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AIKS naad

A Monthly Publication of **all india kashmiri samaj**

Sushree Prabha Devi Attains Moksha!



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Merges into Universal Consciousness!**

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THIS MONTH'S COVER
Tribute to
Sushree Devi Prabha Ji

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Last few days, the Indian media had been busy collecting TRPs, and the trigger was the speech of Nadav Lapid at the closing ceremony of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI). There were prime time shows and not-so-prime-time ones that hogged the viewers' attention. They were unanimous in deploring the irresponsible comments of Nadav, when he referred to the film – The Kashmir Files as “*vulgar propaganda*.” While the ruling dispensation widely condemned it, the pseudo-secular gang latched on to the remarks like leeches, expressing vindication of their narrative.

While the media remained busy for the next couple of days, a significant news went unnoticed and the media houses passed it off as moving stickers at the bottom of the television screens. The newsprint gave it space in the remote inner pages at insignificant places. The news was about the rejection of the petition by the apex court about the KP Community seeking trials of those who killed over one thousand Pandits during the 1990s. The judgement argued that the case is too old and cannot be taken up. For a layman, it translates into the conclusion that such old deaths are not killings, chastising the perpetrators of the heinous crimes as innocents. Though, this was on expected lines since it related to the beleaguered community called Kashmiri Pandits, the irony is that the preceding news was also, somewhere, related to the same issue. But there was a stark difference in response from the media. Why? It is a point to ponder!

While some may lament about this apathy, the KPs, at large, have also let this unfortunate judgement go unnoticed and not

reacted; perhaps accepting it as fait accompli. For the mundane, the judgement translates into assuming that the people like Yasin Malik and Bitu Karate are deemed to be innocent. There can't be a bigger miscarriage of justice than this. It is sad and unfortunate.

Having said that, my attention returns to the same haunting point that has been the focus of my previous few editorials. It may seem nagging, repetitive and, at times, abhorring, I don't feel discouraged or angered for this reaction because I believe we need to be woken-up from a very deep slumber that has numbed our senses into putrefaction and inertia. Undeterred by what is happening to us, we continue to be busy fighting for one-upmanship, pulling others down for self-aggrandisement. The above two episodes are but only few indications to us that we do not matter to anyone because we don't add any value to them. This is because we are a fractured people with no strength of unity. Individually we all agree that our disunity is our doom, yet we don't make any effort to break this jinx. Even non-thinking animals live in hoards to be able to put up resistance to their predators, but, calling ourselves the most intelligent race, we are unable to realise the virtue of unity. This is why we are an unfortunate community.

No one will wake us out of our slumber, but ourselves. It is time to shed our egos and initiate union amongst all the umpteen organisations into one unit and raise a single voice that roars and forces the attention of the dispensation and the judiciary into acting on our predicament. Nothing else will.

NAMASKAR!

युक्तकामत *Manish Chandra*

From the President's Desk



Nadav Lapid and the Vulgar Comment

Recently concluded 53rd International Film Festival of India (IFFI) turned ugly with the remarks of its Head of the jury, Nadav Lapid, about the film – The Kashmir Files in his concluding speech. He called it “Vulgar Propaganda.” Whether it came of his own volition or he was prompted to do so, is anybody's guess. However, having such remarks in his speech has not surprised those who are conversant with his background.

So, precisely who is Nadav Lapid? He is a 47-year-old Israeli film maker who has made some 13 odd films. In his own country, Israel, he is known as Israel hater who sympathises with the Palestinian cause. His film – *Synonyms* got him the Golden Bear Award in the 69th Berlin International Film Festival in February 2019. Talking while promoting the film to the New Toronto Magazine, he said, “Collective Soul of Israel is a sick Soul!” A man who holds such a deplorable opinion about his own country and countrymen, how does one expect him to be sensitive and sympathetic about another country and its people? This man doesn't seem to be aware of the sufferings and struggles his own countrymen have gone through for centuries and are still fighting the challenges of terrorism, how can one expect him to be sensitive towards the issues and challenges of people of other countries. However, we are appreciative of Naor Gilan, Israel's ambassador to India who castigated Lapid over Twitter, finding his remarks as presumptuous and

insensitive; other diplomats from Israel supported Gilan. True to their character, the pseudo-secular opposition in India supported his remarks.

What is pertinent to note here is the reaction of the other jury members. Mr Sudipto Das, one of the jury members, distanced himself from the remark when he said that this is completely Lapid's personal opinion and not supported by the other members of the jury. Noteworthy is the specific comment of Mr Das when he said that the norm of the concluding speech is to talk about the top awarded films in the festival and not of others. This throws up a pertinent point – was it truly Lapid's doing or others who prompted him to add these remarks? With the instant support shown by the left lobby and their likes, one can safely conclude where would have the instigation come from.

In the backdrop of what Nadav Lapid remarked, it is pertinent to ask if some other similar atrocities of genocide are referred to as ugly propaganda? For instance:

- ✓ No Jew calls Schindler's list as propaganda.
- ✓ No Christian calls The Ottoman Lieutenant propaganda.
- ✓ No Muslim calls Quo Vadis, Aida propaganda.
- ✓ No Tutsi calls Hotel Rwanda propaganda.
- ✓ No Buddhist calls killing fields propaganda.

It is only the external forces, Indian leftist propagandists and some fringe elements who call the Kashmir Files a propaganda film.

Referring to the emotions of the Kashmiri Pandits, decades back in 1994, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has very eloquently said that what happened to Kashmiri Pandits in 1990 in Kashmir is akin to genocide. NHRC is an independent body which is under no political influence while giving its comments and hence its comments carry much more relevance for the world opinion than a careless and irresponsible comment by a person whose credentials themselves are under question.

We, at AIKS, strongly deplore the irresponsible and irrelevant comments by Nadav Lapid which has added insult to injury and rubbed three decades old wounds of Kashmiri Pandits.



- Puran Patwari



General Secretary's Column

The month of November and December were high on activity quotient.

AIKS Policy Consultative Group:

AIK'S decision making body, AIKS Policy Consultative Group in its meeting on 8th December at its new office in Ashoka Enclave Faridabad, discussed broad contours of upcoming 21st January AIKS All India Affiliate Conclave to be held at Kashir Sabha, Ambala. The policy consultative group also discussed the AGM on 10th December to be held at YMCA, New Delhi.

Annual General Council Meeting

All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) held its Annual General Council Meeting (AGM) on 10th December at YMCA, New Delhi. The much awaited event was attended by most of its Institutional, Patron and Life members, and also some distinguished guests/members like its former President, Shri MotiKoul.

Notable among the Affiliates were Padmashree Prof Sudhir Sopory, President Kashmiri Sewak Samaj, Faridabad; Shri Ravi Mawa President Kashmir Sabha Vadodara; Shri Rajinder Koul, General Secretary Kashmir Hindu Sabha Karnataka; Shri A.K. Wattal President Kashir Sabha Ambala; Shri Kamal Hak President KMWA-Noida; Shri A.K Raina

AIKS Vice President for Jammu and Kashmir region and many more.

