fazli Sahib and whispered into his ears, "Baba, is he the same as Kaka(her father)told me that he is a 'batta'". Zulfi and Masood, her peer group children have also come to see this 'batta'. Fazli Sahib was taken aback; and he hastily added that she was a naughty daughter of his younger son, born in 1993. Fazli Sahib, in

heart of hearts, would get struck to something that made his face look broody and eyes wide. Perhaps, he was thinking over the new phenomenon of stone pelting by youth with slightest provocation. He said in a murmur, "This has been a regular phenomenon since 2008." The act of stone throwing witnessed many characters in the course. It was first sanctioned by leaders, upheld by followers, cashed by opposition members in the assembly. Fazli sahib sarcastically said to Bola, when he was about to take leave from him, "Most of your youth have found the linear path of market progressive, so have become universal. On the contrary, we have taken primordial retreat. It is a lag on increase". He further quoted from a newspaper that 'this dose worked and here we are. Finding our own children so obsessed with a stone game that no twenty- twenty can tempt them anymore' and then said, "It is indeed a loss of inheritance." Bola replied that even then the genealogical truth was common.

Bola still had two days before he would leave back to the plains. He found time to meet the Ramzan tailor, who had grown beard and was looking exhausted and ailing. Ramzan tailor, for Bola, would represent subaltern voices. The shop was still there, near the old chinar tree. Gone were the days when buzzing young boys would be round him. He was there with a couple of young learners in the shop. Immediately, he hugged Bola and asked how his people were in Jammu and the other parts of India. Bola wanted to hear much from him. His observations and reflections at the present predicament of politics and society were important for Bola. After all, it was their mindset that needed to have a clear picture rather than a blurred future, fractured present of closed society. "You all left us. Maybe, you decided better. We suffered from both the sides". Bola thought that it was a totalizing culture, where binaries were drawn on inside versus outside. He experienced it for the first time that binaries could be overcome if 'dissonant, nonsyncretic theory can shift control away from the dominant shrine discourses in Kashmir.' In Jammu the Pandit women would sing the lyrics made on 'Matadors', 'mobile sets', water scarcity, accommodation problem and fruits paucity and other different mode of new life styles in ridicule and satire. Especially, who were linked with the agrarian mode of life in Kashmir had to face different mode of life world. This changed abruptly when the children of displacement were jobbed in multinational companies all over the world. While in conversations with Prof. Zargar and Prof. Fazli, Bola found disillusionments and awareness about the emergent realities, but with Ramzan tailor, the conversation was vague and conceited. He would not reveal his loss and at the same time he would

not like him to stay more with him. Ramzan, after half an hour, was very eager that Bola leave his shop, but he could not say him to go. Shrine discourses and mosque edicts in early 90s of the previous century and then exodus of the Pandits have made the huge difference between the relationships of Bola and Ramzan. Before leaving back, Bola had his last visit to his abundant home. That, over the years, had become a defaced mud structure. He imagined 'could my Annu believe that we spent our lives and our ancestors created histories in these mud houses? These mud houses have seen transitions in history. Who could now believe that life was better in those three storied mud houses than in this jungle of concrete buildings? We lived with our cows. Raj Rani's house was still erect, standing high. Other houses have diminished in this Pandit settlement. Those defaced portions soon would be in ruins and then new tall buildings would stand on these ruins.' Bola had the whole history before him. Not only did he remember his childhood with his brothers and friends, but also remembered her cheerful younger sister playing with her friends in the neighbourhood and in their small courtyard. The Muslims as well as the Pandits, the children in groups, would come to his father for guidance and learning. He knew that his father, at an early age, had started his teaching career, teaching privately and publically until his end at the age of ninety nine. Even in exodus, he would catch hold of young boys and girls, try to teach them languages and explain Lal Vaakh, Shavism and classical poetry. He had burnt that midnight oil to give pen to his own poetry 'Kulyat Razz' in this abundant house. The entire Bandipur would respectfully call him Ved lal ji or Master Ji. Bola remembered how early in the morning his father would be at the bank of the stream, covering his head and body with the blanket, absorbed hours together in his worship facing *Sharda Mandir*. *Azan* in the mosque and bells in the *Sharda Mandir* would make a melody that was different but with esteem, equally. Life was then peaceful and human bonds had significance. Relations were solid and social order had sustainability and predictability. 'Would that history go down in the ruins? All these abundant falling houses were a potential cluster of more than hundred families. And from each house there were teachers and engineers and doctors, the real agencies of social transformation for generations.' It made Bola's eyes moist. His life and love had germinated in that abundant house. Ruins might turn into building, but beneath its roots the accumulative essences would always make it a complex heterogeneous base, sobbing for its natives.

The author is a professor of Sociology
Extracts from his novel 'Kashmir: Nativity Regain'



How To Keep Brain HEALTHY AND ACTIVE

As people age, they often become increasingly concerned about their inability to remember names and faces or recall specific words. As their memory seems to decline, they worry about developing Alzheimer's disease. Forgetting has become a prevalent worry as people age. When people have difficulty remembering names in social interactions, they tend to think their brainpower is failing. But a growing number of studies suggest that this assumption is often wrong. Some brains do deteriorate with age. Primary risk factors for dementia are age and genetic susceptibility, which are non-modifiable. In recent years, a variety of educational and psychological approaches, such as *brain training*, have been implemented to address this problem.

Various activities that are thought to keep brain active and healthy are:

Exercise

Eating healthy food (fruits, vegetables, fish, avocado, whole grain, olive oil, anti oxidants, omega-3 fatty acids, green tea, water, multi vitamins)

Reading, Learning new words, spelling exercises, strengthening your memory

Writing (creative), learning a new language

Word puzzles (e.g. crosswords)

Number puzzles (e.g. Sudoku)

Visual puzzles (e.g. spot the difference)

Games such as darts/ bridge/ dominoes

Playing musical instrument

New 'brain training' technology (e.g. Nintendo)

Computer games (e.g. Free cell)

Socializing and talking to people (e-mail, clubs, volunteers, online, letters, phone, dinner clubs, cooking classes)

Picking a new hobby

Staying healthy, sleeping well

Avoiding and managing stress (meditation, breathing exercises, relaxation exercises, sleep well, smile, have a pet)

Taking these in small amount or not at all (fast food, heavily processed food, white sugar, caffeine, alcohol, saturated fats, heavy metals, environmental pollutants)

Keeping safe : Protecting brain from injury is a great way to keep brain healthy (wear helmets and seat belts, avoid smoking, drive safely, avoid drugs)

Exercise

Exercise can be in the form of dancing, running, cycling, yoga, aerobics, swimming etc. Currently there are three hypotheses explaining how exercise may affect executive control. The **first** is that exercise may increase oxygen saturation and angiogenesis in brain areas crucial for task performance. The **second** hypothesis suggests that exercise increases brain neurotransmitters, such as serotonin and nor epinephrine, facilitating information. The **third**, and probably most well-studied hypothesis, is that exercise up regulates neurotrophins such as brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), insulin-like growth factor (IGF-I) and basic fibroblast growth factor (bFGF) that support neuronal survival and differentiation in the developing brain and dendritic branching and synaptic machinery in the adult brain.

Healthy Food

Although food has classically been perceived as a means to provide energy and building material to the body, its ability to prevent and protect against diseases is starting to be recognized. It has long been suspected that the relative abundance of specific nutrients can affect cognitive processes and emotions. Diets that are high in saturated fat are becoming notorious for reducing molecular substrates that support cognitive processing and increasing the risk of neurological dysfunction in

both humans and animals

Gut hormones associated with cognition.

Several gut hormones or peptides, such as leptin, ghrelin, glucagon-like peptide 1 (GLP1) and insulin have been found to influence emotions and cognitive processes

Caloric intake and cognition

Caloric restriction. Altering the caloric content of the diet is a potential means by which to affect cognitive capacity.

