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HEARATH POSHTE

AIKS meeting held on 2nd March, 2024 on 'Upcoming Elections and KP Stakes in it'



AIKS Celebrated International Mother Tongue day on 3rd March 2024



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THIS MONTH'S COVER

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Sh. Ravi Dhar**

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The Chief Election Commissioner finally declared the election dates for the 18th Lok Sabha. Our 140 crore people of this great nation are curiously looking at the possibilities and speculations are rife about who will run the nation for the next five years. The news media channels are in overdrive in churning opinion polls. As always, each opinion poll claims to be the most authentic. While the actual outcome will be known only on June 4, the media, in the meantime, is busy building the TRPs. It is another entertainment show that will keep the viewers glued to their TV screens.

Well, elections have evolved, over time, into festivity of a kind. Everyone's curiosity takes an upward swing as the dates come closer. The politicians and their political outfits will be seen making beelines at the ordinary citizens' doors seeking their support. It is fun to watch this once-in-five-years festival where the crorepati begs and the ordinary keeps him guessing. Once elected, this ordinary citizen, will not be easily able to reach him to even have a glimpse of his. He will then wait for the next five years for the action replay.

In this backdrop, our miniscule community faces a dichotomy of sorts. Only a few months ago, the Kashmiri Pandit was rejoicing and was seen on every forum with the expression of euphoria, welcoming the decision by the Delimitation Commission. The offer took some time to sink in. After the de-limitation of the Union Territory, we will be represented by a face not chosen by us but by the choice of the Lieutenant Governor. As Indian citizens we are qualified voters, free

to vote for a candidate of our choice; while as, as Kashmiri Pandits, we are offered the Hobson's choice. How fare is this is anybody's guess.

In retrospect if we, hypothetically, consider that we had been offered to choose our own representative, would we have been better off? The answer is left to the readers' guess. A miniscule community with a snatched homeland, spread thin on the streets across the globe and languishing without even a refugee status has a long list of organisations spread across each one claiming to be representing the community welfare. With so much of intellectual and scholarship claim, we never thought to have one political outfit of our own where we could have had one political voice and where the community politicians could be groomed. We did not choose this option and, instead, preferred to be driven by others' choice.

To further complicate the issue, the UT government is inviting Kashmiri Pandits to enroll as voters in the UT. When s(he) doesn't have a choice what is the enrollment for? But we don't ask these questions; instead we line-up for filling the forms to get enrolled.

No matter what, our plight is our own creation with our divided house. In this condition we will be useful only as guinea pigs for others. Our united front is the only solution for our problems. Can we shun our egos and think of ONE KP POLITICAL ORGANISATION?

Food for Thought!

युकांकामरु

Manish Chandra



IRRELEVANCE HITS THE KP'S WHERE IT HURTS THE MOST

The recent turnout at the rally of Honourable Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi held in Kashmir on March 7, 2024 tells a story different from the ones that we had become used to and that is “*Viksit Bharat Viksit Jammu Kashmir*”. It is this theme which makes his visit significant because there is a palpable desire to connect Kashmir and Kashmiris emotionally, psychologically and economically with the mainstream of India. With the revelation of development projects worth 64 Billion Rupees, speaking at a huge rally at Bhakshi Stadium attended by about 100,000 people makes it all the more special. “*Today Jammu and Kashmir is touching new heights of development because J&K is breathing freely today. This freedom from restrictions has come after the abrogation of Article 370*”, PM said. It is a testament to prioritise the welfare and development of UT of J&K on a fast track. The political commentate see the visit as a commitment to addressing the needs of the people which has increased the

pace of expectations. Therefore, the amount of excitement and eager wait for his arrival is seen as holding a great promise for Kashmir.

Kashmir today is in a transformative mode and the political narrative that was woven under article 370 and 35A is crumbling like pack of cards but its movers and shakers especially the ones who have benefitted the most out of its continuance have come together under the umbrella of People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration and, as a mark of defiance by seven mainstream political parties of the place, created this seen mostly as anti-BJP platform to contest its abrogation. But the restoration of Articles 370, 35A and special status doesn't have many takers, especially the development narrative which evolved post-August 5, 2019 is dominating the political narrative which has received more traction, visibility and acceptability by the people and the aspirational class who identify themselves with growth, progress and development see it as a manna from heaven for a new and developed Kashmir pretty much close to the PM's vision of Viksit Kashmir.

Post abrogation of Article 370 the changes that have travelled through Banihal Tunnel, both administrative and governance, have ultimately led Kashmiris embracing the future with India under Shri Modi Ji's leadership and that is the realisation of summum bonum for Kashmir. The present day reality has come at a great cost, when the aimless 35 years of war of attrition costed Kashmir heavily. It incurred all round heavy losses in every conceivable area. The choice was either a prolonged militancy, insecurity and threat

perception looming large all the time or embrace peace and development, both economic and political, for the posterity. Choosing development model, therefore, was the only option available. With the caring GOI at the centre, the fruits of the development became more visible and pronounced. Today the successful peace building in Kashmir is gradually empowering Kashmiris and it would not be wrong to say that with all the elements in place, such measures are easing in a built up to New Kashmir.

Having said that, in this entire journey, Kashmiri Pandits seems to be losing the race if not lost yet completely. Unfortunately, KP's had to battle on many fronts to remain in the reckoning *which continues till date like they were asked by late Jagmohan (Ex-Governor*

of J&K) to leave, yeh Markaz ki chaal hai so on and so forth. A powerful narrative indeed built by the vested interests and all those interested in seeing the Valley as Kashmiri Pandits mukht Kashmir. The breaking point came when KP's started getting ignored which gradually is leading to their irrelevance in their homes and hearths. Though our appreciation in reserving two seats in JK legislature for Kashmiri migrants is on record, but man made odds are heavily against this beleaguered community, now in the 35th year of running exiles and a sure recipe for killing their desire to return to their roots.

I close by wishing a warm Herath Mubarak to my community members. May Lord Shiva bestow happiness and prosperity to all of you!"



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TODAY IT IS SOMEONE ELSE, TOMORROW IT CAN BE ME



- Puran Patwari



General Secretary's Column

The month which saw full of activities on cultural and political front in Jammu and Kashmir and Delhi was a busy one for the Apex organization too. The schedule was tight and activities galore.

Meeting with thought leaders

AIKS held a meeting at YMCA Hostel New Delhi on March 2, 2024 to discuss the 'Upcoming elections and KP stakes in it'. The meeting was presided over by its President Dr Ramesh Raina and attended by large number of community activists and thought leaders from Delhi NCR, prominent being Sh.Moti Koul, Prof Sudhir Sopory, Ms.Alka Lahori, Dr Manorama Bakhshi and many others. The meeting was convened to discuss KP's perception in the light of changing political realities and dynamics of the place. A detailed report is given elsewhere in this issue.

MotherTongue Day

Celebrating Mother Tongue Day on 21st February is the important day in AIKS calendar. This year too Mother Tongue Day was celebrated on 3rd March with full enthusiasm and gusto at Sharika Bhawan of KSS (Kashmiri Sevak Samaj) in Sector 17, Faridabad. The programme was conducted by Dr Roop Krishen Bhat, eminent linguist and Editor of Vaakh, a Kashmiri magazine of AIKS. Setting the ball rolling for the day long programme with his introductory speech by Dr R K Bhat on pleasures and challenges in preserving the language in alien atmosphere, was followed by short speeches by AIKS President Dr Ramesh Raina and KSS President Prof Sudhir Sopory. One of the highlights of this year was Dr O.N Koul award conferred on the most celebrated poet of the community Ms Sunita Raina Pandit. Dr O.N Koul was a world renowned Linguist and author of many books on language and literature. He has

immensely contributed to the Mother Tongue by way of author and poet and together with Dr R.K. Bhat in creating a software for generation next for learning of Kashmiri Language. Ms Sunita Raina Pandit is a poet of a different genre who touches your core when she philosophises with her words set in lyrics. She has created a niche for her genre of poetry in the world of literature in J&K state and her poems have been translated in many Indian and foreign languages. The daylong session included story telling sessions by eminent literateurs like Dr Gauri Shankar Raina, Dr R K Bhat and Shri Arvind Shah, Mushaira (poetry symposium), Kashmiri songs by eminent artists like Dileep Langoo, Sanjeev Gautam Raina, Sushma Kalla, Sanjay Wali, and Shri Rohit Dass.

AIKS lauds UT Administration

AIKS raises its toast to J&K administration especially the Relief Commissioner for including the migrant community living in different cities apart for Jammu in PM's Ayushman Bharat Health Scheme. So far only migrant community living in Jammu was covered under this scheme. AIKS and other KP organisations have been persistently demanding that it should be uniformly applied to all migrants living anywhere in the country. AIKS expresses its gratitude to the UT administration and Relief Commissioner for personally supervising the exercise. AIKS also lauds the efforts of all the KP organizations for providing all sorts of logistic support like use of organizational Bhawans and office secretariat to the visiting Relief Office delegation from Jammu. AIKS congratulates all the heads of the KP organizations for their consistent efforts.

Non Engagement is a Core Concern

New Delhi March 4, 2024; AIKS held a meeting at YMCA Hostel New Delhi on March 2, 2024 to discuss 'Upcoming elections and KP stakes in it'. The meeting was presided over by its President Dr Ramesh Raina and attended by large number of community activists and thought leaders from Delhi NCR, prominent being Sh.Moti Koul, Sh.Sudhir Sopory, Ms.Alka Lahori,Dr Manorama Bakhshi and many others. The meeting was convened to discuss KP's perception in the light of changing political realities and dynamics of the place.

Dr.Ramesh Raina set the ball rolling by stating that consequent to the upcoming Parliamentary elections in May 2024, the political activities in the UT have started gaining momentum and each political party, be that national or regional, is trying to woo their voters and reaching out to their constituencies with electoral promises. In this regard, KPs, who being in running exile for 35 years now and the erosion from socio-psychological memory of Kashmir staring in their faces, it is significant to draw the attention of political authorities towards their plight and extract their commitment towards the beleaguered community in their respective manifestos.

He attributed the present condition of KPs to the non-engagement with them which he described as the core concern that was pushing them towards irrelevance which neither was good for Kashmir nor the Nation. He reminded the meeting that Kashmiri Pandits constituted a factorial importance in the socio-cultural construct of the Valley, their participation in the mainstream political life of the place therefore assumed significance. He also hailed the recent developments, especially, post the notification on delimitation in the UT of Jammu & Kashmir and the Supreme Court verdict upholding the validity of abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A and the AIKS response. In this regard the nomination of two legislative seats for Kashmiri Pandits was a monumental decision which created a legislative space of Kashmiri Pandits for the first time hitherto denied to them. He laid out various options for Kashmiri Pandits which focussed on improved Kashmir connect via temples and shrines which need a greater KP organisational push for the passage of temples and shrines bill, influence the political agenda of respective political parties of the place, grant of Minority status and pitch for more employment under PM package. The idea was to place KP issue at the centre stage of the political debate during the ensuing electoral campaigning. Shri Moti Kaul, ex-President of AIKS emphasised that the present BJP dispensation was committed to the welfare of displaced KP community and in this regard he mentioned the President's speech to the Parliament in 2014, which had the rehabilitation of beleaguered community prominently placed in the policy document. During these ten years we have seen the GOI delivering on our sustainable long term solutions like reservation in legislature which was in no way a smaller thing. He expressed optimism that the new term for the BJP will definitely have something to cheer about. Prof.Sudhir Sopory also echoed the AIKS sentiments and said that 35 years of running exile was killing the desire of the people to return in a big way and agreed with the outlined options. Ms.Alka Lahori and Dr Manorama Bakhshi expressed their satisfaction at the outlined options and to make it more meaningful and productive urged for the need to have greater consensus on it.

The meeting ended with Puran Patwari presenting the expression of gratitude.

- *Puran Patwari*
General Secretary



- Dr Roop Krishen Bhat



CKLLC CELEBRATES Mother Tongue Day 2024

Centre for Kashmiri language literature and Culture, an organ of AIKS, celebrated the Mother Tongue Day – 2024 at Sharika Bhavan, Kashmiri Sewak Samaj, Faridabad on 3rd March 2024. The one day programme started with a welcome address by Prof. Dr. Roop Krishen Bhat, Chairman of the CKLLC. He explained the origin and importance of mother tongue day to the audience. He said that CKLLC was established under the able guidance of Late Shri M.K. Kaw, former President AIKS and Secretary to the Govt. of India, with an objective to preserve and promote Kashmiri language and culture. Celebration of mother tongue day is one such activity. He said one of the objective of CKLLC is to promote Devnagri script for Kashmiri as an additional script to help our youngsters to learn, read and write Kashmiri language since Nastaliq script is not part of school curriculum outside the valley of Kashmir and Devnagri remains their better option as it is easy to learn and is the most scientific script. Better even than Roman. The Centre has so far published four important books to fulfill its objective. These are Lal Ded's Vaakh, Nunda Rishi's Shruk', Kashmiri Cultural Reader, a book with more than twenty essays on various aspects of Kashmiri Culture and A Collection of Biographical essays of more than Fifty eminent Kashmiri writers starting from Lal Ded to Shafi Shauq. Dr. Bhat welcomed all the guests on dias i.e. Dr.

Ramesh Raina President of All India Kashmiri Samaj, Prof. Sudhir Sopory Vice President of AIKS and President of KSS Faridabad, Shri S K Bhan senior poet, Executive Committee member of AIKS and coordinator of the programme and Smt. Sunita Raina Pandit, the eminent poet of Kashmiri language and other guests, scholars, writers, members of Kashmiri Biradari especially the residents of Faridabad. There after a book entitled Kashmir: Nirvasan Sahitya edited by Roop Krishen Bhat and Maharaj K Santoshi was released by guests on the dais. Dr. Gauri Shankar Raina, an eminent media personality presented a brief about the book. Besides this book, a poetry collection in Hindi by Smt. Ashma Kaul and translated into English by Shri Bhupendra Tiku was also released.

Thereafter, this year's Prof. Omkar Koul award for promotion of Kashmiri language and culture was presented to Smt. Sunita Raina Pandit, an eminent poet who has published 8 collections of poetry so far and is well acclaimed poet. Dr. Ramesh Raina, President AIKS, in his speech insisted for preservation of mother tongue and linking it to jobs and opportunities. Prof. Sudhir Sopory in his address appreciated the endeavor of CKLLC in promoting Kashmiri language outside Kashmir among displaced Kashmiries spread across the globe.

Thereafter, a special session on Issues

and solutions in preserving Kashmiri language outside Kashmir was discussed in which scholars like Dr. Gauri Shankar Raina, Dr. Maharaj Krishan Kaul, Shri Uma Kant Kachru, Shri S K Bhan, Smt. Brij Kishori Zutshi, Shri Surinder Bhat etc. participated and gave many suggestions. It was reiterated that parents and grandparents have a role in speaking with their children in Kashmiri at home and in various social and religious functions. Reading and writing of Kashmiri needs to be promoted and community and Kashmiri Sabhas and samitis should come

forward and own the responsibility to promote it. Gauri Shankar Raina and Dr. Roop Krishen Bhat read their short stories which were liked by the audience. The last segment of the programme was a musical presentation in which masters of the community Shri Dilip Langoo, Shri Sanjeev Raina Gautam, Smt. Sushma Kalla, Shri Sanjay Wali, Shri Rohit Das sang many Kashmiri songs which were appreciated and liked by the audience. The programme ended with Presentation of Mementos and shawls to the artistes and eminent participants.





-Ashok Bhan



ELECTORAL BONDS SCRAPPED BY SUPREME COURT



Electoral Bonds scrapped: Supreme Court's land mark Judgment Promotes the purity in Elections. Kashmir Policy and Strategy Group welcomed the Supreme Court judgment that is timely, significant for democracy and for promoting purity of the elections. The Judgment would help end political "mischief"

Supreme Court of India by a constitution bench of five honourable judges headed by the Chief Justice of India on Thursday unanimously struck down the Centre's electoral bond scheme which facilitates anonymous political donations for being unconstitutional. It underscored that the scheme violates the right to information under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution. Supreme Court has reflected its independence and acted as democracy's Guardian angel by its institutional wisdom to clean up and purify the electoral process in the Country.

The Supreme Court has scrapped a seven-year-old election funding system, called "electoral bonds", that allows individuals and companies to donate money to political parties anonymously and without any limits. Coming nearly two months before the general election, Thursday's decision is being seen as a setback for the parties which have been receiving huge funding from corporate houses, individuals of the industry and diaspora. The secretive election funding system was challenged by the opposition parties and a civil society group on the

grounds that it hindered the public's right to know who had given money to political parties.

A five-judge top court bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud on Thursday said the system is “unconstitutional” and directed the state-run State Bank of India (SBI) to not issue any more of these bonds, to furnish identity details of those who bought them, and to provide information about bonds redeemed by each political party. “Political contributions give a seat at the table to the contributor ... this access also translates into influence over policy-making,” Chief Justice Chandrachud said.

'Extra layer of Opacity'

For years, critics condemned India's election campaign financing method as an opaque way to funnel “black money” to parties. But Modi's government defended the policy, saying it mitigates the use of cash or “black money” in political funding, allowing donors a confidential channel to contribute to any party's funds. Undeclared individuals and companies bought such bonds worth 165.18 billion rupees (\$1.99bn) up to November 2023, according to the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), a non-government transparency watchdog working on election funding in India. ADR calculates that more than half of all donations received by political parties used the scheme. It said between 2018 and March 2022, nearly 57 percent of these donations went to the BJP. In comparison, the opposition Indian National Congress party received only 10 percent. Kashmir Policy and Strategy Group welcomed the Supreme Court judgment that is timely significant for democracy and for promoting purity of the elections. The Judgment would help end political “mischief”.

The ruling has brought a big relief for all those advocating the transparency in the election funding process. The initial reaction of all the citizenry: It is of a big relief – and some hope, the bond system “had added an extra layer of opacity”. “It addresses squarely

the issue of people's right to know who is funding political parties;” KPSG says it also “recognizes the fact that the stranglehold on policy and governance is achieved by big money through an opaque funding system of political parties”. “Big corporations were funding the parties and then negotiating what is in their favour through a quid pro quo. That was a blow to democracy.”

The Electoral Bonds Worked?

Under the system, a person or company could buy these bonds from SBI in denominations ranging from 1,000 rupees (\$12) to 10 million rupees (\$120,000) and donate them to a political party of their choice. The bonds – first sold in early 2018 – were then delivered to the party which can exchange them for cash. The bonds, which were exempt from tax, did not carry the name of the donor. Cash donations are still allowed for elections, but carry no tax exemption. Since their introduction, electoral bonds had become a key method of political funding. While the donors were technically anonymous, citizens feared the government could access data through the state-owned SBI. Because of the close nexus between money and politics, it is possible that financial contributions “would lead to quid pro quo arrangements”, the court said as it reinstated corporate donation limits, saying that treating companies and individuals alike for this was “manifestly arbitrary.”

The ability of a company to influence the electoral process through political contributions is much higher when compared to that of an individual contributions made by companies are purely business transactions made with the intent of securing benefits in return,” said the top court's order. Calling the court's ruling landmark, elections analysts say - it will impact the general election, due by May 2024. The political parties must have already made huge money ahead of the election, but they would have made 10 times more money in the coming days. So that sale has stopped.