AIKS Executive team and Consultative Group members were in full attendance, including its Special Invitees and Patron member Padamshri Prof Rameshwar and Smt Gita Bamzai, Editor-in-Chief of Naad Shri Umakant Kachroo and Vaakh Editor, Dr. Roop Krishen Bhat. There were other distinguished patron and life members, also in attendance was Shri Ashutosh Taploo of Tikka Lal Taploo Foundation. The meeting was presided over by the President Dr Ramesh Raina. The meeting had to be reconvened after a short break for lack of quorum. The meeting went on as per the agenda and was conducted by General Secretary Shri Puran Patwari. (Full report elsewhere)

AIKS Affiliate Conclave

AIKS is holding an ALL India Affiliate Conclave with the collaboration with Kashir Sabha, Ambala on 21st January at Ambala. The Conclave which will be attended by its Affiliates all over India and also by some prominent community activists and distinguished members of the community, will unveil its calendar of activities and agenda for 2023, which will mainly focus on onward struggle of the

community in the face of unpleasant rants and signals from political class from across the tunnel.

Shakti Nagar Project

AIKS appoints Shri R.K Bhan as its representative to coordinate between the apex organization and Samchar. It has mandated Shri Bhan to hold talks with Samchar organization head and impress upon him to honour the Joint Management Committee (JMC) agreements for building the community asset at Shakti Nagar twin plots of land.

AIKS TRUST

AIKS Trust is involved in court litigation, therefore its details cannot not be divulged in open forum, as the matter is sub judice. AIKS is respondent in the case and next hearing of the court case is for February 2023.

AIKS CWP:

About the latest status of Civil Writ Petition pending in J&K High Court, AIKS lauds the efforts of the team of community Advocates/lawyers led by Shri P.N Raina and Shri P.N Goja and Shri Ravinder Bhat and Shri Kashmiri Lal who are pleading pro-bono on behalf of the community and religiously attend the hearings. It also places on record the services of Shri A.K Raina, VP for J&K state and Shri Aryan Ramesh, General Secretary for J&K in pursuing the matter with due diligence and coordinating with lawyers and supporting them with all relevant documents asked for by the judge from time to time. AIKS on behalf of the Community is highly indebted to them and place on record the expression of gratitude to them.

All India AIKS Affiliates Meet

on 21st & 22nd January 2023

in collaboration with

Kashir Sabha – Ambala

All affiliate members of AIKS
are cordially invited
to join this historic meet

Venue

Kashmir Bhavan, Ambala
Near Axiom Ayurveda, Rampur-ChandpuShra Road,
Sarsehri, Ambala Cantt, Haryana-133006

Date : January 21/22-2023

Time : 9.30 am to 4.30 pm

E-Mail: hqaiks@gmail.com, ashoka2176@gmail.com



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING OF ALL INDIA KASHMIRI SAMAJ (REGD.) HELD ON 10TH DECEMBER, 2022, NEW DELHI

All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) held its Annual General Council Meeting (AGM) on 10th December 2022 at YMCA, New Delhi. The much awaited event was attended by most of its Institutional, Patron and Life members, and also some distinguished guests/ members, prominent among them being Shri Moti Koul, former President.

Notable among the Affiliates were Padmashree Prof Sudhir Sopory, President Kashmiri Sewak Samaj, Faridabad; Shri Ravi Mawa President Kashmir Sabha Vadodara; Shri Rajinder Koul, General Secretary Kashmir Hindu Sabha Karnataka; Shri A.K.Wattal President Kashir Sabha Ambala; Shri Kamal Hak President KMWA-Noida ; Shri A.K Raina AIKS Vice President, J&K and many more.

AIKS Executive team and Consultative Group members were in full attendance, including its special invitees and patron members like Padmashree Prof Rameshwar Bamezai and Dr Gita Bamezai, Editor-in-Chief of Naad Shri Uma Kant Kachru and Editor of Vaakh, Dr Roop Krishen Bhat. There were other distinguished patron and life members. Also in attendance was Shri Ashutosh Taploo of Tikka Lal Taploo Foundation. The meeting was presided over by the President Dr Ramesh Raina. The meeting had to be reconvened after a short break for lack of quorum. The meeting went on as per the agenda and was conducted by General Secretary Shri Puran Patwari.

The meeting began by observing two-minute silence for all those community members who have attained nirvana and those unfortunate who lost their lives to the bullets of hatred in selective target killing orgies carried

out by Jehadi groups in the Kashmir valley.

The proceedings began by President making an address and dwelling on theme of AIKS-2023 which shall be touched off by holding an AIKS Affiliate Conclave on 21 January at Kashir Sabha Ambala. He announced that AIKS will start the New Year with the Affiliate Conclave Meet in Ambala in collaboration with Kashir Sabha Ambala. The two-day event will be coordinated by Shri A K Wattal, President Kashir Sabha and Vice-President AIKS. The event will nearly coincide with the Holocaust Day which will also be observed in the conclave event.

Besides, in his address, Dr Raina alluded to many problems AIKS as organization was facing and as community KPs were confronted with, especially in the context of their relevance to socio/cultural and political life of Kashmir—their growing alienation and frustration with the continued official apathy and what should be the way forward. He also spoke of financial difficulties the apex organization was face to face with, partly also brought upon it by the cancellation of government accommodation to it and shifting of office to a new address. His focus also remained on finding a permanent address for AIKS and the resource generation towards that end, which was much applauded by the General Council members.

After the Presidential address, it was the time for the General Secretary to read the activity report before the members. The minutes of the previous GCM held on March 21, 2021 was passed by voice vote. He also presented the accounts statement, prepared by AIKS Treasurer

Shri Sunil Koul, which was passed by the General Council. The membership applications of new patron and life members were also approved. There was an enthusiastic floor participation with members vociferously giving their inputs and seeking answers. Following agenda items were discussed:

Shakti Nagar Project: Shri R K Bhan apprised the General Council about the latest status of Shakti Nagar Project. Shri Bhan has been appointed by AIKS as its representative to impress upon the Koshur Samchar leadership to follow the Joint agreement between Samchar and AIKS for the construction of the community asset at Shakti Nagar.

AIKS Trust: The General Council was apprised that since AIKS Trust is sub-judice therefore its details could not be divulged in open forum. However, the General Secretary intimated the House about the next Court hearing which falls in February 2023.

AIKS Civil Writ Petition: Shri A.K Raina briefed the house about the latest status of Civil Writ Petition pending in J&K High Court. He lauded the efforts of the team of the community advocates/ lawyers led by Shri P.N Raina, Shri P.N Goja, Shri Ravinder Bhat and Shri Kashmiri Lal who are pleading pro-bono on behalf of the community and religiously attend the hearings. Shri Raina said that in order to spread awareness among community members regarding this CWP, AIKS should compile the court decision orders in the form of a booklet and widely circulate it among the community members. The suggestion found a ready supporter in Padmashree Prof Rameshwar Bamezai who offered to bear the cost of the project.