Antioxidant foods. The brain is highly susceptible to oxidative damage because of its

high metabolic load and its abundance of oxidizable material, such as the polyunsaturated fatty acids that form the plasma membranes of neural cells

Table 1 | Select nutrients that affect cognitive function

Nutrient	Effects on cognition and emotion	Food sources
Omega-3 fatty acids (for example, docosahexaenoic acid)	Amelioration of cognitive decline in the elderly; basis for treatment in patients with mood disorders; improvement of cognition in traumatic brain injury in rodents; amelioration of cognitive decay in mouse model of Alzheimer's disease.	Fish (salmon), flax seeds, krill, chia, kiwi fruit, walnut, butternuts
Curcumin	Amelioration of cognitive decay in mouse model of Alzheimer's disease. amelioration of cognitive decay in traumatic brain injury in rodents	Turmeric (curry spice)
Flavonoids	Cognitive enhancement in combination with exercise in rodents; improvement of cognitive function in the elderly	Cocoa, green tea, Ginkgo tree, Citrus fruits, wine (red wine) Dark chocolate
Saturated fat	Promotion of cognitive decline in adult rodents ⁴ ; aggravation of cognitive impairment after brain trauma in rodents ⁸⁸ ; exacerbation of cognitive decline in aging humans	Butter, ghee, suet, lard, coconut oil, cottonseed oil, palm kernel oil, dairy products (cream, cheese), meat
B vitamins	Supplementation with vitamin B6, vitamin B12 or folate has positive effects on memory performance in women of various ages; vitamin B12 improves cognitive impairment in rats fed a choline-deficient diet	Various natural sources. Vitamin B12 is not available from plant products
Vitamin D	Important for preserving cognition in the elderly	Fish liver, fatty fish, mushrooms, Fortified products, soy milk, cereal grains.
Vitamin E	Amelioration of cognitive impairment after brain trauma in rodents; reduces cognitive decay in the elderly	Asparagus, avocado, nuts, peanuts, olives, red palm oil, seeds, spinach, vegetable oils, wheatgerm
Choline	Reduction of seizure-induced memory impairment in rodents; a review of the literature reveals evidence for a causal relationship between dietary choline and cognition in humans and rats	Egg yolks, soy beef, chicken, veal, turkey liver, lettuce
Combination of vitamins (C, E, carotene)	Antioxidant vitamin intake delays cognitive decline in the elderly	Vitamin C: citrus fruits, several plants and vegetables, calf and beef liver. Vitamin E: see above

Calcium, zinc, selenium	High serum calcium is associated with faster cognitive decline in the elderly; reduction of zinc in diet helps to reduce cognitive decay in the elderly; lifelong low selenium level associated with lower cognitive function in humans	Calcium: milk, coral. Zinc: oysters, a small amount in beans, nuts, almonds, whole grains, sunflower seeds, selenium nuts, cereals, meat, fish, eggs
Copper	Cognitive decline in patients with Alzheimer's disease correlates with low plasma concentrations of copper	Oysters, beef/lamb liver, Brazil nuts, blackstrap molasses, cocoa, black pepper
Iron	Iron treatment normalizes cognitive function in young women	Red meat, fish, poultry, lentils, beans

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Shuhul Taaph - 2015

on February 6th to 8th, 2015 at B-36, Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi - 110 048



Literature and Cultural Heritage

Written works especially those regarded as having artistic merit are literature. It is a mirror to life and all activities, relationships - social or personal - amongst human beings are usually the theme of literature. Culture, on the other hand, is the theme of arts and manifestations of human intellectual achievements. It is regarded a refined understanding or appreciation of all this. Culture also comprises of customs, ideas and social behaviour of a particular people or group. We can find all this in the literature of different places in different languages. the cultural heritage of a country secures sustenance from the philosophy of life nurtured by its people from the time man awoke to conscientiousness of self an spirit.

Being a student of English literature amongst other things, I become interested in why Charles Dickens exposed the ills of industrial England, why Ruskin reaffirmed feminine graces. The bewilderment of Tennyson, the fatalism of Thomas Hardy and optimism of Robert Browning must have absorbed our attention by turns. It is also conceded that the history of any one country is also legitimate to see as one did in the case of Shakespeare and what use the poets made of Indian thought and sensibility. Being associated with KECSS for quiet some time now, after my displacement from Kashmir, I feel I got interested in the works of some of the great poets and intellectuals of Kashmir. KECSS has been organising Academics, Scientific seminars, discussions and deliberations on issues pertaining to Kashmir. It is in the fitness of things that encouraged us to discuss past and present personalities of Kashmiri Pandits. Most of us are now interested in the lives and literary contributions in Kashmiri language and literature and one can easily understand our cultural heritage from this study. Prof. Jia Lal Kaul has been an icon among the writers from the Valley. Though he taught English Literature throughout his life, he later on, became interested in Kashmiri language and literature. his book on Lal Ded is a great work of all times.

Lalshwari's Vakhs are an expression of high

thought and truth. Some of these have been collected and published by Dr. Grieson, Dr. Barnet, Pt. Anand Koul Bamzai and Prof. Jia Lal Kaul. That Vakhs show the synthesis of cultures for which Kashmir has always been noted. The greatness of Lalla, as she is popularly known, lies in giving the essence of her experiences in the course of her Sadhna or meditation, through the language of the common man.

William Wordsworth, the romantic poet of the 19th century writes in one of his poems :

On the couch I lie,
In vacant or in Pensive Mood
They flash on my inward eye
Which is the Bliss of solitude.

All Lalla's Vakhs are full of meaning and great philosophy. I feel tempted to write just a few to appreciate her thinking, mood and philosophy. I quote :

मूढस ज्ञानुच कथ नो वनिजे ।
खरस गोर दिनु रॉविय दोह ।
स्यकि शाठस ब्योल नो वुविजे ।
कोम याजन रॉवी तील ।।

O Blessed one, Impart no truth to fools,
Nor feed molasses to a donkey.
It is useless to sow seeds in a sandy soil.
Nor should we waste oil in the preparation
of cakes of bran.

(Translated by B N Sopori)

क्याह करु पॉचन देंहन त काहन ।
व्वखशुन यथ ल्यजि करिथ गय ।
सॉरिय समहन यथ रजि लमहन ।
अदु क्याजि राविहे कहन गाव ।।

Alas! the five, the ten and the eleventh
 Scarped this pot and went away
 Had they all come and pulled the rope together
 Why should the eleven have lost the cow?

(Translated by Prof. Jia Lal Kaul)

ख्यनु ख्यन करान कुन नो वातख।

न ख्यनु गछ्ख अहंकोरी।

सोमुय ख्यह मालि सोमुय आसख।

सोमुय ख्यनु मुच्चरनय बरन्यन तौरी।।

Eating too much will lead you no where,
 Not eating will make you conceited,
 Be moderate in eating and you will become minded
 Because of moderation the gates will be
 unbolted to you.

(Translated by Prof. Jia Lal Kaul)

Lalla was a creative genius. Her Vakhs were not composed for publicity or as a contribution to literature. She always stressed on a life of moderation and inner quest.

We have also been benefitted and rejoiced by other Kashmiri philosophers like Nund Rishi and others. He was also known as Sheikh Noor Din. He was the great 14th Century mystic. He revealed an amazing truth when he said

Food will be in abundance only if the forests are verdant.

Nund Rishi's shrine is situated at Chrarī Sharif about 30 kms away from Srinagar.

Habba Khatoon is remembered more as a singer of songs than as a queen and advised Sultan Yusuf Shah on all State matters and was a source of strength to him. She sang about love in many moods.

With the emergence of Ghulam Ahmed Mehjoor as a poet of wide and popular appeal in the early twenties of the 20th century, Kashmir poetry entered a creative poetic revival. He ranked as the greatest in the love of his motherland.*

Language is the mirror of society and literature is the larger mirror which shows what happens in different periods, when writers and philosophers wrote in different languages and in different periods.

*Pandit Dina Nath Nadim was one of the greatest visionary and revolutionary poets of modern times. He enthralled us all with his great and revolutionary poetry.