The information about funding to a political party is essential for a voter to exercise their freedom to vote in an effective manner.

“The Electoral Bond Scheme and the impugned provisions to the extent that they infringe upon the right to information of the voter by anonymizing contributions through electoral bonds are violative of Article 19(1)(a).” the Court added. The bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices Sanjiv Khanna, BR Gavai, JB Pardiwala, and Manoj Misra delivered this verdict. The challenge to this highly debatable scheme was brought to the court by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), the Communist Party of India (Marxist), Congress leader Jaya Thakur, and others. The petitioners essentially argued that: The anonymity associated with electoral bonds undermines transparency in political funding and encroaches upon voters' right to information. Imperatively,

One of the defence taken by the Union before the Supreme Court was that the citizens do not have the right regarding the funding of political parties. Right to know is not a general right available to citizens," The Centre argued before the Supreme Court. Imperatively, one of the defense taken by the Union government before the Supreme Court was that the citizens do not have the right to information under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution regarding the funding of a political party. In the note submitted by Attorney General for India, R Venkataramani, he asserted that the judgments upholding the citizens' right to know of the criminal antecedents of candidates cannot be extrapolated to mean that they have the right to information regarding the funding of parties.

However, this view of the Centre has been firmly rejected by the Supreme Court in its judgment. Reliance was placed on landmark precedents like *ADR v. Union of India*, (2002) 5 SCC 294 and *PUCL v. Union of India*, (2003) 4 SCC 399. In these cases, the Apex Court observed that voters have a right to information that is essential for them to exercise their freedom to vote. To support its findings in this regard, the Court also demonstrated a close association of money with politics. Taking a cue from this, the Court voiced its concerns over the electoral bonds' potential to facilitate quid pro quo

arrangements. It explained that this Quid pro quo arrangement could also be in the form of introducing a policy change. On this aforementioned background, the Court opined that such information would help the voters determine if there is any link between policy making and financial contributions, the Court held.

Notably, the Court also mentioned that the voters need not task themselves with perusing the list of contributors. Electronic and print media would present the information on contributions received by political parties and the probable link between the contribution and the licenses that were given to the company in an accessible format, the Court said. The Court added that response to such information by the Government will 'go a long way in informing the voter.' The union's submission that the political party that receives the contribution does not know the identity of the contributor did not find favor with the court. Without mincing its words, the Court stated that the scheme is not fool-proof and has sufficient gaps. This, in turn, enables the political parties to know the particulars of the contributions made to them.

Electoral bonds provide economically resourced contributors who already have a seat at the table selective anonymity vis-à-vis the public and not the political party,” the Court firmly added. "At a primary level, political contributions give a seat at the table to contributors, i.e., it enhances access to legislators. This access also translates to influence over policymaking. There is also a legitimate possibility that financial contributions to a political party would lead to quid pro quo arrangement because of the close nexus between money and politics. The electoral bond scheme and the impugned provisions to the extent that they infringe upon the right to information of the voter by anonymising contributions through electoral bonds are violative of Article 19(1)(a)," the judgment stated.

(The Author is Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India and Chairman, Kashmir Policy and Strategy Group)



– Rajeshwar Dhar



ART 370 AND 35A THEN AND NOW

Usurping, Art 370 & Art 35A were Nibbling Away Jammu & Kashmir like Rats! Art 370 was Meant for the Empowerment of Then Jammu and Kashmir Region!



ARTICLE 370 THEN AND NOW

Insights

Art 370 in its Normative Form, then, was meant for the Empowerment of Jammu and Kashmir Region, as it was just the Broader Extension of what Dogra Rulers had initiated, however, it Turned out to be Churner of Political Mileages by Polity of the State. The Use of States Own Flag also is not Prohibited by the Constitution of India provided it is used as Subserving to National Flag and there was Violation of the same, time and again, in Kashmir. Both these Articles were responsible for the Ongoing Problems in Jammu and Kashmir, especially the Kashmir

Valley! With this Abrogation, there has been a Plethora of Options for Employment and Divisive Politics is dying its Natural Death. The Welfare Provisions of Indian Constitution are now being implemented across the J K Union. Big Industries and Services Sector are Setting Foot in the Valley Creating Employment Opportunities for the Young and Restive Population. Now, Art 370 is No More Valid for J&K, how best it can Serve the Aspirations of Emigrants of Jammu and Kashmiris is with Gaps, after all, Ghetto Living

there, is Uncalled and Undesired for, more so, when Generations Next of Emigrants live in Chiefly Better Surrounding Social Environment Outside Kashmir. The Simultaneous Reservation of Two Nominated Seats for Kashmiri Migrants in the State Assembly by GOI is a Welcome and Much Desired Step but would have been better if Mechanisms were drawn to Elect These Representatives by People who they Represent. This Top Down Approach Dilutes Right to Exercise Franchise for Voiced Representative in the State which has been Elusive for many decades now, nevertheless, it is there now, Better Late than Never and has Come in NaMo Regime.

Verdict of Hon'ble Supreme Court

With unanimous Decision of Five Bench Hon'ble Supreme Court - SC, upholding the Centres Repeal of Art 370 has dispelled the cloud over the J&K's relations with Indian Union and this endorsement of Hon'ble SC has sent out the message to Stakeholders there especially Perennial Political Parties to embark upon the New Paradigm. In the Judgment, it is held that Art 370 Part XXI of the Constitution was 'Transitory and Temporary Provision', that Art 370 was an example of 'Asymmetric Federalism' meaning Union in which different Constituent States assume different Powers with no evidence of

Internal Sovereignty and President of India had the Power to declare that Art 370(3) ceases to exist without the recommendation of Constituency Assembly of the State. So the Abrogation of Art 370 turned into '*de jure status*' of J&K from '*de facto situation*'.

Art 370 in the Indian Constitution gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir disputed by India, Pakistan and China and was drafted by Constituent Assembly of India and was added to the constitution as a 'Temporary Provision' in 1949. It allowed the state to have its own Constitution, Flag and Autonomy over most matters except for Defense, Foreign Affairs and Communications. It was based on the terms of the Instrument of Accession, which was signed by the Ruler of Jammu and Kashmir, Hari Singh, in 1947 to join India in then Chaotic Situations, after an invasion by Pakistan. But this provision, somehow, posed challenge to the Central Govt regarding Total Integrity of J&K State with Indian Union as this Contentious Constitutional Provision often Persistently held to argue that J&K was differently accessed to Union of India especially in the Eyes of Pakistan that perceived it as unfinished task of Partition and waged many failed wars to Annex it after the immediate Partition. More so, The Polity and the Political Parties of Kashmir Created Mileage of this situation for their own self



goals with no benefit for the Bottom of the Pyramid of Innocent and Aspiring People of then Jammu and Kashmir.

With Pak Deploying of Non State Actors towards 1990s to fuel the Gun Culture of Insurgency in Kashmir and Bordering Areas of Jammu, the Cauldron had come to the Boil with Innocent Hindus falling Victim to Holocaust which took the shape of no-less than Ethnic Genocide on Communal lines. But with New Assertion of Nationalism in India, Art 370 Surely was an Anomaly, which has been Superseded Now. Hon'ble SC has also upheld the Creation of Ladakh as UT and People of Ladakh have heaved a sigh of relief, who have always regretted for being sidelined for proper development of the area by then J&K Political Parties. Simultaneously, The Question of changing status of J&K State to JK UT by Parliament of India has been kept open by Hon'ble SC with Road Map for the Restoration of Political Process for the Jammu and Kashmir sans Ladakh by Sept 24. Also, there was a Judgment of An Emotional Epilogue, Authored by Justice Sanjay Koul of Hon'ble SC who was part of this 5 Bench being himself A Native of Srinagar, Kashmir, recommending Impartial Truth and Reconciliation Commission - TRC, highlighting the Ordeal of Kashmiri Pundits who have been forced to flee their homeland for the last over three decades by brutal violence of Separatist Fundamentalists with many Deaths and recommending A

Structural Investigation of the Events of Human Rights Violations both by State and Non-State Perpetrators in Jammu and Kashmir, at least, since 1980 onwards. Justice Koul also said it is equally important to understand that State has heavily suffered on account of Militant Activities. He added people there were witnessing this Violence for decades now after Foreign Insurgency of 1990 and hence Men, Women and Children of the state have paid Heavy Price witnessing Rupture of the Social Fabric of the Society over the Years and Unfortunate consequences of Intergenerational Trauma of the this Fractured Society.

Justice Koul, Cited South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Too Late in The Day Now) as how Perpetrators of Apartheid came forward to openly in front of Public Cameras owning their Crimes and Leading to the Systematic Changes to minimize any possibility of their recurrence. Top of it, Justice also clarified that Constituting Commission should not be construed as a call for turning the body into a Criminal Court to Punish People but the body must facilitate A Reparative Approach that enables Forgiveness for the wounds of the past - A Balming Process. It has to be Humanized and Personalized Process enabling people to share what they have been through, So That Shared Identity It will Form Is Achieved.

What is in Ubuntu Philosophy which we cannot find in Vasudaiva Kutumbakam?

Ubuntu Philosophy of African Origin Supports Collectivism over Individualism - Defines in Simple Terms, A Collection of Values and Practices that People of Africa or of African Origin view as making People Authentic Human Beings Who are Part of a Larger and More Significant Relational, Communal, Societal, Environmental and Spiritual World. Today, Ubuntu finds Application in Education, Social Work, Research, Morals, Politics, Leadership, Welfare and Development and Diplomacy. As Social Welfare and Development Measure The Truth and Reconciliation Council Believed that Ubuntu



would help reform the already Apartheid Broken Society of South Africa in all walks of life including by way of Social Justice, Criminal Justice and Jurisprudence, involving Sequence of Stages like Initial Stage of Deterrence (Socially, Physically, Economically), Followed by to Bring Back (Compensate or to Replace), Then to Apologize (Forgiveness or Reconciliation), Warnings and Lastly if that is not Achieved, then only resort to Punishments or Retributions that too by Elders and Spiritual Leaders of the Society. Ubuntu, Ideal to Nelson Mandela, has been hailed as Force of Transformation towards Acceptance by Different Races and Classes in South Africa to Accept One Another and to Live Together in Democratic Set Up. But off Late, Ubuntu has come under Criticism, too, from so many Quarters of Society, Referring to its Short Comings for the Society.

If it is Ubuntu there in Africa, it is Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, ideal of Bharat Rashtra, Unity in Diversity, The Eternal Santana, Constitutional Secularism and What Not in Bharata. This Practice of the Universal Truth remains relevant today as it emphasizes a Global Perspective, Prioritizing the Collective well-being over Individual or Family Interests. It encourages thinking about the Welfare of Others, Fostering Global Solidarity and Responsibility, even, addressing Crucial Issues like Sustainable Development. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam rejects Division of Mankind into Various Categories and Emphasises the Universality of All Humans, whatever their Rank or Station in Life, are alike, Where Every City is Your City and Everyone is Your Kin. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam or One Earth-One Family-One Future is drawn from the Ancient Sanskrit Text of the Maha Upanishad. And Essentially, the Theme Affirms the Value of All Life – Human, Animal, Plant and Even Micro-organisms.

Has Governments not done enough for Truths and Reconciliation? At the Outset, If we Turn Back the Pages of Kashmir History, DNA of Kashmir has never been Persecutor or Religious Perpetrator unless Abetted,

Indoctrinated, Misled, Insinuated or Compelled to do so by Extraneous Forces.. In Indian Context, The Steps Taken by Govt of India and Govt of J&K State Then and JK Union Now, so far, against the Perpetrators have been Very Meaningful, where The Centre The State and The Indian Army Forces including other Central State Agents have worked Day and Night to Bring the Radicalized Minds to the Main Stream by Warnings, Offerings for Surrender, Bringing Surrendered to Normal Social Life with Proper Rescue and Welfare to their Family Members, Counselling and Rehabilitation, Providence of Livelihood etc. , Wherever, The Truth of Retribution vis-s-vis Law Enforcement is concerned that is also being followed in the Right Spirits by Criminal Courts. The Difference in Citing the Example of Africa is that there Excesses were by the Apartheid Machineries and here it is the Volte Face and backed by Abettors, also given the fact, most Sufferers are Kashmiri Hindus which are Still in the Fluid State of Emigration - Out of Motherland Kashmir. So the Reconciliation is already followed By Both Central and state governments in Letter and Spirit.

‘So far, Two Vivid Rehabilitation Policies for Ex-militants have been announced by the J&K government, First and Second Rehabilitation Policy (2004 & 2010) for the Ex-militants residing in J&K, Also, Jammu and Kashmir Security Forces New Appeal in 2021 to Militants to Surrender, Come Home and Rejoin Society. What Better Steps Govt Could have taken or If there are un-spelt Gaps to be filled for Re-conciliation should have been Lucidly Mentioned for Course Correction by Hon’ble Supreme Court.’

And, Reconciliation could be incomplete, When One Important Part of the Society or Group of Communities are Not Living in their Homeland, Kashmir and that Community has Marched Ahead to Keep Indic Civilization Alive in This Part of World, irrespective of Commissions or Omissions, albeit, without Home land which is their Main

Tragic Concern. This Kashmiri Community for Generations have faced this Trauma Since almost A Millennium Now, at the hands of Fundamentalist Perpetrators and Emigrant Kashmiri Community has not Flapped or Budged or Stopped to March Ahead in Life –In fact Has Risen Umpteen Times from Ashes like Phoenix –Tathastu!

Is not It, the Same Hon'ble Court that has few years back, Rejected a Petition seeking Reopening of Cases of Kashmiri Pandits / Hindus Mass Killings Citing Long time Period Elapse to Obtain Evidences! or Is not it, The Excruciating Experience How long the Gruesome and Heinous Perpetrators have been going Scot Free !or General Majority There Not Accepting (Embrace As Per TRC) To Agree that Kashmiri Hindu was Driven out from Kashmir, Out of Fear of Mass Genocide!. Wonder, if these Circumstances Be Bases For Re-Conciliation, for Introspection for One and All? However, Let us Pray for Best, Brighter and Harmonious Future for Kashmir and Pay Heed to Directives of Hon'ble Supreme Court, too.

Also, Till-the-time Lip Services get Realized into Real Services for Emigrant and Displaced Kashmiris (35 Years and almost Two Generations Counting), They Require, to the least, Better Living Conditions and Relief Measures for those who are still in Camps, Best Education Access, Best Social Welfare Schemes like Ayushman Bharat for all Irrespective of where they reside in India, JK Union Citizenship on Auto Mode to JK Persons, Born anywhere, on the Globe (Example of Jews), Minority Status in J K Union, Fixed Quota of Job Reservations, Out-of-Box Sops and Incentives for Start Up Businesses and likes – That would be Better Balm to Relieve Kashmiri Hindus-Pandits of Sufferings and of course, withstanding too, the fait accompli, of those who have been Martyred for last so many Centuries and Amass in Recent Past will be Our Heroes for the Times Immemorial to Come. Recall Kashmiri Hindu-Pandit Community, believes in Advancement of Humanity for Vengeance

is of Weaker Minds and Discretion is better Part of Valour.

Lastly, How do we know that the Down-Up Approach of Start of Political Process, as directed by Hon'ble SC, will not Let the JK Union take Reverse Situation, again, when Opposition at Centre Legislature are Still Hammer and Tongs against Revocation of Art 370. This Reminds of following Relationship for Conflicts and Harmony for the Social Causes wherein 'Constitutionally, The Final Type of Authority called the Legislative Authority has Territorial Autonomy and includes a Local Legislature with Deeply Entrenched Powers - Michael Tkacik., Theory of Automonies', Setting aside Personal, Cultural and Administrative Autonomies.

(Personal Views Expressed By the Author)

NAAD CONGRATULATES



Naad Congratulates Ms. Shivani Kaul from Jammu, who was honoured with the "Best Plus Size Model Award" at the "I Am Women of The Year Award Show 2024." AIKS extends its best wishes to Shivani for all her future endeavours.



- Ravinder Gurtoo



KASHMIRI PANDIT GENOCIDE 1990 AND THEREAFTER – Part-II



1. Intimidation and Threats:

The 1990 insurgency in Kashmir witnessed a mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the region. Intimidation tactics, including threats, violence, and targeted killings, forced a large number of Kashmiri Pandits to flee their homes. Militant groups specifically targeted Kashmiri Pandits, viewing them as symbols of Indian authority and cultural integration. Many received threats demanding them to

leave the region, and those who resisted faced severe consequences, including violence and death. The intimidation and threats were often accompanied by religious persecution. Kashmiri Pandits were singled out due to their Hindu faith, making them vulnerable to systematic intimidation aimed at altering the religious demographics of the region.

The intimidation was part of a broader systematic campaign to create an

environment hostile to the presence of Kashmiri Pandits. This campaign included propaganda, inflammatory speeches, and acts of violence to instill fear and coerce the community into leaving. The intimidation and threats had a lasting impact on the Kashmiri Pandit community. The forced exodus resulted in a significant displacement, with many families losing their homes and livelihoods. The social fabric of the region was altered, leading to a profound and enduring impact on Kashmiri Pandits.

2. Religious Extremism:

The insurgency in Kashmir in 1990 was marked by a significant ideological motivation rooted in religious extremism. Many militants sought to establish an Islamic state, reflecting a fusion of political and religious goals. The conflict in Kashmir saw grievances, primarily political and economic, being increasingly radicalised along religious lines. This shift led to the framing of the insurgency in religious terms, with the demand for a separate Islamic state gaining prominence. External actors, including some Islamist groups and neighbouring countries, played a role in fueling the insurgency. This external influence often had a religious character, contributing to the perception of the conflict as a manifestation of religious extremism. It witnessed heightened ethnic and religious polarisation in the region. The targeting of specific religious groups and the creation of an atmosphere of fear based on

religious identity further underscored the religious dimensions of the conflict. Insurgent groups often used religious symbolism and rhetoric to mobilise support and garner legitimacy. This included the use of religious language in manifestos, speeches, and propaganda, reinforcing the perception of the conflict as driven by religious extremism.

3. Selective Targeting:

The insurgency in Kashmir in 1990 saw selective targeting with a strong ethnic and religious dimension. Militant groups often targeted the minority Hindu community, leading to a significant exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the region. Selective targeting was employed as a strategy to instil fear and intimidate specific groups. This not only included religious minorities but also individuals perceived as collaborators with the Indian government or security forces. Militant groups targeted political figures who were seen as aligned with Indian authorities. This included assassinations of local politicians, bureaucrats, and other individuals associated with the administration, aiming to disrupt governance and establish separatist control. Security personnel were also selectively targeted by militant groups. Attacks on military convoys, camps, and police stations were common, reflecting a strategy to weaken the Indian government's presence in the region and undermine its control. Beyond individuals, certain symbolic targets were selected for attacks. These included government buildings,



communication infrastructure, and symbols of Indian authority. Such actions were intended to convey a broader message of resistance and opposition to Indian rule in Kashmir

4. Inadequate Government Response:

The government's response to the threats faced by Kashmiri Pandits during the 1990 insurgency was marred by a delayed evacuation process. The authorities failed to act promptly to safeguard the lives of the Kashmiri Pandit community, leading to tragic consequences. The inadequate deployment of security forces and the failure to establish secure zones for the protection of Kashmiri Pandits left them vulnerable to violence and forced displacement. Insufficient security measures exacerbated the severity of the crisis. The government's response fell short in addressing the root causes of the conflict, such as ethnic tensions and political instability. A comprehensive strategy to address the underlying issues was essential for preventing the escalation of violence and ensuring the long-term safety of the Kashmiri Pandit community. The provision of humanitarian aid and support for displaced Kashmiri Pandits was inadequate. Essential services, including shelter, food, and medical assistance, were not effectively delivered, contributing to the suffering of those affected by the insurgency.