Dignitaries who spoke on the occasion were former President Shri Moti Koul, who, while lauding Dr Raina's Affiliate Connect programme, calling it a great and visionary effort to keep community cohesive. Analysing the present situation of the community, Shri Koul stressed for the need for an introspection to figure out if the community organisations like AIKS can find out if there is a course correction needed for getting the community issues a better hearing from the dispensations. In present political context where community was feeling a bit disgruntled and left out, Shri Koul said that

we have to reinvent ourselves and shake up our strategy to make ourselves relevant and saleable commodity in the political market.

In his speech Shri Ravi Mawa was all praise for the AIKS efforts to reach out to affiliates. He said Umbrella organization should not feel financially wanting when its affiliates are doing well. Shri Mawa received thunderous applaud for that statement.

Shri A.K Wattal said he was looking forward to the 21 January AIKS Affiliate Conclave and Kashir Sabha Ambala was making preparations for the community jamboree on the day. Shri Wattal extended invitation for the participation in the programme to everyone present and to all the affiliates of AIKS.

Shri Rajinder Koul of Bangalore Sabha spoke highly about the efforts of President Dr Raina's efforts to keep community together through his Affiliate Connect programme. He also reiterated to look into the issues that were discussed with the AIKS President during his Affiliate Connect programme in Bangalore.

Shri Kamal Hak spoke about some difficulties in Apex Organizations constitution which he said needed to be removed and rectified to make it a lucid and simplified document. He said it was satisfying that present AIKS team had set up a Constitution Review committee and he would send suggestions to it. He also reiterated support of KMW to AIKS.

Shri Rohit Dhar, Vice President AIKS, while responding to some usual and routine accounting queries, satisfied the House with financial Accounting status of the apex organization.

Shri Uma Kant Kachru spoke about the pains and pleasures he was experiencing while editing and bringing out the monthly community magazine Naad. He also touched upon the issue of financial difficulties the prestigious journal was going through, in the face of which the editorial board had decided to go digital for some time and print only limited number of copies.

AIKS VP Dr Manorama Bakshi presented the expression of gratitude to the august General Council members which was followed by a high tea.

Glimpses of AIKS AGM

on 10th December, 2022 at New Delhi







- Ashok Bhan



Pakistan

A PERILOUS JOURNEY FROM Jinnahistan to Jihadistan

(It is time for Pakistan to realize what could not be settled in 1947 cannot be settled now and pursue a foreign policy based on universal brotherhood)



Pakistan that was carved out as a separate dream homeland for South Asian Muslims has gone astray. Instead of pursuing Jinnahism and following the tenets of its founder, it has chosen to follow Jihadism. It has made supporting terror a part of its state policy.

Instead of building on the common Indian pluralistic heritage, where Muslims also contributed and shined, successive Pakistani regimes and the intelligentsia have preferred to build the idea of Pakistan on pillars of Islam and antagonism towards India. The hate India has been made as a national narrative. Time has

proved that Pakistan's paranoia regarding India is unfounded.

Using terrorist groups as part of its security and foreign policy shows its obsession with India which it perceives as an existential threat. The ideology of Pakistan is built on twin pillars of Islam and antagonism towards India. Pakistan never realized that as a nation-state it should create its history and move forward but lived with historical appropriation and distortions of the past.

India's relations with Pakistan have been defined by the Partition in 1947, the Kashmir conundrum and the military conflicts fought between the two South Asian neighbours. The relations have always been plagued by conflicts, hostilities and suspicion even though the two share common linguistic, cultural, geographical and economic linkages.

India always offered an olive branch to sort out amicably some of the pressing issues including Kashmir. Indian Prime minister Pt Jawahar Lal Nehru was engaged with Pakistan

therefore, visited Karachi in July 1953, where he received tumultuous reception.

Sheikh's tantrums in Kashmir

But in August 1953 political developments turned ugly for India in Kashmir because of Shiekh Abdullah, who already was being perceived as a thorn in the flesh of the body politic of India.

On August 7, BBC reported a speech of Shiekh on Martyr's- day in July: "If I felt by remaining Independent, Kashmir Would be well off, I would not hesitate to raise my voice in favour of complete freedom for Kashmir. If I felt that Kashmir's betterment lay in its accession to Pakistan, no power in the world could silence my voice."

Shiekh was arrested on 8-9th August 1953. Pakistan's joining the US in a defence pact changed the context of bilateral negotiations. Nehru took a firm stand by saying Pakistan is irrelevant as far as Kashmir is concerned. He said Jammu and Kashmir

The ideology of Pakistan is built on twin pillars of Islam and antagonism towards India. Pakistan never realized that as a nation-state it should create its history and move forward but lived with historical appropriation and distortions of the past.

leadership from 1948 onwards. Pakistan's third Prime Minister Mohamed Ali in April 1953 approached Nehru for discussing the bilateral issues. They met on the side-lines of the 6th Commonwealth Conference in London in June 1953. Both sides discussed issues of canal waters, evacuee properties and other issues, except the Kashmir, cordially. Ali invited Nehru for a visit to Karachi. Various issues were being discussed by the officials separately. Nehru realized engagement with Pakistan would benefit in removing irritants in bilateral relations.

He was under impression that an engagement may not take Pakistan for a military buildup and join a military alliance with the US. He was also of the view that it may lead to the relaxation of tension in the sub-continent and it could rescue India from the dangers of Cold War politics etc. Nehru,

Constituent Assembly shall henceforth decide the future of Kashmir. He confidently said: "if Kashmir Constituent assembly, did not approve of the State's accession to India, New Delhi would walk out of the State." The assembly finally voted in favour of India.

Pakistan's brazen belligerence continues towards India despite the extension of an olive branch from time and again by India for good neighbourly relations. Pakistan's Kashmir rants echo always in United Nations Human Rights Council at Geneva and rake up the issue at UNGA. India fiercely replies calling Pakistan "Terroristan" and asserts J&K as its integral part. India is not willing to renegotiate Kashmir's territorial status. The bilateral issues can be addressed through talks and negotiations.

There have been military wars, continuing undeclared wars, numerous

skirmishes and standoffs. Many successful attempts to improve relations through Shimla Agreement, Agra and Lahore summits, etc, have fallen apart. The relations soured after the Siachen conflict of 1980, the Kashmir insurgency of 1989 onwards and the Kargil war. Terror attacks on the Indian Parliament in 2001 almost brought two nuclear nations to the brink of war. Mumbai terror attack of 2008 by Pakistani terrorists that killed hundreds, and its continuous support to terrorists in Kashmir to delegitimise the idea of India has soured our relations further.

