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Happy 75th
Independence Day



Honouring the Sacrifice of **COVID** **WARRIORS**



*Lal Chowk Srinagar
on occasion of
Independence Day*



*100 Feet Tall
National Flag
Hoisted at Hari
Parbat Fort,
Srinagar*

Covid Volunteers who came forward to help the patients during worst pandemic period

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THIS MONTH'S COVER

This month's cover page is dedicated to Covid Volunteers who came forward to help the patients during worst pandemic period

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From the
Editor-in-Chief



Dear Readers,

Wishing you all a very Happy 75th Independence Day. The journey of Indian freedom struggle and resurgence of India as a modern nation state makes every citizen feel proud. We owe our independence not only to those martyrs who fought for it during British Raj but also to our soldiers who have kept the flag of sovereignty high during all these years. When things were looking bleak in Punjab, North East or in Kashmir, it was the sacrifice of our forces which ensured that our independence is maintained at all costs. Therefore, these sons of the soil are our real heroes who have made supreme sacrifice for Mother India and rightly so deserve our humble gratitude.

At the time of Independence in 1947, India was struggling to meet the aspirations of its masses. The statistics show that India had 70% of its population below poverty line which now stands up to 22%, literacy was 12% compared to 74% at present, road infrastructure was 4 lakh kilometres which now stands up to 64 lakh, railway network has gone from mere 0.53 lakh kilometres to 1.23 lakh kilometres, whereas life expectancy has gone up from mere 37 years to 70 years. Today, India's contribution to world GDP is almost 8.3% and growing year on year

and this has resulted in growth of per capita income has also gone up exponentially. This all is achieved when our population has grown from 34 crores at the time of independence to 138 crores at present. Besides, having world's cheapest space research program and being leaders in space and information technology. The Indian success story is also an inspiring one as after independence it has not only retained its territory but also set an example before the world by creating a model of democracy. The world is watching India with awe and inspiration which every Indian should not only feel proud off but ensure to keep this momentum going on.

The democratic spirit of India has allowed every Indian to pursue their dreams in any field they chose but also created an atmosphere where they can contribute to Nation Building. Be it any natural calamity or medical emergency this spirit of India has not only thrived but has led its citizens to come forward and be apart of greater humanitarian cause. The best example can be seen during the pandemic period when citizens across the country rose to occasion to help their countrymen. Such rare examples are very less in the history of any nation.

Applauding the Covid Warriors

Covid Wave II created havoc for miniscule minority of Kashmiri Hindus. The deadly virus struck many families and precious lives were lost. However, in those challenging times there was a group of volunteers across the regions who served as a frontline warriors to reach out to the patients and provide them much needed succour. Kashmiri Hindus across the globe came forward to help the families in India by arranging much needed medical equipment's. However, what was most reassuring was the coming together of community youth and elders to provide all out help to the families in distress. Various voluntary groups were formed in different cities who were at the forefront in helping the needy at Delhi-NCR, Jammu, Srinagar, and other places. These voluntary groups also conducted regular doctor's session with patients which was unique of its kind as it saw participation of doctors across the globe. Food, medicine, oxygen concentrators and doctor's advice were provided by such groups. The community organisations, volunteers and philanthropic individuals made all out efforts to come forward and help the families in distress. As an individual I could see the unique camaraderie among the community members. There are many examples to share which touch our heart and make me believe that no matter how much we must have been impacted by the pandemic but community shall rise like a phoenix and show the way to other communities in near future. We in Naad salute all those Doctor's, paramedics, volunteers, organisations, philanthropist's, and various volunteers who not only saved lives of many people but also raised the hope and installed confidence which was much needed.

Geopolitical Crisis

The fall of Kabul to barbaric terrorists, trained and abetted by Genocidal State Pakistan is a cause for worry, not only to India but also to region. The way the Afghan forces collapsed, and the civilian government ceased to exist shows the corruption and lack of commitment among the institutions of that beleaguered country. This leads to lot for future happenings, but one thing is for sure that China, Pakistan and Taliban axis are going to be new destabilising force in the region which has serious consequences for security of India. With US withdrawal the region is pushed to chaos and confusion which will takes years to get on track. Till then many innocent lives would be lost and Pakistan would be emboldened to push these barbaric terrorists to Kashmir for mayhem. Though the Indian security system is completely capable to thwart any such misadventure, but country cannot lower the guard. India must understand that in present changed geopolitical crisis the best thing would be to keep Jammu and Kashmir directly under its watch. This will ensure that common citizens get the benefit of centralised schemes directly and secondly this will help in keeping a hawk's eye on subversive forces who may get emboldened with Taliban take over in Afghanistan. World powers must strive to bring back to democracy and rule of law to prevent further human catastrophe in Afghanistan. In the words of Martin Luther King Jr,"

"Injustice anywhere is threat to Justice everywhere."

भूनील रूना गणक

From the *President's* Desk



Remembering Our Heroes

Rarely has the world seen or experienced the disastrous situation created by a natural calamity in the form of a pandemic that hit every corner of the world almost simultaneously starting December 2019 and taking almost every country in its grasp within the next four months. By April 2020, it became clear that the world was in the grip of something unheard of; something that had not been seen or experienced for a hundred years, i.e., a pandemic. There was no information available about the virus which caused the disease except a few which did not help create a mechanism to counter its spread or roll back its effect. These known facts included the symptoms visible in the infected person, ineffectiveness of any medicines against the disease and that it spread from one human being to another through air when a healthy person came in close contact with the infected person. Beyond this information nothing more was available to base one's fight against the virus on. That the virus originated in China, and from there spread to Europe through Italy

and to the U.S, etc., did not help the doctors, the scientists, or researchers in any manner in finding an effective cure.

Therefore, the only option available was to take preventive measures to stop its spread in both urban and rural areas. The best strategy to counter the spread of the virus was to minimize human contact with each other as far as possible and in the meantime develop a vaccine. Throughout the world, there is hardly any country which did not impose a lockdown, shutting businesses, bringing to a halt the transportation systems, closing down schools, colleges, sports, etc., etc. The whole world nearly came to a standstill from March-April 2020 onwards with cities, travel, education, economy, commerce, etc., coming to a standstill. The first wave of COVID 19 (the name that finally stuck to it) lasted till December 2020. It destroyed livelihoods, brought life to a grinding halt, and literally turned the world upside down. COVID 19, since its emergence in late 2019, has till now, accounted for over 4.32 million deaths.

However, by the end of 2020, the COVID 19 seemed to be receding. Having been locked up for almost a year, people started behaving as if COVID was only a mirage and not a reality. Use of masks, maintaining social distance and sanitizing hands and surroundings were clearly neglected. In fact, people too hastily threw caution to winds and behaved as if COVID 19 was no longer a threat anymore. Within the next three months it became abundantly clear that the COVID was back; this time with more ferocity and with deadlier effect than what the world had seen during its first wave. Be it through the mainstream media, social

media platforms or anecdotal evidence, it was becoming clearer by the hour that the world, particularly India, was faced with an unprecedented disaster, beginning the last week of April 2021.

During the first wave of COVID, all of us had heard of deaths taking place across the country, but these had only news value of something happening to persons living in far off places, not well known to you. Therefore, death due to COVID remained a distant occurrence that did not concern you intimately. But COVID II was different. This time it hit too close, friends, close relatives, neighbors, well known artists, co-workers, famous people, etc., died every hour. As if this was not enough, the electronic media was quick to depict in stark reality the broken-down health care system of our country. Patients unable to get a bed in the hospital, ICUs of the hospitals completely choked with patients, long queues of breathless patients struggling to get a gasp of oxygen outside hospitals and oxygen *langars* being set up by Sikh community in their Gurudwaras to provide whatever relief they could, became a daily/routine news. There were instances of hospitals running out of oxygen at critical moments leading to the death of patients for non-availability of oxygen. The life of an ordinary person or of those on high pedestals, of poor or rich, high low, men or women, urban or rural, southerner or northerner, all added to the ever-growing list of those who died for lack of availability of oxygen. India suffered an enormous damage.

Our fault lines cracked wide open, with media reporting that in some areas, people just threw the bodies into River Ganga because at the designated crematoriums on its banks there was no more wood available to light the pyres. Western media, always looking for such 'exotic' pictures from India went to town proclaiming that India was dying. It was only after about 45-55 days that the situation was finally brought under control through launching vaccination drive, ramping up oxygen supply, opening many COVID-care big

hospitals, launching a massive campaign to spread awareness about taking COVID precautions, viz., wearing mask, maintaining physical distance, using sanitizers, washing hands regularly, and the imposing lock-down in its various forms.

Our community, already suffering due to thirty years of exile, was hit very severely by the pandemic. For a small community to have lost so many people in so short a time was a big blow. Many families lost their only bread winners, many children became orphans, losing both parents, some families lost people belonging to four generations simultaneously; leaving young widows, orphans, old parents/grandparents behind to fend for themselves. It is, however, a matter of great satisfaction and pride that our community in exile rose to the occasion, both at organizational level as also at the individual level. Many volunteer groups were formed to render succor to the needy. This included delivering medicines, organizing oxygen cylinders, admitting patients in the hospitals, delivering food, providing access to doctors' consultation and in many cases even carrying out cremations. At the global/national level, several KP organizations rendered assistance by shipping oxygen concentrators and cylinders, organizing financial assistance for the needy, providing medical advice, etc.

This issue of your journal is a humble contribution from All India Kashmiri Samaj to recognize the herculean efforts made by our men and women, our organizations, and associations to mitigate the sufferings of our community in distress. But for their timely intervention and much needed assistance, our community would have been hit harder. NAAD salutes our heroes who put everything at stake, including their lives, to take care of the sick, the dying and the dead. We would like to place on record our debt of gratitude to them for all time to come.

- Col. Tej K. Tikoo

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General Secretary's Column

Elections to the Post of President AIKS

Due to the unavoidable circumstances, the elections to the post of President AIKS could not be held as per the earlier schedule of elections. First phase of the election to receive postal ballot papers by 4.00PM on 17th July 2021 was over. As reported by the Returning Officer (RO), ballot papers received by post by the date announced were sealed at 4.30 PM on 17 July, 2021 and are in the custody of RO.

As the physical voting/counting etc., scheduled for 18th July 2021, was postponed at the behest of officials of the concerned Police station of the venue, who expressed concern due to prevailing Covid protocol.

Keeping in view the prevailing conditions, the RO has therefore decided to hold another phase of elections through postal ballot only. The members who had opted to vote in person have been asked to fill up the ballot paper, attach a copy of identity proof as per guidelines issued earlier and as given on the ballot paper and send it back in a sealed cover, preferably by registered post/speed post/courier or handover personally at R.O.s office, i.e. address of the AIKS Office, before 4.00 PM on 28th of August 2021.

The R.O. has announced that the counting of ballot papers shall be held on

29th August, 2021 in the presence of the contesting candidates or their representatives and the current Executive Committee members of AIKS. The timing and the venue shall be intimated to all members in due course of time. R.O. has requested both the contesting candidates to be present at the time of counting or send the names of their representatives in writing. The representative should be a member of AIKS and carry an authority letter from the respective contesting candidate.

AIKS Condemns

Meenakshi Lekhi's Statement

During a webinar held on 01 Aug 2021, Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi, Union Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture, while replying to a question posed by a displaced Kashmiri Pandit, made a disparaging statement, comparing the return and rehabilitation of displaced Kashmiri Pandits to Kashmir with migrant labourers returning to their villages from various cities of India during the Covid pandemic. She further said that in India any one was free to live wherever they wanted to live. She further added that many people living at different places do not want to be disturbed as they are comfortable wherever they are presently living.

Comparing the situation of ethnically cleansed Kashmiri Pandits with migrant labourers and other statements stated above, were derogatory, insensitive, and amounted to sprinkling salt on the festering wounds of the displaced community.

It is shocking that Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi has not bothered to peruse the statement of many stalwarts of her own party over the years. These include statements of Sh. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Sh. Narendra Modi, Sh. Jagmohan, Sh. Ravinder Raina (President, BJP J&K state and JKUT) and many others. Even National Human Rights Commission had called violence perpetrated against Kashmiri Pandits in Kashmir as 'akin to genocide'. Some years back, the Union government, through a statement made by the Union Home Secretary, had called our killings in 1989-90 as genocide.

Being an articulate and well-established lawyer practicing in the Hon'ble Supreme court of India before becoming a minister, it would be naive for our community to think that Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi made these uncalled-for comparisons out of ignorance. It is likely that such a statement from a union minister was made with ulterior motives and indicates that the Government of India has accepted that in secular India, Kashmir need not be secular.

All India Kashmiri Samaj condemns this statement and would like to remind Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi that it is the responsibility of the Union Government to resettle and rehabilitate the ethnically displaced Kashmiri Pandits in Kashmir with dignity and honour, in a secure environment.

AIKS Core Committee Meeting

The core committee of AIKS had a meeting to discuss the financial position of AIKS. The Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India, has intimated the massive liability of rent during the months of transition from the office of AIKS operating from Sarojni Nagar New Delhi to RK Puram New Delhi. The details are hereunder.

Directorate of Estate asked AIKS to vacate the accommodation at Sarojni Nagar, as the estate department was to dismantle the building. 244 RK Puram was allotted for the office accommodation. The possession of the new office was taken over by President AIKS on 7 December 2017. But, the AIKS office shifted from Sarojni Nagar on 24 April 2018. The estate department treated the period as Sub-letting. Subletting period from 19-02-2018 to 23-04-2018, the rent levied was at the market rate of type III Qtr. @ ₹ 37600 per month.

Directorate of Estate of a letter dated 20-07-2020 intimated that licence fee due to AIKS was ₹1,28,278 from 30-11-1993 to 24-05-2019, the amount was deposited on 22-07-2019.

₹84605 was deposited for the period June 2019 to January 2021, @ ₹ 4230 per month. Rent Rates increased from ₹4230 to ₹5020 with effect from July 2020. Licence fee required to deposit up to 31 July 2021 was ₹ 35910 Total fee ₹ 86371 deposited on 4 August 2021.

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AIKS Petition Started Bearing Fruits

The All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) President and his team hail the action of the Government of UT Jammu and Kashmir to issue Government Order No. 53-Jk-(Rev) of 2021, Dated 13.08.2021, about 'Preservation and Protection of Migrant Properties'. While upholding the Act of 1997, "Preservation, Protection and Restraint on Distress Sales", the order by S.O. 1229 (E) dated 31.03.2020 (Adaption of State Laws) Order 2020 the order mentions the requirement of written complaints about the survey or measurement of a migrant property.

Through the order, Government accepts that the Distress Sale Act has not taken place in the manner prescribed by the Act.

The Government has taken notice of the orders of the Hon'ble High Court J & K in OWP No. 477/2016 dated 06.03.2016 titled "All India Kashmiri Samaj and Ors.V/s Union of India and Ors.

It is pertinent to mention here that AIKS had filed the petition in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India under Article 32 of the Constitution of India in 2006. The petition was to protect the interests of deprived, oppressed and displaced KPs several issues of fundamental rights and dignity of the citizens and their rights to constitutional protection, as also the profound problems of their interest were raised. The petition also listed the respondents' alleged callous, complacent, and apathetic approach towards the displaced community. The Supreme Court had heard the plea almost regularly, but every time government replies were not satisfactory, the case dragged on for a long time.

After hearing the arguments, the Supreme Court had, on February 24, 2016, transferred the petition to the J&K high court.

The petition has started bearing the fruits. AIKS welcome the order. AIKS request the Government to look into other community demands, including declaring Kashmiri Pandits as "Internally Displaced Persons"

within the meaning of the guiding principles on "Internally Displaced persons" adopted by 'Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights. It also requests for a direction to the respondents to investigate and prosecute cases of massacre and murders, movable or immovable, sold by displaced persons after 1989-90 be declared as 'Distress Sales'. The AIKS further seeks that the Government addresses the problems of the displaced persons. AIKS appeals to the Government for permanent housing accommodation to all the Kashmiri minority and migrants employees living in various parts of the valley.