Best Wishes to

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Located in the heart of South Delhi, Pamposh Anubhav is the only pre-school with beautiful open spaces and abundant green cover. With a variety of flora and fauna, it is an ideal setting for children to learn experientially in the lap of nature. Our children are truly blessed as they draw the prana (energy) of the earth, sun, and air by virtue of being outdoors, which is indeed a luxury in city living. Observing and interacting with plants and birds is a common sight. Everyday nature walks are an integral part of the curriculum. Values of love, kindness, nurturing, and compassion are learnt automatically as children engage with the elements of nature in the daily activities of the school.

The holistic development of children is encouraged through physical, mental and spiritual workout. Yoga, nature walks, chanting of Gayatri Mantra and Om set the tone for the day. Organized games, athletics and free play happen every day. The school follows a well researched and structured curriculum which equips children to make a smooth and confident transition to the formal school. Love for music, dance and books is inculcated at an early age. School boasts of a beautiful library with a vast collection of books for all ages. Tremendous focus is laid on creativity, confidence building and communication skills.

Unity in diversity is practiced in its true intent and spirit. The bright, cheerful and vibrant colors of India are reflected each and every month as festivals of all regions are celebrated with the same vigour. Outings to the temple (for Janamashtami, Mahashivratri), Durga Puja Pandal (for Dussehra), Gurudwara (for Gurupurab) and church (for X'mas) are organised to teach acceptance and respect for all religions. Regional festivals like Lohri, Makar



Sankranti, Onam, Baisakhi are also given equal significance. Each year we organise hawan on basant panchami day. Video clips of different states are shown to children.

Concept based outings to rail museum (transport), hospital, post office, construction site, cobbler, florist, fire station, police station (helpers), zoo (animals) super market /safal dairy (fruits and vegetables), garden (spring) elicit enthusiastic response.

We use every opportunity to engage children in acts of Compassion. During Mahashivratri, each child brought half litre milk which was served to the not so fortunate children educated by a local NGO. They were invited to the school for mutual learning. On 10th May, Raj Bhowmik Global Compassion Day is celebrated whereby children and school team distribute food/snacks for the underprivileged. Collection drive of books, clothes and toys is also organised around Diwali/Children's day which is sent to an NGO, Goonj, on annual basis.

Parents and grandparents are also an integral part of the school. Special value added workshops are organised for parents and a program celebrating grand parents day is held whereby they are honoured for their very special role in their grandchildren's lives. This year Master Del Pe, leadership and life mentor from USA, addressed the parents on "Being Super parents to raise super kids of 21st century". It was well received. In December school organized "Winter Joy" which was a combination of races and dance performances by children.

Dr. Neena Gulabani

Director - Pamposh Public School
(In collaboration with Anubhav Learning Centre)
Under KECSS Management



Reflections and Views

Shuhul Taaph - V

An Appraisal

T.N.Dhar Kundan

I have before me copies of the newsletter of KECSS, Shuhul Taaph IV and V. I must admire the efforts of the editorial board in bringing out such quality newsletter. These issues contain the usual features of messages, reports of the activities of the society, as it should, but in addition articles on a variety of topics and subjects are included therein, which make them rich in content and informative for the readers. There are articles on important personalities and their contribution to the society and various fields like Krishna joo Razdan, Swami Mirza Kak, Pt. Sham Lal Shakhder, Moti Lal Saqi etc. The articles on cultural heritage and the contribution of Kashmir to philosophy and literature make us feel proud of our ancestors and inspire us to preserve and protect these. The write-ups on subjects like Pashmina, Kehwa and Tulip bring out the flavor of Kashmiriat in these newsletters. I find that there are articles for everyone's taste. For those who are interested in spirituality there are articles on yoga, for those who are health conscious we have tips for living healthy. There are historical accounts of Kota Rani and the visit of Swami Vivekananda to Kashmir. I am sure readers will like to preserve these issues and the forthcoming ones, as I do, for using these as reference material.

A Review

Dr. Shafi Shauq

The Shuhul Taaph-V is an attractive magazine. Apart from messages from prominent people of J&K, the message of noted poet Rahman Rahi is really excellent bring to fore the objective of the festival V in the row by KECSS. The awardees selected have great contribution to

their credit. The report on last year's festival is exhaustive with photographs of the different activities during the festival. The poem of Rahman Rahi speaks volumes about the importance he attaches to the past as he has dedicated it to Anand Vardhan, a great Kashmiri scholar. The brief write up on Kashmir Shivism and the Indian renaissance by M K Kaw is very interesting. Dr. Romesh Raina has toiled hard to bring the contribution of Kota Rani to the fore, though there can be two opinions on the subject. The write up T N Dhar Kundan is really interesting though he has only wrote about the subject which has been dare to the heart to many Kashmiri scholars. The definitions of Yoga in Gita bring to the fore front the importance of Yoga in human life to become pious souls. A N Kaul Sahib's write up on Sham Lal Shakhder speaks at great length the contribution of legendary personality on his role as an architect of Indian Parliamentary System. The write up on Swamy Mirza Kak by T N Hanglu is really appreciable. Vijay Saki's essay on importance of preserving cultural heritage is timely.

He has toiled very hard to put across his point of view on the importance of libraries for the purpose. Dr. Rajinder Tikoo has powerfully put it across the Karma is the essence of life and it creates a balance sheet for a particular human. Upender Ambardar's piece on Kehwa traces its history and the people who would discuss many issues and would have Kehwa at every function as there were many social gatherings where people would enter in an endless chat and have Kehwa after every interval. Prof. Jai Kishori Pandit has written the piece on the objective of KECSS which has gradually emerged as the focal point of cultural activities in the national capital. Noted painter Veer Munshi's Tableau on the Republic Day is really nice to see with his notes on the issue. Dr. Beena Budki's short story and Prof. Makhan Lal Kukilu's write ups are in their own way novel.

At the end I would only suggest to the editor to arrange the articles in a befitting manner so that reader is attracted to read the magazine.

A Review

Upender Ambardar

The 'Shuhul Taaph'-V, the special edition February 2014, published by the Kashmir Education Culture and Science Society (Regd.) Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi spanning 106 pages is an expressively designed and delightfully laid out page turning souvenir. It covers a wide range of myriad topics cast in an enlightening narrative having a socio-cultural connect. The special issue is thoughtfully divided into sections ranging from the messages by the luminaries and distinguished personalities, the citations, editorial activity report, the photo-album of the previous events and lastly the thought provoking write-ups rightly speaking cultural events are not merely get-together but on the contrary they are occasions about rich memories, emotional nostalgia and heart-tugging components having amazing recall value. The happenings of such nature not only promote but also kindle the community interest for the preservation of societal traditions, time tested rich practices, age old heritage elements, cultural norms, mother tongue and traditional art forms. The Cultural bonanza of this type nurtures a Kashmir specific identity and uniqueness for a community which has been turned from natives into exiles by the radical forces. In a state of uprootedness, the community congregations promote an attribute of mind, which activates the collective memory card about the native landscape, the Dev bhoomi homeland and the comforting shelter of our ancestral homes as Home signifies the Kingdom of God, which transcends all earthly paradises. The section comprising varied articles equipped with a deep emotive content wrap us in sweet memories. The article titled "A Fundamental Question that Every Indian should be Asking..." by iconic Sh. Jagmohan reminds us that past has it's way of showing up the present accompanied often by grandeur and brilliance.

Shri T. N. Dhar Kundan's enlightening essay titled "Kashmir- The Cradle of Cultures" told in an expressive narration passes every test of a good reading. "Resurrection or Desolation", written by Shri Arvind Shah full of sentiments stirs the collective consciousness of the community. Similarly, the enriching respective articles by Dr. Romesh Raina on Kota Rani and 'Swami merza kak and his mystic poetry' by Sh T N Hangloo are a sort of rejuvenating and refreshing walk for the readers. Like wise, the articles titled 'Definitions of Yoga in Gita' by Lt Col R. K. Langar, a profile on Pt Shyam Lal Shakhder by sh A. N. Kaul sahib, 'Preserving cultural Heritage' by shri Vijay Saqi, 'Nudging Womenkind' by Dr. Sameer Kaul, " Seek

And you shall find" by Shwami Khazanchi and "Speech Easy", Action Difficult written by Shri Jagan Nath Dhar are tell tale evocatives having content and subject matter grip.