The US has always been helpful and concerned about regional security in South Asia. US experts feel that India-Pakistan tensions will complicate and spoil Peace interests in the region and the Chinese incursions in Ladakh has put India's geostrategic interests in Jeopardy. The foreign policy experts wish to alert Mr Modi on the implications of the close China-Pakistan relations as Beijing is trying to remake geography by launching huge infrastructure roads and bridges on the borders on the one hand and the other continue with belligerence the incursions in Ladakh Therefore, persistent and astute diplomatic engagement at a comprehensive level with nations in the region becomes important. That is how PM Modi is attempting to toggle out of the current diplomatic Catch -20 syndrome.

Downslide in

Relations with its Former Allies

Despite having started to reboot its diplomatic ties with the US to end the stalemate of the last few years, Islamabad's relations with other nations have been on the downside because it lied to the world about the presence of Al Qaeda chief — Osama bin Laden — in Pakistan. The Americans nailed these lies by carrying out Operation Neptune Spear and he was found in Abbottabad near the elite military school in Pakistan and was liquidated. All eyes are on Pakistan and it has to come clean and stop breeding terrorists in its backyard and root them out.

The Modi government's policy to isolate Pakistan from erstwhile friendly countries such as the UAE, Central Asian countries and other relevant nations have succeeded. By now the world has acknowledged the stark truth that Pakistan is the sponsor of terrorism and poses a serious threat to security in the South Asian region. As such at the moment no dialogue with Pakistan is the Indian policy.

India's astute diplomacy and her latest strategy may require a change in Pakistan's unrealistic rigidity that Kashmir is the unfinished business of Partition. That view, having no legal merits has not many takers internationally. The United Nations Now, with 193 members, shows virtually no interest in the issue. Pakistan's leaders still refuse to recognise that the territorial status quo and a better life for Kashmiris might be all they can hope for. They prefer to keep Kashmir alive as a problem that is neither solved nor set aside.

Pakistan's desire for an international solution to Kashmir seems farther from possibility than ever. In the aftermath of the recent Modi Government decision, the US noted that India considers it an internal matter. Chinese's reaction was Focused more on its territorial dispute with India over Ladakh than on Pakistan's stance although the Chinese statement did refer to the dispute as “an issue left from the past between India and Pakistan.”

Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and the Maldives – all members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) – acknowledged the internal nature of the constitutional changes. Among member states of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), United Arab Emirates (UAE) took the lead in expressing the hope that the changes would improve the lives of Kashmiris.

Biden toes Trump's policy on Pakistan

Imran Khan's call to Turkey's Preside Recep Tayyip Erdogan elicited a promise of “steadfast support” without condemnation of India. A similar call for support to Malaysia's Prime Minister Tun Mahathir bin Mohamad resulted only in a lukewarm expression of concern. Despite having started to reboot its

India's astute diplomacy and her latest strategy may require a change in Pakistan's unrealistic rigidity that Kashmir is the unfinished business of Partition.

diplomatic ties with the US to end the stalemate of the last few years, Islamabad's relations with other nations have been on the downside because it lied to the world about the presence of Al Qaeda chief — Osama bin Laden — in Pakistan. The Americans nailed these lies by carrying out Operation Neptune Spear and he was found in Abbottabad near the elite military school in Pakistan and was liquidated. All eyes are on Pakistan and it has to come clean and stop breeding terrorists in its backyard and root them out.

Former US President Trump had voiced his strong-arm policy against terrorism. Now the almost same policy is echoed by the current Joe Biden Administration. Pakistan has to take it seriously if it wishes to get financial aid from the US. Financial Action Task Force is eyeing Pakistan. China removed the objection to putting Pakistan on the grey list by FATF.

Pakistan is being placed on the global terrorist-financing list from June 2018 onwards that would endanger its handful of remaining banking links to the outside world causing financial pain to its economy. Saudi Arabia has also removed its objection and now only Turkey is supporting Pakistan. President Trump has said it is time to expose and hold responsible those countries who breed, support and finance terror groups. The US administration has charted a new South Asia policy in which it has sought a larger role for India in South Asia and has put Pakistan on notice.

Pakistan's temper tantrums and petulance responses have not convinced the US and other nations. Pakistan has to take a hard look at options. It has to play tough against Hizbul Mujahideen, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad and all other similar groups.

International relations are seldom about legalistic and moral arguments of the kind

Pakistanis offer about the invalidity of then Maharaja Hari Singh's accession and subsequent UN resolutions on Kashmir. Countries care more about their interests and Pakistan offers less and less in terms of value concerning others.

China's annual trade with India amounts to \$95 billion compared to \$13 billion with Pakistan. Turkey's trade with India stands at \$8.6 billion against \$1 billion with Pakistan. Malaysia-India trade at \$14 billion is 14 times more than the \$1 billion of goods and services Malaysia exchanges with Pakistan.

Buying peace hostile neighbour

Modi by now is conscious that he may not be able to transact any big issue with Pakistan because it wants business on Siachen and Sir Creek, which in turn is always demurred. India does not buy any formula on Kashmir, as it firmly believes terror and talks cannot go together and until and unless Pakistan brings to the book perpetrators of the 26/11 Mumbai killings. The territorial status of Kashmir is not negotiable. Thus, the only issue that can find an agreement is enhanced trade relations and other economic development schemes but that too will take some time to materialise.

Conducting frequent talks at different levels, which do not yield a satisfying outcome, is part of diplomacy. India and its Prime Minister are to be seen as a participant in the process of buying peace with even the hostile neighbour country to promote his credentials as a moderniser internationally.

It is time for Pakistan to take these harsh realities into account instead of just emotional and religion-based appeals to settle what could not be settled in 1947. The civilizational ethos of foreign policy should be a strong belief in universal brotherhood - Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam



- Er. P L Khushu



Notable Events before and after the Accession of J&K with the Dominion of India

“A SUMMARIZED PORTRAIT”

Maharaja Hari Singh, was the last ruling Maharaja of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir amongst other princely states of India. Maharaja Hari Singh was born on 23 September 1895 at Jammu and was the only surviving son of General Raja Sir Amar Singh who was the brother of Maharaja Pratap Singh, the then Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir. After the death of his uncle Maharaja Pratap Singh in 1925, Maharaja Hari Singh ascended the throne of Jammu and Kashmir.