Copy of Order at Page no. - 49 to 50.

Helping Hands from KSS

In order to facilitate submission of files for obtaining Domicile Certificates to the concerned Authorities, especially for those who are not able to apply for the same online or find it difficult to submit the application files at Delhi, KSS launched a campaign for collection of files and assisting applicants in completing the formalities for the same at Sharika Bhawan. Appreciating the gesture of KSS, many KP Biradari members enthusiastically availed the services of KSS volunteers.





- Dr. K N Pandita



Presidents Convocation Address in **SRINAGAR**



The addresses of a Head of the State at formal functions are usually non-political and non-controversial. The University of Kashmir had the privilege of listening to the President of India on the occasion of its Convocation last week. As a formal address in the strict sense of the term, it was superb.

But addressing a galaxy of academics and intellectuals in a sensitive place like Srinagar and even guardedly referring to tricky historical situations or ideas asks for exceptional circumspection. Kashmir Valley's

history is wrapped in a plethora of intricacies and controversies made worse by subjective historiography. Aberrations happen unwittingly. VVIPs generally go by what the politicians feed them with.

A couple of instances drawn from the address of the President can be elucidated to substantiate the narrative. The President used the term “Kashmiriyat” at least three times, of course in a good sense. But it is a controversial and rather misleading term, which everybody explains according to his choosing because there is no single definition for it. If it means a

specificity or uniqueness (with whatever content), then Jammu and Ladakh regions stand deprived of that forte. In other words, it means the valley has to be treated differently and with kid gloves. Herein rests the malaise of discrimination that has become pervasive and entrenched with time.

The President said that “Violence is alien to Kashmir culture.” It sounds sweet. But in the first place, Kashmir Valley culture is a depository of many leading civilizations, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Muhammadanism. The philosophy of non-violence, to which the followers of the Buddha staunchly adhere to, is enshrined only in the Buddhist liturgy, which, however, did not stand the test of time when Hinduism staged a comeback in Kashmir. Sikhism is born out of the concept of armed resistance as is evident from Sikh history. Lastly, Islam spread out of Arab conquests of Mesopotamia, Iran, Trans-Oxiana and Hindustan. In Kashmir, the cultural invasion was far more violent than the armed invasion. Medieval Kashmir was born out of the womb of cultural violence, which became a conspicuous trait of Kashmirian character down to this day.

The President said that “Kashmir is making a new beginning to regain this land's lost glory.” Two questions need to be answered. What are the contours of the "glory" of Kashmir and in which period did Kashmir enjoy it? Secondly, if Kashmir lost that glory, what were the reasons and to whose doorsteps the onus of destroying that glory should be brought? Kashmir remained subjugated from the third decade of the 14th century down to the present day. Subjugated nations know only of servility, not glory.

Then out of unquestionable sincerity, the President lamented that "the outstanding tradition of peaceful co-existence was broken." Threadbare statements like this are

strongly contradicted by scholars and commentators based on historical evidence that has been assiduously but very honestly dug out from the debris of suppressed and distorted history of Kashmir. It is no surprise that the religious minority of Kashmiri Hindus braved unimaginable atrocities and persecution during the five hundred years of autocratic and repressive rule of the Sultans of Kashmir. But what will be written in letters of blood in the history of contemporary Kashmir is the ethnic cleansing of Kashmir of its small Hindu population in 1990 in a democratic and secular India of which His Excellency Ram Nath Kovind is now the President. In his 20 minute address, he thought it apt to use the Kashmiriyat term thrice. But he considered it

sacrilege to mention the genocide and ethnic cleansing that happened in the valley only three odd decades ago. Undoubtedly, he represents the Indian nation and its perception of peaceful co-existence. That is why he told the Kashmiri audience that "the whole of India is watching you with admiration and pride." How then can the

Kashmiri Pandits deny the whole of India their right to "admire and be proud" of the decimation of a minuscule religious minority in a predominantly Muslim Kashmir Valley? The nation has to be proud because Kashmir, as His Excellency put it, "as the crowning glory of India."

We were surprisingly happy to know from His Excellency's address that Kashmir University has produced 2.5 lakh graduates and 1,000 doctoral scholars. These are notable figures no doubt and the more remarkable thing is that the females outnumber the males in a doctorate. Now, one thousand doctorates mean that one thousand theses were submitted by the candidates. Will it be possible for the university authorities to inform the public

“
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culture.”
”



how many of these theses dealt with crucial subjects of national importance like freedom movement, privileges for Indian minorities, Salient features of Indian Constitution, rise and upsurge of fundamentalism, regional discrimination, Indian secularist experience, Investments in infrastructure, data of Kashmir valley students who studied and received their degrees in various genres from scores of educational institutions in the country, social services rendered by the armed forces, the partisan press in Kashmir etc. It is not the quantity that matters, it is the quality. As against this most of the theses in the branch of social sciences hover around myopic regional and sub-regional themes. How many theses have been published and reviewed in the past three decades is the question.

The President would have made history if he had deviated from the rhetoric and called a spade by its name. He would have broken the jinx and won the hearts of Kashmiri youth if he had compared a democratic arrangement with a unilateral and military-dominated system and impressed upon the Kashmiri youth to think where they should go from the crossroad of history. He would have made

history if he had told the audience that the Kashmiri Pandits were their brethren, and they must take the initiative of bringing them back and extending all help for their resettlement. He could have made a general appeal exhorting that the lands, shops, properties and the precincts of the Hindu temples illegally occupied should be vacated and restored. He could have told the audience that he was unhappy to see people in olive green deployed in towns and villages, streets and pathways. He could have said that it pained him to hear about encounters of Kashmiri youth with the armed troops and then getting killed. He could have told the Kashmiri youth in sincere words that separation from India and accession to Pakistan or China, as is discreetly hinted at by a section of Kashmir political class, is not going to happen. The world would have understood that the President of India is above party politics and the number one citizen of India.

Alas, a good opportunity of heart to heart honest talk was lost.

(The author is the former Director of the Central Asian Studies, Kashmir University)



-Lt Gen Syed Ata Hasnain (Retd)



J&K: Strategise to Reinforce Initial Success

To cement the success in Kashmir, there is a dire need for a strategy with a clearly earmarked role for different organisations. None of this should be left to imagination.

As the nation marked the second anniversary of the constitutional decisions on Jammu & Kashmir taken on 5 August 2019, the debate on which way the situation had moved was largely uninformed. So hugely polarised are the narratives within India based upon political leanings that the worth of the decisions for national good is lost sight of. To imagine that the J&K issue has been resolved in our favour would be a folly and yet to say that the decisions were regressive would be an

untruth too. There are miles to go and alienation continues to loom large, but a huge dent has been made into all that enabled separatist trends to flourish with impunity. The last two years have been partially consumed by post-decision management. The pandemic has taken its toll on the energy and commitment to recover from the surprise decision and the sudden new empowerment. As such, a pragmatic and balanced assessment of what has transpired in these two years can only be done peripherally. More important is to view the righting of many wrongs that were assisting the separatists and the Pakistani deep state to fight the proxy war with relative ease. Most of these existed in the non-military



domain and appear well on the way to be corrected.

Two years into the process of attempting a comprehensive end to separatism, a change in sentiment has begun and will take further shape contingent upon our subsequent handling and the counter-narratives. Reforms, however, have been undertaken to the extent possible in the limited functional time and have begun to manifest results. The commerce and infrastructure sectors have found new energy. Recent media reports indicate that the new industrial policy announced four months ago has resulted in the investment of almost Rs 23,000 crore with a near-equitable distribution between the Jammu and the Kashmir segments. This reportedly is well past the MoU stage with actual transfer of funds. Steel, telecom, cyber optics and hosiery are the areas in which investments have been made. If further stabilisation is achieved in the security and political domains, state officials expect this figure to touch Rs. 35,000 crore by the end of the financial year.

The expected anti-corruption drive has been undertaken and will progressively take more effective shape with greater oversight and accountability exercised by the Centre and the UT government, as the pandemic eases. Taxation laws have been streamlined; panchayats have received greater attention with more devolution of functions and funds. New laws of domicile have in no way opened the floodgates for people from all over India to settle in J&K or own property, but relevant empowerment of those denied property rights all these years has been achieved. The new laws have largely found support due to them setting right many of the existing laws on gender and rights of the weaker segments of society. This will correct the social deficit that existed all these years. Politically the importance of grassroots democracy was realised through the conduct

To imagine that the J&K issue has been resolved in our favour would be a folly and yet to say that the decisions were regressive would be an untruth too.

of the first-ever District Development Council elections. While the delimitation exercise is on (the last one took place in 1995), there is every possibility of the Assembly elections taking place in 2022 or 2023, which will lead to the formation of an elected government. There is a popular groundswell in favour of Central rule among some segments of society fearing that Assembly elections may bring back much of the same politics back to J&K. However, there is no better step towards cementing a good and bold decision than re-introduction of all democratic norms.

The decision to keep the Jammu and the Kashmir divisions together as a UT is not fully supported by many, but in national interest was probably the most prudent option. However, more efforts are needed to remove antipathy between the two segments that have existed for long and especially got exacerbated after 1989. I have long advocated mutual adoption of cities and even districts to overcome bitterness. Greater interaction through sports, education, trade and culture exchanges will have a salutary effect over the bitterness of a couple of decades. Jammu has much to contribute to the nation through this act of outreach. No one understands the problems of J&K as well as the people of Jammu do.

There can be no denial of the fact that the one of the biggest obstacles to the success of further integration is the constant flow of propaganda from Pakistan through social media; much of it is also generated within Kashmir. While separatist leaders and political ideologues appear to have been marginalised and even neutralised to some extent, one cannot say the same of the religious rabble rousers. Undercurrents of radical religious thinking seem to continue although efforts to bring counter-narratives against radicalisation are being made by agencies. This is one field in which

adversaries will wish to protect their turf and prevent dilution; after all a long campaign has been played out by them to bring more obscurantist theology to J&K to suppress the tolerant and middle path Sufi order. The social domain holds the key and it needs a huge amount of face-to-face engagement with the local people if we wish to make further progress.

To cement the success and take the campaign of development, good governance and outreach to the people with integration as the aim, there is a dire need for a strategy with a clearly earmarked role for different organisations and entities. None of this should be left to imagination and self-perception. Let the prevailing peace never be mistaken for normalcy; a bounce back to negative days can always be triggered if networks are allowed to revive. Peace and stability are necessary for

the administration to deliver on development. The Army must not dilute its grid for reinforcement of the northern borders. Holding the proverbial periphery is as essential as it is for the agencies and the local police to dismantle the numerous networks, work on which is in progress. Bold decisions such as those taken on 5 August 2019 require intense follow-up as the risks they run are high. The follow-up has to be strategised and way points carefully identified to determine the path forward. Left rudderless, such processes run the danger of calamitous failure, something that the nation just cannot afford.

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Cartoon Corner

- Anil Nakhasi





-Vikram Zutshi



Kashmiri Pandits Facing Casual Bigotry **FROM CLUBHOUSE TO FACEBOOK**

In Kashmir, those who are seen loyal to the Indian State are labeled as 'informants', making it easy for Pakistani terror groups to mark them for elimination.

A few days ago, I happened to enter a chat room on the popular social media app Clubhouse. The discussion had no stated title or theme. It was simply a bunch of people talking about what they referred to as the “freedom struggle”. On hearing the comments, it became apparent that I was in a large Kashmiri group with members hailing from Srinagar and outlying areas such as Anantnag, Shopian and Bijbehara. A quick scan of the participants' list revealed that there

were only two Kashmiri Hindus in the group — myself and another gentleman. One of the speakers mentioned the minority Pandit community, loudly proclaiming that they could not have a stake in the future of an independent Kashmir because Kashmiri Pandits were an integral part of the Indian Union. At this, the other Pandit in the chat room chimed in saying that the community was entitled to a seat at the table like everyone else in the room. But someone interjected, calling him a part of the “Indian occupation” and from there, it all went downhill.

I raised my virtual hand in the Clubhouse room and was briefly given the podium. In a

few minutes, I touched on some key topics, primarily the need for resettlement of Pandits in the Valley, especially those who did not have the wherewithal to relocate elsewhere and were still languishing in dilapidated refugee quarters. The person who spoke after me stated categorically that Pandits were welcome in Kashmir on the condition they severed all ties with India and joined the “freedom struggle” or else there could be no guarantee of their security.

Again, I tried to raise my virtual hand to respond but realised I had been blocked. Some days after this curious exchange on Clubhouse, I ran into a reporter who works for a London-based digital news outlet focused on the Middle East and North Africa. I had written to him earlier, complimenting him on what appeared to be a balanced piece on Pandits. Therefore, I was all the more surprised when he dubbed me a “collaborator” for returning to Kashmir without surrendering my Indian identity despite knowing that I am a Kashmiri. According to this journalist as well,

Acknowledging the grave danger to the family, Srinagar SSP Sandeep Chowdhury traced the social media accounts of Chalaroo who was arrested shortly thereafter. It turned out, he was a habitual offender.

In local parlance, those who are seen loyal to the Indian State are labeled as “touts”, “informants” or “collaborators”. This makes it easy for Pakistan-sponsored terror groups such as Lashkar-e-Tayyeba or Jaish-e-Mohammed to identify and mark them for elimination. Veteran Kashmiri journalist Shujat Bukhari was marked for elimination in a similar manner, as were many others.

Such loaded terms are used most often by 'over ground workers' like Chalaroo, or others who provide support to militants through social media or traditional news outlets. They are in fact the real collaborators in this macabre scenario.

The media bias in the Valley tends to be pronounced and very transparent. A 2019 survey found that out of 132 published media stories about Kashmir between 5 August and 3

In local parlance, those who are seen loyal to the Indian State are labeled as “touts”, “informants” or “collaborators”. This makes it easy for Pakistan-sponsored terror groups such as Lashkar-e-Tayyeba or Jaish-e-Mohammed to identify and mark them for elimination.

the minority Hindu community was welcome in Kashmir only if they severed all ties with India.

I was bemused but also taken aback by such vitriol. I soon realized this type of casual bigotry was par for the course in the fever swamps of Kashmiri social media discourse and otherwise.

Smear campaigns and half truths

A family of Pandits running a successful business near Srinagar was smeared by one Samiullah Chalaroo, a resident of Chattabal township on the outskirts of the city. Using fake Twitter and Facebook accounts, Chalaroo accused the Pandit family of playing informers for the Indian security forces, thereby helping them nab militants.

September 2019 in some of the mainstream news outlets, just three per cent mentioned Kashmiri Pandits. Clearly, it's not an issue that resonates with them as it puts a dent in the separatist narrative.

The menace of over ground workers

According to an article by Colonel A.S. Chonker of the Centre for Land Warfare Studies, “Over ground workers (OGWs) have always been the mainstay for an insurgency movement.

Previously, OGWs were primarily involved in logistics support and intelligence gathering. Of late the distinction has blurred considerably with OGW also capable of carrying out small scale strikes while retaining the capability to mix rapidly with the

population. OGWs also become a significant tool for strategic communication and recruitment by their handlers in J&K.”

Chonker classifies OGWs under following categories:

- 1) OGWs for Logistic Support (OGWLS) to Strike teams.
- 2) OGWs managing Funding (OGWF).
- 3) OGWs providing Ideological Support (OGWIS).
- 4) OGWs providing Radicalisation Support (OGWRS).
- 5) OGWs for Recruitment of Terrorists (OGWR).
- 6) OGWs generating negative Perceptions and Sentiment amongst the Awaam (OGWPS).