Additionally, the skillfully crafted articles regarding Kashmir Shaivism penned by Sh M. K. Kaw and the one titled "Kashmir Shaiv Darshan writer in Hindi by Prof Makhan Lal Kukiloo signify the overarching civilization identity of Kashmir.

The essay The Karmic Balance sheet by Dr Rajinder Tickoo is a thought provoking narrative. Likewise, 'Living Healthy written by Dr. Sunil Kaul is a much needed and engaging health guidance. In the article titled we are seventy lakhs and not seven Lakhs' scripted by Prof C.L. Sapru gives a heart comforting viewpoint that seventy lakh Saraswat Brahmins of India are the potential support structure of the Kashmiri Pandit Community. Lastly, the article on the local brews by Upender Ambardar is an uplifting delight not only for brew enthusiasts and connoisseur lovers but for all the readers.

Poetry it is aptly said is an expression of lofty and powerful thought in rhythmical form. The poems titled 'A Soundless Symphony' by the iconic poet Sh. Rahman Rahi and the second one written by the legendary poet Shri. P.N. Kaul sahil titled 'Aes Chie sauna sheen maeni vattan aemir' have been written with a Words worthian 'inward' eye, both the poems are sure to make every heart burst into verses.

For a historically wronged community with whom destiny has often played fast and loose, the culturally defined events like 'Shuhul Taaph' become a bouquet of sweet reminiscences and emotional recollections. The resulting emotional fixations not only help to preserve and fortify the Kashmir specific socio cultural assets but also help to assuage the pain of forced displacement. In a plain speak; a place for cultural functions is a sort of heritage alteration as it offers an ambience of yesteryears.

It is no denying the fact that the annual three day Kashmir defined cultural extravaganza organized with unfailing regularity every year by the Kashmir Education, Culture and Science Society, Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi is a watchers' delight and voyeuristic thrill for the community members.

It is also a reassuring sign to observe that the News Letter 'Shuhul Taaph' has steadily been climbing the popularity chart over the years.

Undeniably, the compendium 'Shuhl Tapph'-V is worth reading and is sure to delight one and all alike.

The Editor Dr. Rajinder Tickoo and his team deserve a congratulatory pat for undertaking painstaking efforts for the publication of the Special number. It aptly justifies the statement that a good magazine is like having a discourse with a scholarly and accomplished person.

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Shuhul Taaph V

Art Workshop cum Exhibition - A Report



Shyama Sondhi



Vijay Koul



Shabir Santosh



Bhuvnesh Raina

Art workshop cum Exhibition is a collateral event at the Annual SHUHUL TAAPH festival at Kashmir Education, Culture & Science Society organized by VEER MUNSHI ART INITIATIVE at New Delhi. As you know KECSS is dedicated towards promoting and propagating rich cultural Heritage of Jammu & Kashmir. We have been able to initiate an interactive programme with 11 artist of J&K. Besides recognizing their talent it was enriching experience for the artist coming together in a Art work shop to paint together in a camp at Lalded Centre from 18-23 Feb. 2014. They not only created beautiful works on canvas but also had a meaningful dialogue with each other. The participating artists are all well know names in the field of art and their contribution for being part of the fest is note worthy. Hundreds of art lovers from the community visited the workshop and felt inspired with this humble expressions of artists.



The participating artist where M. K. Bhat, Prof. Zargar Zahoor, Bhuvnesh Raina, Vijay Koul, Mir Imtiyaz, Shabir Santosh, Shama Sondhi, Aushotosh Sapru, Chishool Mahaldar, Ankush Safaya and Javed Iqbal.
All the artists were appreciated by the Chief guest, Dr Farooq Abdullah and were presented with token of honorium.



Ashutosh Sapru



Chushool Mahaldar



M K Bhat



Zahoor Zargar



Javed Iqbal



Ankush Safaya



कश्मीर नरेश दिग्विजयी सम्राट ललितादित्य मुक्तापीड

(कश्मीर नरेश परम पराक्रमी सम्राट ललितादित्य ने जहाँ पश्चिम में बलख, बदख्शा, अफगानिस्तान, उत्तर में मंगोलिया के गोबी मरुस्थल तक अपनी विजय पताका फहराई थी, वहीं मोहम्मद बिन कासिम के अरब आक्रमण को परास्त कर मुस्लिम आततायियों को मुलतान के आगे बढ़ने नहीं दिया था। वह एक ऐसा महान् योद्धा था, जो कभी हारा ही नहीं।)

ललितादित्य (724-761 ई.) प्रतापादित्य का तीसरा पुत्र था। इस यशस्वी सम्राट को इतिहास में एक महान् विजेता के रूप में जाना जाता है। 37 वर्षों के शासन काल में ललितादित्य ने अनेक युद्ध-अभियान तथा विजययात्राएँ कीं और हर बार सफलता के साथ लौटा। इन विजय यात्राओं में कठिनाईयाँ झेलते हुए भी वह एक अधिक योद्धा ही प्रमाणित हुआ।

क्षिति प्रदक्षिणयतो रवेरिव महीपते:

जिगीषोः प्रायशस्तस्य यात्रास्वेव वयो ययौ।

अर्थात् नित्य प्रति पृथिवी की परिक्रमा करनेवाले भगवान् सूर्य की तरह उस विजयेच्छु राजा की अधिकांश उम्र यात्रा में ही बीती।

कल्हण के शब्दों में:— “नदियों के लिए अपने उदगम स्थान से चलकर समुद्र ही उनका लक्ष्य होता है; किन्तु उनके लिए कोई सीमा नहीं होती, जो स्पष्ट रूप से विजय-प्राप्ति के कामी हों।”

ललितादित्य ने अपने साम्राज्य की सीमाओं को व्यापक विस्तार दिया। पंजाब, कन्नौज, तिब्बत और बदख्शा तथा अन्य राज्य क्षेत्रों तक अपनी सीमाएँ बढ़ा दीं। काफी समय तक चलनेवाले युद्ध अभियानों से कभी-कभी विक्षुब्ध सैनिकों में पुनः ऊर्जा उत्पन्न करके आगे बढ़ने की रणनीति में वह निपुण था, ऐसा कल्हण लिखता है।

ललितादित्य ने अपने राज्य में शान-शौकत का नया अध्याय आरम्भ किया। वह अपने राज्य में प्रचलित सभी मतों के प्रति सहिष्णु था। बौद्धधर्म तथा सनातन धर्म उसके शासन काल में दो प्रमुख मत प्रचलित थे। उन दोनों पर उसका वरदहस्त था। ललितादित्य ने बौद्ध विहार, शिव मन्दिर और विष्णु मन्दिर के साथ अन्य देवी-देवताओं के लिए देवालय बनाये। इन धर्मस्थलों से जुड़े विद्वानों का संरक्षण किया और उनका मान-सम्मान किया। चीन आदि विभिन्न देशों से आये हुए जिज्ञासुओं एवं विद्वानों का आदर किया।

उनके शासन काल में जन-कल्याण के लिए कई महत्त्वपूर्ण काम हुए और नये-नये भवनों का निर्माण हुआ। खेतों में पानी उपलब्ध कराने के लिए नहरों का जाल बिछाया तथा आपात्काल में पीड़ितों की हर प्रकार से सहायता की। धर्मार्थ संस्थानों की स्थापना की और गरीबों के लिए भोजनालय खुलवाये।

कई नये नगरों को बसाया और विश्व प्रसिद्ध मार्तण्ड मन्दिर का निर्माण कराया। ललितादित्य ने अनेक नगरों की स्थापना के साथ वहाँ पर मन्दिरों एवं मठों की प्रतिष्ठा भी की। पण्डित कल्हण ने अपनी प्रसिद्ध पुस्तक ‘राजतरंगिणी’ में लिखा है— “ऐसा कोई भी नगर अथवा गाँव नदी या तालाब एवं द्वीप नहीं है, जहाँ ललितादित्य ने किसी पवित्र स्थान का निर्माण नहीं किया हो। इस सम्राट ने राजधानी परिहासपुर में ‘मार्तण्ड’ तथा ‘परिहास केशव’ नामक प्रसिद्ध तथा ‘मुक्त केशव’ महावराह एवं ‘गोवर्द्धनधर’ मन्दिरों का निर्माण करवाया। नारानाग में जयेश्वरेश तथा भूतेश मन्दिरों का विस्तार कार्य करवाया।