In 1931, when Maharaja Hari Singh was the sovereign ruler of the Jammu and Kashmir, which included Ladakh, Gilgit-Baltistan, Muzaffarabad-Mirpur, Aksai Chin and Saksham Valley, the British wanted him to lease them the Gilgit agency. The Maharaja was reluctant. He was a rare Hindu king who ruled over his predominantly Muslim subjects. The British decided to turn a few

screws. A rabble rouser Ahmadi from Peshawar, Abdul Qadir, was brought into Srinagar by the British intelligence agency in the garb of a cook for the local British resident. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, then a recent product from the Aligarh Muslim University and politically active and ambitious, was also roped in. A public meeting was organized at the Shah-e-Hamdaan, Khanqah Mohalla. There, Abdul Qadir, the rabble rouser, delivered a fiery speech. He quoted liberally from the Quran to incite the Muslims against the Maharaja. Spewing communal venom and inflaming passion, he asserted that the book forbade Muslims to subject themselves to an infidel Hindu ruler. He also incited them to cow slaughter, which was forbidden under the law. Qadir was ordered to be arrested for sedition. His arrest was resisted. Later, his trial too was sought to be disrupted repeatedly. It was then decided to hold his trial in the jail premises itself. This is how GS Raghavan, former editor

The support of Mahatma Gandhi and Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru was a key factor in getting Sheikh Abdullah appointed as Head of the emergency administration by the Maharaja.

of some leading dailies like Hindustan Times, The Nation, and The Sunday Times described the instances of July 13, 1931, now known as “Martyrs’ day” “in Jammu and Kashmir”, in his book “The Warning From Kashmir: ”

The hearing in jail fell on 13th July. On that day, a mob stormed the jail and demanded admittance along with the Sessions Judge. The crowd stoned the policemen and some prisoners were made to flee. A section of the recalcitrant's proceeded towards Maharaj Ganj, a business locality mostly belonging to Hindus and loot over an extensive area followed. From Bhorī Kadal to Alikadal a long stretch, Hindu shops were raided. Other localities such as Safakadal, Ganji Khud and Nawakadal too formed the centers of loot. Market streets were littered with property,

Jammu and Kashmir and is still a day of government holiday on that date. But the situation is otherwise. (It is only a glimpse of that event mentioned here in this article, when an elaborate account of this day of carnage will be given by this author in a separate article).

In 1947, after India became independent, Jammu and Kashmir had the option to join either India or Pakistan or to remain independent. It is said that Maharaja Hari Singh originally had an inclination to maintain his independence by playing off India and Pakistan. Jammu and Kashmir was a Muslim majority state the raiders from the neighboring northwest frontier, subsequently known as “Qabalties”, duly supported by newly created Pakistan, invaded Jammu and



books of accounts were burnt, and the Hindu shopkeepers were molested. In short, pandemonium prevailed." A myth is sought to be propagated that it was a "democratic" uprising, to uproot the prevailing "feudal" order. None whatsoever. It was an Islamist rebellion against the Hindu king. Sheikh Abdullah too was found complicit in the uprising. He was arrested, tried, convicted and sent to prison. This day of 13th July was subsequently declared as “Martyrs’ day”, in

Kashmir under the impression that Maharaja Hari Singh would accede to India. Maharaja Hari Singh appealed to India for help for sending troops to fight these tribal invaders. Maharaja Hari Singh was advised to accede to India by the Government of India before India could send its troops. Hence, considering the emergency situation, the Maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession to the Dominion of India on 26th of October-1947. By executing this Instrument of



Accession under the provisions of the Indian Independence Act 1947, Maharaja Hari Singh agreed to accede to the Dominion of India. In return the Indian armed forces were air lifted to Kashmir, by the Government of India, to fight back the Pakistan-supported raiders. While the Indian army had made successful advances in throwing the raiders back, a cease fire was declared at the asking of Pt. Jawaharlal, the then Prime Minister of India. As per this cease fire the western and northern districts presently known as Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan passed to the control of Pakistan. The rest of the area came under the control of India, which is presently the Indian-administered state of Jammu and Kashmir, now the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and the Union Territory Ladakh.

Maharaja Hari Singh in his Accession Offer to the then Governor General of India, Lord Mountbatten wrote, "I may also inform your Excellency's Government that it is my intention to set up an interim Government and ask Sheikh Abdullah to carry the responsibilities in this emergency with my Prime Minister." Lord Mountbatten accepted the accession after a meeting of the Defense Committee on 26 October 1947. In accepting

the accession unconditionally, he wrote among other points, that "My Government and I note with satisfaction that your Highness has decided to invite Sheikh Abdullah to form an Interim Government to work with your Prime Minister." The support of Mahatma Gandhi and Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru was a key factor in getting Sheikh Abdullah appointed as Head of the emergency administration by the Maharaja. He raised a force of local Kashmiri volunteers to patrol Srinagar and take control of administration after the flight of the Maharaja along with his family and Prime Minister Meher Chand Mahajan to Jammu even before the Indian troops had landed. Sheikh Abdullah was then appointed as Prime Minister of the Jammu & Kashmir State as the post of Chief of Administration was subsequently abolished in March 1948. This happened with the constant intervention from Jawaharlal Nehru to Maharaja Hari Singh that Sheikh Abdullah should be made the Prime Minister and power of administration transferred to him fully. Due to the invasion of raiders Maharaja had to run away from Kashmir, when he was forced to remove his own Prime Minister and hand over the reins of administration to Sheikh Abdullah fully. Sheikh Abdullah continued to be the Prime Minister till 8th August 1953. He was dismissed as Prime Minister and arrested on 9th of August-1953 and Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad was appointed as the Prime Minister of J & K State. Subsequently a case was lodged against Sheikh Abdullah and others known as "Kashmir Conspiracy Case".

The other Prime Ministers of the Jammu and Kashmir state between January 1927 to March 1948, who worked with Maharaja Hari Singh are mentioned as under:-

Sir Albion Banerjee, 1927-1929, G.E.C. Wakefield, 1929-1931, Hari Kishen Koul, 1931-1932, Elliot James Dowel Colvin, 1932-1936, Sir Barjor J. Dalal, 1936-1937, Sir Gopalaswamy Ayyangar, 1937-1943, Kailash Nath Haksar, 1943-1944, Sir Benegal Narsing Rau, 1944-1945, Ram Chand Kak, 1945-1947, Janak Singh, Aug.1947-Oct. 1947, Mehar Chand Mahajan, Oct.1947-Mar.1948.



- H L Kak



Kashmir's Jewish Connection

An Interesting tradition is passed down among the Kashmir people regarding their ancestry from the Lost Tribes of Israel lost tribe took refuge in Kashmir. This tradition is supported by extensive literature written by both the people of Kashmir and other scholars. In Kashmir, various places are called with Israeli names, like Har Nevo, Beit Peor, Pisga, Heshubon. These are all the names in the land of the Ten Tribes of Israel. The same thing is true in the names of people, male names, female names, and names of village. The people in Kashmir perform a feast called Pasca

in spring, when they adjust the difference of days between the lunar calendar and solar calendar and the way of this adjustment is the same as Jewish. Several books are published on this. The Urdu language which is used in Kashmir includes many words of Hebrew. The history of the Kashmiris is shrouded in mystery as is the history of other people in that region. Most Kashmir researchers are of the opinion that many inhabitants of Kashmir are descendants of the Lost Tribes who were exiled in 722 BCE.