The government's failure to hold accountable those responsible for orchestrating attacks on Kashmiri Pandits added to the sense of injustice. A lack of swift and transparent legal action allowed perpetrators to escape consequences, undermining trust in the government's ability to protect its citizens

5. Mass Migration:

The exodus resulted in a mass migration of Kashmiri Pandits, with thousands leaving their homes and becoming displaced internally or settling in various parts of India. It's important to note that the situation is multifaceted, and different perspectives exist regarding the causes and responsibility for the exodus of which the main factor is Islamic fundamentalism.

IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

1. ECONOMICAL

The migration of Kashmiri Pandits had a significant economic impact on their livelihoods. Many faced disruptions in their careers and businesses, leading to financial challenges. The forced displacement resulted in the loss of property and assets, impacting their overall economic well-being. Rebuilding lives in new locations posed employment challenges, affecting income and economic stability for most of the members of Kashmiri Pandits.

The forced exodus of Kashmiri Pandits resulted in a significant loss of livelihood for many, as they had to abandon their homes, businesses, and jobs. Kashmiri Pandits faced economic displacement, struggling to rebuild their lives in different parts of India, often starting from scratch. The abandonment of homes and properties in Kashmir led to substantial financial losses, impacting the overall economic wealth of the community. Many Kashmiri Pandit-owned businesses in the region were either shut down or taken over, causing a long-term economic setback.

Displacement also affected the education of Kashmiri Pandit youth, potentially limiting their access to opportunities and impacting their future earning potential. The process of resettlement placed a strain on the financial resources of many Kashmiri Pandit families, as they had to establish new homes and lives. Some members of the community became dependent on government support and rehabilitation programs, which has certainly affected their economic independence. The trauma of the exodus likely had a psychological impact on the workforce, potentially affecting their productivity and ability to pursue economic opportunities.

2. SOCIAL

The exodus of Kashmiri Pandits in 1990 led to numerous social problems for the community. Many faced difficulties in resettlement, discrimination, and a struggle to preserve their cultural identity. The trauma of

forced migration continues to impact the community's social fabric, with issues like emotional distress, economic challenges, and a longing for a return to their homeland. The events of 1990 significantly altered the social landscape for Kashmiri Pandits, creating enduring challenges. It may involve examining how displacement, loss, and trauma have influenced familial bonds, identity formation, and intergenerational dynamics within the community. Certainly, the impact of the 1990 Kashmiri Pandit Genocide on family relations can be a complex sociological issue. Families were torn apart, and the social fabric of the Kashmiri Pandit community was severely damaged by the forced migration. Sociologically, the community faced challenges in preserving its cultural identity. Dispersed across different regions, Kashmiri Pandits had to adapt to new environments while striving to maintain their unique customs and traditions. The loss of a shared physical space also affected social cohesion, as the community struggled to recreate the

close-knit bonds they once had in Kashmir. The forced migration led to a profound loss of connection with their homeland, impacting the Kashmiri Pandits emotionally and culturally. The dispersal of Kashmiri Pandits across various regions led to the fragmentation of their close-knit community, affecting social bonds and support systems. The migration contributed to the political alienation of Kashmiri Pandits, as they were uprooted from their native region during a period of heightened political turmoil. The migration affected the practice of religious rituals and customs, as the community had to adapt to new environments with different cultural contexts. While integrating into new communities, Kashmiri Pandits faced challenges in adapting to diverse cultures and lifestyles, further impacting their social dynamics. Post-migration, some Kashmiri Pandit individuals and organizations actively engaged in advocacy and awareness campaigns to highlight their plight, seeking support for their community's rehabilitation and justice.

(To be Contd...)

Calendar of Month

Thaal Bharun (Choram)	13th March 2024
Soanth Sankranti (Paancham)	14th March 2024
Teel Aashtami (Shukla Paksha)	17th March 2024
Ekadashi (Shukla Paksha)	20th March 2024
Holi (Chaturdashi)	24th March 2024
Poornima	25th March 2024
Ashtami (Krishna Paksha)	02nd April 2024
Ekadashi (Krishna Paksha)	05th April 2024
Thaal Bharun (Amavasya)	08th April 2024
Navreh (Navratra Starts)	09th April 2024
Zang Trey	11th April 2024
Sankranti	12th April 2024
Durga Ashtami (Shukla Paksha)	16th April 2024
Ram Navami	17th April 2024
Poornima	23rd April 2024

Note

Panchak starts on 05th April 2024 ends on 11th April 2024

Phalgun (Shukla Paksha) from 11th March 2024 to 25th March 2024

Chaitra (Krishna Paksha) from 26th March 2024 to 08th April 2024

Chaitra (Shukla Paksha) from 09th April 2024 to 23rd April 2024



- Rohit Kachroo



"YOUR VOTE MATTERS"

In the midst of our busy lives, "Election Day" often turns into a chance for relaxation – a day to sleep in, relish pizza, socialize, watch a movie, and much more. I have personally witnessed individuals eagerly anticipating election day to indulge in various activities, excluding the act of casting a vote. However, neglecting the power of your vote has profound consequences for our democracy and for our future generations. While some argue that one vote may not sway an election, history shows otherwise. Numerous elections, from local to national levels, have been decided by a few votes. Your choice adds to the collective strength shaping our political landscape.

Not voting sends a disheartening message to those who fought for our democratic right. People sacrificed for our voices do matter. Disregarding these rights disrespects their struggle. Casting a vote empowers you to shape your community's policies, from education, infrastructure, healthcare and much more. By abstaining, you miss the chance to influence decisions directly affecting your life. Critics point to disillusionment with political promises and a perceived lack of accountability. However, change is gradual. Through participation, you become part of an

ongoing dialogue, holding politicians accountable and advocating for reforms.

Not voting has consequences. Low turnout may be seen as apathy, leading to policies that don't align with the majority's needs. Diminished diversity weakens democracy, making it susceptible to manipulation. Consider the scenario of General Elections: dedicating a couple of hours on your day off to vote can have a lasting impact over the course of 43,800 hours. Your investment on Election Day, though brief, is incomparable to the enduring effects of policies shaped by your vote.

In conclusion, the influence of a single vote is immense. It is a privilege and a responsibility that shapes our nation's destiny. On Election Day, rise above the allure of a day off. After casting your vote, you can still relish pizza, socialize, watch a movie, and much more. Recognize the importance of your voice, and by voting, contribute to the resilience and vibrancy of our democracy. Commit to casting your vote in future elections for a future where our collective voices resonate through the corridors of power.

If you prefer not to endorse any political party, you can opt for "None of the Above" (NOTA) when voting in Indian elections since 2009. This option allows citizens to express their preference for none of the candidates while emphasizing the importance of not wasting a single vote.





-Vinod Razdan



BELIEFS OF LALDED

There is no doubt about Lalded or Lalleshwari been a Shaivite and her Guru too was a Shaivite. Many different authors have written about her centuries after her demise and some of the narratives about her seem to be imaginary, deliberately misquoted and with wrong attributions. One of these attributions is that Lalded was influenced by Islam.

Some texts of Islamic Sufism do resemble the Philosophic ideas of Monistic Shaivism, Pashupati Shaivism or Vedantic teachings but Lalded being influenced by Islam or having accepted Islam is wrong. Even certain incidents subsequently claimed to be related to her after almost two hundred years after her death are also baseless and without logic.

Lalded had her Guru Sidh Srikanth who taught her monistic Shaivism. There is a mention of an incident where Lalded explains to her Guru about her six prior births on the occasion of her marriage with Nikka Bhat. She tells her Guru that let him recognise Nikka Bhat who was her son in her previous birth. Sidha Srikanth gets astonished though he himself was no less a Yogi. Lala thus was purely a Shaivite by thought and action. Her education in this field is vivid by her Vakhs. When she says “Shiv Chuy thali thali Rozan; Mov zaan Heund tay Musalmaan”, this Vakh derives its roots from monistic Shaivism and not from Islamic Sufism. In Monistic Shaivism, there is no cast, creed and religion.

As per Tarikh-e-Husseini, Sultan



Allahudin ascended on throne in 1345 AD, Lalded is mentioned as Majnun-i-Aqila and the incident of water pitcher getting broken by a stick by her husband and creation of pond of Lalded called Lal-trag. Baba Dawood Mishkati in Asrar-ul-Abrar written in 1654 whereas Lalded is said to have died somewhere between 1372 to 1391. This being the earliest recorded mention of Lalded. These documents have come into existence almost three hundred years after the death of Lalded and some incidents mentioned are simply hearsay. Asrar-ul-Abrar was a Hagiographical document and not a Chronicle like Rajtarangni. The earliest Sanskrit Chronicles Jonaraja's Rajtarangni from 1150 to middle of Zain-ul-abdin regime 1420-70 makes mention of Mala Nur-u-din, chief Guru of Muslims but not Lalded. This indicates even by then Lalded was not much popular. Srivara's Jaina Rajtarangni (1459-1486) has no mention either, Prajyabhata's Rajvalipataka (1486-1513) and his pupil Shuka who extended it till 1586, none has mention of Lalded. Persian Chronicles succeeding till 1746 too have no mention of Lalded. Chronicles exclusively mentioned about the Kings and it must be the reason that Rajtarangni is silent about the Trika school of Shaivism or Acharya Abhinavagupt. The teachings of Lalded must not have reached general Public and having become popular by then. Thus, various incidents related to her too seems to have been added subsequently. Thus the incidents mentioned in earliest documents cannot be blindly relied upon.

Khwaja Mohd Azam Dedamari (whose ancestors were Pandits) mentions her as Lala-Aarifa who died in the reign of Sultan Shahab-u-din. Abdul Wahab Shayiq and Mohd Aslam Abu-Al-Qasam mentions her a Yogini. Birbal Kachru mentions her as a Saintly Hindu, Pir Gh. Hassan mentions her as Saintly Lala Aarifa. There are evidences that Lal Ded worshipped Pampore Bhairava called "Nata Keshava Bhairava" "at Zinapore where she is said to have crossed the river without dipping her feet in water. This shows her firm belief in Shaivism.

The vakh "Tannay heyot Lalli

nangay nachun", some explain the "Nachun" "very wrongly, Lali is attributed as her belly being hung lose which is another wrong explanation. Had it been so then in her earlier age she would not have said "Lali nalvath chali -n-zanh". Here she herself mentions her as Lali. This defeats the wrong explanation that Lal means a hung belly. Even some photographs or paintings are shown her with hung belly. Lalded no doubt was an elevated soul. Once her Guru was on a forty day fast and one day she visits him, she tells his family that his Guru is not meditating at the moment but, instead, he is watching his horses being fed with salt at Nandimarg. This shows her spiritual elevation.

Her influence of Shaivism gets further strength when she says "there is no Mukhti (Liberation) by self-mortification but it comes by the grace of God". An incident of placing earthen pots called in Kashmiri as "tag'ear", one below her body and another over her head and then waning & waxing of her body. She upbraided those who were satisfied with worship of idols, animal sacrifice, pilgrimages and recitation of scriptures alone. As per Trika and Agamas, she as a Yogini was right. These teachings of her do not reflect influence of Islam. 'Omkar Yeli Layi Onnum' (as per Anupaya 6 paths of Varna viz. Mantra, Pada, Kala, Tatva and Bhavana) shows her deep understanding of Shaivism. A dialogue wrongly claimed between Lalded and Nundrishi as under:

LALDED

Siryas hue na gash kanh; Gangayi hue n tirath kanh

NUNDRISHI

Acchev hue n gash kanh; Kotheav hue n tirath kanh

LALDED

Dayas hue n gash kanh

This is said to be in fact a dialogue between Nikka Bhat, Sidha Srikanth and Lalded when Nikka Bhat is persuading Lalded to return to home. Pandit Anand Koul Bamzai says that Mir Sayyed Ali Hamdani, Lalded and Nund Rishi would discuss spiritual matters and showed occult powers

whereas she was against occult powers.

Followers of Kubrawi order of Shah Hamdan say that Lala Aarifa journeyed the four spheres of meditation Arsh-i-Majid with Shah Hamdan. Shah Hamdan came to Kashmir in 1372-73 when Nund Rishi was not born, Shah Hamdan came to Kashmir second time in 1379 and third time in 1383. Nund Rishi was born in 1377 and would have been a toddler on the visit of Shah Hamdan. Thus the above attribution is deliberately planted. Similarly, the saying "Aaye Vannis Gaye Kaandrass" meaning Lala had gone to a grocer but arrived at a baker's shop and she jumping to hot oven of the baker when she noticed Shah Hamdan approaching too has no evidence. Khwaja Mohd Azam Dedmari in his "Waqayati Kashmir" writes that it has not been proved that Lalded met Mir Syed Hamdani. The only mention instead is by Birbal Kachru in his Majmu-al-Twarikh in 1836. Pir Gh. Hassan in Tarikh-e-Hassan"

offered Shidukashkam, a cup of wine with no mention of Lala. Behrstan-i-shahi too has no mention. This finds mention first time in Asrar-ul-Abrar in 1654. Wine Shidu became Sharbat in Asrar-ul-Abrar.

Another attribution is that Lalded became "Murrid-e-khas" of Syed Hussain Samnani and Muslims say she accepted Islam at the hands of Samnani. Abdul Ahad Azad says Lalded conversed with Muslim missionaries for mutual interest. Lala was in fact above cast, creed and religion and her vakh "Annas Khennas kya chum dvesh" or "Shiv T'chondum thali thali" shows her deep roots in Shaivism. She neither changed her faith nor did she find any difference between a Hindu and a Muslim when she said "Mov Zaan Heond t Musalmaan".

All these attributions are fake, bogus and without any substance.

The biggest injury caused to the Vakhs of Lalded has been the spurious Vakhs added in

The biggest injury caused to the Vakhs of Lalded has been the spurious Vakhs added in her name.

writes that Lalded met Syed Jalal-u-din Bukhari and Syed Hussain Samnani but there is no mention of Syed Hamdani. Asrar-ul-Abrar mentions this incident differently and there is no corroboration that Lala met Syed Hamdani.

Prince Shahab-u-din was once hunting with Mallik Jinder, Aadarsh Rawal and Akhta Ji. Lala Aarifa having met them and having offered a cup of Sharbat. Prince accepting it and Lala prophesied that Prince will become a King, Aadarsh Rawal took some and handed over to Mallik who drank whole leaving nothing for Akhta Ji. Lala declared Aadarsh would be PM, Mallik as Commander in chief and Akhta Ji would die before reaching home. This seems to be unusual as already said that Lalded was against occult exhibition. Jonaraja's Rajtarangni has this anecdote with a difference that a leader of the Yogni's

her name. Pandit Bhasker Razdan had mentioned some sixty odd Vakhs, Professor Jia Lal Koul after due research found some 180 Vakhs in her name which included some spurious ones added by Pandit Anand Koul and the learned Professor found some 131 odd Vakhs as genuine. Today's some writers took them to near 450 Vakhs. The height of the bogus claim is that most of these writers are Kashmiri Pandits, it is not understood how they did their ground work in Kashmir that too in utter turmoil? This way some irrelevant Vakhs have crept in and people on this strength attribute bogus claim and narrative about Lalded. Tomorrow, our youngsters won't be able to refute it as we find it now to refute false claim of conversion to Islam of Lalded. Better to eliminate these narratives and bogus Vakhs in her name now.



– Sanjay Pandita



PT. DHANANJAY KAUL

Harmonizing Traditions, Bridging Cultures, and Crafting a Musical Legacy!

Dhananjay Kaul, a multifaceted personality, weaves a tapestry of diverse experiences and talents, transcending stereotypes in the world of music. Born into a lineage enriched with the musical essence, his roots trace back to the shores of the Manasbal lake, where his grandfather, Pandit Shambhu Nath Kaul, held sway as a Jagirdar. The familial influence on Dhananjay was profound; his father, Pandit Shanti Chaitanya Kaul, was not only a handsome man with unique looks but also a source of early musical inspiration.

The early echoes of music resonated in the family home, where Dhananjay's grandmother would sing, and great-grandfather hosted Sufiyana Mehfil. Surrounded by the soulful tunes of Surdas, MiraBhai Bhajans, and Sufi Kalam, Dhananjay's musical journey began. His father, a man of early maturity who embraced the path of renunciation at a tender age, served as a guiding force. Dhananjay's fascination with music, an intrinsic part of his being, unfolded without formal training, positioning him as a prodigious singer in his school days.

The symphony of his life orchestrated itself in 1989-90 when, amid the turmoil of a curfew-clad Srinagar, Dhananjay was beckoned to Delhi by Pandit Bhajan Sopori. The beginning of his journey, marked by a



modest sum of Rs. 5000 for three to four songs, hinted at the resilience and determination that would shape his trajectory. Though the subsequent assignments did not align seamlessly, Dhananjay found solace in singing with hotel groups, maintaining the flame of learning.

His tryst with Delhi revealed a stark reality – commercial viability in the city demanded versatility. With Urdu learned from his father and proficiency in Saraiki and Multani acquired through earnest efforts, Dhananjay broadened his musical horizons. Ranjeet Kaur and Prof. Manjeet Indra in Chandigarh played pivotal roles in guiding

him through this transformative phase. Challenges persisted, but Dhananjay's adaptability and prowess flourished, allowing him to seamlessly render Punjabi, Sufi, and Urdu compositions.

Beyond the stage and studio, nature emerged as a steadfast companion in Dhananjay's life. Retreats to Uttarakhand offered moments of self-discovery amidst hills and open spaces, a practice he embraced with devotion. Swami Sachitanand Ji Maharaj became a spiritual guide, providing strength and grounding. His connection with preacher Morari Babu, showcased through an eight-hour-long performance on Aastha Channel in 2004, attested to a relationship of mutual admiration and faith.

In the rich tapestry of Indian Classical Music, the resonant echoes of Punjab's spiritual heritage birthed a distinctive style known as Punjab Ang. Within this melodic realm, Dhananjay emerges as a maestro, weaving the threads of Patiala and Shyam Chaurasi Gharanas into a harmonious narrative. Dhananjay's vocal prowess transcends the boundaries of conventional Khayal singing, delving into the soul-stirring realms of Thumri, Dadra, Kafi, Ghazal, Sufiana Kalam, and Bhajans. A virtuoso in the footsteps of luminaries like Bade Ghulam Ali Khan and Barkat Ali Khan, he carries forward the musical legacy shaped by Ustads such as Salamat Ali Khan and Fateh Ali Khan, under the guidance of his revered guru, Acharya Nirmala Devi.