Then there are OGWs who help orchestrate acts of terror in tandem with their counterparts in Pakistan. After the Pulwama attack, the suspension of mobile and internet networks had forced the terror networks to shift base to neighboring regions like Chandigarh. A National Investigation Agency (NIA) probe revealed that three of Jaish-e-Mohammed's OGWs, namely Zahoor Ahmed Khan, Shoaib Manzoor and Suhail Javed Lone, were allegedly using internet services in Chandigarh to communicate with their Pakistan-based handlers Abu Hamza and Abu Bakar. Their assigned duties included ferrying arms and militants across the border into Kashmir. The rationale behind strategic suspension of internet services in terror-infested regions such as the Valley is evident.

Not long after my experience on Clubhouse, a Bharatiya Janata Party councilor, Rakesh Pandit, was murdered in Tral where he had gone for an informal visit. Soon after, a spate of killings targeting both innocent civilians and officers employed with Jammu and Kashmir Police ensued. One of the casualties in this murderous spree was inspector Pervaiz Ahmed Dar, killed while returning from prayers in Nowgam. Inspector Dar is survived by his wife and two children aged 10 and 13 years. In a similar attack, J&K Special Police Officer Fayaz Ahmed, was shot dead, along with his wife and daughter by two

Jaish-e-Mohammed militants in Pulwama.

When terrorists target innocents in the Valley, or when their acts of murder are glossed over by journalists and academics in distant Mumbai, Delhi, US or UK, it's not them who suffer the consequences but small business owners, artisans and rank and file Kashmiris. It should be abundantly clear to anyone but the most delusional that militants and their proxies are not remotely interested in the wellbeing of Kashmiris and certainly not motivated by any romantic notion of “freedom.”

The ugly truth

For many of us, this author included, having grown up under the influence of mushy liberal values, it can be difficult to come to terms with the hard and often cold-blooded decisions required to protect our communities and nation from forces that would like to tear them asunder. Good art and literature can help us understand the broader context, the moral dilemmas and the sacrifices involved.

During my university days, a film that left a deep impression was Francis Ford Coppola's opus, *Apocalypse Now*. The film, adapted from Joseph Conrad's seminal novella *Heart of Darkness*, tells the story of Colonel Kurtz, a decorated army vet who goes mad during the Vietnam war and becomes a tyrant running his own private fiefdom deep inside the jungle. As such he has become a clear and present danger to his own side. Rookie officer Willard is dispatched to take care of the situation. Initially resistant to the idea of eliminating one of his own, and full of the idealism and moral ambiguity that plague the young, Willard seeks advice from his commanding officer who tells him in no uncertain terms that he must put aside his emotions and do as duty demands.

“Terminate with extreme prejudice” are the last words the commanding officer says to Willard before leaving the room.

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(Edited by Anurag Chaubey)

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- Dr. Rahul Magazine



A Moment to **CHERISH**



There are times when we experience feelings which, though impossible to describe, are so profound they leave a lasting impression on our souls. These are also rare moments of insight that harbor kernels of truth deep within, having the power to completely change one's outlook towards life itself. Knowing very well that such realization can be grasped only if experienced firsthand, yet I am embarking on an audacious task of penning it down. Deep inside, I have this

irresistible urge to share what I felt—and learnt—during one such soul-stirring experience.

It all happened at the banks of the holy Ganga, when I, along with my family—parents, wife and son—was on a pilgrimage to Haridwar, Uttarakhand. It is the spot where holy Ganga leaves the mighty Himalayas and enters the plains of North India. My parents knew the place well—of late they had been going to Haridwar every year to visit the



ashram and *samadhi* of our guru—so they were our guides through the maze-like alleys and the sea of humanity that seemed to be around us everywhere. The chaos at the bazaars and the famous Ghats was unsettling, but the very sight of holy Ganga, flowing in all its majesty, was spiritually uplifting. The spontaneous reverence that sprang up from the depths of our souls, was an immensely moving experience. My parents took us to *Brahma Kund* (the spot where, as per the Puranas, few drops of the *Amrit* have supposedly fallen) at *Har Ki Pauri* ("Har" means "Lord Shiva", "Ki" means "of" and "Pauri" means "steps")—the Ghat were a dip in the holy waters of Ganga holds the promise of washing away all our sins. At the crowded Ghat we managed to find a place to keep our belongings, before heading for a dip in the freezing waters. Only I and my father planned to get into the water while others in the family decide to just wash their faces and hands and feet. I volunteered to go in first—the very first dip in the ice-cold water sent me clambering back onto the stone steps of the Ghat, uncontrollably shivering. However, seeing hundreds of pilgrims—old and young—reverently taking the holy dip nudged me to get back in once more—this time,

however, my body adapted better to the cold of the water. All this while my father was standing on the steps of the Ghat, yet to make up his mind. After some thinking he finally decided to take the plunge and started climbing down the stone steps, my wife holding his hand to ensure he didn't slip. His slow and carefully placed steps made me realize he needed help if he was to pull it off safely. The water was only waist deep near the bank but the stones on the riverbed were slippery, there was a real risk of losing balance and getting carried away by the current. Wading towards the bank I held out my hand, he promptly grabbed it and started tentatively descending into the water. Soon he also was in waist-deep water, as I held both his hands, helping him to keep his balance. Feeling secure, he took two quick dips while all along chanting 'Jai Gange'. It was a heartening experience for me to help my father take a safe bath in the holy waters of Mother Ganga. While I was enjoying this blissful moment, all of a sudden, a scene from our past flashed in my mind's eye—yet another cherished moment but from a different time and place. The scene that played out in my mind, though more than three decades old, was amazingly vivid and brought flooding back fond

memories of good old days back in our native place.

My reverie carried me back to the day when our family was at the famous shrine of Mata Kheer Bhawani, Tulla Mulla, Kashmir. It is the same shrine where Swami Vivekananda had a vision of Mother Goddess. The temple there is in the center of a small pond, the color of the water in the pond changes, supposedly reflecting the mood of the Goddess. Before entering the temple we got ready to take a ritual bath in the nearby rivulet. My father was already chest deep in the water when he beckoned me to get in as well. Though wanting to take a few dips, I felt scared. The rivulet was deep enough for a little boy like me to get fully submerged and I didn't

past should have ordinarily lifted my spirits but surprisingly a heart-wrenching feeling gripped me—my father so young and strong then, was aged and frail now, I lamented. A long time back he had helped me take a holy dip and now he needed my help to do the same. While it was extremely gratifying that I was there helping him out, but simultaneously I felt sad that time had taken its toll on a person whose guiding hand I had grown to depend on. It was one of those rare instances of experiencing totally opposite emotions, simultaneously—at once a heartwarming and a heartbreaking moment. The mingling of such strikingly different emotions threw me into a strange emotional state—an indescribable feeling of pleasure mixed with pain seized me.

While it was extremely gratifying that I was there helping him out, but simultaneously I felt sad that time had taken its toll on a person whose guiding hand I had grown to depend on.

know how to swim then.

“Don't be scared, get in, I will hold your hand,” he said, understanding my predicament.

Feeling a bit reassured I got in, soon finding myself neck deep in water. Though he was holding my hand, I felt terrified as he guided me into deeper part of the rivulet. Scared, I put my arms around his neck and wrapped my legs around his waist. Holding me tight he made me take a few dips in the water while I pleaded with him to take me back to the bank. After a while he, to my great relief, took me back to the stone steps at the bank. Though scared, I equally enjoyed the experience in the safety of his arms.

“Please come out now, it's getting late,” my wife said, jolting me out of my day dreaming; again I found myself holding my father's hand in the waters of Ganga, at Haridwar. I don't know whether he remembers that time we had enjoyed together in the rivulet, but for me that moment is forever etched in my memory.

That lovely memory from a time long

That unique moment of mixed emotions held within it life-changing insights: the truth about the ephemeral nature of life, the significance of strong family bond, and the appreciation of simple joys of life. Strengthening family ties needs committing time to it, which in today's fast-paced world is, unfortunately, becoming a challenge. Money can never replace the time a parent spends with the child—a strong family bond can only be forged with quality time spent together. Creating pleasant shared memories is the best investment one can make, and eventually these very memories become the wellspring of lasting happiness. *Kal* (Time) is all powerful, and in the end will destroy everything, but so long as we are around in this realm we should be there for each other—as a helping hand and eventually as a cherished memory.

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- Dr. Rakesh Raina



Service Rendered by **COVID VOLUNTEERS**

It was April 22 this year I saw in the morning my name added in a what's app group by the name Covid Response Team when asked about the purpose and the motto of the group it was clear to help people in need in this hour of crisis. Covid was at peak in other parts of the country now it was our turn to face the heat of this deadly disease in Jammu a group of likeminded people came together and shared a common concern how to help our community members during this tough time, as they say charity begins at home they donated a meager amount in this havan and oxygen cylinders, medicines and pulse oxymeters were procured from this money. As the intentions of the Covid Response Team was nishkam sewa people of our community could sense that and they started to help this group in the form of money and medical equipment's. As our group had just evolved we didn't had our own account Maha Gyatri Sewa Sanasthan Janipur Jammu came forward to receive the donations for this common cause, as this was public money we all wanted to be accountable for the same. Mata Kheerbhawani Sanstha Janipur came forward in providing the space to store these medical equipment's. Organizations like KOA, KMECT, KAKANI and KPs from Dubai came forward to help our group and other KP groups who were working sincerely during this period. KP Volunteers another group of KPs also played a pivotal role during this



period. They also worked day and night to support the community during these tough times. Many groups were active in Jagti KP colony and other KP migrant colonies this time KPs living in these colonies came forward in helping people in other part of the town changing the mindset of the people that people in the camp are always at the receiving end only, they provided people with food, medicines and physical support during these tough times for which the whole community is highly indebted to them.

Area of Activity

Covid Response Team started a novel daily online Doctors talk on various health related

issues relevant during that time, Doctors within the country and abroad became part of this daily event. Doctors of our community came forward of their own showing their concern for their community. Doctors who were working on the front eased the stress of their families who were not with them by giving a physical, emotional and medical support. Various groups were formed one doctors group was formed to give their expert opinions to their patients this was coordinated by many volunteers who were managing other groups 24x7, these groups were coordinating with volunteers who were working on ground for food, medicines, oxygen cylinders which was provided free of cost to the needy people. Auto Rickshaw facility was kept to make sure the patients in distress could receive these medical equipment's like oxygen concentrators, pulse oxy meters, oxygen cylinders and medicines as quick as possible. Our group didn't remain confined in helping our community alone this group worked for all the communities and religions which shows the essence of our community and our belief of vasudeva kutumbhakam. When BiPap machines were in less numbers in the hospitals these machines were provide free of cost to such patients in the hospitals which helped in saving lives of many people. may it be oxygen cylinders or oxygen concentrators tele consultations BiPap machines, medicines, masks, daily online live zoom and facebook doctors talks on the different topics about the covid. People were provided free pulse oximeters, food was provided by different individuals and groups in and around Jammu this was facilitated by our team. Teams were working in Srinagar, Jammu and Delhi- NCR. To help the patients on mental health various psytriasts and psychologists online sessions were conducted during this period, apart from this yoga sessions were held for a forth night online in collaboration with Vivekananda Kendra Kanyakumari which was made facebook live to benefit more and more people . Online yoga classes by Expert Individuals were also held during this people so that people could remain both physically

and mentally fit during this period. Post Covid times families were scrutinized by our senior team members who have lost their bread earners Cheques of Rs 25,000 each was provided to these families whose names were not made public as we never wanted to play to the galleries. This time critics were proved wrong about this miniscule community all the community members were marching ahead in a mission mode, the energy of youth and experience of old were amalgamated with the sole purpose of Sewa for our community in particular and rest of the society in general. Day and night 24x7 groups were trying to help people in distress may it be arranging for hospitals or ambulances, may it be providing of food items at their door steps. Volunteers were working tirelessly across the globe. It was not an easy situation at all, were relatives and dear ones were leaving this mundane world irrespective of their age hospitals were full, people were sinking because of lack of oxygen. volunteers of different groups of our community took the dead bodies to the burial sites risking their own lives. This was a different KP community and hope we all will work together for a brighter future of our next generation. I want to thank all our senior karyakartas who were a guiding force to all of us during this period and they worked shoulder to shoulder with their young counterparts. We all should thank our youth as well who were the real ground workers without them the execution of this sewa karya would not be possible.

“Time is short vanities of life are transient they alone live who lives for others the rest are more dead than alive”, Swami Vivekananda. These powerful lines always reverberate in my mind. It is a known fact that we are transitory on this planet and the duration of our stay is also not certain. we all can make some difference in some one's life by words or deeds and we all get opportunity to serve mankind in one form or the other. We all must avail that opportunity and grab the same whenever we get it. Stay Safe and Healthy.



- Dr. Rishab Bhan



Covid Crisis

A Doctor's Experience

The dawn of 2020 brought with it the challenge of a new pandemic- Covid and the medical fraternity was at the forefront to take it hands on. What made the pandemic even more challenging is the quickness with which the whole global community were caught unguarded. Being a part of the medical fraternity, we often used to discuss the

considering the huge inflow of patients we have been handling over the years.

The lockdown of 2020 brought the whole country to standstill and we were just preparing for what would be the experience we had read just in our books. Although I had been a part of managing the ebola crisis few years back, I was hopeful that the pandemic



repercussions it was going to have on the whole human community. We often would discuss that India would be in a better position to handle the pandemic in a better manner although the condition of our health system would always make my thoughts a bit sceptical. The state of our health system particularly in our UT has been chaotic always

would be handled in a better way. But my whole optimism had turned out to be a nightmare as I quickly witnessed how the challenge turned out to be a crisis and that too within a short period of three weeks. We were asked to handle the Covid patients and without any prior knowledge what started was a “trial and experimentation” process. We call it trial

and experimentation theory and there are reasons for the same. The pandemic was new and a lot of research had just started. The cause of it still unknown and the incidence of its contagiousness was still being worked out. The cure was still being researched and the medicines were not known. We had to rely on the miniature an outcome of the research's going on. We were left with no other option but to try it ourselves. The trail & experiments started.

As we approached the middle of the year, we realised that the pandemic was soul threatening not because it would take-away life but because the dead had a stigma attached with it. What we watched was that the complete apathy of society towards the dead. Although the government had put cap on the number of people assembling at a place, the worst part had been that the family members had started deserting their deceased dear ones. Many a times, the medical staff had to cremate the dead in absence of their family members.

Our family was at a higher risk because we had senior citizens as well as the kids at home. We kept the precautions on all the time until the unexpected happened. One of my family members got infected and what followed was the transmission. Within a week's time, our all family members got infected with the virus.

This put a fear in our minds as well after-all we were at the forefront of these patients and we also had family members back home. We started practicing social distancing at home. We reserved a room at home for those who had fears/suspected of any contact with the Covid patients. The sanitising process and other preventive measures were on the full swing. The masks were on even in inside our home. Our family was at a higher risk because we had senior citizens as well as the kids at home. We kept the precautions on all the time until the unexpected happened. One of my family members got infected and what followed was the transmission. Within a week's time, our all family members got infected with the virus.

The next one month was the real test as i

had to look at patients not only at hospital but also at the home. I was discharging duties real 24/7. The scenes at hospital would not allow me to sleep at home. At one time, I was totally blank but by the grace of almighty and the real collective effort we got through these tough times.

As we were on track of normalcy, the second wave imploded. The scenes were devastating but we had learnt our lessons. The second wave may have been completely devastating in India but the way we handled it at our hospital was real commendable. We did not face the problem of oxygen shortage in the hospital even once. The real compliment was when we received patients from outside our UT and we were able to cure them well. The societal change also did wonders. The mindset of the people also started changing. The role of various social organisations was a real plus. I also got associated with KP Quick Response Team. The team did a fantastic job. The oxygen cylinders, the beds, the oxygen

concentrators and other infrastructure was arranged on a single call.