मार्तण्ड सूर्य मन्दिर अनन्तनाग जनपद में प्रसिद्ध तीर्थ मार्तण्ड (वर्तमान मट्टन) के ऊपर पहाड़ी पर बना है। यह स्थान श्रीनगर से लगभग 70 किलोमीटर की दूरी पर है। यह मन्दिर कश्मीर के महत्त्वपूर्ण तथा प्रभावोत्पादक प्राचीन स्थलों में अन्यतम है और विश्वप्रसिद्ध कोणार्क के समकक्ष है। भगवान् सूर्य को समर्पित यह भव्य मन्दिर उच्च भूमितल पर स्थित है। यह मन्दिर पहाड़ी के अन्तिर छोर पर विद्यमान है, जो इसके सौन्दर्य में अभिवृद्धि करता है। मन्दिर बृहत् आँगन के मध्य में वृत्ताकार परिस्तम्भ से परिवद्ध है, जिसमें 86 स्तम्भ हैं। इसमें गर्भगृह, अन्तराल, मण्डप हैं। केन्द्रीय वेदी की ओर दो पंगियाँ हैं, जो दोनों ओर आलों से युक्त हैं। ऊपरी पंगि में एक विस्तृत आला है। इनमें पार्वती, गंगा, यमुना हैं और साथ में दिक्पाल। बाहरी ओर से मन्दिर त्रि-रथ युक्त है। मार्तण्ड गहन सन्देश-विचारों, निर्माण कार्य के सौन्दर्य तथा मूर्तियों के समान अनुपात को प्रकट करता है। वर्तमान कालीन क्षीण होती हुई स्थिति में भी मार्तण्ड आश्चर्यजनक रूप से कश्मीर की वास्तुकला का अत्युत्तम दृष्टान्त स्वरूप है।

विद्वानों का आदर करनेवाले ललितादित्य ने कन्नौज के शासक यशोवर्मन् के राज्याश्रित महाकवि भवभूति और वाक्पतिराज को अपने साथ लिया।

तस्योर्ध्वजूटाः कर्णाटाः कृतप्रणतेयोऽनयन्।

सुवर्ण केतकीस्त्यक्त्वा प्रतापमवतंसताम्।।

(राजतरंगिणी, 151/तरंग चतुर्थ)

अर्थात् लम्बी-लम्बी जटाएँ धारण करनेवाले कर्नाटक देश के निवासी स्वर्णकेतकी सरीखे केशभूषणों को त्यागकर राजा ललितादित्य के चरणों में गिर गये और उन्होंने उसके प्रताप को ही अपना आभूषण बना लिया।

उत्तराः कुरवोऽविक्षंस्तदभयज्जन्मपादपान्।

उरगान्तक संवासाद्विलानीय महोरगाः।।175/4।।

जयार्जितधनः सोऽयं प्रविशेत् स्वमण्डलम् ।

भिन्ने भभीकता पूर्ण पाणिः सिंह इवाचलम् ।।176/4।।

अर्थात् जिस प्रकार गरुड़ के भय से सर्प बिलों में घुस जाते हैं, उसी तरह उत्तरी कुरुदेश के राजे विपत्ति काल में आश्रय देनेवाले वृक्षों की झुरमुट में जा छिपे ।।185।।

जैसे सिंह हाथियों को मारकर अपने पंजे में चिपकी गजमुक्ताओं के साथ मौद को लौटता है, उसी प्रकार राजा ललितादित्य विजयोपार्जित पुष्कल धनराशि अपने साथ लेकर कश्मीर-मण्डल को लौटा ।।176।।

राजा ललितादित्य की आज्ञा से तुरुष्क (तुर्कीवासी) जन बन्धन-मुद्रा सूचित करने के लिए अपने दोनों हाथ पीठ पर रखते हुए आधा सिर मुँड़ाये रहते हैं । (179/4)।।

इस जगती तल में कोई भी ऐसा नगर, गाँव, नदी, समुद्र एवं द्वीप नहीं रह गया था कि जिसमें राजा ललितादित्य के द्वारा देव

मन्दिर का निर्माण न कराया गया हो ।।181/4।।

चीनी इतिहास में ललितादित्य-मुक्तापीड का Mu-To-pi नाम से वर्णन है । चीनी सम्राट Hicuntaung (713-755) ने सम्राट ललितादित्य के राजदूत का प्रतिनिधिमण्डल सहित स्वागत किया । तिब्बत के बारे में ललितादित्य के प्रस्ताव को चीनी सम्राट ने स्वीकार किया ।

कन्नौज के शासक यशोवर्मन के साथ अरबों के खतरे का प्रतिरोध करने की योजना ही नहीं बनायी, अपितु सन्धि कर यशोवर्मन को अरबों पर प्रत्याक्रमण का दायित्व सौंपा और स्वयम् पश्चिमोत्तर में तुर्कों को दूर-दूर तक वह मार लगायी कि वे त्राहि माम त्राहि माम करके भाग गये और फिर भारत की ओर मुँह करने का साहस न कर सके ।

दिग्विजयी ललितादित्य को 'प्रतापादित्य' की उपाधि से विभूषित किये जाने का भी उल्लेख मिलता है ।

दीवियि छ काँशुर ज़बान स्यवह वँठ



Krishna Joo Razdan

वनय दीवीयि छ्य काँशुर ज़्यवुय वँठ ।
पस्ख बोज़ख चु तेलि काँक्सि गछ्यि काठ ।।
पसन वाल्यन तु बोज़न वालिनय प्यठ ।
प्रसन गछन छ कासन सर्वु संकट ।।
हसन छख द्वख करन बरकत गसन छख ।
यि माता पोत्र ज़ॉनिथ प्रय बरन छख ।।
ग्यानुच बक्तिबावुच वँन्य मे लीला ।
बनॉवुम छोट बँडुय ऑसिथ दँलीला ।।
कनन छम गछन संतन तु सादन ।
ह्यनम तिम दाद सत्यन व्यचार नादन ।।

*I assert with confidence that Mother Goddess loves
Kashmiri language the best of all.*

*For a Kashmiri reading and speaking person a gibbet
changes into a mounting saddle.*

*Those who read and hear Kashmiri language
are absolved of all troubles*

By Mother Goddess in her infinite beatitude

*Besides purging them of all their sorrows
she sends bounties galore*

Treating as her own offspring

she showers on them her abundant love

I have composed a lyric

Pregnant with divine love and enlightenment

I have abbreviated a tale adjudged too long by all

My convictions should be available

to sages and savants

They alone can appreciate

all my thoughtful sermons.

(Translated from Kashmiri by Prof. K. L. Moza)



कोख की पीड़ा

काकनी आज सुबह से कुछ उदास सी थी, उसकी खुद की समझ में नहीं आ रहा था कि वह बेटे राजा जी के लिए दुखी होए या दुआएं मांगें। राजा जी का जन्मदिन उसके लिए किसी पर्व से कम न था। गरीबों को दान देती। मन्दिर जाकर भिखारियों को खाना खिलाती लेकिन पिछले 10 सालों में सारी दुनियां ही बदल गई। उसकी आँखों में आज भी वह दिन यूँ समाया हुआ है। मानों कल की बात हो, निढाल सी वह बिस्तर पर जा गिरी। अतीत उसकी आँखों के आगे चलचित्र की भांति चल रहा था।

काकनी का विवाह भूषण के साथ बड़ी धूमधाम से हुआ था। गाँव में कई दिनों तक दावत चल रही थी। भूषण पढ़ा लिखा तो नहीं पर काफी जमीन जायदाद का मालिक था। गाँव में सभी उसकी इज्जत करते थे। काकनी भी बहुत जल्दी गाँव में सबकी प्यारी बहू बन गई। विवाह के जगले साल 'शीन' का जन्म हुआ। भूषण शीन को पाकर फूले न समझ रहा था। धीरे-धीरे शीन भी बड़ी होने लगी और काकनी की सख्त पकड़ में बंटा आ गई। यँ तो भूषण ने बिटा के होने पर भी दावत दी सख्त कुछ किया पर दिल के किसी कोने में एक दर्द भी था कि इतनी बड़ी सम्पत्ति का वारिस कौन होगा?