They wandered along the Silk Road into



the countries of the East, Persia and Afghanistan until they reached the Kashmir valley and settled there. Others say the wanderings began approximately 300 years later. The wanderers settled in Kashmir, kept their traditions until they were forced to convert to Islam when the spread of Islam reached the valley. The priest Kitro in his book, the General History of the Mughal Empire, said that the Kashmir people are the descendants of the Israelites. The traveling Arab Historian El Bironi in the 12th century wrote, "In the past, permission to enter Kashmir was given only to Jews." The priest Monstrat said that in the time of Vasco da Gama in the 15th century, "all the inhabitants of this area who have been living here since ancient times can trace their ancestry, according to their race and customs, to the ancient Israelites. Their features, their general physical appearance, their clothing, their ways of conducting business, all show that they are similar to the ancient Israelites." Names like Israelites in Kashmir Recently Mr. Ikbal Chapri, the owner of a houseboat called Haifa (the same name as a big city in Israel) in Srinagar, Kashmir, has written about this topic in the local newspapers. His article was about the names of the tribes and places of Kashmir which are exactly Hebrew. I have a copy of two pages of the list. For example, one of the tribes of Kashmir is called Asheriya which is Asher, the tribe of Dand is Dan, Gadha is Gad, Lavi is Levi. The Tribe of Shaul is the Hebrew name of King Saul. Musa is Moses, Suliamanish is Solomon. And you also have the tribe of Israel, the tribe of Abri which is the tribe of Hebrew, and the tribe of Kahana which is the word for Jewish priest. There are also 50-75 names of places in Kashmir which are in fact the Hebrew names that ancient Israelites were very familiar with. There is a place called Samaryah which is Samaria. Mamre is Mamre, Pishgah is Pishgah, Nabudaal is Mt. Nevo, Bushan is Bashan, Gilgit is Gilgal, Heshba is Heshbon, Amunah is Amon, Gochan is Goshen, Median-pura is Midian, and Guzana is Gozan which is a place name in

Assyria and the very place where the Ten Tribes of Israel were deported.

The name Israel is very common among them as it is among the Pathans, and this name is never used among the Muslims. They also light a candle for the Sabbath, have sidelocks, beards, and emblem or design of the Shield of David. In an area which is on the border of Pakistan, called Yusmarg (Handwara), there lives a group which to this very day calls itself B'nei Israel meaning children of Israel. Many of the inhabitants of Kashmir say that this is the ancient name of all the people of Kashmir. In Kashmir there is a strange tradition of a small community next to the Wallar Link who point out the grave of Moses. There is yet another tradition in connection with King Solomon according to which even King Solomon reached the Kashmir Valley and through his wisdom aided the people of Kashmir by successfully regulating the Jalum river. This tradition is also connected to a place called Solomon's throne which is situated above the capital of Kashmir, Srinagar. Isn't it strange and fascinating that there are historical and even folkloristic tales of ancient Israeli heroes in these strange and exotic places? These also resemble legends in Japan. There is the grave of Moses in Mt. Houdatsu, Ishikawa prefecture, and a legend says that many secret treasures of Solomon are kept in Mt. Tsurugi in Shikoku, Japan. The two primary historians of Kashmir, Mulla Nadiri, who wrote The History of Kashmir and Mulla Ahmad who wrote Events of Kashmir have established without a trace of doubt that the origins of the Kashmiri people are to be found in the people of Israel. Source: <http://www.moshiach.com/tribes/ns/4.html> Kashmir, a valley surrounded by high mountains and rich of awesome sightseeing, is considered one of the most beautiful places in the world. This country is inhabited by different ethnic groups: Kashmiris, Gujjars, Bakarwals, Dards, Ladakhis, Dogras, Hanjis, etc. The Kashmiris are known to be immigrated in the valley from the west in different periods, showing evidence of having been in contact also with the Greek culture. In general, they are different from the other peoples of India,

having clearer complexions and remarkable intellectual qualities, as well as efficiency in business. Kashmiris traditionally trace their ancestry from the so-called “Lost Tribes” of Israel. This tradition is supported by extensive literature written by both the people of Kashmir and other scholars.

The main elements that support the hypothesis that Kashmiris are descendants of Israelites are: **1) Cultural Features and Traditions, 2) Geographical Names, 3) Historical Records.**

1) Cultural Features and Traditions: Even though most Kashmiris are Muslims, they feel a particular attraction and sympathy towards Jews and the Israeli nation, of whom they claim to be descendants. Indeed, the name Israel – never used by Muslims – is very common among them. They have the “Magen David” as their emblem, and men usually have Jewish-style beard and side-locks. Kashmiris light a candle for the Shabbath, and celebrate in Spring a festival that they call Paskha; in this period they adjust their lunar calendar with the solar year, and the way they do it is similar to the Jewish system. Even their language has many Hebrew words. Kashmiris' character, style of clothing, traditions and habits resemble those of Israelis. They do not use animal fat but vegetable oil in their food. The head cover of the old Kashmiri women is quite like the one for Israeli women. Kashmiri girls dance in formations in a similar fashion like the Israeli girls. The Kashmiri women, following the delivery of a child are considered impure for forty days, like the Israeli women (the same applies to Roma/Gypsy women). The majority of the old graves in Kashmir are aligned in east-west direction like the Jewish graves, whereas the Moslem graves are in the north-south direction. There is a group of Kashmiri people that still today call themselves “B'ney Yisrael”, meaning “Children of Israel” (different from the B'ney Yisrael of India, now fully recognized by the State of Israel as Jewish). They assert that this is the original name of all the people of Kashmir in ancient times. Indeed, the names of the Kashmiri tribes are amazingly very similar

to the Tribes of Israel, and according to these names it is likely that they reached the Valley of Kashmir in different periods: one is called the Tribe of Israel, another is Abri [meaning “Hebrew”], and the tribe of Kahana [like the Hebrew word for priest], as well as the Tribes of Musa (Mosheh), Shaul, and Shulaymanish (Shlomoh) seem to indicate a migration before the Kingdom was divided. Other names correspond to single Israelite Tribes, like Gadha as Gad, Asheriya as Asher, Dand as Dan, and even Lavi as Levi. There are legends and tales that link the Kashmir Valley to different events actually happened in the Land of Israel, or about Jewish historical people. For instance, a legendary site allegedly being the grave of Mosheh, and another claimed to be Yeshua's grave, that they say, reached Kashmir in his search for the “Lost Tribes of Israel” – it is very probable that one of his followers, perhaps Toma, who is known to have reached India, has been the one who actually did so. Another tradition says that King Shlomoh visited Kashmir and after his wise counsel the people achieved in successfully regulating the Jalum river. There is a place called Solomon's Throne situated above Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir. Even though his personal visit to the country should be considered a myth, it is quite likely that King Shlomoh had any contact with the people of Kashmir, since he had a fluent commercial activity in India.