We are on the verge of third wave now. What should be the strategy for the third wave is what we learnt during past time

1. Fear creates chaos so fear has to be dealt upfront.
2. Care is the need of hour and has to be given in abundance.
3. Stigma of Covid is more threatening than the disease itself. Remove that by getting vaccinated.
4. Healthy foods should be taken in plenty
5. Practice social distancing and make it a part of your lifestyle.
6. And finally Mask on and Covid Gone.



A Kashmiri Pandit Tailoring Shop in Batyaar Ali-Kadal Srinagar

You can see the Tailor Master at work with his SINGER FOOT PEDAL SEWING MACHINE while a group of Pandits are seated on the shop front and busy in gossiping and posing for the photograph. There was a problem for Boys engaged in this business when they had to look for a match to get married. Kashmiri Pandit society considered this business as something inferior and later shunned this occupation altogether.

But then again, sometime around 1940,

Lamboodhar Nath Tikoo, An educated and enterprising Kashmiri Pandit, belonging to an affluent and influential family, surprised his community members when he opened a tailoring shop under the name and style of “NAVYUG TAILORS” at Habba Kadal Srinagar. Pandit Kashyap Bandhu, A reformist leader amongst Kashmiri Pandits during those days was also invited for the opening ceremony of this shop at Habba Kadal. To attract VIP and European customers, the business location was immediately shifted to



Amira Kadal in Srinagar City. Son of an Engineer who had built BC road during Maharaja's rule, Lamboodhar Nath went to Bombay to study engineering but returned to valley after learning professional Tailoring. He would cater to VIP customers and was much in demand for stitching stylish suits, Tweed coats and shirts. Very soon, NAVYUG TAILORS opened another branch at Residency Road in Srinagar city. Some Muslim Boys, who worked as Apprentices at these shops, became excellent Tailor masters and opened independent tailoring shops in city. Pandit Triloki Nath Tikoo, a young Kashmiri pandit with modern outlook, joined his brother Lamboodhar Nath Tikoo in this venture from day one. For Tikoo brothers, it was also a step towards reforming the community and motivating youth for starting such like business ventures that were traditionally shunned. Tikoo family was from

Reshi Peer Mohalla in downtown Srinagar. Pandit Laxman Joo Tikoo (their father) felt sad and disillusioned at the venture of his sons. Lamboodhar Nath had to start an Urdu Newspaper "NAVYUG" simultaneously to protect his father from recurring satires from relations and friends for this Tailoring venture looked down upon by orthodox Kashmiri Pandit society during those days. Young Nandlal Wattal (who later joined as editor of Urdu newspaper Khidmat) from Rainawari was brought in as Editor of this newspaper. Tailoring Business of Tikoo brothers was directly hit by the second world war as most of their European clients had moved out of Kashmir. The tribal raid of 1947 dried up almost all the residual clientele for NAVYUG TAILORS. The News Paper had to be closed down for various reasons. "NAVYUG TAILORS" also pulled down its shutters permanently after sometime.





-Dr. Tej N Dhar



Dear Pegasus



My dear Pegasus. These days you are in the news in virtually all parts of the world. Yesterday I heard one of the known leaders of a country, which I am sure you would have known by now, say that you were responsible for toppling as many governments as he could think of, by which he really meant the ones in which his party was defeated in the elections. Mercifully, he did not tell us how exactly you made that happen. But more of that later.

Right from the time I was drawn to the fascinating stories of Greek mythology, I knew you as a white, pure white, resplendent, winged horse, with an aura of divinity around you. Because you looked so different from the normal breed of horses, many divine and

semi-divine beings tried to forge links with you, right from the time of your birth. One of the stories current in your time was that you sprang from the neck of the dreaded Medusa when Perseus was in the process of beheading her. Even though she was washed in blood, you came out pure white. The Greek sea-god Poseidon claimed that it was his white sea-foam that washed the blood from your body and turned you pure white. So he claimed to be your joint father.

What I liked about you when I met you for the first time and what I like about you even now is that you are truly divine and committed to doing good deeds. There is evidence to show that whenever you struck any part of our globe with your hoofs, water

burst forth there in the form of a pleasing spring. You hated evil and helped many warriors in eliminating it from this earth. So it is not surprising that in its fight with their enemies, the British army chose to use you with a warrior Bellerophon on your back as an insignia for its paratroopers.

I do not know how to tell you what is being talked about you now: that some corporation in some country has turned you into a medium for spying on people. The corporation says that it did that solely for helping governments all over the world to monitor the activities of people and organizations that are anti-people, for their known involvement in harmful actions. But unfortunately, in the world that we live in at

anything worthwhile in them, how exactly could it lead to the toppling of governments is beyond comprehension. Even if we believe that you can see what these people are up to, what they think and how they feel, then what? I am sure you do not tell them what to do and what not to do. If you did, then they would cease to be human; they would become phantoms or robots, and we all know that they are neither phantoms nor robots.

The worthy minister's utterances make it clear that he is unclear about your true character: whether you are a passive observer or an active agent? Do you only watch and gather information, or do you do anything more than that? Given how things have happened all the time, governments have



present, the line between friends and enemies of the people has become so blurred that it is difficult to distinguish between them.

Take the case of the leader I mentioned to you right in the beginning. He feels that the government that is in power at the centre used you to snoop on members of his party, and used whatever information you could collect from their smart phones to help it devise strategies for toppling state governments where they were not in power. I have to admit to you that it makes no sense to me. Given what the leaders of his party have been speaking all the time in public, on digital platforms or TV channels, one can clearly see the vacuity and shallowness of their minds. There is hardly anything in them that one could be tempted to steal. And even if there is

fallen before the expiry of their normal time because of the actions of the legislators, which are prompted by their venality and greed. By charging you with toppling the governments, the minister is trying to paint these turncoats as gentle lambs and covering up their nefarious deeds. In the process, he also forgets that what he is charging you with is beyond your power of action.

Dear Pegasus, I really feel sorry for you, because you are being maligned for no fault of yours. You have fallen into bad days, for we are now in the era of dirty politics. We all try to find excuses for our evil deeds and wicked actions. I wish and hope that your divinity has a positive influence on human actions, so that this world can become better than what it is at present.



-Dr. M K Mam



Prevention of BACK PAIN

(This is in continuation of Low back pain – causes and risk factors that we discussed last month)



Low back pain is extremely common. Over three quarters of the world's population experiences an episode of low back pain (LBP) at some point of time in their lives; however its symptoms and severity may vary. The diagnosis and treatment low

back pain (LBP) often is difficult. It challenges the diagnostic and treatment skills of the doctor. It is one of the leading causes of absenteeism, sick leave, loss of work days and the workplace productivity which affects the economy of the person, the family and the

There is no need to do strenuous exercises. Any exercises that worsen the back ache should not be done. Simple walking, swimming and stationary cycling are good to keep our body including the back fit.

nation as a whole. Loss of work days and then the very high expenses involved in its diagnosis and the treatment very badly affects the economy of the affected person and the family. It is also associated with disability and restriction of social activities, as such it is most appropriate to prevent it. Prevention, we all know is always better than treatment. The right and also the simple thing is that we need to take care of our back. As long as we take care of our back, it certainly takes care of us. It won't be wrong to say that if we do not pay due attention to our back and on the contrary we try to misuse or abuse it, it is certainly going to hit us, that too badly at some point of time.

What all can be done to prevent low back pain :

Exercise: It is a fact that exercise is very essential for the overall wellbeing of the body and mind, so is the case with back. . There is plenty of evidence in the literature to suggest that exercise is effective in prevention of LBP. Back specific exercises help in strengthening of the core muscles of the back and abdomen which support the spine. Stronger muscles provide better support, thus allowing them to handle greater loads. Weak and unconditioned muscles on the contrary put strain on vertebrae, ligaments and discs even in normal

day to day activities and cause back strain and pain. Any exercise we do should be well within our comfort zone. Start has to be slow and gentle, and we should stop if it hurts. There is no need to do strenuous exercises. Any exercises that worsen the back ache should not be done. Simple walking, swimming and stationary cycling are good to keep our body including the back fit. Exercise keeps the joints supple - prevents stiffness of back. In addition weight bearing exercises help to prevent osteoporosis. It also keeps weight under control and elevates our mood, thus preventing depression. One thing that should be clear in our mind is that exercise has to be a regular daily lifelong activity. Just as we never forget to eat our daily meals so we must not forget to do exercise.

We have to make it a **MUST TO DO** activity of our daily routine. It just cannot be 'weekend activity'. Very often we get backache which gets better within few days or so. After remaining well for some days or weeks we usually stop doing the exercise, this should not happen. Doing the exercise when one is fit and fine helps in keeping us fit for long time to come.

Yoga: and its role in physical and mental wellbeing of the people is very well recognized all over. There is enough evidence



to suggest that it benefits people with non-specific LBP and helps in its prevention. It relaxes mind, decreases muscle tension, increases range of movements in the joints, and builds muscle strength. It has to be done under the guidance of an experienced teacher of yoga. If there is a history of low back pain, we must see a doctor before starting yoga.

Education: It is important to educate the people - make them aware of the gravity of the problem of LBP, its overall effects on the person and the society and what all can be done to prevent it. There is enough evidence in the literature to tell us that exercise in combination with education is very effective in prevention of LBP.

Maintaining a correct posture: Improper posture puts stress on the back and can cause LBP. Not only that, It can also worsen the already existing backache. Often it is said that we should always try to keep our back straight when we are standing. It is fine; however the



most important thing is that we should just stand naturally with our feet slightly apart and not tense up on standing up straight. It is always good that we avoid slouching. Whenever we have to stand for long periods, we should use a small stool to keep one foot up with our knee bent. Again it is essential that we take proper care of back while sitting as the load on the back is greater when we are sitting more so when our back is unsupported. We

should avoid sitting in the same position for longer periods. Just get up and walk around for couple of minutes every hour or so when we have to sit for long periods. Our working / study table, computer screen has to be at a height that is comfortable and we need to adjust it in such a way that we do not have to bend our head or back forward. Our chair should provide enough support to our lower back. It is better to have a fully adjustable chair. We can use a small pillow to support our lower back when we are using an ordinary chair. We must use a small foot stool under our feet when we have to sit for long periods and use arm rests to support the weight of the upper body. When on a long drive we must take short breaks, stretch and walk around for a minute or so. We need to keep the driving seat straight. Shock absorbers of the vehicle have to be in good condition to avoid stress on the back due to road vibration.

Careful lifting of heavy objects : Back injuries are often caused by improper lifting of heavy objects which puts excessive strain on back. Right way of lifting an object is that we do not bend our back, just keep it upright and instead bend our knees to lift the object. We always need to remember that we have to bend our knees and not the back. This way we will be using our thigh and leg muscles to lift the object rather than the muscles of the back. We must hold the object close to our body while lifting and carrying. Holding the objects away from the body puts lot of stress on the lower back.

Managing your weight : Keeping the weight under control helps not only the back but the whole body to keep it fit and fine. Extra weight puts additional load and stress on the ligaments, muscles discs and joints, so the back muscles have to work harder. Again protruded or potbellied abdomen shifts the centre of weight forward and increases the lumbar lordosis i.e. normal posterior concavity of the lower back, so the back muscles have to put an extra effort to keep the proper alignment of the back.

Staying fit and active: It is always good to be physically fit and active, as the active people

in general suffer less from the back pain than the people who are not active. Staying active keeps body especially the muscles, bones and joints in good shape so that stress can be well taken care of. Anything we can do to improve our overall physical fitness and general health will certainly benefit our back as well.

Anything we can do to improve our overall physical fitness and general health will certainly benefit our back as well. A sedentary life style, when we sit for long periods of time and do no exercise, back muscles become inactive and increasingly weak, thus put the back at risk.

Sleeping well : We should have a bed that is comfortable. A firm bed (neither very hard nor very soft) is ideal for the most of the people with back pain. We must also make sure that the pillow is soft and not too high. Sleeping on sides with knees bent and the hips bent



forwards with a pillow in between your knees is appropriate for a painful back. When sleeping on the back, we should keep a pillow under the knees and legs.

Healthy food : Eating healthy food with enough of calcium, vitamin D is essential just to keep the bones strong. Diet high in calories and fat has to be avoided.

Cessation of smoking : It is well known that there is a link between smoking and back pain. Smokers are more prone to back pain, have more frequent episodes of back pain and often

it stays longer. Smoking has to be stopped as there is enough evidence that cessation of smoking reduces LBP.

Shoe wear: It has been observed that a patient with LBP prefers using soft sole shoes as they might be acting as shock absorbers especially when we walk on hard surface. We should avoid shoes with high heels. Many patients with LBP are advised and use shoe insoles and they may be effective for the people who have to stand for long periods of time, however there is insufficient evidence to support the use of insoles in the prevention of LBP.

Common misconceptions about back ache: There are many misconceptions / wrong notions regarding back ache in the minds of the general public, so it is appropriate make them clear and educate the people what is right and what is not.

Do we need a long period of bed rest

.....? We have seen patients with back pain often stop doing most of their activity and have bed rest. Absolute bed rest certainly is not needed in nonspecific LBP. Couple of days of rest is fine when the pain is acute and severe. Once the acuteness and severity of pain is over, one must start with mild low stress exercises and it has to be within the comfort zone that too under medical supervision. Mild exercise started and done slowly helps in quick recovery from an episode from back pain. Prolonged bed rest

and inactivity does not help, rather it is harmful. It decreases muscle strength, flexibility, bone density and disc nutrition in addition to affecting cardiovascular fitness. Weak muscles and stiffness of the back caused by prolonged rest increases the back stress and LBP. Most important thing is that we should avoid the activity which caused back pain.

Should we use a back- belt or the back support – brace or corset?. We have observed that many patients with LBP do use a belt and feel somewhat comfortable. Belt may be useful in preventing back pain for people whose jobs require heavy lifting. It is not to be used in nonspecific uncomplicated back ache, rather it should be discouraged. If at all it is to be used, it should be for a short term only that too it must be there in addition to the back exercises. Using it for long time is certainly harmful for the back muscles; it makes them weaker and also makes patient psychological dependent on back support. There is enough evidence in the literature to tell that back belts do not help in preventing episodes of LBP. Belt or the brace is certainly needed for back pain because of some specific causes like metastasis, llisthesis or severe osteoporosis. One thing is clear that belt is not curative and it does not guarantee absolute spinal immobilization

Should we use heat or cold.....? We should apply bag of ice or cold pack to the affected area for the first 48 hours or so. Cold helps in reducing inflammation and pain caused by muscle strain. Heat in the form of heating pad can be applied subsequently and it helps.

Do all the back pain patients require surgical treatment.....? Answer certainly is big no. Around 90 % of patients with LBP can be treated non operatively. There are well known indications for surgery and it is recommended if all other treatment options have been tried or in an emergency situation.

Is imaging needed in all cases of LBP.....? Diagnostic imaging like MRI may not be needed not in all cases

Finally one would say that life style changes like regular exercise, maintain a correct posture, managing weight, staying active and cessation of smoking has a great role in the prevention and reduction of the risk of LBP. In order to be effective, the exercise has to be regular and ongoing; in fact it has to be a MUST TO DO daily lifelong activity. It is very appropriate that we take due care of the back keeping in mind all the risk factors which makes a person prone to LBP.

(Concluded)

Former Vice Principal, Professor & Head of Orthopedics, Christian Medical College, Ludhiana, Punjab

NAAD CONGRATULATES

Naad Congratulates Mehul Munshi, an immensely talented KP child born in Noida for his outstanding achievements in Singing. He has learned classical music under guidance of highly competent and well known music teacher Dr. Pratibha Patil.