बच्चों की किलकारियों में दिन बीत गए। लेकिन काकनी को भी बेटे की चाहत दिल में पनपने लगी। जाने कितने व्रत और पूजा उसने किए। हर किसी के आगे बस एक ही उम्मीद लेकर जाती कि उसका घर कब बेटे की किलकारी से गूँजेगा। कोई पूजा के बहाने नोटों की गड़िड़ियाँ मांगता तो कोई 6 महीने का अनाज दान बहाने के बहाने अपने घर में भरवा लेता। कोई भी कुछ कहता काकनी सब टोने टोटके करती। इन टोने टोटकों के जंजाल में वह एक बार बड़ी बीमार भी पड़ी पर ज्यूँ ही ठीक हुई फिर से मन्दिर मेहजद की चौखटों में सिर झुकाने पहुँच जाती। एक बार गाँव के बाहर अमरनाथ रोड़ पर एक साधु ने अपना डेरा डाला था। उसके शिष्य उसका खूब प्रचार कर रहे थे। जो भी जाता उसके शिष्य आने वाले से आम इन्सान बनकर सारी कहानी पहले ही पता कर लेते और दुखीयारा इन्सान जब घन्टों प्रतीक्षा के बाद साधु के पास पहुँचता वह पहुँते ही तोते की तरह सुनी बातों को बड़ी गम्भीरता से कहता। आने वाला इतना प्रभावित हो जाता कि वह सोचता कि सामने साधु नहीं साक्षात् भगवान है।

काकनी के कान में भी जब यह बात पहुँची तो वह भी साधु के दर्शन करने पहुँची। लम्बी प्रतीक्षा के बाद काकनी जूँ ही साधु के सामने पहुँची तो उसने कहना शुरू किया— बेटियाँ है पर बेटे की चाहत है। क्यों देवी। काकनी आवाक् सी देखती रही। हाँ बाबा जी। बहुत धन सम्पत्ति है। काकनी मानों निर्जीव सी हो गई। साधु ने फिर

कहा। पति की इच्छा है कि बेटा हो और तुम भी चाहती तो कि घर परिवार में बेटा होने से इज्जत मिलती है वह मिले। काकनी यह बातें सुनकर वहीं जड़वत सी हो गई उसे लगा कि साक्षात् भगवान है। उसने साधु के चरणों में सिर नवा दिया। साधु आखिर बाघाल साधु और मूलतः इन्सान था। काकनी की भीगी आँखें लाल गोल और सुन्दरता देखकर वह मंत्रमुग्ध हो गया।

जाने क्या सोचकर उसने काकनी का हाथ पकड़ा और दबाने लगा और कहने लगा चिन्ता न करो जरूर बेटा होगा। काकनी ने आज्ञा मांगी तो साधु ने कहा कि कम से कम 10 दिन तुम्हें संन्यास होने के समय आना है। साथ ही चीजों की लिस्ट भी पकड़ा दी। काकनी पूरे रास्ते कुछ अनमनी सी चल रही थी। यूँ तो वह कई साधु सन्तों के पास गई थी पर आज का एहसास और प्रतीक्षा की कतार में जो बातें उसने कही थी। वहीं अन्दर साधु के मुँह से सुनकर उसकी आस्था ढलने लगी।

आस्था ढलने लगी।
काकनी जैसे तैसे घर पहुँची किसी चीज में उसका मन नहीं लग रहा था। अपने ही मन में तर्क वितर्क करती रही। आखिर उसने निश्चय किया कि आज के बाद वह कहीं नहीं जाएगी। ईश्वर को देना होगा तो देगा वरना शीन और बिटा ही उसका सब कुछ होंगे।
... की का जन्म हुआ पर इस बीच हफ्ते में 4

ठीक 2 साल राजा जी का जन्म हुआ पर इस बीच हफ्ते में 4 दिन काकनी व्रत रखती थी। कुछ निराहार तो कुछ बिना अन्न जल के। राजा जी को पाकर वह सब दुख दर्द की पीड़ा भूल गई।

कै। राजा जी को पाकर वह सब दुख-दद को पीड़ा भूल गई।
बहनों का दुलारा राजा जी सबकी आँख का तारा था। काकनी ने शीन और बिटा का विवाह भी धूमधाम से कर दिया। अब उसे राजा जी के लिए दुल्हन लाने की उमंग थी कोई भी लड़की उसे पसन्द न आती। राजा जी शहर कश्मीर में पढ़ाई कर रहा था। उसकी आँखें वहीं गौरी से लड़ गई। माँ को जब गौरी के बारे में पता चला तो बेहद दुखी थी कि शहर की लड़की जाने कैसी होगी। उसके तौर तरीके खानदान जाने कैसा होगा। राजा जी की खुशियों के खातिर माँ चुप हो गई। राजा जी को बहुत समझाया पर वह न माना। राजा जी का विवाह हो गया गौरी दुल्हन बनकर गाँव की बहु बन गई। शादी के कुछ ही दिनों में गौरी ने अपने शहरी रंग दिखाने शुरू कर दिये। सारे गाँव की बहु बेटियाँ उठ के हजार काम करती पर गौरी अपने कमरे में सोती रहती। राजा जी भी उसकी अदाओं और जुल्मों में इतना कैद हो चुका था कि उसे किसी भी चीज में बुराई नजर न आती। दबे लफ्जों में माँ ने राजा भाई से कहा भी पर उसने अनसुना सा कर दिया।

ककनी अन्दर ही अन्दर घुटने लगी। पहले बेटा होने के लिए दुआएं मनीतियां मांगत थी। अब उसकी घर गृहस्थी पत्नी के लिए प्रार्थना करती। दिन गुजरते रहे। काकनी बहु की गलतियों पर पर्दा

जातली रही।

गौरी भी धीरे-धीरे लगभग खाती सा हो रहा था। आधे दिन की घटनाएँ आतंकवादियों के बढ़ते कदमों से सभी परेशान थे। भूषण भी परेशान था। उसकी दोनों बेटियों के परिवार वाले दिल्ली चले गए थे। भूषण भी परेशान था। उसकी दोनों बेटियों के परिवार वाले दिल्ली चले गए थे। विशाल सम्पत्ति छोड़कर जाने में भूषण कुछ सकपका रहा था। पड़ा-लिखा भी नहीं, कश्मीरी के सिवा हिन्दी भी टूटी फूटी आती थी। धीरे-धीरे भूषण ने कुछ पैसे जोड़ कर जमा किए और सबकी तरह उसने भी परिवार के साथ दिल्ली में शरण ली। दिल्ली आकर उसे उसके कौसर का व्यापारी मनोज वाधवा मिला। मनोज ने राजा जी की नौकरी हैदराबाद में लगवा दी।

भूषण उसे लाखों आशीष देने लगा और सब एक दिन हैदराबाद की ओर चले गए। पहले दिल्ली और अब हैदराबाद की बोली उनकी समझ से बहुत दूर थी, पर काकनी के साथ मिल बैठकर अपने दिन बिता रहा था। उसका बड़ा दिल करता कि वह बाजार से सब्जी लाए। सामान लाए पर रास्तों से अनभिज्ञ और भाषा न होने के कारण घर की चाहरदीवारी में ही कैद रहते।