Within the cadence of his singing, echoes of the Patiala and Shyam Chaurasi traditions resonate, each note an homage to the profound artistry of his musical forebears. Dhananjay's vocal expression, infused with the essence of Kirana Gharana in Raga music, unfolds with a full-throated resonance, a bold proclamation of his artistic identity.

In the intricate dance of Swaras, his voice, endowed with a requisite bass and the subtle rattle of Jhawari, paints a mesmerizing portrait of musical finesse. A master of Tana patterns, Dhananjay's readiness to explore diverse melodic landscapes makes his artistry

a captivating journey through the enchanting realms of Indian Classical Music.

Dhananjay's reflections on music transcend the boundaries of genres and languages. A torchbearer of Kashmiri music's potential, he envisions a revival of the rich poetic heritage encapsulated in works by Lalleshwari, Zinda Kaul, Krishan Joo Razdan, and others. His desire to translate and popularize the works of Krishnakar Ji, who penned Bhajans in Persian, highlights an ardent commitment to preserving and disseminating cultural treasures.

Dhananjay Kaul's style of singing is a harmonious blend of traditional Indian classical elements and a contemporary flair that sets him apart in the world of music. Rooted in the rich cultural heritage of Kashmiri music, his voice carries the essence of the soulful tunes he was immersed in during his upbringing. Dhananjay, a connoisseur of diverse musical forms, harbors a profound belief in the expansive potential of Kashmiri music. Contrasting with the predominant use of two Ragas in the music of the Himalayan belt, Kashmir boasts over 40 distinct ones. Harkening back to the 8th-9th century, during Abhinavgupta's era, Kashmir was a hub for music conferences, a testament to its rich cultural heritage. Amidst this wealth of tradition, Dhananjay envisions a transformative project, translating and popularizing the works of Krishnakar Ji, who penned Bhajans in Persian. Lalleshwari, Zinda Kaul, Krishan Joo Razdan, and the verses of Derveshes beckon composers and singers, forming a reservoir of devotional, Sufi, and diverse poetic expressions influenced by Sanskrit, Persian, and Arabic.

Krishnakar Ji's Persian Bhajans, still awaiting global recognition, fuel Dhananjay's aspiration to bridge the cultural gaps. In the mosaic of Kashmiri music, Kaafi, Jaijaiwanti, Bilawal resonate in folk expressions, seamlessly adapted into cinematic compositions like "Bambro-Bambro" and "Rind-Poshmal." Having traversed musical realms, Dhananjay's sojourn in Pakistan, alongside luminaries like Ustad Hussein Baksh

Gullu, has profoundly influenced his artistic ethos. Considering Ustad Hussein Baksh as his spiritual guide, Dhananjay's style draws inspiration from the resonant gayaki of maestros such as Bade Ghulam Ali Khan and Amanat Ali. Eager to embrace international collaborations, his desire to explore diverse compositions propels him to traverse borders, seeking encounters with global singers and composers for mutual inspiration.

Dhananjay Kaul, adorned with a vast musical tapestry, has intricately composed an impressive anthology of approximately 700 songs. His creative oeuvre draws inspiration from an array of poetic traditions, weaving together the essence of Kashmiri Sufi Poetry, Punjabi Sufi Kalam, Urdu Poetry, Sanskrit, Hindi, Awadhi, and Poorbi.

This maestro, a luminary in the realm of music, stands adorned with numerous accolades, both from the Jammu & Kashmir State and on a national scale.

His expertise traverses the expanse of Hindustani classical music, delving into the intricate realms of Khayal and Raga, while also embracing semi-classical forms such as Thumri, Dadra, Kafi, Ghazal, Sufiana Kalam, and Bhajans.

In live performances, Dhananjay captivates audiences with his emotive delivery, whether in grand concert halls or intimate gatherings. His ability to infuse traditional Indian attire into his performances adds a visual dimension to the auditory experience, creating a captivating synergy of music and culture. Overall, Dhananjay Kaul's singing style is characterized by its depth, versatility, and a seamless fusion of classical roots with contemporary expressions. His voice not only resonates with the cultural richness of Kashmiri music but also transcends boundaries, making him a distinguished ambassador for Indian music on the global stage.

Dhananjay Kaul's live performances are nothing short of mesmerizing experiences that captivate audiences worldwide. Whether he is gracing the stage at prominent music festivals, cultural events, or intimate gatherings, his

performances are marked by a unique blend of traditional roots and contemporary flair.

The Kashmiri Overseas Association Camp at Turf Valley Resort in Maryland, U.S.A., witnessed a performance that became a defining moment in his career. The venue, filled with around 500 attendees, resonated with the enchanting melodies of Dhananjay Kaul, leaving a lasting impression on the audience. His ability to break stereotypes and infuse traditional Indian attire into his performances adds an extra layer of intrigue to his shows.

Sharing the stage with stalwarts like Pandit Bhimsen Joshi in a 1995 concert speaks volumes about the caliber of Dhananjay's talent. Concerts organized in his name, such as the one at Abhinav theater in 1997, are a testament to his growing influence and popularity. Whether it's classical compositions or folk tunes, Dhananjay's ability to hold audiences in thrall is a hallmark of his performances.

In addition to his prowess as a performer, Dhananjay has taken on the role of a mentor, passing on his knowledge and passion for music to the next generation. His commitment to preserving the rich cultural heritage of Kashmiri music is evident in initiatives such as workshops and foundations. These endeavors provide aspiring musicians with opportunities to explore and hone their craft under his guidance.

In conclusion, Dhananjay Kaul's achievements, awards, and performances stand as a testament to his unparalleled contribution to the world of music. His journey is a symphony of cultural richness, global collaboration, and mentorship, echoing through the corridors of musical history. As he continues to captivate audiences and inspire the next generation, Dhananjay Kaul's legacy is destined to endure as a harmonious melody that transcends time and boundaries.

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- Ashok Razdan



What is Tantra? Part-III

Concluding remarks

Customs and rituals of Kashmiri pandits have undergone changes over period of time. Kashmiri Pandits have traversed a cultural journey from pure Vedic way of life to adopting multiple streams like tantric rituals, Puranic rituals along with vedic rituals. As of today all Kashmiri pandits follow Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Shaktism, Tantra simultaneously. We celebrate Shivratri using tantric rituals and celebrate Diwali, Ramnavami etc following Vaishnavism traditions. We Celebrate Ganesh festival like any other Lord Ganesh followers. We were also Surya Upasak. We had built one of the most beautiful Surya temples at Mattan in Kashmir. Actually we are true followers of Sri Adi Shankara who through his teaching established a concept of Smarata Sampraday also known as Smartism. Adi Shankara said we should move away from concept of worshipping one deity but move towards worshipping Shiva, Vishnu, Shakti, Suraya and Ganesha equally. He said divine has many manifestations but without any form. He stressed manifested form of the deity serves the same purpose as formless consciousness. The Smarta traditions is part of Advaita Vedanta. The Sringeri Sharada Monastery founded by Shankaracharya is an example of Smarta Hinduism. Kashmiri pandits are not Shaivites because for us the month of Shravan is very not very sacred though Shravan purnima is important day of



Adi Shankra. Divine Mother "Sharda" on the wall
puja for us and most of us keep fast on this day. Whole month of Shravan in general and Monday in particular is sacred all Shaivites. For Kashmiri pandits the month of Magha (December/ January) is very sacred. Some of our elders used to keep fast for the whole month and at the month end they will perform homa

also. In the month of Magha Surya Bhagwan is worshipped. It is also the month of Uttarayan. This month also associated with Ardh Kumba at Hardiwar and Kumbha at Prayag. In the Nilmatha Puran, the term Sukha Sampada (sleep with happiness) is used instead of Diwali and there is mention of deepmala (rows of lamps) as a part of Sukh Sampada.

Coming back to traditions of rituals (shown in Kantara movie) in Karnataka countryside, it is very clear that this tradition has tantric roots. Since tantra has roots in Kashmir and every Kashmiri pandit practices it knowingly or unknowingly, very natural for Kashmiri pandits like me to relate to Kantara movie. Kashmiri pandits have culture of "houn maet" which is offered to dogs. This practice has too tantric roots because dog is vahana (vehicle) of Kaal Bhairav. However, our elders will not encourage dogs inside homes because dogs have vibrations of cremation ground due to association with the Kaal Bhairav. One feature that is only typical of Kashmiri pandits is sacredness of Ashtami fast which has its roots in tantra. All Ashtamis

worship of Shiva. It is said that Shiva granted Godly status to sons of Brahmin who were his devotees. The literal meaning of Batuk is sons of Brahmin and this Batuk over period of time became "Batta", name associated with Kashmiri Pandits.

Not only Jains, Buddhist came back, Puranas also brought tribals into Hindu fold but tribals also continued with some of their tribal practices, the synthesis of which resulted in many streams of Tantra. In later years it got refined from many scholarly teachers of Kashmir and Abhinavgupta compiled it in the scholarly form in the book Tantralok. However, with the advent of Purana culture everyone started writing Puranas and by the 10th century Hinduism had lost sense of

direction when Adi Shankarachary appeared on the scene and infused new life into Hinduism by his samvad and his writing. He wrote commentary on Brahma Sutra, commentary on Bhagwad Gita commentary on ten primary Upanishads, Vivekachoudamani etc.

The emergence of powerful female deities in Tantra and Puranas have their roots in Vedas even though female deities were not independent entities in Vedas.

in our culture fall on moon light days (shukla paksha). Durga Ashtami also falls in Shukla paksha. Kaali appeared out of Durga on Ashtami. Krishna was also born on Ashtami but that was in Krishna paksha. According to some tantric scriptures, Lord Krishna was an incarnation of Mother Kaali, Lord Rama was incarnation of Mother Tara and Kalki Avtar will be incarnation of Mother Durga. Kashmiri pandits knew about the birth of Krishna in advance. So 24 hours before the birth, some Kashmiri Pandits kept fast, some did mantra jap and others meditated. Hence there is culture of Janam Saptami among us. According to ShivPurana Bhatuk Bhairvas are worshipped before the commencement of

In Rig Veda we find the names of many female deities like Usha, Prithvi, Ratri, Saraswati, Vac etc. The emergence of powerful female deities in Tantra and Puranas have their roots in Vedas even though female deities were not independent entities in Vedas. According to Sri Aurobindo, deity Usha as medium of awakening. She also symbolises spiritual awakening in humans. Aditi is mother of all deities and creation. Sri Aurobindo describes her as infinite consciousness. Prithvi is earth principle, feeding the whole of the manifested forms. Saraswati is heaven sent river to bless the earth. Vac is deity associated with the speech. The virtues of Vac and Saraswati merged into

one divine form again called as Saraswati recognized as deity of speech, knowledge, learning, wisdom, culture with multiple names like Vani, Sharada, Pusti, Veenapani, Vedmata, Vagishvari, Bharathi etc. Adi Shankara synthesized Advaita Vedanta. Vedanta is a Vedic school of Philosophy in which consciousness is supreme with infinite bliss. In Advaita Vedanta, consciousness projects all forms of life using Maya. In Sanskrit consciousness it is called as Prakasha. In Kashmir Shaivism consciousness is not only supreme with infinite bliss but also aware of itself. In Sanskrit it is called as Prakasha Vimarsha. In Kashmir Shaivism Vimarsha is power of consciousness is also called as Shakti. Shiva and Shakti has three powers of Gyan (ability to know), Iccha (ability to desire) and Kriya (ability to act). These are not only powers of Shiva but also of jiva. These three powers are due to Maya in Advaita Vedanta hence unreal but in Kashmir Shaivism these powers are real. In Kashmiri Shaivism these three powers represent Trishula of Shiva. In Kashmir Shaivism Jiva knowing itself becomes Shiva.

Hinduism is aesthetically beautiful, intellectually profound. It caters to classes and masses. Swami Sivanada said, "Hinduism is neither asceticism nor illusionism, neither polytheism nor pantheism. It is synthesis of all types of religious experiences". Vedantic scriptures answer all queries, questions on the nature of the existence and the truth. Kaivalya Upanishad says, "Everything is born in me and everything merges back into me, I am limitless, blissful awareness, one without second". One day Narendra was making fun of Sri Ramakrishna's non-dualism before a friend and said: "What can be more absurd than to say that this jug is God, this cup is God, and that we too are God?" Both roared with laughter. Just then the Master appeared.

Coming to learn the cause of their fun, he gently touched Naren and plunged into deep Samadhi. The touch produced a magic effect, and Narendra entered a new realm of consciousness. He saw the whole Universe permeated by the Divine Spirit and returned home in a daze. While eating his meal, he felt the presence of Brahman in everything — in the food, and in himself too. While walking in the street, he saw the carriages, the horses, the crowd, and himself as if made of the same substance. After a few days the intensity of the vision lessened to some extent, but still he could see the world only as a dream. While strolling in a public park of Calcutta, he struck

his head against the iron railing, several times, to see if they were real or a mere illusion of the mind. Thus he got a glimpse of non-dualism, the fullest realization of which was to come only later, at the Cossipore garden. ("Vivekananda - A Biography" by Swami Nikhilananda, "Training of the Disciple", p. 43)

That is why Swami Vivekananda said Swami Vivekananda said, "The whole universe is one. There is only one self in the universe, only one

existence and that one existence when it passes through the forms of time, space, causation is called by different names, buddhi, fine mater, all mental and physical forms. Everything in the universe is that one, appearing in various forms. When a little part of it comes, as it were, into this network of time, space and causation, it takes form. Take off the network it is all one". We will end this article with this profound vedantic Vaakh of Lalded.

*"Thou art the earth, thou art the sky,
Thou art the air, the day and the night,
The sacrificial corn thou,
And unction of the sandal paste,
Thou art the water, thou art the flowers,
Thou art all these and everything,
What may I, in worship bring to thee?"*

That is why
Swami
Vivekananda
said, "The
whole
universe is
one."



-Ashwani Kumar Chrungoo



SAPTRISHI SAMVAT-5100

Living evidence of Civilization of Kashmir

A significant development in the Civilizational flow of Kashmir awaits us all. On the auspicious occasion of the coming Navreh (New year or Nav-Varsh Pratipada) this year on 9th April 2024, the "Saptrishi Samvat" will complete five thousand and one hundred years of its existence. It is an extraordinary event so far as our civilization in Kashmir valley is concerned. 'Saptrishi Samvat' is a living evidence of the Civilization of Kashmir and its continuity for the last more than five thousand and one hundred years. The best part of it is that even after five thousand and one hundred years, the 'Saptrishi Samvat' is a working and living entity and we observe its existence among us every year.

There are a number of old almanacs in the world. In this context, the oldest almanacs are Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Hindu, Chinese and Mesoamerican etc. In whole of Bharatvarsha, the Yugabd calender is the oldest. It was established 26 years ahead of 'Saptrishi Samvat'. We are currently observing Yugabd Samvat-5125; thus the 'Saptrishi Samvat' is a contemporary almanac not only to the Yugabd calender but is also contemporary to the other oldest almanacs in the world.

The great thing about these two oldest almanacs in India is that they are functional and working till date while most of the other such oldest calendars in the world have ceased to be functional and working almanacs. Both the 'Yugabd Samvat' and the 'Saptrishi Samvat' are based upon lunisolar system of astronomical calculations where both solar

and lunar years are recognised as complementary and supplementary to each other. The beauty lies in the fact that this profound knowledge of India has stood the test of time and is considered completely scientific and functional.

'Saptrishi Samvat' is an indigenous almanac of Kashmir. This Samvat in Kashmir which is completing 5100 years this year is a testimony of the historical fact that Kashmir's civilization had a distinct and great character. This civilization contributed as the fountainhead of ancient Vedic civilization and culture. There are four important pillars of the Civilization of Kashmir i.e., the ancient art & architecture in the Kashmir valley, written monumental compendium of the last thousands of years, the working and functional cultural traditions of Kashmir and the 'Saptrishi Samvat'.

The continuity of the oldest Samvat known as the 'Saptrishi Samvat' is an evidence of our history, belonging and living in Kashmir as the indigenous people of Kashmir. That the Kashmiri Pandits (Hindus of Kashmir) are the original inhabitants of Kashmir is also established by our esteemed almanac called 'Saptrishi Samvat' which completed five millennia, ninety-nine years ago. It needs now to be celebrated on the completion of 5,100 years by all who believe in the truth that they are a part and parcel of the profound civilization of Kashmir.

The legend says that the Saptrishis (seven sages) assembled on the Hari-Parbat in Srinagar-Kashmir in the ancient times and

after a great thought, they initiated the new almanac, Saptrishi-Samvat, dedicated by them, for the valley of Kashmir. These sages, as per Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, were: Vishwamitra, Jamadagni, Gautama, Vashishtha, Kashyapa, Bharadwaja and Atri. There is a particular place earmarked around the periphery of the Hari-Parbat called, "Sata-Resh" (Saptrishi) which remains a special point of reverence for the devotees visiting Hari Parbat temple of goddess Sharika for the last thousands of years.

Kashmiri Pandits and the Kashmiri Muslims both are fundamentally, and also in principle, the sole inheritors of the civilizational ethos and legacy of Kashmir. The Kashmiri Pandits always feel pride in declaring their direct connect with their thousands of years' heritage in Kashmir. This they have continued practically even in their forced exile for the last thirty-five years in the most graceful manner. Despite their pain of exile, the Kashmiri Pandits kept observing the birthday of their river in Kashmir, the Vitasta-Jehlum, every year. They continued with their tradition of publishing the yearly almanacs in the shape of "Panchangs" and the Jyotshi family of Bijbihara-Kashmir deserves a great acknowledgement in this regard. Walter R Lawrence in his book, 'The Valley of Kashmir' describes beautifully the high reverence of the people of Kashmir towards the springs, rivers, rocks, mountains and natural resources of Kashmir.

However, the majority community in Kashmir, due to certain religio-political considerations, was misdirected to shun its own civilizational connect and heritage dating back to the last more than five thousand years. Here is now the occasion for them to reassess and reconsider their notion about the whole issue under discussion. The greatest quest for the human beings on this earth, anywhere and everywhere, both individually and collectively, has been their search for their roots. Howsoever healthy, wealthy, wise and influential one may be, but the intimate connection with one's own Civilization is the most important soothing

treasure and happiness for both, the individual and the society. Moreover, history didn't begin just 700 years ago in Kashmir.

The great thinkers and ideologues in India evolved the idea of almanac and calendar on the basis of their knowledge about the scientific issues commensurate with their vast experiences of life. 'Kaal-Ganana' or time-calculation in India was considered as a very serious subject and brilliant minds were devoted to such issues from the times immemorial. They would take into account the position of stars, planets and their natural satellites very closely so that its impact on the life of the human beings on earth could be made better and ideal. This scientific thinking gave birth to the organised almanacs-calendars in India, the mention of which can be found even in the ancient books of great value like Vedas, Upanishads, Ramayana, Mahabharata and Puranas. Neelmatapurana is the oldest indigenous "Purana" of Kashmir.