Mehul sang his first Kashmiri song in Faridabad in a community programme at a very tender age. He participated in Gashtarukh in 2016 and won it in first attempt and continued to participate in many musical events in Delhi and Noida.

Recently his two videos of Kashmiri Songs were released which were appreciated not only within the community but also in Kashmir, he also attempted one cover song of famous Hindi artist. He is working on some more Kashmiri and Hindi songs and these will be launched very soon.

We wish Mehul and all talented children a bright future.





-Preeti Vakil Nehru



Divine Recollections



It is an historical fact that Kashmir has been abode of saints and rishis from time immemorial. Meaj Kashir has produced galaxy of saints who had extraordinary mystic powers like Jeevan Sahib, Lassa Sahib, Ram Joo Tabardar, Manas Razdan, Swami Vidhya Dhar, Swami Zia kak, Swami Kashkak, Swami Nand Bab of Nunar, Swami Har Kak, Swami Nand Bab Ji of Hushoor, Swami Ram ji, Swami Anand Ji, Swami Grat Bab ji and many others and could predict coming events with precision and also change them for the benefits of the individuals and humanity at whole.

Kashmiri Pandits have inherited qualities

of theist by the blessings of such great saints and sages.

Kashmiri ladies would get up at Brahma Murat (early morning before sun rise) and perform all duties in a deific way. It was tradition to start day with wuz livun (plastering corridor with clay), brandh phash (cleaning of a raised platform near the main entrance of the house), thokur- kuth puzun (a separate room where worship and meditation were done). As Kashmiri Pandits believe in Shaivism, it was mandatory to have Shiva Lingam in the thokur kuth. Sani- warya barnai (small terracotta pots kept in kitchen in which food was daily offered to Lord and later on it

was offered to fauna). Hoon meith (first bite of meals was taken out for dog), Sandhya chong (clay diya lit in evening for homage to All Gods and ancestors who left for heavenly abode). This was like a persuasion of dharmic and karmic acts which would eventually lead to the righteousness of elders to juniors of the family and the gen-next.

I was lucky been born and brought up in such a family where karma, dharma, samskars, inculcations, pooja path mattered more than materialistic things. I have been growing watching my parents and especially my grandmother who was also spiritually very elevated soul. She was a staunch bhakt of Mata Sharika Devi. Here under I share a memory to Mata Sharika with my grandmother Smt. Leelawati Koul Vakil.

As Mata Sharika was our Isht Devi, we would often visit to Mata's shrine on special days like Shivratri, Navreh, etc. But special midday visits were quite occasional. My grandmother, whom I would call "Amma" with love, would hold my hand and proceed towards "Hari Parbat"- the shrine of Mata Sharika. On the way we would come across Rehbab Sahib, Ali Kadal, Budhgear, Wazpora, Gojwara and finally at sangeen darwaza (the huge stone carved gate). This was beginning and completion of circumambulation (parikrama). The parikrama was of about 3-4 kilo meters. The first spot was Ganesh Bal (lord Ganesha temple), in the form of a big rock smeared with sindoor and ghee. It was situated on the south western of Hari Parbat. Here we would pay our first obeisance and move further as every auspicious thing is started in the name of Lord Ganesha. After few yards there was a huge mulberry tree which was considered as the form of Bhairava. After performing parikrama there were some mud houses where many of the saints had meditated and finally

went to samadhi there in. Next there was a "satresh" stapana (the seven sons of Lord Brahma) known as "Saptarishis". Then we would move further to Devi Angan- the play garden of Mata Sharika and then comes the holy shrine "Chakreshwari". But to reach to the main temple we had to steep up one hundred and eight steps which was big task to do. But my grandmother was so energetic, strong willed and dedicated that she would start reciting "Om Mae-jai Om Mae-jai..." and reach within minutes without any halt to the main temple of Mata Sharika.

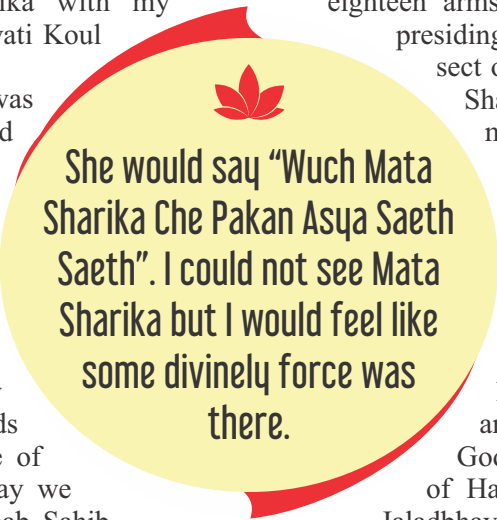
The mother of all creation means Jagadamba- Bhagwati Mata Sharika and incarnation of Mata Durga/ Shakti with eighteen arms and is regarded as the presiding deity (Kul devi) of certain sect of Kashmiri Pandits. Mata

Sharika is also known by many names like Maha Tripursundari, Raj Rajeshwari, Astha Dash Buja, Maha shakti and haer. A demon Jaladhbava is believed to be living near hillock Hari Parbat. He had made life of the inhabitants around miserable. It is said Goddess Shakira in the form of Haer (Myna) killed demon

Jaladhbava at the behest of the devotees. Goddess Sharika dropped a pebble from above on Jaladhbava which became larger and larger when it hit the demon. The divine pebble had grown to the size of hill and the demon was crushed to death under it. That hill came to be known as "Hari Parbat"- abode of Goddess Sharika.

She resides here in the form of "Shri-Chakra" and also known as Maha Yantra. This mystic chakra is engraved on the holy shilla- a huge triangular vertical rock simmered with sindoor and ghee. Since the mother Goddess resides here in the form of Chakra hence locally known as "Chakreshwari" and the temple as "Chakreshwar".

Goddess Chakreshwari has been a

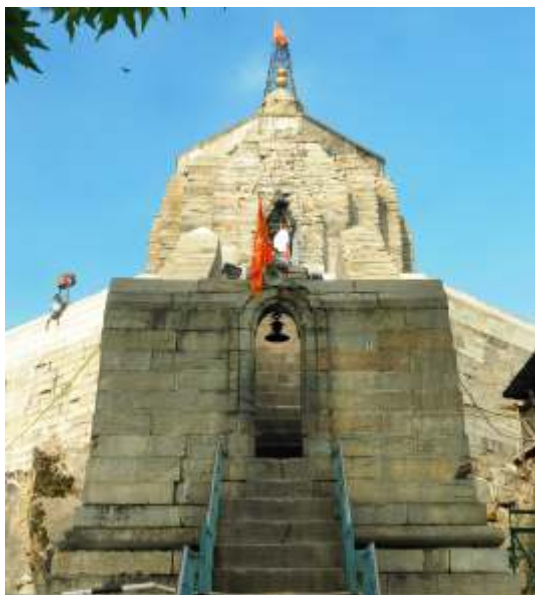


She would say "Wuch Mata Sharika Che Pakan Asya Saeth Saeth". I could not see Mata Sharika but I would feel like some divinely force was there.

powerful centre of attaining spiritual bliss. Many great renowned saints Mahadev Joo Dhar, Krishen Joo Kar- guru of Peer Pandit Pathshah, Peer Pandit Pathsah, Jeevan Sahib and Bhagwan Gopi Nath Ji and many other performed sadhna at the holy feet of the Goddess Sharika. They all had shakshaat (blood and flesh) darshan of Sharika. Pandit Madhav Joo Dhar's dedication and devotion towards Goddess Sharika was given boon who was later blessed with the daughter who later came to know as Mata Roop Bhawani. Late Ex- Prime Minister Indira Gandhi would also drop at Mata Sharika for meditation during her visit to Kashmir.

On entering the main premises of the temple first thing was to wash our face, hands and feet and then sit at the holy feet of the Mata. Then Amma would lit dhoop and Deepak and offer some flowers at the Mata Sharika's Shrichakra which would get tacked up with the stickiness of the sindoor and ghee. Now she would sit in a meditative position and tell me also to sit like her, close eyes and chant Mata mantra. She would stay in the meditative posture for about an hour or so but me being naughty kid would play with myself. But now being grown up I understand the value of that time which will never be reverted.

Then we would perform the



circumambulation of the Shilla and move to the other hall of the temple. Here Mata Sharika is present in the form of "asthdusbuja"- with 18 arms. We would again bow down at the holy feet. Now it was time for prasadam. Kehva was served in khasu with kashmiri bakery kulcha as prasad that was served round the clock. It was a ritual to offer teher and charvan with raw lungs and heart of goat to deity which was later feed to birds on above the hill. Cooked teher and charvan was distributed as prasadam to devotees. After having refreshment it was time to recede in order to perform the circumambulation of the Hari Parbat and we had to reach the same spot i.e. sangeen darwaza to complete it. On the way to the parikrama there were more temples of Maha Laxmi, Koul's mandir dedicated to Lord Krishna, Pokhri Bal- the shrine of Mata Ragnya and lastly the Hanuman temple and then Kathi Darwaza. On reaching Kathi Darwaza we would stop and take rest for few minutes. Next was Chatti Pathshahi Gurudwara situated near to Kathi Darwaza connecting to Rainawari which was hub of Kashmiri Pandits. It is believed that 6th guru Har Gobind Singh stayed here for few days and built a small Gurudwara and also erected "Nishaan Sahib- Sikh flag" which still exists there. Guru Nanak Ji also visited Gurudwara in the sixteenth century for his religious discourses. After performing Ardaas there, he proceeded to Malkha. Malkha - a big deserted graveyard, over acres of land which was also known for anti- social activities then. Hats off to my Amma who was epitome of strength in self and spiritually elevated lady holding my hand tightly and again chanting Mata Sharika's Mantra would walk this area without any fright and fear. She would say "Wuch Mata Sharika Che Pakan Asya Saeth Saeth". I could not see Mata Sharika but I would feel like some divinely force was there. After coming across to Malkha, the ending point was Sangeen Darwaza from where we had started our parikrama. I wish Amma was alive today and exodus would not have happen we would be living these memories in reality.



- Chander M. Bhat



MATA BHUVANESHWARI

Chandpora (Harwan)

Harwan is located about 3 km beyond the famous Shalimar garden where a Buddhist monastery existed and a scholar, the glorious Nagarjuna, lived one hundred and fifty years after the Buddha. The place was called Sadarhadvana which stands for forest of six saints.

Harwan is a huge garden lined with flower beds and massive Chinar Trees with a beautiful canal flowing right through the middle. The canal is fed from a beautiful lake which lies behind the garden. There is not much clutter of fountains and other fancy things but vast big green carpeted green lawns which form an ideal spot for picnics.

Kalhana mentions in his Rajtarangini that "there is not a piece of land, equal to a mustard seed that is not a tirtha in Kashmir". It is on this account that the Aryans visited Kashmir frequently; they stayed mostly at Buzahama and Harwan. On a hillock, linked with the name of Raja Harish Chandra (known for his honesty), there still exist some ancient ruins considered sacred. At Harwan, in Chandpora, there is a small sacred spring associated with Mata Bhuvaneshwari. Kalhana has mentioned this spring in the Rajtarangni; at two of its corners, we find the idols of Mata Bhuvaneshwari installed. It is said that it was Maharaja Gulab Singh who

changed the original name of the place from 'Chachaa Pora' to Chand Pora. The Maharaja's grandson Maharaja Partap Singh often visited the sacred spot and paid his obeisance to the Holy Mother; as a religious ritual, he would feed young virgins and adore them as divinities.

The hillock of Mahadev, believed to be the abode of Lord Shiva is about 20 kilometers away from the holy spring located in Chandpora. It is believed that Lord Shiva keeps a vigil on it from the Mahadev Peak.

It was during Maharaja Partap Singh's reign that a Sadhu Alakh Ram took up his abode in a hut near the spring mentioned above. The hut got destroyed in a fire.

pilgrims. The committee in question not only renovated the spring but also got a concrete temple built up in which the image of the Mata was firmly installed. In the adjoining area of the temple, measuring 3 kanals of land, there exist six Chinar trees and a brook having pure water flows through the complex. It is said that a spring has sprouted from within the hollow of each of these Chinars. The water of the main spring at the shrine can cure diseases. The legend is there that once the only son of a woman, who had gone blind, reposing his trust in the kind heartedness of the Mother Goddess Bhuvaneshwari, washed his eyes with the water of the holy spring for seven consecutive days; he regained his vision



Thereafter two Dharmshallas were constructed to provide shelter to pilgrims, these structures did not stand the fury of nature for long and no trace was left of them. With the expansion in the population of the village around, the inhabitants got together and constituted a committee to look after the shrine, which they named as Bhuvaneshwari Sathapana Committee. The members of the committee in question spared no efforts in raising a pucca structure that served as a Dharmshalla accommodating at least 200

through the grace of virgin Goddess Mata Bhuvaneshwari, whose devotees make only vegetarian offerings to her in the shape of the fruits and other edible things. Non vegetarian offerings to the Goddess are strictly forbidden.

Mata Bhuvaneshwari, is one of the seven sister-divinities and the youngest of them, the other six being Ragnya, Sharika, Jawala, Jeshta, Uma and Shardha. According to Kashmir, Shaivism, Shiva, who is the male counterpart of the Shakti, is the Supreme

Being. He remains introvert and dormant, while Shakti is active and dynamic. The Shaivite philosophy is, in principle, non-dualistic. In her diverse manifestations, Shakti performs manifold functions. As Saraswati, she propagates knowledge and wisdom. As Lakshmi, she distributes wealth and as Kali she destroys the demons. In Kashmir, Shakti worship is very popular and every clan of Kashmiri Pandits adores its chosen female deity as Ragnya, Sharika, Jawala, Jeshta, Uma, Sharda or Bhuvaneshwari. Being the youngest, Bhuvaneshwari, is adored as eternal Shakti.

The devotees in great bulk, including all the inhabitants of Chandpora, have deep-rooted faith in Bhuvaneshwari. It is said that when a hawan was performed propitiate the Goddess Bhuvaneshwari on the seventh day of it a beautiful snake, bearing white patches, emerged all at once from the spring at Chandpora, it made seven circumambulation around the temple to the joy of devotees present there. It accepted the milk that was offered to it by the devotees, and then vanished. The devotees took it as a good augury, believing firmly that Bhuvaneshwari had blessed them.

Thus enthused and encouraged, a

beautiful Murti (idol) of the Goddess carved out of the marble from Jaipur was installed in the temple on Mata's Birthday in the year 1974, falling on Vetha Truvah which is also celebrated as the birthday of the river Vitasta (Jhelum) annually. It was the late Swami Lakshman Joo, renowned saint and Shaivite Scholar, who took care of the installation ritual.

After the displacement of the Pandits from the Valley, the devotees of the Mata being away could no longer ensure the preservation and maintenance of the shrine. With the passage of time, due to climatic ravages the Dharamshala collapsed, though, the other pacca structures still exist. Now the Mata's hawan is being performed at the Kheer Bhawani Peeth at Janipur, Jammu to mark the birthday of Bhuvaneshwari.

Notes and References

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2. Encyclopedia: Kashmiri Pandit Culture and Heritage by C.L.Kaul, published by Ansh Publications, New Delhi, 2009 edition.