हैदराबाद आकर गौरी के जैसे पंख निकल आए। रोज दिन में बाजार जाना। शनिवार, इतवार राजा जी के साथ पिक्चर मौज मस्ती मारना उसका नियम बन गया था। अब उसे सास ससुर का साथ रहना कुछ अखरने लगा था। रोज स्लो पायजन की तरह वह राजा जी के कानों में कुछ न कुछ डालती रहती। कभी कभी राजा जी कह देता अरे लाखों के मालिक है यह मेरे नाम कुछ भी नहीं करेंगे। सब करो।

कुछ दिनों बाद राजा जी का ट्रांसफर दिल्ली वापस हो गया। किराये के छोटे-छोटे मकानों से तंग आकर और दोनों बेटियाँ भी यही थी। भूषण ने एक बड़ा सा मकान खरीदा। कुछ दिनों तक तो गौरी ठीक-ठाक रही। लेकिन फिर उसके माँ-बाप भी जम्मू से दिल्ली आ गये। बड़े हुये किरायों के कारण उन्हें सस्ता मकान कहीं नहीं मिल रहा था। गौरी के दिमाग में शैतान ने धीरे-धीरे जगह बनानी शुरू कर दी। रोज नई कहानी बना के राजा जी को सुनाती एक दिन उसने राजा जी से कहा।

राज तुम्हारे पापा तो सठिया गये हैं। बरामदें की नाली पर पेशाब करके अपना लिंग दिखाते रहते हैं। पता नहीं उनका दिमाग खराब हो गया है। पहले कुछ दिन राजा जी ने ध्यान न दिया पर रोज इसी बात को अलग-अलग तरीकों से कहती।

राजा जी भी उसी वाचाल स्त्री के कहने में आ गया और सोचने लगा कैसे इन्हें भगाऊँ? तभी एक सुबह राजा जी ने माता-पिता से कहा कल आप लोग तैयारी करें। हम सब तीर्थ स्थानों के लिए जाएँगे। काकनी की बरसों की आशा पूरी हो रही थी। वह बेहद खुश थी। सुबह उठते ही उसने तैयारी कर ली। रास्ते के लिये मीठे शकरपारे, बेसन के सेव ना जाने कितने चीजें तैयार की। शाम होते ही वह मद्रास की ट्रेन में रामेश्वरम् गये वहाँ दर्शन कर काकनी ने राजा जी और गौरी के लिए अनेक मन्त्रों मांगी।

वहाँ से वह कन्याकुमारी के रास्ते पर चल पड़ा। त्रिवेन्द्रम पहुँच कर रात एक होटल में काटी। दूसरे दिन बस से कन्याकुमारी जाने के लिए बस स्टॉप पर गए वहाँ माँ-बाप को एक जगह बिठा कर टिकट लेने के लिए राजा जी और गए। भूषण और काकनी सुबह के बैठे रात तक बेटे का इन्तजार करते रहे पर राजा जी न आया। काकनी अपना माथा पिटती रही। रोते-रोते बेहाल हो गई। भूषण

समझदार होकर भी जैसे जड़वत् हो गया। उसकी कुछ भी में नहीं आ रहा था कि क्या करें एक तो अन्जान शहर दूसरा उसकी माँ कोई समझ नहीं पा रहा था। कहीं से ट्रेन ले कहा से जाए फिर हजार तरह की आशंकाएँ कि आखिर राजा जी गौरी कहीं चले गए? कहीं एक्सीडेंट तो नहीं हुआ? एक दिन आस-पास के अस्पतालों में वह घूमता रहा।

दो दिन में जब में थोड़े बहुत पैसे थे, वह खत्म हो गए। सबसे पहले भूषण ने अपनी घड़ी 100 रुपये में बेची फिर काकनी ने अपनी सोने की चेन बेची। दोनों मियाँ-बीबी कई दिनों तक मटकते रहे। पैदल पैदल पुलिस स्टेशन भी गए पर भाषा के कारण और नाम पता फोन कुछ भी मालूम न होने के कारण कोई कुछ मदद ना कर सका। राजा जी ढूँढने के लिए काफी न था। थकहार कर वह अखबार के दफ्तर गया। वहाँ खबर दी लेकिन कोई भी कहीं से खबर ना मिली।

थकहार कर वह कई दिनों तक रेलवे स्टेशन पर पड़े रहे। एक जोड़ी कपड़े में वह भिखारी दिखने लगे थे। काकनी की आँखें तब भर जाती जब आते जाते यात्री 5 या 10 रुपये उनके आगे डाल देते या कोई कहता। वह भीख मांग रही है पर कान में सोना पहनी है। हाथों में चूड़ियाँ सोने की हैं। भूषण प्लेटफार्म पर काकनी की बिछाई आधी साड़ी पर बैठता था। कई दिनों के गन्दे कपड़े में वह लोगों को भिखारी लग रहे थे।

पहली बार काकनी ने इतनी लम्बी उम्र में धीरे-धीरे कानों से 'डेजहरु' (सुहाग चिन्ह कश्मीरियों का) निकाला और हाथ से चूड़ियाँ निकाली। कई दिनों प्लेटफार्म पर बेटे के इन्तजार में बिता दिए पर राजा जी को न आना था और ना ही वह आया। एक दिन एक कश्मीरी परिवार एक ट्रेन से उतरे। काकनी ने ज्यों ही देखा उसने भूषण से कहा। भूषण ने लपक कर उस परिवार से बात की पहले उसकी हालत देखकर उन्होंने बात न ही फिर उनकी आप बीती सुनकर अपनी भाषा में बात करके उन्होंने सारी बात बताई, उन्होंने उन्हें सात्वाना दी और कहा। कोई बात नहीं हम पाँच दिन के बाद दिल्ली वापस जा रहे हैं। हमें कन्याकुमारी जाना है वहाँ से वापस आकर आप हमारे साथ चलना। भूषण ने राहत की सांस ली। कौल परिवार ने उनकी टिकट वगैरह भी कर दी। इतफाक से उन दोनों की टिकट भी उसी कोच में मिल गई। कौल परिवार कन्याकुमारी चला गया और भूषण ने काकनी से एक सोने की चूड़ी लेकर उसे बेचकर कुछ पैसे लाए दुकानदार भी उन्हें अजीब नजरो से देख रहा था। एक तरफ दोनों बुजुर्ग और चेहरे का रंग सफेद देखकर चुप रह गया। हाँलाकि उसने उसकी मजबूरी का फायदा उठाकर कम पैसे ही दिये।

पर भूषण ने पास की एक दुकान से पेंट कमीज और काकनी के लिए भी कपड़े लिए। साबुन, कच्चा और आज पहली बार जी भर के पेट भर खाना खाया। वापस प्लेटफार्म पर आकर उसी जगह पर बैठ गए जहाँ कौल परिवार ने कहा था।

5 दिन का एक पल उन्होंने खुली आँखों से काटा। 5 दिन उन्हें 5 सालों की तरह लगे। जबकि पिछले 5 महीनों से वह इसी शहर में भटकते-भटकते आखिर स्टेशन पर पिछले 15 दिन से थे। कम से कम पैसों पर दिन काट लेते। पर कौल परिवार को देखकर उनकी बुझती साँसों में फिर से जिन्दगी आ गई। कभी-कभी डर भी जाते कि कहीं राजा जी की तरह ये भी वापस न आए।

ऐसे तैसे दिन बीत गए। पाँचवे दिन कौल परिवार समय से आ गए। उन्हें देखते ही इनकी बूढ़ी आँखों में चमक आ गयी। सूखी

पड़ती जमे होठों पर रंगत ही आ गई। राजेश कौल ने इन्हें खिलाया पिलाया। पूरे रास्ते उनकी आवभगत की, दिल्ली पहुँच कर अपने घर ले गया। लेकिन अब समस्या थी कि उसे अपने घर या बेटियों के घर का पता भी मालूम ना था। राजेश कौल हैरान परेशान था कि इन्हें इनकी मंजिल तक कैसे पहुँचाऊँ?