The conceptualization of year, months, weeks, seasons and important occasions of geographical and astronomical events were the most important part of these almanacs. For example, it was perceived that in the Indian conditions, there were/are six seasons in a year called-"Shadharitu". These six seasons are Vasant (Spring), Greesham (Summer-hot season), Varsha-Ritu (Rainy season), Sharad (Pre-Autumn), Hemant (Autumn) and Shishir (Winter). Each season consists of two months and in total comprised the twelve months of a year.

Keeping in view the local conditions of the Kashmir valley, the thinking minds in Kashmir also adopted this concept of 'Shadharitu'. However, in practice in Kashmir, there were/are only five seasons. All these five seasons have appropriate Kashmiri names derived originally from the above mentioned Sanskrit names. The first three seasons consist of two months each while the last two seasons consist of three months each. These names are the echo-names of the original names. 'Vasant' is called 'Sonth', 'Greesham' is called 'Retakol' (it was also called as Grishem some six or seven decades earlier) and 'Varsharitu' is called

'Vehraat'. 'Sharad' and 'Hemant' are amalgamated into one season and is called 'Harud' (Ha+Rad) and lastly 'Shishir' is called 'Shisher-maas'.

While there are several other witnesses to prove that the Civilization of Kashmir dates back to 7,000-8,000 years BCE, the 'Saptrishi Samvat' is a functional and living witness to confirm this fact. It is important that the current and future generations, particularly belonging to Kashmir, know about these issues of our collective concern; thus inspiring them to establish and flourish their connect with their glorious civilization. This will also further inspire them to do more meaningful research in this regard. It is suggested, in this connection, that:

1. A grand community programme may be organised in this context well before the commencement of Navreh this year.
2. A yearlong celebration may be organised throughout the length and breadth of the country wherever there are institutions and presence of the people belonging to the Kashmir valley.
3. In foreign countries as well, these celebrations may be organised by involving our institutions working there.
4. Schools, colleges and universities may be requested to organise seminars, symposiums and other such programmes throughout the year, as per their

convenience,

5. The government can be requested to issue a special postal stamp in this regard and the ministry of culture and sports can be asked to organise programmes in this context as well.

Besides what has been said above, in order to inculcate the sense of civilizational connect, old history books written by Kashmiris themselves should be provided a shelf-space in maximum homes during this year. Document-books like, Neelmatapurana, Rajtarangini/s by Kalhana (researched by Aurel Stein), Jonaraja, Shrivar, Pragyabhatha, Shuka, Tareekh-e-Hassan, The Kashmiri Pandit by Pt. Anand Koul and also (in addition) The Valley of Kashmir by Walter R Lawrence deserve our immediate and meaningful attention.

This all will depend upon how we are ready to initiate this important and historical exercise in time. This is the opportune time to take this initiative keeping in view the Shri Ram Mandir fervour and happiness all around. This author beckons the thinking minds and activists in our society for their useful contributions and noble initiative in this regard.

(The author is a senior BJP and KP leader, Human Rights Defender, author and columnist and can be reached at ashwanikc2012@gmail.com)

Hearty Congratulations Padmashree Pran Kishore Koul!

The veteran Kashmiri Broadcaster, Writer, Playwright, Author, Filmmaker and Director, Padmashree Pran Kishore Koul has been conferred this year with Sahitya Academy Fellowship.

All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) congratulates the community icon on this coveted honour and wishes him success and good health!





Walnuts and Shiva Ratri

Walnuts as it is called *Doon* in Kashmiri language is an integral part of the Vedic injunction in the Kashmiri Pandit religious ethos. Walnut in any Homa is essential ingredient of the Samagri. Why? Kashmiri Pandit Puja consists of three integrated streams of the Vedic, Puranic and Agamic systems. It has been so, as to make the Puja Yogic in spirit, mystic in theme and ritualistic in pattern. Who taught us this methodology of Anushthana system? It was the great LAUGAKSHSI Rishi of Kashmir, who gave the popular Paddati, with regard to Homa/ Yagnya, Pakshayagya and Anushthans. In every Kashmiri Pandit Religious *Anushthana*, we need to invoke the Kalasha *Purusha*, with mystic diagrams to be drawn by the Rice flour. The Yantras differ from one deliberation to another. The Kalasha are of two types. The First is the Brahma Kalasha and the other is the Indra Kalasha. Brahma Kalasha is purely the Hiranya garbha, which needs to be invoked through the Atharva Vedic Ganapati Avahan, followed by the Panchayatan Deva Vedic Suktas of Ganesha, Surya Vishnu, Shiva and Devi. The Puranic Mantras are also recited during invocation, followed by the Tantric Bijaksharas. You know it well, that Kalash Doon is highly revered and is the First Naivedya after the Hasta Phalam/ Athi Phol'u is offered and Shanti Mantras are recited. This is known as the Achhidra of the Deliberation/ Anushthanam. The walnuts are offered to the Kalasha



Purusha, because Walnut is the Ritu Phalam of Kashmir, which are easily available in the whole cycle of the year. Offering of Ritu Phalam is purely Puranic in substance, as it is the fifth step in the Panch Upchara Puja.

Rituphalam is Kalash Doon

The emphasis is on Rituphalam. It means the fruit of the season, and the Ritupati is the Narayana, whose abode is the Ksheer Sagar/ milk ocean. Narayana is Purusha, who is for the sustenance of the universe, and the water is the important element for survival, both physical and cosmic. Therefore, Laugakshya taught us

to invoke water with the Vedic Sukta, which runs as:

“A -imam Ambitame Naditame Devitame Saraswati Aprashata Iva smasi Prashastim Amba namaskridhi” The translation of this famous mantra gives a clear picture of the Kalasha, which is the Hiranyagarbha/cosmic egg, where the water element, is the Mother, is the River, is the Divine Mother and is the fountainhead of all knowledge and bliss. Lingobhava/ the origin of the Shiva Lingam opens with the saying: No universe as we see was there, only water and water everywhere, and there was no direction as well. There was starless night of the lifeless interval between merger/ dissolution and the creation. All the seeds were in that infinite ocean, with all potentialities, of the forthcoming evolution rested in the dormant stage of undifferentiation., which is static in its inherent Svaroop. This is also the identical approach of the Laugakshi Rishi, with respect to the Kalasha and Akshota/ walnut/ doon.

The Laughaksha Paddati also says that the water source, which is in this Kalasha is from the Ganga, Prayag, Gaya, Naimish, Pushkar and other Tirthas, which virtually are taking the devotee from the physical consciousness to the higher consciousness of Vatuka Raja Bhairava. The Bhairava is the Supreme spirit of the SHIVA, which is filled with the triadic power of creation, preservation and absorption/merger, but not destruction.

The Watuka Raja Bhairava likes the AKSHOTA, which means Doon in Kashmiri. Doon is the dried edible fruit at the time of Shivaratri, and it needs to be soaked for further cultivation, just after the Tila Ashtami. It is being soaked in water and sanctified by the Watuka Raj Mantra for eleven days to commence from the Shivaratri to the Tilashtami. It receives the power to regenerate from the botanical point of considerations. It used to be the sacred act to give the soaked walnuts to the peasants of Kashmir, which in turn would cultivate in on the banks of streams, as it needs water nearby. The devotees would sow these walnuts around the Tirathas at Kashmir, preferably at Tullamula.

Philosophically, a walnut is the composite unit seed of four equal quadrants, in the shell, which graphically can be represented as under in the circular and the elliptical shape. Generally the shape of the walnut is either, circular or elliptical. Walnut is of four cells, with a smooth, irregularly dehiscent husk that separates easily from the nut. It is the most common nut of Kashmir. All the four sections are of equal dimension. The shell is roughly wrinkled or furrowed but thin. In Kashmir, we have approximately the one inch diameter of the walnut. It contains of two kernels separated by a thin, plate extending from the inner layer of the shell. The first quadrant represents the Rigveda, the



second quadrant is Yajurveda, the third quadrant is Samaveda and the fourth quadrant is the Atharvaveda. All the four Vedas are equally important within the spirit and meaning of the Sat -Chit- Ananda and Svaroop. Satchitananda is the Upanishadic concept and the Svaroop is the Shaivistic concept. The walnut is therefore, a symbol and the *SEED* theory of the Shiva in manifestation.

The elliptical Lingam is the eternal seed of the Absolute Shiva, and walnut is one manifestation of that seed. The Vedas speak of the four fold Ashrams within the human birth, which are the four cells, in two lobed seed of the walnut. Each lobe consists of Purusha and Prakriti. The Brahma has spoken the Vedas through his four mouths, and the four mouths represent the synthesis of the Vedas. Shri Krishna says in the Gita : “Me as the Supreme person is the creator of the Chaturvarnas/ four categories according to the Guna –Karma/ inherent quality and

attitude to life”. The four Avasthas/ stages of life are brahmacharya-grihastha-vanaparastha and sannyasa. In the Tantras, the Bhupura is fourfold and is the outer extended layer of the Bindu. In the figure no 2 the origin O/ origin is the Mula Bindu, which is the source energy of the universe. Each quadrant is the equal to the 1/4th of the circle, which is the Parama -tattva in the Shaiva Darshana., symbolic to the walnut.

It is the Bijakshara of the four syllabled Mother Shri Raj Rajeshvari. The Mantra is Shri Chakra Priya Bindu Tarpana Para Shri Raja Rajeshvari of Shri Sharika Bhagavati. This Mantra, which is the quintessence of the Nishkala manifested into Sakala in the form of walnut. Keeping such virtues in the set of Four fold seed within the Unit of shell is inspiring, strength giving and making us realize that the Seed needs to be soaked with the water substance of Love for giving to the Mother Earth back for future tree to grow in her lap of soil, for the generations to come.

(The author resides in the USA)

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At Samoohik Shivratri function organized by Jammu Kashmir Vichaar Manch on March 27, 2024. Sh. Autar Krishan Raina received the award on behalf of Amar Balidan Trust Jammu



The World Economic Forum News

The Promenade at the World Economic Forum, Davos - Switzerland Covered with Blanket of Fresh Snow and was Cluttered with Signs and Pavilions from Companies and Governments Courting Attention or Deals by The Tech Giants, The Major Consulting Groups and Other Representatives from the All Continents of Business and Politics.

as the World's Third Largest Economy in 2026, knock Japan (which has recently slipped to Fourth) from the number Four Spot in 2032 and become only the Third Country with GDP worth \$10 trillion by 2035. So dominating this year in the main streets in Davos were the Emissaries from India that have taken over many



Congress Centre of the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) 2024 in Davos

India showed up for Best Reason in World Economic Forum 2024, Amidst Global Recession Fear when The Country is Expected to Log the Best Performance of Any Major Economy. The World Bank is Estimating Growth of 6.6% of India compared to just 0.5% for the United States and 4.3% for China. If it can maintain its momentum, India will overtake Germany

Storefronts with appeals to the Elite Gatherings of Political and Business Class. India's Economy currently stands at nearly \$3.5 trillion; making it the World's Fifth Largest. The Case for Investing has been Bolstered by Geopolitics as Western Business Leaders talk about 'Near-Shoring'-- Shortening Supply Chains to Reduce Risks and 'Friend-Shoring'--

Boosting Economic Cooperation with Countries that have Similar Values, The World's Biggest Democracy Presents a Clear Alternative to China and that India has replaced its powerful neighbour as the World's Most Populous Country.

- ❖ I see a lot of businesses, a lot of companies looking to India as an investment destination as they try to diversify away from other countries, including China,' Gita Gopinath, Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund
- ❖ India's economy has been remarkably resilient to the deteriorating external environment, noting the buffer provided by its large domestic market.' World Bank Country Director Auguste Tano Kouame
- ❖ It wants to deepen trade ties with India, Apple-America's biggest public company has started shifting more of its production there -The reorientation is already underway', The Biden administration
- ❖ Resilience has to take Precedence over Efficiency, The World needs Resilience” Tata Sons Chairman Natarajan Chandrasekaran in Davos.
- ❖ India's Outreach to Investors often refers to what Economists call its Demographic

Dividend, The country has a Working-Age Population of more than 900 million people that could hit more than 1 billion over the Next Decade. Many of these workers are Entrepreneurial, English-Speaking and Digitally Literate, They're a Substantial Asset,' Ila Patnaik, Chief Economist at Indian conglomerate Aditya Birla Group.

- ❖ I haven't had to ask for investment, Investment has just flown in and that he's fielded huge interest from investors, bolstering optimism about the outlook,' R.K. Singh, India's Energy Minister
- ❖ The States of Maharashtra, Telangana, Tamil Nadu Tata Group and IT giant Infosys- infy have rented Prominent Real Estate in the Ski Resort
- ❖ The Chief minister of Maharashtra, India's Wealthiest State and Home to 120 million Residents Signed (\$16.8 billion) Agreements, one being Auto System Maker Belrise Industries and Taiwan's Gogoro, called the “Tesla of two-wheelers” — to invest \$2.5 billion in Battery Swapping Infrastructure
- ❖ Every 10 steps you will have Either Us or A State Government or A Private Entity,' Deepak Bagla, the CEO of National Investment Promotion Agency Invest India.



Invest India has promoted Asia's Third-Biggest Economy at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland

The World Economic Forum (WEF) is an International Non-Governmental, Non-Commercial Organisation based in Geneva, Switzerland. It was founded on 24 January 1971 by German Engineer Klaus Schwab originally named as European Management Forum and it changed its name to the World Economic Forum in 1987. The Foundation is mostly funded by its 1000 Member Companies – Typically Global Enterprises. The WEF Annual Meeting in Davos (Switzerland) engages the foremost Political, Business, Cultural and other Leaders of Society to Shape Global, Regional and Industry Agendas and is the International Organization for Public-Private Cooperation. The Main Focus Areas are Mastering the Fourth Industrial Revolution, Solving the Problems of the Global Commons and Addressing Global Security Issues. WEF believes that Potential for Positive Global Change Exists at the Intersection of these Three Challenges and that Progress will come through bringing together Leaders from All Walks of Life to Forge Common Understanding, Purpose an Appropriate Action.

The World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland, 2024 edition, Titled 'Rebuilding Trust', was held from January 15th to 19th, brought together participants from Global Gathering of Political, Business, and Societal Leaders to convene the most Pressing Issues Facing the World and Deliberated on this year's theme of 'Restoring Trust in a Divided World' - One of the Central Themes of the 2024 WEF was the urgent need to address the Growing Trust Deficit in Global Institutions and Leadership. The discussions emphasized that Trust is Fundamental for Fostering Cooperation, Stability and Progress on a Global Scale. Participants underscored the importance of Transparent and Ethical Governance, Responsible Business Practices and Inclusive Policies to Rebuild Trust among Citizens and Between Nations.

A Notable Focus of the forum was the Role of Technology in Shaping the Future of Society and The Economy. Leaders from the Tech Industry, Policymakers and Experts

Engaged in Robust Discussions on the Ethical and Responsible use of Emerging Technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain and Quantum Computing. The need for International Collaboration to establish Regulatory Frameworks that Balance Innovation with Privacy, Security and Societal Well-Being emerged as a Key Consensus. Furthermore, Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability were Prominent Topics at the 2024 WEF.

In addition to These Overarching Themes, The Forum also Delved into Pressing Geopolitical Challenges, Including International Security, Trade Tensions and Geopolitical Rivalries. Leaders and Experts Engaged in Candid Conversations About The Need For Diplomacy, Multilateralism and Conflict Resolution to Address Global Security Threats and Prevent Escalation of Conflicts That Could Have Far-Reaching Consequences. The WEF2024 was attended besides Business Leaders by Over 60 Heads of States and Nearly 300 other Top Political Leaders. The Meeting Welcomed Over 100 Govts, Major International Organisations, The Forums 1000 Partner Companies As Well As Civil Society Leaders, Foremost Experts, Young Change Makers, Social Entrepreneurs and The World Media.

Business Leaders, Sam Altman, Satya Nadella, Elon Musk, Jack Ma, Mukesh Ambani, Gautam Adani, N Chandershekar. as many as, All major Business Leaders of The World attended the WEF including three Indian PSU Heads, SBI, NTPC, Indian Oil and RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das. Among Indian Political Leaders Smriti Irani, Ashwini Vaishnaw, Hardeep Singh Puri, Maharashtra's CM Eknath Shinde, Telangana's CM Revanth Reddy and Karnataka's CM Siddaramaiah also attended. Included among World Leaders of Politics and International Organisations were Antony Blinken-US Secretary of State, Jake Sullivan-US National Security Adviser, Li Qiang- Premier China, Emmanuël Macron- Prez France, Han Duck Soo- Premier Korea,

Volodymyr Zelenskyy-Prez Ukraine, Isaac Herzog-Prez Israel, Tharman Shanmugaratnam-Prez Singapore. Bisher Hani Al Khasawneh-Premier Jordan, Mohd Bin Abdulrahman Al Thani-Premier Qatar, Ursula Von der Leyen- Prez EEC, Antonio Guterres- UN Sec Gen, Kristalina Georgieva- MD IMF, Ajay S Banga- Prez WB, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala- DG WTO, Jens Stoltenberg- Sec Gen NATA, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus- DG WHO, Achim Steiner- Admn UNDP.



In a huge achievement, India Successfully Established and Pioneered 'Global Alliance for Global Good - Gender Equity and Equality to Promote Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality, at the 54th Annual World Economic Forum Meeting in Davos. The Alliance will bring together Worldwide Best Practices,

Knowledge Sharing and Investment Opportunities in Women's Education, Health and Enterprise.

As Purists Say India Flexes its Muscle at Davos as China's Star Fades

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Kashir Sabha Ambala Celebrates Sathapna Divas of Mahamrityunjay Mandir



The Sathapna Divas of Mahamrityunjay Mandir, Kashmir Bhavan Sarsehri Ambala, falls on Hura Ashtami. It was on this day in 2012 that the Pran Pratishtha of the Shiv Parivar took place and thus this day is quite special in the annals of history of Kashir Sabha Ambala.

Every year this day is celebrated with gaiety and much fervour. Havan is performed, which is normally followed by Prasad Vitran.

Today, it was quite heartening to see a big congregation of males and females on this occasion, who rejoiced Kheer and Tehri Prasad, after the havan. This was a celebration where the Biradari Members could meet and congratulate one another for the ensuing Herath (Maha Shivratri) festival, which falls on 08/03/2024.

Prominent members who participated in this function include:-

Sh & Smt. Surrinder Pandita, V.M Pandita, Ramesh Pandita, V. K. Razdan, Sunil Braru, Virendar Bhat, M. J. Raina, Rajinder Kaw, Sunil Kumar, V. K. Mujoo, Kiran Ji Braru, Bitra Raina, Anjali Kotroo, Purnimah Kaw, Usha Watal and others.

**- Rajinder Kaw,
General Secretary, Kashir Sabha Ambala**



- Avtar Mota



WHEN MARY MARGRET BECAME BEN- DED

R C Kak was born in 1893 in Razdan family of Kashmir. In 1901, at the age of 8, he was married to 7-year-old Janki Devi Tikoo. Janki Devi was the daughter of Pandit Lakshman Joo Tikoo of downtown, Srinagar. Pandit Lakshman Joo was the first qualified engineer of Kashmir who was drafted to work on the construction of Jhelum Valley road.