Events of the Month	Naag Panchami	13 th Aug 2021
	Ashtami (Shukla Paksha)	16 th Aug 2021
	Ekadashi (Shukla Paksha)	18 th Aug 2021
	Poornima (Raksha Bhandhan)	22 nd Aug 2021
	Chandan Shishthi	27 th Aug 2021
	Zaram Satam	29 th Aug 2021
	Janam Ashtami (Krishna Paksha)	30 th Aug 2021
	Amavasya	07 th Sep 2021
Note	Panchak Starts on 22nd Aug Ends on 26th Aug 2021	
	Shravan (Shukla Paksha) from 09 Aug to 22 Aug 2021 Bhadra (Krishna Paksha) from 23 Aug to 07 August 2021	
	Punn Saath on Sep 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 19	



-Surendar Kaul



Sheetalnath

The Listening Post of Kashmiri Pandits



Sheetalnath has an old history of Sheetaleshwara Bhairav temple as one of the Bhairava places consecrated around Srinagar District behind it. But it came into eminence due to the efforts of Pt. Hargopal Kaul who used to organize Kashmiri Pandit youth and address them in the large ground of the complex

During, before and after, India's freedom movement, stalwarts like, Jawahar Lal Nehru, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and Mahatma Gandhi addressed the Kashmiri people, from its holy ramp. Sheetalnath became a natural

platform of freedom of expression of the Kashmiri people. Martand, daily Urdu newspaper of Pandits was run from the premises of Sheetalnath. Educational institution Hindu High School was also housed in one of the building in Sheetalnath.

Sheetalnath, served as a hub of resistance during the infamous "Parmishori Case" in July 1967. Kashmiri Pandit launched an agitation for the return of the Pandit girl Parmishori, eloped with one Muslim boy Ghulam Rasool Kanth, to her widow mother. Her name was also changed from Parmishori

to Parveena Akhtar. The agitation spontaneously turned into communal intensity. As usual different stories with different versions started pouring in about the elopement of the girl. One of the versions was that the KP girl was working as a salesgirl in Super Market, located in Lalla Rukh Hotel, Lal Chowk Srinagar. There she was trapped in cash deficit, which was pre-planned by her Muslim co-workers to entice her for marriage. Whereas some said both were in love with each other and one fine day the boy fled along with her to a safe zone in the Downtown area. The news spread like a wide fire in the valley. The communal hue to issue gave an opportunity to Kashmiri Pandits to vent to their resentment against the government, which was already undercurrent.

This outrage was raised by minority Kashmir Pandits for the first time after independence, which sustained for one and a half months. Sheetalnath turned nerve center for Pandits where leaders emerged like Prem Nath Gassi, Gopi Krishen, Shamboo Nath Kachru, Amar Nath Vashnavi, Kashi Nath Dulloo, Prem Nath Bhatt, Tika Lal Taploo, Hadey Nath Jattu, Amar Nath Ganjoo, Pushkar Nath Karnal and Balji Handoo delivered emotive speeches. An Action Committee of Kashmiri Pandits was constituted which organize protests, dharana and peaceful Satyagrah by five volunteers, continuously for days and weeks. None of the protestors resort to the damaging public the property, burning of civil transport or looting of any shop or any business establishment, despite brutal police actions and firing of teargas on women folk at the Regal Chowk, Srinagar led by one Kapoor IPS officer then. A similar heavy police lathi charge was also let loose on KP agitators in Lal Chowk area by the then Late D.N Kaul DIG Srinagar. One day large gathering of KP was blocked within Sheetalnath by Kashmir Armed Police under the direction of DIG Srinagar. Pandits were not allowed to move out, if and when any attempt was made by Pandit protesters to move out, they were lathi charged from the entry lane of the temple. KP community

would religiously converge in Sheetalnath every day to attend anti Government speeches and chalk out next line of action.

Interestingly, KP innovated a unique strategy of alerting neighbours during police action in midnight or danger from anti-social elements. They would bang their alloy plates or blow conch shells from the top of their houses. Satyagrah of KPs turned out to be incomprehensive weapon in Srinagar which went on unhindered for weeks. The potency of the KP peaceful movement put the state government baffled to this extent that the then CM, G M Sadiq almost had decided to resign from the post. Eventually, the Jammu region got also involved and Jan Sangh party leaders Shiv Charan Gupta, Rishi Kumar Kaushal and Makhan Lal Hakar landed in Srinagar in support of KP and to take stock of the situation after meeting their party unit in the valley. The state administration swung into action and arrested protesters at random in large numbers, in which nearly twelve hundred were Pandit government employees, lodged in Central Jail. In central jail, the agitators were not spared from torture. The hardcore criminals were given free hand by the jail authority to beat and bash the Pandit agitators on the behest of ruling masters. Dozens of Pandits were severely injured with deep wounds and cut marks on heads.

Communists did not stay back; they deputed Rajeshwar Rao, CPI leader to Srinagar in August, when KP had converged all their fronts under one banner to recover the Pandit girl from the Muslim captivity.

Before leaving for New Delhi from Srinagar, Rajeshwar Rao, was briefed by the state Govt according to their Machiavellian. He did not have the nerve to counter check the version fed to him by meeting the agitating KP to understand their issues. In Aug, the Jan Sangh leader Late Balraj Madhok landed in Srinagar and met CM G.M Sadiq. What transpired between the two having different ideology remained unknown? On the following day Balraj Madhok fiery statement, "Kashmir is an integral part of India. Accession with India is final. The plebiscite is

impossible. Those who want plebiscite should vacate Kashmir and go to Pakistan”, infuriated Muslim majority and they resorted to complete hartal on the next day and condemned Madhok for an anti-Kashmir provocative statement. Muslim groups assembled to counter KP agitation and Satyagrah by hurling pro-Islamic slogans near Govt. Girls College, Chowk, when KP Satyagrah was going on. Ruling leadership made the best use of Muslim hooliganism to suppress the KP agitation. Late Sadiq's close cohorts Peer Giyasuddin, Noor Mohammad, Zanib Begum, Sajida Begum and Miss Mehmooda and one Burza family played a pivotal role in reversing the peaceful agitation into communal and violet hue. T.N Kaul, the

then Union Home Minister arrived at Srinagar on 2nd Sept 1967 to work out an amicable solution of the burning situation. He met CM, G.M Sadiq and Late D.P Dhar State Home Minister to gauge the turmoil and steps to be taken to restore normalcy. Chavan had extensive conversation with DP to about the situation from both the point of view of both communities and how to come out of this quagmire as PM was eager for its resolution. Chavan desired for meeting with the KP leadership to acquaint himself with the grievances and their expectation. But the real KP leaders H.N Jattu, AN Vaishnavi, Tika Lal Taploo had gone underground. Whereas, the other community leaders Late A.N Ganjoo, P.N Karnal were in central Jail



then Foreign secretary also flew in Srinagar as an emissary of PM to calm down the KP movement. Now the number of incidents of looting and burning of Kashmiri Hindu minority shops and houses had started. Nine Kashmiri Pundits were killed either in police savagery or in mob lynching in Khanyar and other areas of Muslim predominant enclaves under the darkness when Pandits were returning to their homes after peaceful Satyagrah.

Public pressure was raising high on the central government to bring the situation under control in Srinagar. Y.B Chavan, the

Srinagar. Chavan met selected KP delegation who revealed woeful tales of discrimination in state employments, promotions, admissions in technical institutions, allotment of contracts that were surreptitiously practiced by State Government.

Chavan assured them protection, security and safety. They were asked to present a charter of demands in writing. One of KP delegation member visited CM's house on the next day morning revealed what had transpired between Chavan and KP delegation? Subsequently, DP paid a midnight visit to Central jail in his private car to meet

KP leaders for getting their petition reviewed with minor changes in draft and affixation of their signatures. Credit did go to late DP Dhar who saved the Govt. services of nearly twelve hundred jailed KP employees from punitive action from the State Administration by incorporating the demand of condoning the employees for their absence from duty?

In Jammu, rumour was floated that KP agitation was aimed at in getting a government jobs, but not to get eloped Kashmiri Pandit girl back. This interpretation was given by none other than Dr Karan Singh, former cabinet Minister and his band of associates. Such statement from Jammu left KP sympathy less even from Jammuites. Within two days times all jailed KP were released.

At Sheetalnath, the hordes of KP were informed that the Chavan had accepted all demands and waved a white sheet of paper signaling the endorsement of Govt. on their demands even return of the girl. On the contrary, the delegation did not ask for the return of the girl. State Govt. announced of constituting Gajender Gadker commission to go into the nitty-gritty of the state services community wise break up. KP agitation rose up with big bang which shuddered politics vertices in the state but it later crumbled in rubbles. Many lives were lost. Community sacrifices went down the drain. Whatever a little respect they had that too was dashed.

Late P.N Bazaz, renowned journalist and one-time member of the Glancey commission published a booklet "Kashmiri Pandits Agitation and its Aftermath", in which he attributes the sustenance of the agitation was based on two factors. First, Bakshi's political group supported the agitation to get back to power, and second RSS and Praja Parshad group of Jan Sangh supported KP for their own political gain. He totally overlooked the hard reality of setting of communal trends in the state political governance and administration against which KP joined their ranks and file. He could foresee the failure of agitation due to a lack of vision among their leaders.

The immediate fall out of the agitation was that DP Dhar, a genius politician to the core, known as the king maker was removed from Home Ministry to Education Minister which he could not reconcile. Later, he was shifted from State politics to centre where he later became an Ambassador to USSR.

A gulf between majority Muslim community and KP community came into effect on social and political levels. KPs were gradually relegated aside. Hashim Qureshi, 1971 Indian Airline hijacker, now settled in Srinagar, pointed out that the agitation of KP had sowed the seed of mistrust among Muslims towards KP. Other major outcome of KP agitation was that seventy percent of Muslims were absorbed in jobs, promotions; admission in technical institutions, contracts, scholarships, and bank loans in the state on the basis majoritarianism. The rest of non-Muslim communities comprising Hindus, Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs, and KP were to be accommodated within 30% leftover in the state.

On political scenario division within Democratic National Conference started surfacing and Mir Qasim advocated for political forays of Jamiat E Islami to counter pro-Pakistani propaganda. Late Sadiq and his men disapproved of this political combination. With coming of late Mir Qasim in power after demise of Sadiq, Jamiat's and subversive got footholds made inroads in police and education departments.

Late T.N Kaul was upgraded and posted Indian Ambassador to USA in 1968. Though the Democratic National Conference headed by late G.M Sadiq as CM supported by State Cabinet D.P Dhar, Mir Qasim, Mir Lasjan, Peer Gayasuddin, Mohammad Ayub Khan, Abdul Ghani Lone, Mufti Mohd Syed, Kanwar Ranjit Singh, Trilochan Dutt, Girdhari Lal Dogra were all leftist bent of mind yet the politics of the State remained Kashmir centric and communal in practices.

We as KPs continue to be fooled by all because we have more leaders less followers with divergent political claims.



- T.K. Kachroo, Vijay Teng and Monika Khazanchi (Trustees PYCT)

SH. SHIBEN K. KHAZANCHI

Tribute to a True KaramYogi

According to Lord Krishna in Bhagavad Gita, Karma yoga is the spiritual practice of "Selfless action performed for the benefit of others" Karma yoga is a path to reach Moksha (spiritual liberation) through work. It is rightful action without being attached to fruits or being manipulated by what the results might be, a dedication to one's duty, and trying one's best while being neutral to rewards or outcomes such as success or failure. A perfect example of Karma Yoga and true Karamyogi is none other than Sh. Shiben K Khazanchi.

Shiben Ji lovingly called by his kith and kin was born in the year 1945 to Dr. Premnath Khazanchi and Smt. Gunwati Khazanchi at Srinagar Kashmir. He was the youngest among his siblings. After Bachelor's degree from Amar Singh College, Srinagar, he moved to Chandigarh to pursue his Master's in Geology. Having excelled academically, Sh. Khazanchi Sahib joined ONGC in 1966. He then got married to Smt. Phoola Munshi in 1968. They were blessed with two daughters. From the very beginning of his life, he was a very honest, spiritual, loving and a kind person which he inherited from his father and grandfather. Through his professional excellence, hard work and devotion Sh. Khazanchi Sahib reached Leadership Position at ONGC as General Manager and led various key functions.

A major transformation in the life of Sh. Khazanchi Sahib came in the year 1976 when he read the Autobiography of a Yogi written by



Paramahansa Yogananda. The contents and expressions of the book left a lasting impression on him and became an ardent devotee of Paramhansa Yogananda. Subsequently he took highest form of Diksha called Kriya Diksha from Swami Ji of Yogoda Satsang Society of India. The Spiritual Journey and the Duty to Serve the needy had just begun. Sh. Khazanchi Sahib continued

discharging his various duties and he took a decision post superannuation in 2005 to dedicate his life completely to serve The Guru and the Society. Driven by the responsibility towards the downtrodden and the needy in the country he along with his family, friends and well-wishers established a trust in the Year 2006 which was named as Paramhansa Yogananda Charitable Trust (PYCT)

Among the many deep thoughts and expressions of his Guru, Sh. Khazanchi Sahib drew his inspiration from some of the key teachings like “You must not let your life run in the ordinary way; do something that nobody else has done, something that will dazzle the world. Show that God’s creative principle works in you.” and “Making others happy, through kindness of speech and sincerity of right advice, is a sign of true greatness”.

Inspired by his Guru, Sh. Khazanchi Sahib, embarked on a mission to serve the society, transform the lives of needy and downtrodden and bring a smile to the faces. PYCT established in Ahmedabad started various initiatives in the field of Education, Supporting the Differently Abled, Medical Support, Contributing to sustenance and livelihoods. As a part of these broad aims, different activities like giving books and uniforms to school students, funding for wheelchairs for physically handicapped people so that they can be independent and have self-esteem for themselves, funding for cornea operations in the eye hospitals established by Blind Peoples Association (BPA Ahmedabad), providing scholarship and educational support to bright and needy students of Kashmiri Migrants through SHARIKA foundation Jammu, and also at other places in the country. Providing financial support through KMECT for medical aid and Sustenance and Daily Needs for families through BPA were projects close to his heart. All these activities kept him busy and very involved in PYCT.

Transforming lives was the motto of Sh. Khazanchi Sahib, we can for sure say that he touched thousands of lives and brought a

cheer to them. Sh. Khazanchi Sahib was the person who would shell out 50 percent of his savings for the upliftment of the downtrodden, poor, and needy people of the community which he always used to say “FROM GURUDEV”. Well wishers, friends and philanthropists were ready to contribute for the good cause for which PYCT stood by. PYCT gave Educational Support and scholarships to more than 500 students, livelihoods, and sustenance support to more than 1000 families and also shared Medical Support to needy patients through KMECT and Sharika foundation. They also worked with BPA (Blind Peoples Association) hand in hand to bring cheer on the faces of widows / physically challenged / dumb and deaf youth of the country.

One of the key highlights of PYCT has been impeccable transparency and continuity of various programmes. Going forward the real tribute to the True Karam Yogi Sh. Khazanchi Sahib would be if we can double the support programmes and budgets for the same. Of course, this can be achieved with more like-minded people joining the cause of serving the needy.

While performing PYCT duties one day in April 2021 he contracted Covid19, shockingly succumbed to the virus and left all of us for the Astral world on fateful day of May 11, 2021. The day Sh Khazanchi Sahib left his body to be merged with his great Guru the same day Swami Hiteshananda ji from YSS Kendra also left his body in YSS Ranchi ashram. Seems one soul in two bodies. Sh. Khazanchi Sahib was a self-realized soul having his own identity, charisma and capable of inspiring others. He always wore a big smile on his face attracting thousands of people. He was very clear and transparent in his dealings. He had the ability to see and appreciate the surroundings with the innocence and magic of a child every known person, every experience, and every present event... Because everything, had helped him to learn and grow.

Even though we all greatly miss him on this planet Earth, but we are sure that he is very

happy in that Astral world called HEAVEN full of flowers and big fruits and enjoying the company of his great Guru which he always longed to be with and blessing all of us from there. We all derive inspiration from his Guru who said "My body shall pass, but my work shall go on, my spirit shall live on and even when I am taken away, I shall work with you all for the deliverance to the world the message of God. Sh. Khazanchi Sahib guides

us to continue the mission he started to serve the ones who need us the most, through PYCT.