2) Geographical Names: more than three-hundred places in Kashmir have names that sound very familiar to ancient Israelites, mainly to the inhabitants of the Northern Kingdom. Some of these places are Mamre, Gilgit (Gilgal), Nabudaal (Nevo), Pishgah (Pisgah), Heshba (Heshbon), Bushan (Bashan), Medianpura (Midyan), Amunah (Amon), Goshan (Goshen, the region in Egypt where Israelites sojourned), Guzana (Gozan, that in Assyrian language is Guzana, one of the places where the Northern Tribes were sent in exile), and there is even Samaryah. Besides toponyms, also many names of people, male and female, are typically Hebrew.

3) Historical Records: The history of the Kashmiris is shrouded in mystery. After accurate research, most scholars support the hypothesis that a consistent part of the Kashmiris are descendants of the Israelite Tribes that were exiled in Assyria in 3039 (722 b.c.e.). According to an Apocryphon ascribed to Ezra and other ancient records, many of these Israelites decided to emigrate into a distant country in the east. Along their route, many of them reached the Kashmir Valley and settled there. Other historians' records: Kitro, in his book "General History of the Mughal Empire", said that the Kashmir people are the descendants of the Israelites. The travelling Arab historian El Bironi (12th century c.e.) wrote, "In the past, permission to enter Kashmir was given only to Jews". Another witness of the 15th century c.e. wrote, "all the inhabitants of this area who have been living here since ancient times can trace their ancestry, according to their race and customs, to the ancient Israelites. Their features, their general physical appearance, their clothing, their ways of conducting business, all show that they are similar to the

the peoples settled in Kashmir there are also the Gujjars. Even though they may not be directly related to the ancient Israelites, their ethnicity is interesting and connects them with the peoples that have indeed been closely linked to the Jews. The early history of Gujjars is obscure, and it was suggested that they may have reached India from Georgia in Caucasus (Gurjistan, in Persian). Place names like Gujar, Juzrs (Gurjara), Gujrabad, Gujru, Gujristan, Gujrabas, Gujdar-Kotta, Gujar-Garh, Gujarkhan, Gujranwala, etc. and other evidences show that they indeed travelled through Central Asia, likely from Mesopotamia, crossed the Khyber Pass reaching Rajasthan, and settled in Gujrat. In a later period, a consistent group of them moved northwards through Pundjab and settled in the Kashmir Valley. The arrival of Gujjars in Jammu and Kashmir is attributed to the outbreak of devastating droughts in Rajputana, Gujarat and Kathiawar, and there are archaeological evidences to prove this hypothesis. The Gujri language is now recognized to be of Rajasthani origin, and as it is not written, they have not recorded history

The history of the Kashmiris is shrouded in mystery as is the history of other people in that region. Most Kashmir researchers are of the opinion that many inhabitants of Kashmir are descendants of the Lost Tribes who were exiled in 722 BCE.

ancient Israelites". The two outstanding historians of Kashmir, Mullah Nadiri, who wrote "The History of Kashmir", and Mullah Ahmad, who wrote "Events of Kashmir", have established without a trace of doubt that the origins of the Kashmiri people are to be found in the Israelites. Conclusion: According to the above mentioned evidences, it is reasonable to credit the hypothesis that the Kashmiris are among the descendants of the ancient Israelites, though it is not possible to establish with certainty when did they reach the Kashmir Valley and settled there. The Greek influence that appears evident in some aspects suggest that they have migrated with Alexander's army in his campaign to the conquest of India and remained there. Among

but oral traditions. Some scholars are of the opinion that the Gujjars are the descendants of Kushan (Yue-zhi) tribes; the most reliable sources consider them to be a branch of the Khazars that migrated to India. According to linguistic rules, the Indo-Aryan terms "Gujjar" and "Kushan" are derived from the original name "Khazar" through the standard rules of phonetic change: Indo-Aryan languages, lacking the "kh" and the "z" phonemes, transcribe them respectively as "g" and "j". Therefore, their alleged "Georgian" origin is in some way true, since the Khazars' early homeland was in the Caucasus. Thus, it is interesting the fact that a people of likely Israelite origin, the Kashmiris, are sharing the same land with a Khazar tribe.



- Chaman Lal Gadoo



AMRESHVARA DHAM

"Listen O Devi, I tell of the Maha-Tirtha Amreshvara, by listening to which alone, one is freed of millions of grave sins." Amreshvara Mahatmaya

The original name of the *Dham*, as given in the ancient texts, is Amareshwara, Amarnath being a name given later to it. *Dham* is a place where the divine manifests its power and where one experiences its presence. The earliest reference to Amarnath can be seen in the Nilamata Purana (v.1324), a 6th century Sanskrit text which depicts the religious and cultural life of early Kashmiris and gives Kashmir's own creation myth. The pilgrimage to the holy cave has been described with full topographical details in the Bhringish Samhita

and the Amreshvara Mahatmya, both ancient texts said to have been composed even earlier. Amarnath is a cherished pilgrimage destination of Hindus from time immemorial.

Amarnath means Deathless God--- Lord Shiva. He is God of gods, Mahadeva, about whom Bhishma says in Mahabhrata, "I am incapable of enunciating the attributes of the wise Mahadeva, who is ubiquitous but nowhere visible; who is creator of Brahma, Vishnu, and Indra and their lord as well; whom all the deities from Brahma to the



Pisachas worship; who transcends all natural phenomenon as well as the absolute spirit, whom the Rishis who practice discipline and have arrived at truth contemplate; who is indestructible, supreme, the Brahma himself; who does not exist yet exists.”

Historically, the worship of Shiva lingam has been a very popular religious practice in Kashmir. The same stands corroborated by Kalhan Pandit who in his monumental work, *Rajatarangini*, makes a mention of 'vateshwar', an ancient Shiva-lingam worshipped even in his lifetime. A king of Kashmir, Ravana, and (1000 B.C) worshipped it as it was believed to predict future occurrences and events through the light emanating from the Sri-Cakra engraved on it. (Prof. M.L. Koul)

Pandit Kalhan, the greatest and earliest historian-poet completed in 1150 AD, his immortal work of 7,844 verses, *Rajatarangini* – “River of Kings”, the history of ancient Kashmir, in a detailed manner. According to *Rajatarangini* the most famous pilgrimage in Kashmir, a land of divinity and spirituality, is the cave temple of Amarnath and mentions that King Ram Deva is stated to have imprisoned the debauch King Sukh Deva and to have drowned him in the Lambodheri

(Lidder) among the mountains of Amarnath about 1000 BC. It also mentions in Tarang II, Samdimat (Arya Raja) 34BC-17AD, a great devotee of Shiva who rose from the position of a minister to be the king of Kashmir, “used to worship a *Linga* of snow above the forests, during the delightful summers of Kashmir, which is not to be found elsewhere in the world,” it further states in verse 267 that Shushram Naga (Sheeshnag) is seen to this day (i.e.1148-49AD) by pilgrims proceeding to Amreshvara.” In another reference to Amarnath, Pandit Kalhan in his *Rajatarangini*, Tarang VII conveys that Queen Suryamati, the spouse of King Ananta "submitted trishuls, banalingas and other sacred emblems in the name of her husband at Amershwara, which has been naturally formed in the waters of Narmada River".