After graduating from S P College, R C Kak spent 5 years (1914-1919) in India taking training under the legendary archaeologist Sir John Marshall, the then Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India. After completion of his training he was appointed as Superintendent Archeologist and later promoted as the director of the newly formed Archaeology and Research Department in J&K State. He remained as director Archaeological survey for 10 years from 1919 till 1929. During this period, he led extensive excavations of some major archaeological sites in Kashmir that include Awantipora and Harwan. He wrote some scholarly and research based books on the archaeological remains of Kashmir.

Kak was granted the title of Rai Bahadur in the year 1938 by the British India and thereafter he became the Maharaja's minister-in waiting. The Maharaja was extremely pleased with his work. Kak became prime minister of J&K (1945-1947) and died in 1983. In his own state, his death was not officially condoled. That was the extent of humiliation he suffered. He also moved to court against his



banishment order and got it quashed. He also moved to court for restoration of his pension. In his memoirs, Radha Krishen Sher writes this:

"Violating all the norms of civilized behaviour, the new NC government humiliated RC Kak. The latter maintained his dignity and said, "I had to do whatever I did because I was loyal to his Highness". Despite cool relations with Maharaja later, Pt. Kak never spoke or wrote anything that could have lowered the prestige of Maharaja.

R C Kak was a man of sterling character. He never bypassed protocol. During Quit Kashmir Movement, Pt. Maharaj Krishan Dhar, Governor had come to seek his advice to tackle the situation created by Nehru's defiance at Kohala. RC Kak told him curtly, "You are the District Magistrate and enjoy full powers. I do not wield such powers as you do. Why do you ask me for guidance on such matters? It is your business," When R C Kak submitted his resignation, two other senior officers-Sham Lal Dhar (later Home Secretary) and Justice Shahmiri (Sessions Judge) were also prematurely retired. They were subsequently rehabilitated by Sheikh Abdullah."

Did the National Conference leadership settle personal vendetta against Maharaja by humiliating his Prime Minister?

Shri Maharaj Krishen Dhar also faced the wrath of the popular government installed in 1947. In November 1947, the emergency administration headed by Sheikh Mohamad Abdullah asked Maharaj Krishen Dhar to arrest Sh R C Kak . He was asked to handcuff the former Prime Minister in grass ropes and then parade him through Srinagar. Sh Dhar refused to perform this task, saying he could not meet this treatment to a former Prime Minister. Sh Dhar was relieved of his duties.

Tuberculosis was a great killer at that time. Penicillin and other antibiotics had not been invented. Unfortunately, in 1928, his wife Janki Devi died at a young age of 34 due to tuberculosis leaving behind four sons. In 1935, Kak remarried an English woman Mary Margret Allcock. The marriage took place in England. He had no child from this marriage. Mary Margaret adopted Kashmiri traditions

with perfection and learnt Kashmiri language. She was also affectionate towards Kak's children and family. Kak's relatives affectionately called her Ben Ded or the "Great Sister". Many visitors to Kak's house at Kaksarai noticed Ben Ded dressed like a Kashmiri Panditani meeting people or attending to some household work or sitting in the garden under a Chinar tree. Ben Ded spoke fluent Kashmiri with household servants. The Kaks would also spend holidays in their family hut at Gulmarg. Later during his exile, Kak used to spend summers in Kasauli , Himachal Pradesh. Ben Ded had adopted Lila Bhan as her daughter.

It is true that Ben Ded accompanied her husband to some official functions either at the Maharaja's Palace or at the British Resident's place, but for the most part of her life in Kashmir, she kept herself out of the affairs of the administration and was fully involved in the family affairs. During the turbulent period 1947, Ben Ded stood like a rock to support her husband after he was arrested by the popular government headed by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and exiled from the State. She fought for his release with Nehru, Sardar Patel and Mountbatten. She fought for the restoration of his pension that had been stopped. After the death of her husband, Ben Ded moved to England. However, she couldn't adjust in England and returned to India. She lived in Kaksarai house for some time and later at Rawalpura colony. In Rawalpura colony, she lived with Dr B K. Jalali 's family who are closely related to RC Kak. Very reluctantly, agreeing to the suggestions of her relatives and well-wishers, she left Kashmir when the armed militancy brought darkness, death and destruction all over the valley. She started one more phase of her exile. She moved to Indore to live with the family of her adopted daughter where she breathed her last.

Ben Ded was believed to be in possession of some keynotes that Kak had scribbled for his proposed memoir. Possibly she wanted to publish her husband's memoirs.



CATASTROPHE

When over 9,000 Kashmiri Pandits died at Harmukh Ganga!

Courtesy: Kashmir Records March 1, 2024



Kashmiri Pandits have suffered a lot at the hands of tyrants! Even Nature has been cruel towards them. This is evident from that fact that over 9,000 Kashmiri Pandits, including children and women, had perished on their way to Harmukh Ganga pilgrimage, over 500 years ago in 1516 AD! Harmukh, originally “Haramukuta” is a mountain with a peak elevation of 5,142 metres (16,870 ft), in the present Ganderbal district of Jammu and Kashmir.

There is a mention of this tragic incident in many books and records, but unfortunately, most people are unaware of this catastrophe that had befallen on Kashmiri Pandits!

Pandit Anand Koul in his 100 year old book “The Kashmiri Pandit” (1924) makes a

mention of this tragic incident. The incident had taken place during the reign of Sultan Fateh Shah (1489 A.D.), the 12th Sultan of Kashmir. For nine years, his Minister was Musa Raina, a bigoted Shia, who had tyrannised Hindus, imposing *jaziya* on them and destroying their temples.

A Double Whammy for Kashmiri Pandits

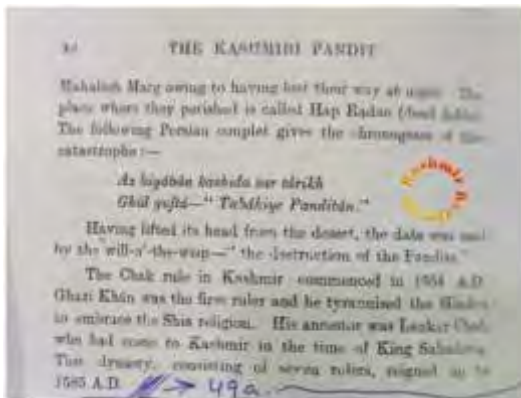
It is said of Musa Raina that he had forcibly converted 24,000 Brahmin families to his own religion. In 1516 AD, about 10,000 Kashmiri Pandits had decided to undertake a pilgrimage to Harmukh Ganga, in order to immerse the ashes of those 800 Hindus who had been massacred during *Ashura*. However, Nature too resorted to a double

whammy when Pandits on a pilgrimage to the Harmukh Ganga, perished at Mahalesh Marg owing to having lost their way at night. According to Anand Koul, the place where they perished is called Hap Radan (dead defile).

Anand Koul quotes the following Persian couplet that gives the chronogram of this catastrophe:-

Az biyábán kashida sar tarikh Ghút guftá "Tabáhiye Panditán."

—Meaning “having lifted its head from the desert, the date was said by the will-o'-the-wisp—“the destruction of the Pandits”.



Poet-historian Suka Pandit too says about this cataclysm. “Ganga was oppressed with hunger, as it was after a long time that she had devoured bones; she surely devoured the men also who carried the bones.” It was in fact after a gap of so many years that Pandits were allowed to go on a pilgrimage to Harmukh Lake, which, however, ended in the most devastating tragedy. Suka Pandit was a Kashmiri poet and historian who wrote Rajatarangini between 1517 and 1596. A student of Prajyabhatta, the work of Suka Pandit is considered a supplement to Kalhana’s Rajatarangini.

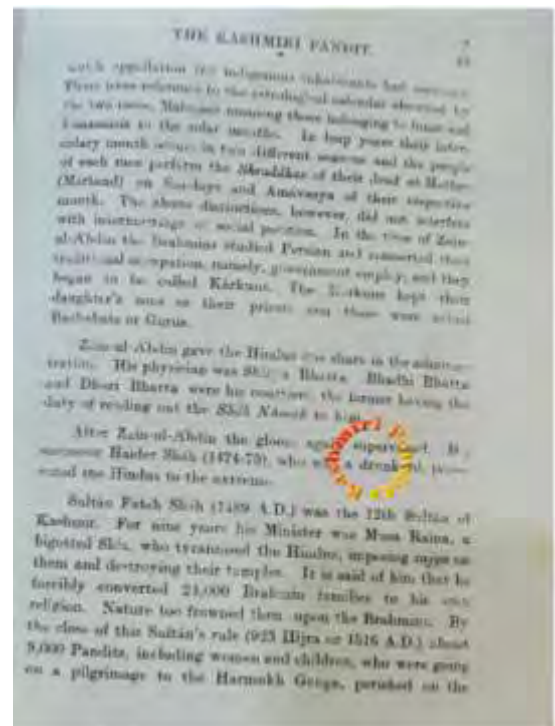
Dr Satish Ganjoo, a noted Historian and a Senior Faculty at Central University of Himachal Pradesh, in his research paper “A Political Study of Ancient Vedic-Saraswat Kashmiri Pandit Society”, published in June, 2017, also makes a mention of this natural catastrophe that had befallen Kashmiri Pandits over 500 years ago. However, while

Pt Anand Koul mentions 1516 AD (923 Hijra) as the year of tragedy, Dr Ganjoo quoted the year of tragedy as 1519.

The Dreaded Tyrant Soma Chandra (Musa Raina)

The tragedy at Harmukh Lake had occurred as the Kashmiri Pandits who were allowed to perform this pilgrimage after a long time, wanted to perform the religious rites of all those near and dear ones who had been killed during the era of Mir Shamas-ud-Din Iraqi, the founder of Nurbakhshiyeh Order (Shia sect) who had visited Kashmir Valley twice in 1477 AD and 1496 AD for propagating his faith. He was helped in his “mission” by Soma Chandra, the most dreaded tyrant, who had rechristened himself as Malik Musa Raina after converting to Shia Islam.

Not only were the vulnerable Brahmans, even the Sunni Muslims also violently converted to Shia sect by murderous techniques. This dogmatic fanaticism had even crippled the Sunni ruler of Kashmir, Fateh Shah (AD 1510-1517). A khanqah was built at Zadibal, Srinagar by Iraqi, which became the nucleus of Shia concentration.



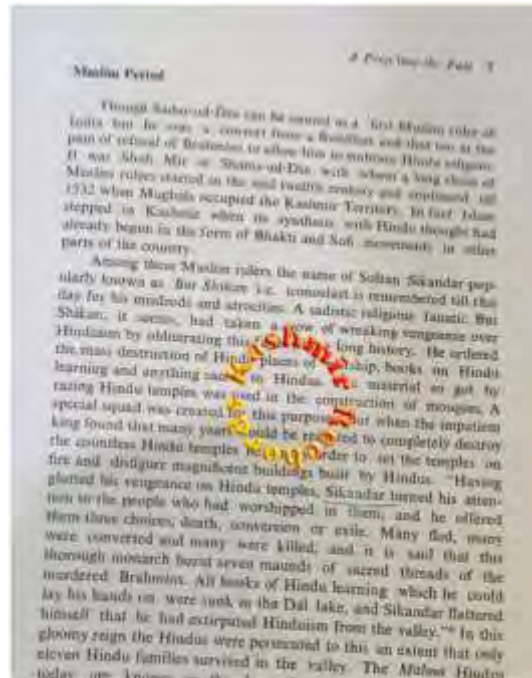
Burning Sacred Threads of Pandits

In his Book, “ This Beautiful India –Jammu and Kashmir” (1977), Dr Sukhdev Singh Chib mentions that Iraqi had even issued orders that everyday about 1500 to 2000 Brahmans be brought to his doorsteps, remove their sacred threads, administer Kalima to them, circumcise them and make them eat beef. These decrees were ferociously and brutally carried out. The Hindu religious scriptures from 7th century AD onwards and about 18 magnificent temples were destroyed, property confiscated and women abused. Thousands of Brahmans had killed themselves to evade this horrific barbarism and thousands migrated to other places, resulting in their third tragic mass exodus from the Valley. Those who stayed behind were not only forced to pay jaziya, but their noses and ears were chopped off.

According to Baharistan – i -Shahi, “Dulucha, a Tartar chief from Central Asia, who had invaded Kashmir with 60,000 strong horsemen, had also inflicted terrible miseries upon the people including the Brahmans.

According to W.R. Lawrence, Brahmans of Kashmir were during those days given three choices—death, conversion or exile. “Many fled, many were converted and many were killed, and it is said that this thorough monarch (Sikandar) burnt seven maunds of sacred threads of the murdered Brahmans”. As for the statement of Lawrence, six maunds of sacred threads of converts and seven maunds of murdered Pandits were burnt. The number of people, to whom these thirteen maunds of sacred threads belonged, might have been tremendously colossal. A mammoth number of the Pandits also went into exile, causing the first disastrous mass exodus of the community. Not only Sikandar- the Butshikan, but Suha Bhatta – the convert, also was responsible for this barbarous, murderous and cruel approach towards Kashmiri Pandits.

The brutal religious persecution of the Kashmiri Pandits has been borne testimony to by almost all the Muslim historians. Hassan, Fauq and Nizam–ud–Din have condemned these excesses in unscathing terms. It was the



reign of terror and homicide. Even then, they did not forget their past and rich tradition. As the custodians of their extraordinary cultural heritage, they wrote the illuminating treatises on the stupendous Kashmir Shaivism, colossal literature, splendid art, marvellous music, grammar and medicine.

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I, Alka Lahori hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

-sd-
Dated 15-03-2024

Alka Lahori
Printer & Publisher



YouTube Channel- *SoulInspirationsHQ: A Spiritual Haven Unveiled by the Bhat Family*

The YouTube Channel - SoulInspirationsHQ, a beacon of spiritual enrichment and solace, has been unveiled by the esteemed Bhat Family in a heartfelt tribute to the late Shri Pyare Lal Bhat ji. The platform, dedicated to fostering harmony and spiritual growth, marks a significant milestone in the realm of spiritual awakening.

The recent launch event of SoulInspirationsHQ at KSS, Sharika Bhavan, Sector 17, Faridabad was a testament



to the enduring legacy of Shri Pyare Lal Bhat ji, showcasing a profound compilation of devotional bhajans, a meticulously curated Pooja Book, and digital bhajans on a pen drive. The event resonated deeply with attendees, offering a glimpse into the wisdom and devotion that continue to inspire generations.

Vinay Bhat, the spokesperson for the Bhat Family, expressed sincere appreciation for the overwhelming support received from the community. He emphasized the profound impact of spiritual teachings in shaping lives and highlighted the eternal love and wisdom embodied by Shri Pyare Lal Bhat ji.

The response from the community has been overwhelmingly positive, with members expressing deep gratitude for the opportunity to reconnect with their spiritual roots through SoulInspirationsHQ. In these challenging times, the platform serves as a sanctuary for solace and inspiration, providing a space for reflection and spiritual growth.

As SoulInspirationsHQ embarks on its journey to illuminate lives with spiritual fulfilment, it invites individuals to explore its transformative offerings. Through devotional bhajans, sacred texts, and digital resources, the platform aims to be a guiding light for all seeking harmony and inner peace.

To experience the transformative power of SoulInspirationsHQ and embark on a journey of spiritual awakening, visit their YouTube channel @SoulInspirationsHQ. For further information or inquiries, please contact Vinay Bhat at email vinay@bhat.co.

Join us in celebrating this new chapter in spiritual enlightenment as SoulInspirationsHQ continues to inspire and uplift souls on their quest for inner harmony.

Contact: Vinay Bhat

Email: vinay@bhat.co;

Website: <http://www.youtube.com/@SoulInspirationsHQ>



- H L Kak



THE TRUTH, MYTHS, AND LIES

About the Health and Diet of the "Long-Lived" People of Hunza: The Burusho or Brusho, also known as the Hunza people or Botraj, live in Hunza, Nagar, Chitral, and in valleys of Gilgit–Baltistan in northern Pakistan, as well as in Jammu and Kashmir, India. All of them are Ismaili Muslims.



The Burusho people also reside in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, being mainly concentrated in Batamalu, as well as in Botraj Mohalla, which is southeast of Hari Parbat. This Burusho community is descended from two former princes of the British Indian princely states of Hunza and Nagar, who with their families, migrated to this region in the 19th century A.D. They are known as the Botraj by other ethnic groups in the state and practice Shiite Islam. Arranged marriages are customary. Since the partition of India in 1947, the Indian Burusho community have not been in contact with the Pakistani Burusho. The Government of India has granted the Burusho community Scheduled Tribe status, as well as reservation, and therefore, most members of the community are in government jobs. The

Burusho people of India speak Burushashki, also known as Khajuna, and their dialect, known as Jammu & Kashmir Burushashki (JKB), has undergone several changes which make it systematically different from other dialects of Burushashki spoken in Pakistan. In addition, many Jammu & Kashmiri Burusho are multilingual, also speaking Kashmiri and Hindustani, as well as Balti and Shina to a lesser extent.



It is believed that these people are the descendants of the Macedonian soldiers who traveled to Pakistan with Alexander the Great. Whether this is true or not, the Hunza people are one of the most remarkable societies in the world and have a lot to teach the people of this planet.

The story of Hunza is thought to have begun with Alexander III or Alexander the Great (July 356 BC to June 10, 323 BC), son



of King Philip of Macedon (Ancient Macedonia northwest of Greece). Alexander was a brilliant warrior, more capable than his father. After his father's murder, Alexander set out toward the east to conquer neighboring kingdoms. He conquered Greece in short fashion and continued toward Persia where he eventually burned the capital and the national library in a great defeat of the Persians.

Three generals in Alexander's army are said to have married Persian women. The generals betrayed Alexander by giving the Persians his plans. When Alexander heard of the betrayal he sought to take revenge, but the generals, wives, and a band of many soldiers fled. The valley of Hunza is thought to have been their valley of refuge because of its remote and secure location.

It is likely that the Hunza valley was already sparsely inhabited when the Macedon generals arrived. Certainly these tough fighting warriors made quick work of slaughtering the ancient inhabitants of Hunza. Though this is purely speculation, it is

highly probable. The desolate rocky valley could not have supported the Macedonians unless some farms had been slowly built by others over the preceding centuries.

Hunza People Never Get Sick and Live up to 120 years - This Is Their Secret

The most fascinating thing about this community is that they seem to have remarkable health. Many people in the Hunza community live to be over 150 years old, and there have been reports of women giving birth naturally in the area at the age of sixty-five. Life in the Hunza communities is characterized by its peacefulness. While bitter animosities over religion and ethnic identity are common in this particular region of the world and often stem into violent conflict, the Hunza are known for their tolerance and acceptance of difference. While the community is predominantly Muslim, there are a number of individuals who practice different faiths. All of these people co-exist peacefully, and the area is known for its warm and friendly community relations.

APPEAL!