May his soul be always in the company of his Guru whom he loved from the bottom of his heart.

*Jai Guru
You can reach PYCT on
pycttrust@gmail.com*



Paintings by Ms. Riddhi Raina (Age 12 years)

**Government of Jammu and Kashmir
Revenue Department Civil Secretariat
Jammu/Srinagar**

Subject: - Preservation and Protection of Migrant properties.

Government Order No. 53-JK-(Rev) of 2021

Dated: - 13 .08. 2021

Whereas, "J&K Migrant Immovable Property (Preservation, Protection and Restraint on Distress Sales) Act, 1997" (hereinafter referred as the Act) provides for the preservation, protection and restraint on distress sales of the immovable property of the migrants; and

Whereas, various provisions of the Act, provide for measures to prevent, alienation of immovable property due to distress sale by imposing certain restrictions, custody of immovable property, eviction of unauthorized occupants, implementation by the competent authority, etc.; and

Whereas, the implementation of the Act, has not taken place in the manner as prescribed by the Act, and instances have come to notice, particularly after the orders of the Hon'ble High Court in OWP No. 477/2016 dated 06.03.2020 titled "All India Kashmiri Samaj and Ors. V/s Union of India and Ors." regarding diarization of complaints and monitoring thereof, of immovable properties of migrants having been alienated without following due process; and

Whereas, by virtue of S.O. 1229 (E) dated 31.03.2020 (Adaptation of State Laws) Order 2020 the requirement of written complaints for survey or measurement of a migrant property, proviso 2 of sub-section (2) of section 6 has been omitted and the following sub-section has been inserted in section 6:-

"(3) The competent authority shall prepare the details of immovable property of migrants in such format, as may be prescribed, and take appropriate action to evict unauthorized occupant of such migrant property including such action as provided in Section 5"; and

Therefore, considering the need for urgent measures to implement the provision of the Act, exercising the powers under section 10 of the Act, it is hereby ordered that:-

- i. The Department of Disaster Management Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction will develop an online portal for filing applications by the

migrants for correction of records/demarcation and removal of encroachments/trespassing/alienation by way of fraud or distress, etc.

- ii. The application filed on the portal will be disposed off in a fixed time frame under the Public Services Guarantee Act, 2011 by the revenue authorities under intimation to applicant.
- iii. The competent authority (District Magistrate) shall undertake survey/field verification of migrant properties and update all registers, within a period of 15 days and submit compliance report to the Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir.
- iv. Any violation of the Act, including in respect of religious properties, shall be taken cognizance by the competent authority (District Magistrate) with timely action for eviction, custody and restoration of such properties and also action under law against the violators.
- v. The Revenue Officers shall dispose off cases on priority, with due consideration to the circumstances and specificity, while taking decision with regard to the Limitation period.

By order of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir

Sd/-

**(Shaleen Kabra) IAS
Principal Secretary to the Government**

No. Rev-Sett/32/2021(43542)

Dated:-13.08.2021

Copy to the:-

01. Financial Commissioner (Revenue), J&K.
02. Principal Secretary to the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor, J&K.
03. Joint Secretary (J&K), Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.
04. Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir.
05. Secretary to the Government, Department of Disaster Management Relief, Rehabilitation & Reconstruction.
06. Secretary to the Government Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs.
07. All Deputy Commissioners, of Kashmir Division.
08. Director Archives, Archeology & Museums, J&K.
09. Private Secretary to Chief Secretary, J&K.
10. Private Secretary to Hon'ble Advisor (B).
11. Private Secretary to Principal Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
12. Incharge Website, Revenue Department.
13. Government Order file (w.2.s.c).
14. Stock File.




(Sudershan Kumar) JKAS 13.8.2021

Addl. Secretary to the Government

Lockchaar - Kids Special

FUN THIS MONTH!

Lets find our Koshur Ninja ! 

Word Search

E F A I K C M G L J J I H G N O W J I T
 R P Y B R Y E B G Y Z Z A K B H U E U M
 P Z U V A B V M A M Z C K N F P T E S X
 F T T J V O L P A Z D Y E K K Y H R M F
 H K M H P D J Z H A A F P S D G U C I O
 F Q D O K U N O E E E J H D Z B R K D G
 S T H T O K N A Y A D C G O W P Q H F B
 T N P U O G F N D F V O H N Z V K T V W
 A N U U A Q J W K N I W R H A P I W W Y
 B Q D Y K U S E E H H L Y V L Z P U L S
 D U N E A W G V T H S S H I I V J K I H
 W Z G B N D Q O P A A S E H C B P A F C
 U N S T G X Y M N M T X E Y B F M E O E
 A L B Z O N H Y B T X K X Y K N E L C K
 X R B N K S Z S V U Z C M G J S T O S C

What is the lake which was created at the end of Ice Age called?

Good work!

Why did the Nagas name the valley "Kashyapmaar" ?

Which is the largest freshwater lake in India ?



Which boats are found in Dal Lake ?

Aechh
Dyek
Kan
Nas
Wuth

Buth
Fyuk
Koth
Nyoth
Yad

Dand
Hongayn
Mas
Onghijj
Zang

Goddess Saraswati is also known as ?



Answer- Nadru is the stem of the lotus plant.



Want to feature your kid ? or for any feedback

Please write to us 

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- **Second largest lake in J&K**
- Receives its water supply from the mountain lake Mar Sar.
- When visiting the Dal lake, you'll find it an enchanting maze of intricate waterways, numerous channels, and floating islands.
- Dal Lake is also important for fishing and for harvesting water plants.

SHIKARA: A type of wooden boat found on Dal Lake and other water bodies of Srinagar; used for multiple purposes including transportation of people.



Dal lake actually consists of 4 lakes: Lokut Dal, Bod Dal, Gagribal and Nagin

Dal Lake



People living within the lake buy their daily fruit and vegetable supplies at the **FLOATING MARKET** located on Shikaras.



A **FLOATING POST OFFICE** is located amidst picturesque snow-clad mountains, on a huge houseboat in Dal Lake. The only one in the world !!



Did you know the connection between these two ?

Answer on last page.



Book Review

Close Up Of a Kashmiri Society In Flux

Author : Khem Lata Wakhlu

Book Review By : Ashok Ogra

SRINAGAR (in the 1870s):

A boy was born to a wealthy Dhar family of Safakadal, Srinagar and named Bal Bhadra (Ballu). The boy's father Kashi Nath Dhar had done precious little with his life and was flirtatious by nature. Heemal, the mother of the boy, was daughter of an influential nobleman, Divan Nand Ram Tikku. The couple was blessed with three boys and a daughter.

Lucknow (Kashmiri Mohalla):

It was a home to the well-known Kaul family: Mrs. Sumali Kaul and her barrister husband. They had no children and were keen to adopt a boy belonging to a decent Kashmiri Pandit (KP) family. They approached relatives and priests both in Kashmir and outside but to no vain. Meanwhile, Mr. Kaul's health deteriorated and he passed away. This further strengthened the resolve of Mrs. Kaul to adopt a child.

One Day In The Life Of Ballu:

Kashi Nath decides to visit Kheer Bhawani along with Ballu. After Puja, he goes for a stroll – perhaps looking for vulnerable damsels - leaving his son in the custody of his servants. While playing a game of hide and seek the servants lose contact with Ballu. The news spreads like wild-fire in the valley all wondering what must have happened to the Dhar boy. Both the Dhar and the Tikoo families are devastated. Massive search operations yield no results.

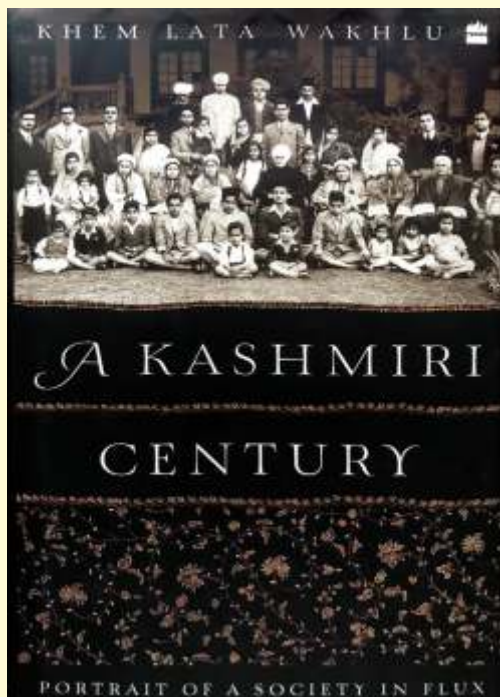
Lucknow (Ballu reunites with parents):

After several agonizing months, it was found that Mrs. Kaul had engineered the abduction, and Ballu was safe and happy living with her.

When Kashi Nath comes to know of it, he decides to relocate to Lucknow to be with his son. He stays at the residence of Mrs. Kaul. After sometime, Heemal also joins them; happy to see and be with Ballu if not necessarily with her amorous husband.

The above is not a scene from a Bollywood thriller but true incident recollected, candidly and honestly, by Khem Lata Wakhlu in her book 'A Kashmiri Century: Portrait of a Society in Flux.'

As expected, the incident stunned the Dhar and Kashmiri society into disbelief.



While the author may take comfort in nostalgia, the question arises: weren't incidents of abductions rare in 19th century? If so, does it then truly reflect the portrait of our society that was fairly conservative during that period? The winds of change, if any, were slow in coming.

That aside, Khem Lata manages to bring to life the people and happenings thus presenting an honest and, at times, critical portrait of Kashmiri society in general and the Pandit community in particular - one where orthodoxies co-existed clumsily with the disruptions of modernity!

To her the book 'delves into the human side of living in the Valley an aspect often missing in the cold political treatises on Kashmir. It offers a rare glimpse into lives of Kashmiris – Hindus and Muslims alike and how their pleasures' existence revolved around the simple pleasures of life, even as they dealt with the many changes of the past hundred years.'

Khem Lata is the descendent of the Dhar family mentioned above; she became Wakhlu after marriage to late Prof. O.N. Wakhlu, Principal of REC (NIT), Srinagar. She is a well-known social worker, has been an MLA and Minister for Tourism during mid-1980s. Multilingual, she has to her credit many fiction and non-fiction books, and her play KAYAMA (Hindi) and Lale Sahib (Kashmiri) were adapted for television.

According to her the migration of the Pandits from the valley started from 12th century when they would visit Kasi, Ujjain, Leh, Puri and Lhasa, to provide guidance in writing books and for translating Sanskrit or Sharda texts into the local language of the respective regions. However, during the tyrannical rule of some Muslim rulers who used sword to force conversions and persecute Pandits, the migration turned into a tide.

With regard to KPs managing the affairs of the Dogra kingdom, she informs that with the signing of the Treaty of Amritsar in 1846, the administration of far flung areas including Gilgit required educated and trustworthy officers. The Pandits were most suited because of their familiarization with Persian, Hindi, Urdu and Sanskrit. "These were not easy positions to be in since most in most cases the incumbent would be posted all alone," she adds.

In the chapter 'The Desire for Change,' she acknowledges Shri Kashyap Bandhu and Jai Lal Kilam who were endeavoring to make the KP community progressive in their outlook. "In fact, every Sunday, Kashyap Bandhu would organize a meeting of the community at the historic Sharika temple on the Hari Parbhat hill and share his ideas with the congregation. He was emphatic that modern KP women would have to switch over to wearing saris and blouses.'

Shiv Narain Fotedar too engaged himself in social service along with other notable social reformers of that time: Dr. S.N. Peshin, Justice J.N. Bhat, Shambu Nath Dhar, and Prem Nath Bazaz.

She makes an interesting observation about the old enmity between Abdullahs

of National Conference and Mirwaiz Farooq: It was only in 1987 that the then Mirwaiz Maulvi Farooq joined hands with the old enemy, Farooq Abdullah. "That era of 'Double-Farooq,' as the unusual and unprecedented coalition of the Shers and Bakras was then known, resulted in a hardening of the Muslim identity in Kashmir."

She blames Saudi money (and Iran) and its brand of Islam with focus on Wahabi Salafi brand of conservative Islam the key factors that led to the dilution of the tolerant, mystical and love based version of the religion that had evolved in Kashmir. The process started in 1970s- with Madrasas coming up in large numbers, and new printing presses set up too publish pamphlets, papers, and magazines covering Islamic themes.

The bigoted General Zia ul Haq and his regime too played an active role in fostering trouble in the Valley.

However, barring brief references, the author shies away from offering a grand narrative of political developments or an examination of the reasons that gave birth to militant insurgency.

I find her vivid description of celebrations surrounding festivals like Shivratri, Diwali, Dushhera... both hilarious and brilliant as she weaves it into a family saga. "As the effigies were reduced to ashes, the other items of entertainment that had been planned for the evening commenced. The children, arranged in groups according to their ages, were brought in front of the spectators to do their little acts of singing, dancing, and making fun of the times through Ladishah style of poetry."

There is nothing of significance that has escaped the author's attention. Tribal raid to the massive protests that rocked the valley when Moh-i-Mugaddas was supposedly stolen from Hazratbal shrine to radicalization and ethnic cleansing of Pandits. She provides an entertaining anecdote concerning Nande Lal Bab who was an eccentric Kashmiri mystic. During early 1970s, word went round that that an educationist close to the Chief Minister would summarily replace the then Vice Chancellor of Kashmir University, Noor-ud-Din. Being a devotee of Bab, he immediately rushed to his ashram at Nunner village. On hearing his devotee's story, the saint thundered: "I have given you this position! Nobody dare dislodge you!" Rest is history: Noor Noor-ud-Din went on to complete his tenure.

It is when recalling the brotherhood that existed between the majority and the Pandits and the Muslims, the author slides into sentimentality, and let's her heart speak out. She fondly remembers her Muslim neighbours, The Peers who belonged to priestly class and were fairly affluent and educated. The girls of both the families used to each other quiet often. In fact, a special ladder to cross over the compound wall separating the two neighbours was erected so as to enable the young ladies to meet almost every day without having to leave their respective compounds. She recalls a conversation with their daughter in-law of: "For you there is no newness in this home, right? After all Appaji is your own dear aunt whom you've known from your childhood."

She replies: “Being an aunt is one thing but when the same aunt becomes your mother-in-law, everything changes.”

It is squeezing meaning from a welter of events such as these that makes the book a fascinating read. Harper Collins should be commended for publishing such an important book: brimming with excitement, nostalgia, loss and hope- all captured in compelling prose.

It is when recalling the burning of the school run by Rupa Devi Sharda Peeth Trust by the terrorists that the composure in the author bursts into pain and anger. The school housed some of the world's rarest books and manuscripts in Pali, Sanskrit, Persian, Hindi, Urdu and English- all reduced to ashes. The trust was being managed by Dr. Vimla Dhar- the wife of her brother noted physician Dr. Surender Dhar: “Thousands of girl students benefited from the education provided by the school run by the Trust. However, as the Kashmir valley saw fanatical Wahabi ideas- riding on petro-dollars from Saudi Arabia and Iran- take root in Kashmir during the early 1980s, innocent Kashmiri families started to be berated by mullahs for sending their children to 'Hindu' educational institutions and not to madrassas instead.”

The family of the author too paid a heavy price: first she and her husband were abducted, and later the militants kept Dr.Dhar in captivity.

It is a challenge to represent the voice of a community in one book but being an insider who has not only been a witness but a participant, Khem Lata has done an excellent job with finesse only a talented author like herself possibly could.

The book ends on a poignant note when Khem Lata recounts with great sensitivity the conversation that her brother Dr. Surender Dhar has had with his abductors: “Seeing him crying, one of the militants came forward and asked: 'Why are you crying, doctor Sahib? Has anyone said something insulting to you?' 'No, no one has said anything to me, he replied. Then turning to the open window and looking out into the darkness, he added, 'I am crying because our land has lost its soul!'”