भूषण रोज घर के पास के निशाने बनाता। दफ्तर से आकर राजेश कार में उनको वहाँ ले जाता। वहाँ से निराश होकर लौट आते। लगभग एक महीना हो चला पर कुछ पता न चला। राजेश ने जब भूषण से कहा कि कल कश्मीरी मीटिंग है। मैं उसमें आपकी बेटी और दामाद का नाम कहूँगा शायद कुछ जानकारी मिल जाये।

भूषण झट से कहता। नहीं, नहीं लड़की के ससुराल वाले गलत समझेंगे। राजा जी का वह हमेशा कहता, उसके साथ कुछ अनहोनी हुई है। काकनी रोती हुई कहती, पता नहीं वह है भी कि नहीं। वरना वह बस स्टैण्ड पर हमें बिठा कर थोड़ी जाता।

राजेश कौल भी थक चुका था। एक दिन उसकी सहनशक्ति ने जबाब सा दे दिया। वह चीख पड़ा। माता जी राजा जी को कुछ नहीं हुआ है। वह जानबूझ कर आप लोगों को छोड़ गया। आप जैसे जाने कितने माँ या बाप कहीं—कहीं दोनों को लड़कों ने अन्जान राहों पर छोड़ दिया है। कश्मीर से निकलकर पैसों की तंगी। जगह की तंगी और दूसरे कौम की लड़कियों के कारण कई लोगों के साथ हुआ है। आपकी घटना कोई नई नहीं थी। मेरे दफ्तर मेरा चपरासी जो अनन्तनाग का शाही किसान था। बेटे ने ट्रेन में बिठा दिया। खुद चढ़ा ही नहीं। वह मेरे दफ्तर में चपरासी बनकर जीवन बिता रहा है।

काकनी और भूषण राजेश कौल की बात सुनकर सन्नाटे में आ गए कि कहीं हमारे साथ भी तो यही हुआ है। काकनी माँ का दिल थी कहने लगी, अरे राजा जी ऐसा नहीं कर सकता है। पता नहीं इसे क्या हो गया? वैसे इसका कसूर भी नहीं। आखिर कितने दिन रखेगा। एक महीना तो हो गया। फिर भी इसकी बीबी जुबां अच्छी है। जो इतने दिन रख लिया। भूषण सारी रात न सो सका। सुबह उठते ही उसने राजेश से कहा, राजेश तुम सब अखबारों में एक इश्तेहार दो। मेरी दोनों बेटियों का नाम लिखो कि आपका खोया सामान मेरे पास है यहाँ आकर ले जाओ यहाँ का पता लिख दो।

राजेश हैरान सा भूषण को देखने लगा। अरे क्या खोया सामान लिखें। राजेश उनके यहाँ पिछले साल चोरी हुई थी उसमें कई कीमती सामान भी थे, वे अगर देखेंगे तो जरूर आएँगे। राजेश ने सभी अखबारों में इश्तेहार दे दिया। दो दिन तक कोई भी न आया। लेकिन अचानक चार दिन के बाद शाम आठ बजे दोनों लड़कियाँ आईं दरवाजे पर ज्यों ही दस्तक हुई जुबां दौड़कर गई। देखो दो लड़कियाँ आई हैं। उन्हें देखकर राजेश भी कमरे से बाहर आया।

उन्होंने आते ही अखबार को दिखाते हुए पूछा, कि क्या आपने ही इश्तेहार दिया है। हमारा क्या सामान आपको मिला है। दूसरी बहन बोली, पुलिस ने सिर्फ हमारा सिर खाया। आज तक एक सामान न मिला। पहली बोली आपको भाई साहब कैसे मिला। राजेश ने दोनों को बिठाया, तब तक जुबां ने चाय भी लाई। दोनों लड़कियों ने कहा कि हमारा व्रत है। जुबां ने कहा कोई बात नहीं है व्रत वाली चाय बनाकर लाती हूँ। राजेश ने पूछा आज क्या है जिसका व्रत रखा है। दोनों बहनें लगभग रो पड़ी।

शीन ने कहा कल 6 महीने हमारे माता पिता को मरे हुए हो गए। हमारे माता-पिता बेटे के साथ तीर्थ करने गए थे। वहीं उनका

एकचोट हो गया। कल 'चरमोक्त' रात 6 महीने की पूजा थी। आज 'भासवा' थी। तभी हम 3 दिन नहीं आ पाए। आपने सिर्फ सिर जिलाया था सो आज हम पूजा समाप्त होकर वह सारी सामग्री और कुछ जमुना नदी में डालने आए थे। लौटते में आपका घर रास्ते में था। आपके पास भी आ गए।

शायद माँ की ममता काकनी के ज़राखत बड़कने ला लगा। वह धीरे-धीरे बाहर आई तो सामने नीचे आगन में बेटियों को देखकर चीख पड़ी। काकनी की चीख सुनकर भूषण भी बाहर आया। बेटियाँ बेतहाशा भागकर माँ बाप से गले मिली दोनों मिल कर जी भर के रोये।

जब शीन और बिटा को सारी हकीकत का पता चला तो वह आग बबूला हो उठी। वह उसी वक्त जाकर राजा जी को जलील करना चाहती थी पर राजेश ने भी सारी कहानी समझकर उनसे कहा। जहाँ आपने इतने दिन काटे, कुछ दिन रुकिए आप को मैं वापस अपने घर छोड़ आऊँगा।

शीन ने बताया गौरी का पूरा मायका वहाँ रहता है। हम भी बहुत कम जाते थे पर मायका सिर्फ उतना ही था और माँ बाप की मृत्यु का साल मनाने के लिए चले जाते थे। मारी कदमों और दुखी दिल से लड़कियाँ चली गई। वापस आते ही राजा जी ने दोनों की हालत देखकर कहा कि कहीं रह गई तुम लोग, चलो खाना खाते हैं। दोनों बहनों से एक कौर भी ना खाया गया। किसी ने उनकी तरफ ध्यान न दिया।

सुबह होते ही वह माँ बाप के पास पहुँची। राजेश ने पुलिस कम्प्लेन करके राजा जी पर केस कर दिया और काकनी और भूषण को वापस उनके घर पहुँचा दिया। राजा जी उसकी पत्नी दो दिन जेल में रहे फिर किसी मायके वाले ने जमानत करवा दी। सबको घर से बाहर कर दिया। राजा जी निम्नतें करता रहा। कई सफाईयों देता रहा पर भूषण का दिल टस से मस न हुआ।

दोनों को घर से बाहर निकाल दिया। दोनों बहनों ने राजा जी गौरी को खरी खोटी सुनाई गौरी मायके वालों को अपने घर में रखने के लिए सास-ससुर को सड़क पर बेमौत मार दिया। गौरी भी घड़ियाल के आँसू बहाती रही पर काकनी भूषण के पीछे खड़ी चुपचाप थी।

भूषण और काकनी घर में आ गए। पर पूरा घर खाली सा लगता। दोनों बेटियाँ एक सुबह एक शाम आकर माँ बाबू जी को देखती। कभी-कभी काकनी का दिल दर्द से भर जाता। जिस बेटे के चाहम में मैंने क्या-क्या नहीं किया। क्या मन्नतों से मांगा कोई बेटा ऐसा भी कर सकता है। बिटा घर के खुले दरवाजे देखकर पहले तो घबरा गई फिर माँ को पलंग पर निढाल देकर दौड़ कर गई।

काकनी उठो क्या बात है। बिटा की आवाज सुनकर वह उठ बैठी मानों लम्बी नींद से जागी हो। काकनी तबियत तो ठीक है ना बाबू जी कहाँ हैं? यहाँ कहीं होंगे।

दौड़ के उनको कमरे में देखने गई तो देखा कि वह राजा जी के चित्र की ओर टकटकी लगाए थे उनकी आँखों में आँसू बह रहे थे। बाबू जी आज दोनों को क्या हो गया है, आप यहाँ काकनी यहाँ।

बिटा आज तुम्हारे भाई का जन्मदिन है। उसने आप लोगों को जीते-जी मार डाला और आप लोग उसे ही याद कर रहे हैं। काकनी तपाक से बोल उठी, तुम अभी बच्चे का दर्द नहीं समझोगी। बिटा दिलेरी से क तो रही थी पर आँखें भी उसकी नाम हो चुकी थी।

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