Team NAAD, every month, brings to its readers articles and features of importance to the community. It has assumed larger importance as our next generation is increasingly drifting away from history and culture because of the scattered nature of the community. NAAD serves as a powerful tool of connecting the youth with its roots through its rich articles and features. Behind the scene, month after month, there is a lot of effort put together by the team NAAD to present to its esteemed readers this richness of our heritage. It needs your patronage and support in terms of articles and that is the smallest payback its readers can provide to it. Please write articles for NAAD and give it the strength to serve you uninterrupted.

Kavita Ke Maadhyam Sey
Santulan kii Baat Batati Hoo...,
Yaad Rakhnaa---,
Mai Arya Putri Hoo'n ,
Mujhe Hi Sati Naam PaDaa Thaa,
Mai Ne Shankar Ke Liye ,
Apne Aap Ko Bhasmii bhuut Kiyaa
Haa'nh Mai Ne Hi,
Apne Swabhiman Ke Liyay
Sharir Ki Parvah Na Ki,
Agni Ko Gale Lagaaya,
Yoga ki agni mai Aahuut Huyi---
Shankar Nay Halahal Vish Hii Piyaa Thaa
NILKANTH Ban Gaye
Mai Keval Sati Ki Sati Rah Gayi,
Meri Puja Huyi
Ek Sphurling--Chingari Ban gayi Purano'
Mei

Sati Naam Se Nahi,
Parvati Naam Se Hii,
Keval Durga ko Jaan Kar
usi Ko apme bhiitar samaye Hue
jankar Ki Satitva kyaa Hota hai

Meraa Hii Naam Sita Hai.,
Ram Ko Mere Hi Kaaran
Dharama Yudh Ladnaa Padaa.
Agni Pareekshaa Denii Padi Mujhee.
Kyaa Meraa Dosh Thhaa?
Nahi Nahi, Kadaapi Bhi Nahi
Mai Sadaa Shri Ram Ko Arya Putra Samjhi
Aur samajhtii Bhi rahoo/ngii
Maryaada Mai Nay Hii Banaayi.
Puroshottam Ram Wo Kahlaaye
Savitri Bhi Mai Hii Hoo'n.
Satyavaan Ko Mritu Ke Changul Se
Chheen Liya --Vaapis Liya
Mahakaal ke Paash se
Isi Par Sabhi Ko Naaz Hai--
Kuonki Mai Arya Putri Hoo'n
Kashmir Se Visthapan ke Pashchat bhi
Mei Ne wahi Maan Maryaadi Rakhi
Mujh mei Arya sanskriti Ke Sanskar
Sabhi Jivvit Hai
Isi Liye Mai svayam Ek Kavita hoo'n
Kavita Hii Shruti Kahlaati Hai

Shabda Mayi Kavita



- Jaya Siblu





- Tej N Dhar

Pakistan's Invasion on J&K (1947-48) : Untold Stories of Victims

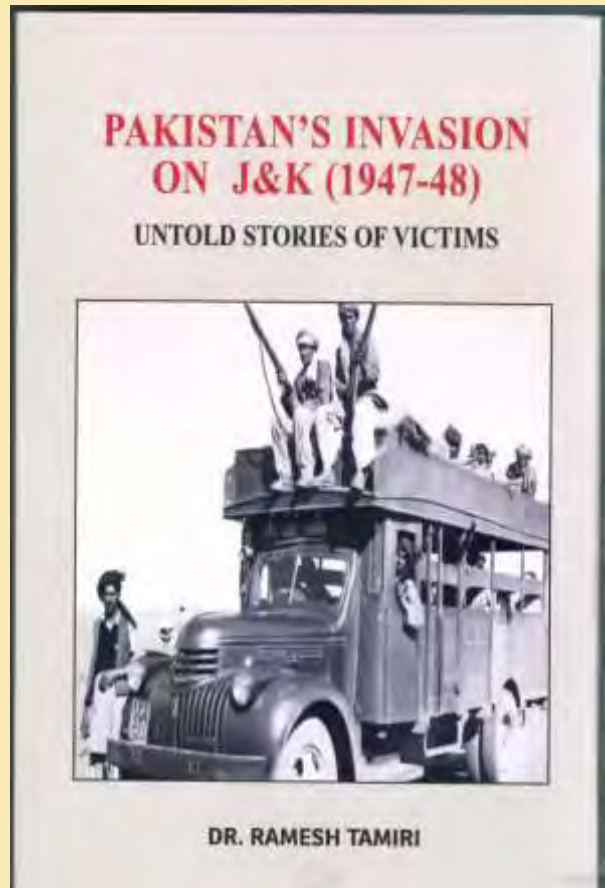
Author - Dr Ramesh Tamiri
Publisher - Published by the Author, 2023
Total Pages - Hb Rs 995; pb 595.

The subtitle of Tamiri's book might give the impression that it is a work of oral history meant to document, what he says in its Introduction, "the impact of the Pakistani invasion on non-Muslims, with a special focus on Kashmiri Hindus." A careful reading of the book reveals that it is much more than that. It is a work of scholarly historical research conducted with thorough methodological precision, and quite readable.

Like an accomplished researcher, Tamiri has a firm grip on the universe of his research, which is evident from his listing of all the available work on Pakistan's invasion of Kashmir: academic and popular histories, official documents, and published and unpublished memoirs of individuals who survived the brutalities unleashed by the Pakistanis. Since he found that there was "no work on how Kashmiri Hindus were impacted by the Pakistani attack," he started identifying the zones of conflict where the Kashmiri Hindus lived during that time. Gradually, he extended the bounds of his research to include other non-Muslims as well. Because of that, he took more than two

decades to gather all the required details and information and weave that into a readable account. He gives his research a proper closure by summing up its main findings in "Analysis and Conclusion."

Since the attack on the state of Jammu and Kashmir has been called by Pakistanis as the work of its tribals to liberate their Kashmiri brethren, and the writers from within the country have considered it no more than a raid, Tamiri has provided a detailed background to the attack to give a lie to the Pakistani propaganda and shown that it was a well-planned and carefully orchestrated attack, and not just a raid. The attack was the result of meticulous planning by the



Pakistani government, which can be seen from their elaborately drawn plans, like the Peshawar Plan and Lahore Plan. What they finally did was to put Pashtun tribesmen and former INA officers in the vanguard of the attack, which was controlled and supervised by uniformed officers like Col Sher Khan and Col Akbar Khan, and backed by senior politicians, including Jinnah and his ministers, and the British military officers.

Reports of war preparations in Pakistan had reached the Valley months before the actual attack. The British officers in Pakistan knew about this and informed the British commander in India, but he did not inform the Indian government. When rumours of the attack intensified, the Maharajah, knowing that he did not have enough troops to fight the invaders, sent his Prime Minister to Delhi with his proposal for acceding to the Indian Union. But Nehru did not accept it because he wanted that Sheikh Abdullah be involved in the government of the state. When the Maharaja's request was eventually accepted, and the Indian troops landed in Srinagar to fight the Pakistanis, a lot of damage had been done by the invaders in Muzaffarabad and Baramullah.

Tamiri's account of the invasion begins with a focus on its two lesser-known aspects. One, before the actual attack, Pakistani government sent their agents into various parts of the Valley to foment trouble from within, so that they could show to the world that people were discontented with the rule of the Maharajah. Two, that the tribal raid was much more than a short burst of brutal aggression unleashed by the Pakistanis from the side of Muzaffarabad and Baramulla. Pakistanis had their eyes on capturing the state capital and penetrating deep into the Jammu region as well, into Rajouri, Budhal, Samote, Chitti Batti, Dandakote-Ganjuli, and areas in Baltistan, like Skardu, Khaplu and Shigar, Drass, and in Gilgit region, in Chilas, Bunji and Astore. Because of this, it turned into a long-drawn war and many areas outside the Valley remained under the Pakistani control till the end of 1948. Tamiri has done well to relate stories of the people who had to face brutalities and indignities in those areas as well, because that part of the war has gone largely unnoticed.

As early as August 1947, Nasira Siddiqi left Pakistan for Kashmir to set up links with local Muslim Conference leaders for planning subversive activities and secure the support of Muslim officers in the state bureaucracy, police, and army. Leaders of the Muslim League came to the Valley and Jammu regions to instigate communal clashes. They went to Poonch to stage violent protests and resorted to killings, looting, and abducting women. The situation reached such alarming proportions that the government had to issue shoot-at-sight orders. More trouble started in September and led to the flight of people from the main town. The raiders killed the special Magistrate on October 5. Soon after, the raiders and the Pakistani army led a massive attack on Muzaffarabad, Baramulla, and Poonch. Major Khurshid Anwar and Major Aslam Khan oversaw the attack. At one point, the number of tribals involved in direct attacks swelled to 70,000. Some prominent persons who played a significant role in the Pakistani attack included Latif Afghani, Captain Akram, Eqbal Ahmed, Russell Haight, the British correspondents, and several others.

Tamiri has a long chapter on Muzaffarabad because it was home to thousands of Hindus and Sikhs, who were traders and agriculturists. The number of Kashmiri Hindus, who were mostly state employees, was around seventy. In the attack on the town on October 22 led by Major Khurshid Anwar, all the Muslim troops of the state turned deserters, betrayed the trust of Col Narain, and helped the enemy by giving them strategic details. Much later, they took part in looting and arson too. The result was that during the three days following the attack, Pakistanis killed Sikhs and Hindus brutally in a series of massacres, which were followed by arson and looting. At places like Naluchi, Sikhs offered resistance for some hours, but could not escape

being killed. Women were kidnapped and raped and then taken away to be sold in NWFP. Many women were converted forcibly and married to the local Muslims. To escape falling into the hands of their captors, hundreds of women took poison and jumped into rivers. Tamiri provides details about how some Kashmiri Hindus succeeded in running away from that hell. Those who were forced to stay on suffered physical pain and mental agony for months together. Their stories, as told by Tamiri, are stories of suffering and resilience. These are of Ramchand Koul, Gopi Nath Ganjoo, Balbadhar Bhat, Sham Lal Sas, Radha Krishan Bhat, Hriday Nath Kaw and Ram Lal Shah. Radha Krishan Raina, Shiv Jee Tikku, Sham Lal Dhar, Triloki Nath Bambroo, Dham Lal Bhat. Jia Lal Boni, Prem Nath, and Prithvi Nath Mazari lost their lives. The fate of several people could not be known, and some were repatriated much later by the International Red Cross. Every story of death and survival is a sad story of pain and suffering. Some unfortunate beings had to live with forced conversions. People who lived in areas slightly away from the town, such as Kotli and Chakar, could survive to tell their stories. The survivors include Suchwant Singh, Kripal Singh, S Khazan Singh, and S Harpal Singh. In Mirpur town the population of Hindus was around 80%. It was cleansed of Hindus and Sikhs by the Pakistanis with help from local goons. Tamiri provides details about massive killings and massacres and writes that “some ended their lives by drowning themselves in wells or canals or by swallowing poison. Women suffered worse indignities. The number of women abducted here ran into hundreds.” Even those who had found their way into refugee camps were not spared by the killers.

The book gives graphic details about the tortures that non-Muslims faced in other regions of the Valley: in Jammu, Rajouri, and Poonch, where the Pakistani siege lasted for months. The people who suffered in these areas were Hindus and Sikhs and only a few Kashmiri Pandits. The stories of survivors and the members of their families are stories of massacres, bravery, miraculous escapes, and heart-warming friendships. There were deserters in these areas too, who were treacherous and callous, and killed people without compunction, but there were good Muslims too, who shielded and sheltered Hindu families for months together, well knowing the risk involved in doing so. Those who survived the conflict have spoken glowingly about the people who saved them.

Tamiri's account also highlights two important aspects of whatever happened during and after the war in which thousands of people lost their lives. One was that the newly formed government in the state that swore to protect their people could not do much. When Balraj Madhok met Nehru at Jammu airport on November 25 to seek help for the people who were being butchered in Mirpur, he told him to “Talk to Shiekh Sahib,” as if he could really do anything. The attitude of the state towards its employees who saved their lives with great difficulty is shocking beyond belief. I quote two of the several examples that figure in the book. When Sham Lal Khushu reached Srinagar after surviving the carnage in Muzaffarabad, “he was put on suspension and remained without pay for many months.” When B N Sapru managed to reach his home in Srinagar on March 17, 1948, and joined a school there, “no pay was given to him of four months while he was stranded in Muzaffarabad. The state government did not even condone the service break.”

Tamiri's book is a must read for all the citizens of India so that they can know how Hindus and Sikhs were killed by the Pakistanis in 1947-48 and how the ones who managed to survive had to suffer trauma for many months. Apart from being an excellent piece of research, with meticulous Notes, Glossary, and Bibliography, the book is no less than a revelation. Tamiri deserves our gratitude for reclaiming voices of the people who were forced to live the horrors of a holocaust.

PRESS RELEASE

Manoj Sinha Visits Sharda Exhibition

New Delhi
14 February, 2024

LG Manoj Sinha visits Sharda exhibition stall at Sambhaav utsav in New Delhi

Lt. Gov. Sh. Manoj Sinha paid a special visit to sharda peeth stall no:26 at Kashmir Bhawan , 5 Prithvi Raj Road in New Delhi on the eve of inauguration of Sambhaav utsav being held here from 13- 19 February.

The event is to showcase civilization, culture & heritage of J&K to the fellow countrymen. Save Sharda Committee founder Ravinder Pandita greeted LG and presented him brochure containing brief on Sharda Peeth as well as whole struggle, so far. While appreciating the efforts of the committee, he also made a special mention in a verse about Ravinder Pandita in his address to the audience. The event is being organized by Resident Commission spearheaded by Principal Resident Commissioner Dr. Rashmi Singh IAS. After many decades such an exhibition is being held in the capital by Kashmir House that has attracted thousands of people. Many prominent personalities have visited Sharda Stall in the exhibition that include K L Ganju Consul General Union of Comoros, Mrs. Ratan Kaul , Public diplomat, Ms. Sheetal Nanda IAS, Yasha Moudgil IAS, Anuradha Rishi , Managing Trustee MSC Trust amongst others.

A colourful presentation by artists from Padder Kishtawar and other parts of J&K enthralled the audience at the event.

- Ravinder Pandita
Tel : 9811143024





LG Sinha Lays Synthetic Football Turf in Jagti

Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha recently laid the foundation stone of the Synthetic Football Turf at Jagti Camp, Nagrota. The Synthetic Football Turf, to be developed for Rs 5.75 crore, will include a G+1 pavilion with a covered area, a seating capacity of about 600 spectators, change rooms, and other amenities. The development of a state-of-the-art sports facility will, as per FIFA Standards, demonstrate the unwavering commitment and dedication of the UT Administration to promote sports in the Union Territory.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, appreciating the role of Kashmiri Pandits, said the community's achievements fill his heart with pride and urged them to contribute to rebuilding J&K. He further noted that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Government is fully committed to the welfare of Kashmiri migrant families and this is also reflected in the interim budget of Jammu Kashmir. Appealing to the KP youth, he said, "The representation of the Kashmiri Pandit community in J&K's Legislative Assembly will be a major step towards the empowerment of the community". He urged the youth of the Kashmiri Pandit community to avail limitless opportunities in diverse sectors and fulfil the goal of Viksit Bharat,"

LG, while highlighting the steps being taken by the Government for the welfare of Kashmiri Pandits, said in this year's budget that Rs 1067.61 crore were earmarked for the KPs, more than Rs 135 crore kept last

year. He reiterated that this Government would make every effort for the community's welfare.

The Lt Governor called upon the community members to create significant employment opportunities for the local youth. He assured them every support from the administration in their endeavours. He further directed organising the second leg of the Special Grievance Camp for Kashmiri Migrants in the coming days.

Non-Camp Migrants Meet RRC.

An interactive meeting of Kashmiri migrants living in non-camps was convened at Udheywala Jammu by the Vitasta Helping Hand Trust. Dr Arvind Karwani, Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (RRC) was the chief guest at the meeting. The RRC was apprised of the problems of PM package employees and told that more than 1500 PM package employees, mainly females, are putting up on rent in the Valley, facing misery and needing accommodation near their workplaces on a priority basis. He was requested to recommend enhancing monthly cash assistance from Rs. 13,000/ to 25,000/, creating a new employment package for the unemployed educated youth of the community.

The removal of M-Forms ahead of the coming Lok Sabha polls will make the voting system for displaced communities simple and transparent; he was asked to take up with the authorities. Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner Dr Arvind Karwani assured the displaced community that he would take up the genuine issues of the community with the authorities at the highest administration level for their early solution.

GM Camp College hosts lecture on 'Syncretic Ethos of Kashmir'

Gandhi Memorial (GM) Camp College Jammu hosted a lecture on the "Syncretic Traditions of Sacred Architecture of Kashmir". The keynote speaker, Saleem Beg, Head of INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage) in Jammu and Kashmir, offered a profound pictorial overview of Kashmir's ancient past as a sacred geography blessed by divine forces.

Professor B L Zutshi, President of Hindu Education Society Kashmir, set the stage with insightful opening remarks, highlighting the significance of exploring Kashmir's spiritual and historical roots.

Throughout the lecture, Saleem Beg illuminated the syncretic ethos of Kashmir, showcasing how diverse cultural and religious influences have shaped the region's architectural landscape over the centuries.

Quoting references from Sanskrit literature, he unveiled the mystical essence in Kashmir's sacred spaces.

The vote of thanks was eloquently delivered by Satish Talashi, the Principal, acknowledging the collective efforts that made the event a resounding success.

Special awareness camps across Migrants Camps in Jammu

The Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner (Migrants) J&K, in collaboration with the J&K Bank, organised special awareness camps at Jagti, Nagrota, Muthi, and Purkoo Camps during the week ending 17th February 2024, under the LGs SSS (Self Employment, Skill Development/ Scholarship and Social Assistance/ Sports) Campaign, to aware the beneficiaries about various Government Schemes.

On the directions of the District Development Commissioner, Jammu, Sachin Kumar Vaishya officers from the Line Departments viz Industries, Social Welfare, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry,

Agriculture, Employment, KVIB, Labour, Handicraft & Handloom gave awareness about various Government schemes in the Camp. The departments also enrolled beneficiaries and gave detailed information about self-employment generation schemes.

On the directions of the MD & CEO of J&K Bank, Baldev Prakash, a team of J&K Bank Officers headed by the Zonal Head, Rajesh Dubey, Rohit Kumar, in-charge Advances, and concerned branch heads also attended these camps and gave awareness about the various services offered by the J&K Bank. The Jammu & Kashmir Bank also sanctioned 117 self-employment cases on the spot involving an amount of Rs 2.47 crore. Further, the bank assured sanction of more cases in the coming week.

Free Health Checkups in Migrant Camps

A team of doctors from the Ayush Department held free health checkups in the Kashmiri migrant camps and examined more than 500 persons. Free medicines were distributed to the patients.

RC Jammu Visits Migrant Camps

Dr Arvind Karwani, Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner (Migrants) J&K, accompanied by the senior officials of Relief Organization and officials from PWD(R&B), PDD and Jal Shakti, visited different migrant camps and took stock of the problems being faced by the camp inmates.

The Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner (M) J&K visited the Health Centre, Zonal Office (Relief) and Higher Secondary Schools in the camp area, assured camp residents of the early resolution of their genuine demands, and emphasised transparent and time-bound disposal of all issues.