One may ask: what is left if the soul is lost? But what about our unending, never-dying longing for home.

Perhaps, this remark of the British writer C.S.Lewis best captures our current predicament: “The longing for home? For indeed it now feels not like going, but like going back.”

Meanwhile, it is expected that this important book by Khem Lata Wakhlu will serve to remind our future generations – once upon a time Kas'mira was a sacred place that belonged to the Pandits!

(LUCKNOW KASHMIRI MOHALLA: The mohalla came up way back in 1770s, during the regime of the then Nawab Asaf-ud-Daulah. Experts say the Nawab, while shifting the capital from Faizabad to Lucknow, was accompanied by many courtiers, a majority of whom were Kashmiri Pandits. They were given a piece of land by the Nawab and the area was later known as Kashmiri Mohalla. Source: Late Dr B.N.Sharga who was one of the oldest residents of the mohalla; he passed away two years ago)

» NIPUN BHARAT

National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy

To cover the learning needs of children in the age group of 3 to 9, the Ministry of Education has launched a scheme called NIPUN Bharat in July 2021.

Fundamental Literacy and Numeracy is a numerical concept to the skills and strategies involved in reading, speaking, writing and interpreting thoughts. It is the ability to reason and to apply simple numerical concepts.

As per the former Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', NIPUN Bharat focuses on the right interventions around the children by designing learning objectives, circular materials and assessments and involving parents and teachers to make learning personal and social.

According to the World Bank, 55 per cent of India's children cannot read and understand the age-appropriate text by class v.

The children in the early school years of 3 to 8 years pick up fundamentals of education learning. The scheme Government of India ensures that every child attains foundational literacy and Numeracy (FLN) by the end of Grade 3, by 2026-27.

A centrally sponsored scheme of Samagra Shiksha will focus on providing access and retaining children in foundational years of schooling; teacher capacity building; development of high quality and diversified Student and Teacher Resources/Learning Materials; and tracking the progress of each child in achieving learning outcomes.

The Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education (MoE) will be the implementing agency at the national level and headed by a Mission Director. As the scheme is up to grade 3, the children in Class 4 and 5 and have not attained the foundational skills will be provided

individual teacher guidance and support, peer support and age-appropriate and supplementary graded learning materials to acquire the necessary competencies. The goals and objectives of the mission are required to be achieved by all Govt., Govt. Aided and Private Schools so that universal acquisition of FLN skills can be completed by 2026-27.

The FLN skills are the development of oral language, including improved listening comprehension, oral vocabulary and extended conversation skills. The experiences in oral language are essential for developing skills in reading and writing. Decoding, deciphering written words based on understanding the relationship between symbols and their sounds, reading fluency refers to reading a text with accuracy, speed (automaticity), expression (prosody), and comprehension that allows children to make meaning from the text. Many children recognise aksharas but read them diligently, one by one, reading comprehension, meaning constructing from a text and thinking critically about it, readers. The domain includes the competencies of writing aksharas and words writing for expression and foundational Numeracy. Foundational Numeracy means the ability to reason and to apply simple numerical concepts in daily life problem-solving. The significant aspects and components of early mathematics are pre-number concepts. The idea represents counting and understanding the number system. Numbers and operations mean to learn conventions needed for mastery of Mathematical techniques. The essence is to perform simple computations in their way up to three-digit numbers and apply these to their day to life activities in different contexts. Understand and use standard algorithms to perform operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division on numbers up to three digits, i.e. measurement, and data

handling to Identify and extend simple patterns. From repeating shapes to patterns in numbers, interpret simple data/information in their daily life activities.

Under the FLN Mission, academic support is through the State Council of Educational Research and Trainings (SCERT) and District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET). The SCERT is mandated to develop extensive teacher training modules and other resources for teachers, including in the local language. At the same time, additional learning material for grades 1 to 5 that are engaging, joyful and innovative, would also need to be developed for this purpose. On the other hand, each DIET can develop an Academic Resource Pool specifically for FLN, comprising teachers, teacher educators, district education planners and faculty from the University Department of Education. Henceforth, for strengthening the SCERTs and DIETs for the FLN Mission, the following are some critical enablers, which States and UTs would need to prioritize. The priorities are

1. Enhanced scope for faculty development opportunities and avenues for professional development, including seminars, advanced and blended courses and fellowships, cross-institutional deployment of teachers and collaborative teaching and research.
2. Augmenting the capacity of SCERTs and DIETs to provide academic support so that students' learning outcomes are improved. Under this structured support can be provided by actively increasing the rigour and consistency of capacity building programs for SCERT faculty and creating opportunities for SCERT to work with international experts. They will identify National Institutions/Universities for mentoring SCERT and DIET faculty to develop expertise in FLN.
3. Develop a culture of sharing ideas and experiences through exposure visits between and within states.
4. Faculty exchange and interaction is to be

enabled with other Teacher Education and Higher Education Institutions working in the sector.

5. Ensure capacity building of faculty so that over time faculty acquires appropriate expertise in subject areas of relevance to teacher professional development and school improvement.
6. Explore possibilities of collaboration with reputed National and International Organizations on specific programs for the FLN Mission.
7. Streamline the idea of continuous professional development by identifying demand-based deriving from research into classroom practices and the impact of training imparted earlier.

Further, with the renewed focus on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy as a prerequisite to learning, there is an urgent need to establish alignment of BRCs and CRCs with DIETs and work under their supervision to monitor the quality teaching and designing interventions for direct support to schools. Consequently, the BRCs and CRCs would be the key agency for monitoring and controlling the progress of activities against the goals of the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Mission (FLN). Under this, the nodal person to be nominated at the BRC level would act as a supportive and vigilant supervisor for all dimensions of activities concerning FLN. Moreover, schools who feel they have achieved the target/goals may declare themselves as Pocket of Learning Excellence and invite school visits from BRC/CRC and FLN block-level nodal persons to verify and suggest improvements.

Source: Ministry of Education & Vikaspedia.

»» ADMISSION ALERTS

Delhi University Admission UG Courses Reservation of Kashmiri Migrants (KM)

All the wards (sons/daughters) of Kashmiri Migrants who wish to be considered for admission to various undergraduate programs of the University have to register online as per

the schedule notified by the University.

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. Admission of Wards of Kashmiri Migrants will be based on cut-offs to be announced by the Colleges. A concession of maximum 10% in the last cut-off marks fixed for unreserved category Candidates shall be extended to the Kashmiri Migrants. Reservation under this category is not available in programs where admission is based on entrance tests.

❖ **Start Date** : Monday, 02 August 2021

❖ **End Date** : Thursday, August 31, 2021

For details visit <https://admission.uod.ac.in>

DTE Haryana Admission

B.E./B. Tech Kashmiri Migrants

KM category candidate shall apply online and the application fee for the purpose shall also be deposited online on www.onlinetesthry.gov.in through Credit/Debit Card or Net banking by using online payment gateway.

Candidate, if any, simultaneously applying for all options i.e., through JEE (MAIN)-2021 for B.E./B. Tech. 2021 as well as under Kashmiri Migrants (KM) Quota are required to apply separately and deposit the separate counselling fee i.e. Rs. 500/- (non-refundable), through <https://techadmissionshry.gov.in> for submitting separate Application Forms.

Candidates are required to fill online application form on <https://onlinetesthry.gov.in>

gov.in. He/ She will get unique application number after submission of online application form. The unique application form number may be used by the candidate for any correspondence with HSTES, Panchkula.

Apply online on websites:
<https://onlinetesthry.gov.in> 04.08.2021 to 01.09.2021

Online 1st Counselling 17.09.2021 to 21.09.2021

Online 2nd Counselling 30.09.2021 to 05.10.2021

Central University of Himachal Pradesh Admission

Central University of Himachal Pradesh invites applications from interested eligible candidates for admission to various Undergraduate, Postgraduate, PG Diploma, Diploma and Certificate Courses offered by the university for the academic year 2021-22

❖ Last date for submission of Application for PG: 22nd August 2021

❖ Last date for submission of Application for all UG, PG Diploma & Certificate courses: 31st August 2021.

❖ Date of Entrance Examination (For PG Programmes of Study only) : 11th September 2021

Eligible candidates can apply online through the official website <http://cuhimachal.ac.in/>

The Kashmiri migrant students shall have the concessions in admission to various programmes during academic year 2021-22:

Two seats are available under supernumerary quota for admitting students coming from the state of Jammu & Kashmir

Feedback: vijaykashkari@gmail.com

Education
is the manifestation
of the perfection already in man

- Swami Vivekananda





AIKS Matrimonial Service



Looking for a suitable match for our Son born on 17 January, 1989 at 6.55 AM. Place of Birth: Srinagar, Height :5'5". He has done 4 year degree B.H.M. in Hotel Management from Acharya Institute of Management and Sciences Peenya Bangalore. Working at Chef de Partie, VOX Cinema Red Sea Mall, Jeddah Drawing Salary of 10 Lakh Per Annum. Permanent resident of Bul bul, Lanker ji Ali kadal srinagar and Presently residing at: Shiv Dass Colony Tomal Anand Nagar bohri H.No. 9/2. Interested may Contact on MB no. 9419166991, 9797558803.



Alliance for my daughter, DOB. 23rd April 1989, POB Srinagar, TOB. 1.45 PM, Height. 158, Qualification, BE Electrical from Bombay University, Job description software Engineer In MNC Pune, Permanent Address: Ali Kadal Srinagar, Present address Pune, Contact Number 918605012408, Email address: newmatrimonial90@gmail.com



Alliance is invited for our 1992 year born daughter. She has completed BE in IT from Kurukshetra University and is presently employed in TCS. Family originally hails from district Pulwama presently settled in Jammu. For Tekni and Kulawali please contact 9419227270, 7780857090



Looking for a suitable match for our son, born 2nd January 1991 at 6.30 PM at Jammu. Height - 5'11", B.E (C.S.E) Computer Science. From VTU University. Presently working as LEAD INSIDE SALES in Metric Stream (MNC) Company at Bangalore with handsome package.



Interested persons may contact on: - MB No. 7006171324, 9055272134, 8717090262 & 8717090264, WhatsApp No. 7006171324 & 9055272134 and Email-Id: - hldhar1958@gmail.com



Seeking Suitable Alliance for our Son, Ht- 5'.10", Born on 20/12/1991 At New Delhi. The Boy has done five years post high school education in Advanced finance/accounting and hospitality/hotel management. Presently Looking after well-established family business of well-to-do family settled in Canada (toronto) for over 25 years.

Interested may contact kaul123@hotmail.com or WhatsApp +14168719147



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



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



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

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



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



Parents seeking marriage proposal for their daughter. Our daughter is a physician and is based in the US. She is a US citizen. We are looking for a suitable professional Kashmiri Pandit match. Our daughter is talented, humble, and has been raised in Kashmiri and Indian culture at home. She is willing to relocate to India or other countries for the right match. Date of birth October 12, 1982 at 1:30 am, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA. A recent photograph would be very helpful. Please correspond with a brief writeup of the family and a tekni to: kkker50@msn.com. WhatsApp: +1 202-765-5444.



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Web : www.aiks.org E-mail : hqaiks@gmail.com

Application No. :

Date :

The President

All India Kashmir Samaj

244, Sector-3, R.K. Puram
New Delhi - 110022

Dear Sir,

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

Name (In full) :

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

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

Mobile : **Email :**

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

With best wishes
Yours Sincerely

Signature

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

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

Amount : **Date :**

AIKS Receipt No. :

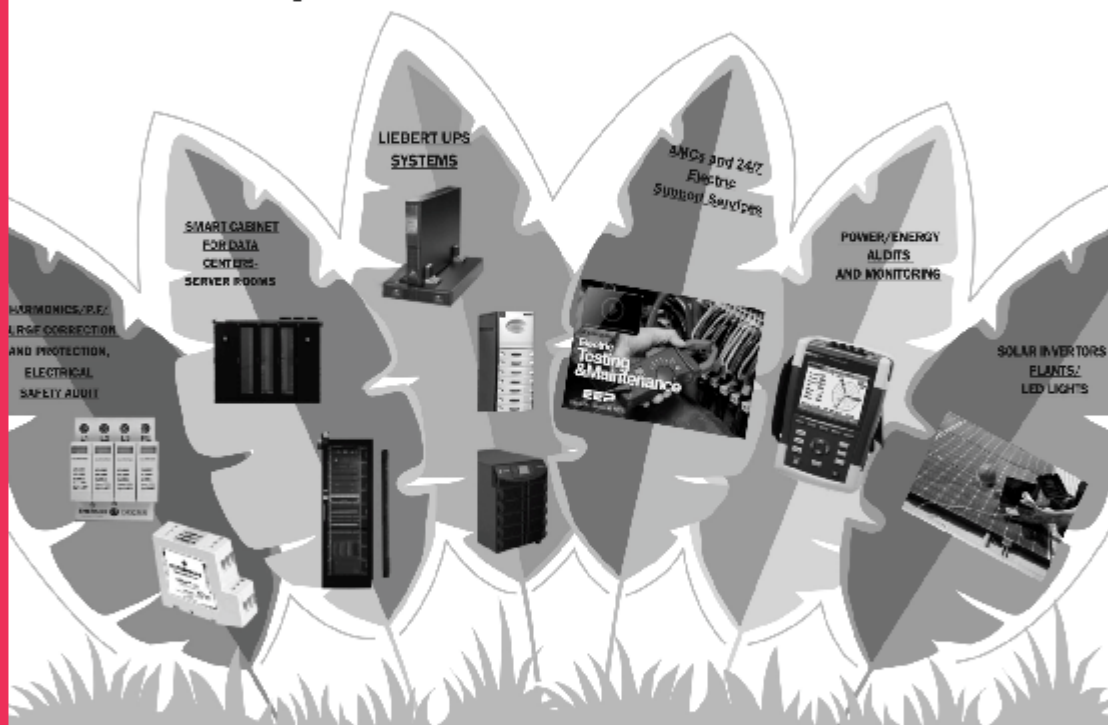
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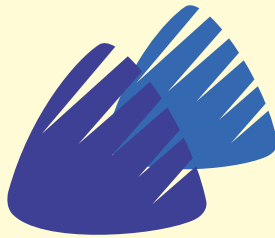
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OBITUARY



Shri Badri Nath Malla

(28.04.1928 – 05.05.2021)

With profound grief we inform the sad demise of our father Shri Badri Nath Malla, original resident of Malik Angan, Fateh Kadal Srinagar (J&K) on 05 May 2021.

Daddy, as he was fondly called, was a man of strong will power, dedication and fighting spirit. Himself a yoga enthusiast for the past 20 years he was always motivated others to follow it. It was because of his zeal to live a long and healthy life that he had set a target of completing 100 years for himself. Unfortunately he could not achieve it due to some complications in the later years of his life and passed away at the age of 93.

He was fond of acquiring latest gadgets, and his love for these, even if he could not use them, is something we are going to cherish forever. His lively nature, strong will power and dedication will remain in our hearts for many years to come. Although for the last few years he struggled with his health but sailed through every challenge and always came back victorious. We were sure he will come back this time as well, but Lord had a different plan for him.

We pray to God to give him place at his lotus feet. May he be happy wherever he is and keep showering his blessing on all of us.

Om Shanti

Deeply Missed and Remembered by:

- Neelmani & Nirmal Malla (Son & Daughter-in-law)
 - Meena Malla (Daughter-in-law)
- Sushma & P.K Kaul (Daughter & Son-in-law)
- Geeta & Vipin Makkar (Daughter & Son-in-law)

Grand Children

Ankit, Pulkit, Charu-Himanshu, Abhishek, Anirudh, Heemal, Shefali-Jatin, Kshitij

Great Grand Children

Bhavya, Raghiya

Community Volunteers Serving the Needy





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