*Source: Agencies
Editing: Vijay Kashkari*

DU Most Viable University in India

The University of Delhi (DU) has been featured as the best maintainable University amongst the Indian Universities. Delhi University, formally the University of Delhi, is a central university in Delhi. It was founded in 1922 by an Act of the Central Legislative Assembly Act recognised as an Institute of Eminence by the University Grants Commission. The present location of the university is on Benito Juarez Road, near Dhaula Kuan. The University shifted to the new campus in 1984. The Campus is spread over 69 acres of green, hilly terrain, and its buildings blend attractively with the natural surroundings. The University has 90 affiliated, constituent and recognised colleges and 16 faculties across Delhi, with two primary campuses — North and South Campus.

It is a premier university of the country. The President of India is the Visitor, the Vice-President is the Chancellor, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India is the Pro-Chancellor of the University. The University started with three colleges and 750 students. Over 500 programmes offered by the University are approved by Academic and Executive Councils, out of which 209 programmes are being considered for NAAC accreditation purpose. The rest being run in colleges are separately accredited. The men of eminence to this University include Prof. D.S. Kothari in Physics, Prof. T.R. Sheshadri in Chemistry, Prof. P Maheshwari in Botany and Prof. M L Bhatia in Zoology. Five Departments namely Chemistry, Geology, Zoology, Sociology and History have been awarded the status of the Centres of Advanced Studies. These Centres of Advanced Studies have carved a niche for themselves as centres of excellence in teaching and research in their respective areas. In addition, a good number of university departments are also receiving grants under the Special Assistance Programme of the UGC in recognition of their outstanding academic work. Ten Departments (Germanic & Romance Studies, Hindi, Persian, Geography, Music,

East Asian Studies, Anthropology, Mathematics, are getting grants under DRS, two Departments (Buddhist Studies, English) are getting grants under DSA, Three Departments (English, Buddhist Studies, Social Work) are getting grants under AISHSS and three Departments (African Studies, East Asian Studies, Developing Countries Research Centre) are getting grants under Area Studies Programmes. The University's Department of Adult, Continuing Education and Extension and Women's Studies & Development Centre also gets special funding from UGC. The University today boasts of as many as fifteen libraries apart from libraries in colleges. The University Science Instrumentation Centre (USIC), now close to the Physics and Chemistry Departments, houses several sophisticated, high-end research instruments. These instruments are used quite frequently by Teachers and Research Scholars of postgraduate departments of the University as well as by many other institutions in Delhi and its neighbourhood. The University has recently laid a fibre-optic network connecting all colleges and departments in the North and South Campuses. When the University of Delhi expanded in many directions to keep pace with a rapidly growing city, South Campus was established in 1973 to facilitate access for the residents of South Delhi.

To cater to a large number of students and get the education at the door steps, East Campus and West Campus are coming soon. In the NIRF ranking 2023, Delhi University got 11th in the top universities category while 17th in the research category. Several affiliated colleges of Delhi University have bagged top 10 positions in the top 10 colleges categories. The top Ten Colleges of Delhi University as per NIRF 2023 ranking are:

Delhi University (DU) UG admissions 2024 will be based on the Common University Entrance Test (CUET UG), conducted by NTA. Candidates seeking admission to BA, B.Com, B.Sc. program, and honours courses must appear for the CUET exam. CUET UG 2024 exam will be conducted from May 15 to May 31, 2024. Candidates who clear the entrance exam must

College Name	NIRF 2023 Rankings
Miranda House	1.
Hindu College	2.
Atma Ram Sanatan Dharm College	6.
Kirori Mal College	9.
Lady Shri Ram College for Women	9.
Shri Ram College of Commerce (SRCC)	11.
Hansraj College	12.
Sri Venkateswara College	13.
St. Stephens's College	14.
Deshbandhu College	17.
Acharya Narendra Dev College	21.

apply on the DU admission portal. Based on CUET scores, seat Allocation will be done through the Common Seat Allocation System (CSAS) portal.

The University of Delhi (DU) has been featured as the most sustainable Indian institute in the QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2024, released on December 5. Globally, the university has ranked at 220.

The university has maintained its position at the top in the country as per the Centre for World University Ranking (CWUR) and is 8th in the National Institutional Ranking Framework. It is among the top 10 Indian public educational institutions/universities and the first among them under QS BRICS University Rankings. The university's h-index touched 192, one of the highest among Indian universities. The University of Delhi has been ranked 1st among the top 25 central universities and 8th among the top 100 universities by Outlook-ICARE India University Rankings 2019.

Delhi University offers several integrated courses, including Integrated M.Sc. in Economics, Computer Science, Statistics, MLT, and Biotechnology.

Integrated law programs : BA LLB and BBA LLB,

which are 5-year LLB courses, Five-Year Integrated Program in Journalism (FYIPJ). Some of the PG courses offered by DU include an M.A. Political Science, M.A. Sanskrit, M.A. Philosophy, M.A. Psychology, and M.A. Social Work. Other PG courses DU offers include Anthropology, Applied Psychology, Bengali, Biochemical Engineering, Bio-Chemistry, Biomedical Sciences, Botany. Some other postgraduate courses include a Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Science (MSc), Master of Technology (M. Tech), Postgraduate Diploma (PGD) and Master of Commerce.

To be eligible for DU PG admission, you must have a bachelor's degree from a recognised university in the relevant field. You must pass the CUET PG exam. The minimum percentage of marks required varies by program to program. Up to 5% seats are reserved program-wise in all colleges for the wards of Kashmiri Migrants. All the wards of Kashmiri Migrants will have to upload a certificate of registration as Kashmiri Migrants issued by Divisional Commissioner/ Relief Commissioner.

Credits : Delhi University, Shiksha

Common University Entrance Test [CUET (UG) - 2024] Registration

The CUET (UG) provides a single window opportunity to students seeking admission in any of the Central Universities (CUs) or other participating organisations (including State Universities, Deemed and Private Universities) across the Country. For the Academic Session 2024-25, CUET (UG) – 2024 will be conducted in the Hybrid mode (Computer-Based Test (CBT) / Pen & Paper) as per the details given below:

- ✓ Last date of online Submission of Application Form 26 March 2024 (Up to 11:50 P.M.)
- ✓ Last date of successful transaction of fee through Credit / Debit Card / Net-Banking / UPI 26 March 2024 (up to 11:50 P.M.)
- ✓ Date of Examination between 15 May and 31 May 2024

Website(s) www.nta.ac.in, [https:// exams . nta.ac.in/CUET- UG/](https://exams.nta.ac.in/CUET-UG/)

Indian Institute of Management Indore Five-Year Integrated Programme in Management (IPM)

✓ Selection Process

An application form aimed at understanding the students' proficiency in academics, as well as in co-curricular activities, is filled out by the aspirant. An entrance examination follows to test the applicant's aptitude, logical reasoning and proficiency in English and Mathematics. Shortlisted candidates appear for the Written Ability Test (WA) & Personal Interview (PI). The interview panel comprises well-qualified professors from IIM Indore and other prestigious institutions. The interview judges the students' confidence level, communication skills, general awareness, persuasion skills and knowledge.

✓ Registration Date: up to 26 March 2024

✓ Date of Computer-based Test: 23 May 2024

Website: www.iimidr.ac.in

IIIT Hyderabad UGEE 2024

International Institute of Information Technology, Hyderabad, announces Undergraduate Entrance Examination (UGEE) 2024 for admission to Dual Degree (B.Tech and MS) programs for the academic year 2024-25.

Application Portal Closes

- 1st April 2024

Entrance Exam:

- 4th May 2024

Date of Interviews

- 11th to 13th June 2024 (Online)

All applications should be submitted online in the UGEE Portal: <https://ugadmissions.iiit.ac.in/>. To submit the application, a candidate has to complete two registration forms i) Pre-Registration Form and ii) Pre-Registration Form. Applicants in this mode need to appear for a computer-based undergraduate entrance examination (UGEE) conducted by IIIT Hyderabad. This exam will be for three hours and has two sections. Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore Admission for P. G. Applications are invited from eligible applicants for admission to regular Research Programmes

- M Tech (Research)]
- Course Programmes in Engineering [M Tech/MDes/MMgt],

- Course Programmes in Science [M Sc in Life Sciences; and M Sc in Chemical Sciences],

- Integrated Ph D Programmes,

Applicants are advised to go through the eligibility criteria, specialisations, research areas, selection procedure and other details available at separate links on the IISc website i.e., <https://www.iisc.ac.in> → Admissions → Programmes. Bachelor's degree in Engineering/ Technology/ 4year Bachelor of Science Valid GATE score / NET JRF is mandatory for PG admission.

- Last date for online submission of applications (website closes at 23:59 hours on 22.03.2024) is 22.03.2024

Reservation/concession/relaxations for Kashmiri-Migrant (KM), Kashmiri Pandits/ Kashmiri Hindu Families (Non-Migrants) living in the Kashmir valley as per Government of India regulations. Graduates of any course with a minimum duration of FOUR years, from any Centrally Funded Technical Institution (including IIIT in PPP mode) with a minimum CGPA of 8 out of 10 or its equivalent may be considered for admission to MTech (Res.) by respective Department under project mode i.e. the stipend/fellowship for such admitted students will be from the project being executed by the Department concerned

Panjab University Chandigarh Management Entrance Test (MET)-2024 For admission to MBA programmes in

- Retail Management
- Banking & Insurance Mgt.
- Capital Markets
- Infrastructural Management
- IT & Telecommunication Mgt.
- Pharmaceutical Management
- Hospital Management
- University Institute of Applied Management Sciences (UIAMS)

Last date for submission of information on the website to generate the Login & Password

- April 3, 2024 (Wednesday)

Last date for deposit of fee through Online mode

- April 10, 2024 (Wednesday)

Last date for uploading of photograph, signature with rest of the information on the website after depositing fee

- April 16, 2024 (Tuesday)
Last date for receiving a printout of copy of filled application form along with the requisite documents (if any) to Assistant Registrar, UIAMS, P.U. South Campus, Chandigarh by registered post/speed post or by hand
- April 18, 2024 (Thursday) up to 4:00 P.M
Final date by which Roll No. will be available online
- April 23, 2024 (Tuesday)
Date of Holding Entrance Test
- April 28, 2024 (Sunday)
Reservation for the wards of Kashmiri Migrants and Kashmiri Pandit/Kashmiri Hindu Families (non-migrants) living in Kashmir Valley, one seat each in MBA (sectoral) programmes. The Entrance Test will be held at Chandigarh Centre on the scheduled date.

National Council for Hotel Management Joint Entrance Examination (NCHM JEE) - 2024

The National Council for Hotel Management & Catering Technology was set up in 1982 as an Autonomous Body under the Ministry of Tourism to run and regulate scholars for B.Sc. Hospitality & Hotel Administration and ten other structured courses of study are imparted at the affiliated 21 Central Institutes of Hotel Management, 30 State Government Institutes of Hotel Management, 01 Public Sector Undertaking, 2 PPP-run SIHMs and 24 Private Institutes of Hotel Management. NCHMCT is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India. Admission to the above Course is through the NCHM JEE only. All the affiliated institutes accept the NCHM JEE score for admission to the B.Sc. (HHA) course in their respective institutes.

- Eligibility requirements:

A candidate should have passed the 10+2 system of Senior Secondary Examination or its equivalent with English as one of the subjects from a recognised Educational Board. Candidate must have passed English as a subject of study (core/elective/functional) in the qualifying examination. It has been decided to reserve one seat, on a supernumerary basis, for the wards of Kashmiri Migrants and Kashmiri Pandits / Kashmiri Hindu Families (Non-Migrants) residing in Kashmir Valley in each Central Institute by Govt. guidelines. Such Applicants shall have to qualify for the NCHM JEE 2024. Kashmiri

Pandits/Kashmiri Hindu Families (Non-Migrants) residing in Kashmir Valley must upload their domicile certificate online while applying for the Category Certificate in the space provided. Kashmiri migrants must upload the migration certificate while applying in the space provided for uploading the Category Certificate. Candidates registered with different state governments should produce original proof of registration at the time of counselling and at the time of admission to the institute (s) concerned. Candidates are advised to refer to NCHM JEE-2024 website : <https://exams.nta.ac.in/NCHM/> for authentic information and periodic updates about NCHM JEE-2024.

The National Testing Agency (NTA) will conduct the National Council for Hotel Management Joint Entrance Examination (NCHM JEE-2024) for admission to the B.Sc. (Hospitality & Hotel Administration) Course at the Institutes of Hotel Management (IHM) affiliated to the National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology (NCHM&CT) for the Academic Year 2024-25 in Computer Based Test (CBT) Mode.

- Date of examination: 11th May, 2024 (Saturday)
- Mode of exam Computer Based Test
- Last Date of Submission of Online Applications and Last Date of successful fee transaction: 31.03.2024

Eligibility : Admission procedures relating to the exam are in the Information Bulletin hosted on <https://exams.nta.ac.in/NCHM/>. Apply online at <https://exams.nta.ac.in/NCHM/> during the period specified above. The exam fee must also be paid online through a payment gateway, using debit/credit cards or internet banking.

It has been decided to reserve one seat, on a supernumerary basis, for the wards of Kashmiri Migrants and Kashmiri Pandits / Kashmiri Hindu Families (Non-Migrants) residing in Kashmir Valley in each Central Institute by Govt. guidelines. Such Applicants shall have to qualify for the NCHM JEE 2024. Kashmiri Pandits/Kashmiri Hindu Families (Non-Migrants) residing in Kashmir Valley must upload their domicile certificate online.

Candidates registered with different state governments should produce original proof of registration at the time of counselling and at the time of admission to the institute (s) concerned.

Feedback: vijaykashkari@gmail.com



Looking for a Suitable Match for our Son Born on 29th August 1994 at 08:55 AM at Jammu. Parents are presently living in Roop Nagar, Jammu. Height 5'9", Qualified as BE in Computer Engineering from Mumbai University plus pursuing MS in AI & ML. Working as Senior Data Scientist in Fractal Analytics Pvt Ltd, Pune currently WFH. Interested people may contact on MB- 7889558793,9419241773, Email id: sunitarazdan25@gmail.com for Tekni & Biodata.



Seeking Alliance for my Daughter. DoB: 12-09-1997, Born in Faridabad, Haryana at 05.04 PM. Height: 5ft.2in. Qualification: B.TECH (EIC) from Govt Engineering College YMCA, Faridabad. Non-Manglic. Working in Central Govt. Service. Father from Karan Nagar, Srinagar. Retired as C.E.O and Settled in Faridabad Haryana. Mother: Gazetted Officer, retired from Central Government. Seeking Alliance from equally educated Boy. Preferably working in PSU or Central Govt Service (DELHI NCR). Interested, Please Contact on: WhatsApp No - 8178887009 Or 9868109905.



Looking for suitable match for our Son, born on 02nd January 1991 (06:30 PM) at Jammu. Height: 5'11, Education: BE (C.S.E) MBA from University. Working as Manager in MNC company at Bangalore handsome package. Interested person may contact on : - MB No. & WhatsApp: - 7006171324, 8717090262, 8717090264 & 9055272134 or Email-Id: - hldhar1958@gmail.com



We are looking for an alliance for our Daughter, DOB: 24-07-1995, TOB: 09:41PM, POB-Delhi and Height: 5'5". Qualification: MBBS (IGMC Shimla), Currently Perusing Masters in UK. Present address: Dwarka, Delhi. Valley address: Zaina Kadal, Srinagar, Kashmir. Boy should preferably be settled in the UK/USA. Interested may contact on MB no. 9871790735 or 9871790729.



Looking for an alliance for my daughter Dr. Aditi Tikku, Date of birth : 12-10-1989, Time of birth : 10:58 AM, Place of Birth : Srinagar, Height : 5 feet 5 inches, Qualification : BDS Mumbai, MBA in Health Care Management from IIM-Calcutta. Currently working as an Implementation Project Manager at Tata Trusts Hospital Mumbai. Valley Address : Haba Kadal Sgr, Present Address : Mumbai/Gurgaon. If interested please WhatsApp tekni and kolawali on Contact no: 9312869544 or Email id: jyotinder.nath.tikku@gmail.com.



Seeking a suitable alliance for my Son. DOB-17/09/1993, Height- 5.11 ft, Qualification- BE in Computer Science & MBA Finance (Mumbai University). Occupation: Sr. Manager in Kotak Mahindra Bank, Mumbai. Earlier he was working as Relationship Manager in HDFC Bank. Family Details - Father: Sh. Predemen K Tikoo, Rtd Dy-SP and Mother: Smt. Bunty Tikoo, House Wife. Valley Address: Village Bandipora, Kashmir. Present Address –Saraswati Vihar, Bohri, Jammu. Interested may contact at MB No- 9419240281, 9419272653.



Looking for a Suitable alliance for my daughter. DOB – 21/02/1996, Time & Place of Birth – 10.40 AM Jammu, Height – 5’4”. Qualification – MBBS from Manipal College of Medical Science, Job Profile – Working as Medical Officer in one of the leading Hospital in Delhi. Valley Address – Rainawari, Srinagar, Kashmir. Present Address - Sector 7, Jasola Vihar, New Delhi. Manglik – No. Interested may Contact through - WhatsApp No – 9818879945 or Email ID - vakirajinder@gmail.com .



Seeking suitable alliance for legally divorced KP girl, born Feb, 1988 at Srinagar ht. 165 cms. The girl is B.Tech from Delhi and working as Manager IT in a reputed MNC in Bangalore and settled in Bangalore, drawing a handsome package of 25laks. The boy should preferably be from IT sector and working in Bangalore/Pune. Interested may please contact for tekni and kalavali at the following numbers/email: 7899178915, 7483537133 email: koulgirja@gmail.com



Looking for a bride for my son, born 10.10.1993 at 11.55pm at Delhi, Height 174 Cms. He has done B.Tech (Chemical) from BITS, Dubai. Currently working as Engineer with L&T in Saudi Arabia, getting Rs.3.50 lacs per month. Father working as GM with L&T, Saudi Arabia. One engineer elder sister married to Abhinav Tankha, IITian working in US. Interested may contact: ravijailkhani@gmail.com M:00966541065973, 00971509553165, 00971504591203



Alliance wanted for our son Bhavesh Zutshi with following particulars: D.O.B: 12-10-1994 at 1 PM, Place of Birth: Jammu. Height: 5'.10", Qualification: BE, Computer Science from Bangalore Institute of Technology, Bangalore (2017). Working as Oracle Cloud Consultant at KPMG Bangalore since November 2019. Earlier - Oracle India Pvt Limited through Campus Selection (2017-2019), Salary: 20 lakhs P/A. Parents settled in Jammu at Subash Nagar post Migration. Valley Address: Ram Bagh Barzulla (Sgr.) adjacent Met. Dept. Original residents of Narparistan Fathekadal Srinagar. Interested may Contact on Mb no. 9419184816.



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All India Kashmir Samaj

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With best wishes
Yours Sincerely

Signature

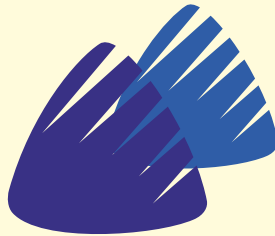
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