At Amarnath, Shiva initiated Parvati into the science of immortality, *Kriya Kundalini Pranayam*. At this site, the vortex of energy was forever marked as the *Kriya Tantra Yoga Peetam* (power spot) of Parvati, and where the two cosmic deities found union. Shiva brought Parvati to this secluded natural setting to sanctify their marriage and to open a doorway of liberation from rebirth for his chosen partner. Here Parvati could fully absorb the experience



of her previous incarnation as Sati. As one of the famous fifty-two *Shakti Peeths*, the throat of Sati fell to the earth at this very spot after she immolated herself in fire. In this particular natural temple, Shakti manifests as Mahamaya Devi. Mahamaya casts illusion but also takes away illusion. Her worship and course of *Sadhana* is extremely auspicious as it liberates the embodied soul from *Maya* and bestows the bliss-awareness of non-duality; God Consciousness'.

(Swami Ayyappa Giri, *Tantracharya*,
Yogini Ashram, Norwalk CA)

As per Amarnath Mahatmya, Parvati, the consort of Shiva, was keen to know in full details the mysteries of life and immortality. Entreating the lord to reveal the mysteries to her, Shiva traversing the tops and ridges of the Himalayas took rest in a cave and disclosed to her, *Amar Katha*, all the secrets about life and immortality. Finally, Lord transmuted Himself into an icy-lingam.

In ancient scriptures, it is recorded that Maharishi Bhrigu was the first person to sight and identify the cave temple of Sri Amarnath where Lord Shiva had narrated the secret of *Amartav* to his consort Parvati and got himself transformed into ice Lingam on *Sharavan Purnimashi*. This sacred day falls every year on the night of the full moon in the month of *Sawan* (July – August) on *Sharavan - Purnimashi*, when sun is in Leo, *Simha Rashi* and *Chandrama*, moon in Aquarius *Kumb Rashi*, this yoga makes the Shiva-Lingam *Darshan* very auspicious. A pair of snow pigeons over heard Shiva's discourse and became immortal. Thus Amarnath, the Lord of Immortality and Deathlessness became *Amreshvara*.

According to a legend, Parvati asked Lord Shiva; “You are the God of gods, can you not find a garland made of anything better than skulls?” Shiva replied; “These skulls are very precious to me, since they happen to be yours. You have taken births and have been my consort many a times. Every time you die, your skull is collected and added to this garland.” Parvati was amazed and further asked; “Why do I die, while you remain immortal?” Lord

Shiva clarified, “That is because I know the mysteries that make one immortal.” Thereupon Parvati requested, “You must disclose those mysteries that make one immortal.” Lord Shiva had chosen the cave temple of Amarnath, as the avenue for discussion with Goddess Parvati on the secrets of 'Life and Death'. One who heard the conversation would attain immortality, *Amaratvam*. So Shiva left Nandi, His bull at Bailgam, (Pahalgam), Sesa, and snake at Seshnaga, Ganpati at Mahaganesha, Mahagunusa and Ganga at Panchatarni on his route to the holy cave. To check that none was present in the cave, Lord Shiva vibrated his *Damaru*. Two pigeons, which were in the egg form in a nest in the cave came out of the eggs by the sound of the *Damaru* and were fortunate to overhear the conversation of Shiva and Parvati. When Lord Shiva realized this, he exchanged his body with those of the little birds.

There is another legend recorded in Mahatmayas that when *Maha Kala*, the God of Death, appeared, to Indra and other Devas, they were frightened of death and approached Shiva. They requested him to avert death for them. The Lord was pleased with the devotional hymns sung in his praise.

'Shiva took the crescent moon from his head and squeezed it. The peerless current that flowed from the moon took the form of a stream near Amarnatha cave, known as Amuravati. The *Rasa Bindu*, nectar drops, falling on Shiva's body got dried, displaying his towering splendour in the form of ash. Out of his love for the gods, Shiva's body also got liquefied..... The liquefied sap got transformed into a *Linga*. Shiva told gods; “since you have had the exalting glimpse of my *Rasa Linga*, or loving emblem on the banks of this stream, death will no longer torment you. O Gods! Be immortal and take my leave.” The *Linga* is also called *Siddhi Linga*, the sign of accomplishment; *Buddhi Linga*, the token of intelligence; *Shudhi Linga*, the emblem of piety; *Vridhi Linga*, the eternal symbol of prosperity!

(Ms. Advitavadini Kaul)

Rasa Linga Mahatmaya adds:

*Shrunu Devi pravakshami yatramamara
nathagam,*

Yam shrutwamapi narah punya

—mapnuyat narah tirthajam Priye!

Devi Parvati! Do listen to me carefully and attentively about this highly sacred Tirtha of Amarnath which bestows unique achievement of Maha Punya to the Yatris.

Pranamy vidhivat Bhaktyaa

Swadhaa Lingam sanatanam,

Naro na vipyate papaih

koti janma samudbhavaih/

The most memorable moment when a person who undergoes the arduous hardships of the Yatra would treasure the unique life time experience of the most imposing and awesome *Amerasha Linga Darshan* even from a distance; indeed, that is the split second which the darkness of his or her vision gets brightened with unparalleled luminosity, simultaneously destroying the stored up sins for innumerable past births. Once the trance so experienced from the vision and 'pranaama' of the Swadha Linga is secured an instant 'Mukti' gets accomplished from the pent up sins of all times in retrospect.

*Darshanaa sparshanaa chhaapi vandanaat,
Amareshasya Lingasya mucchate sarva
kilbishaih*

The 'darshana and sparshana' or the magnificent vision and the enthralling touch, as accompanied by the personalized worship of the fortunate devotee, would indeed bestow the ultimate obliteration of sins for sure.

As per ancient literature cave temple of Amarnath was worshipped by devotees of Lord Shiva from time immemorial. It is recorded that Himalayan caves have been abode of celestial beings and great Sages used to meditate for hundreds of years in these caves. It is also recorded that the Himalayan mountain range especially the northern range is indeed the first and the sublimes symbol of divinity.

“Of the mountains, I am the Himalaya” says Lord Krishna in the Bhagwad Gita.

Someone asked Swami Vivekananda,

“Why have we so many Gods and Goddesses?”

He promptly replied, “Because we have Himalaya.” The music of the Himalayan streams brought divine feelings to the Seers. The rushing streams fall like thunder with the sound of *Vyom, Vyom* on the rocks and the flow out in frightening speed with the sound *Hara, Hara*. Probably Adi Shankara, inspired by snow clad Himalayan peaks and ice Lingam of Shiva at cave temple of Amarnath wrote of Shiva;

“Oh, Shiva, Thy body is white, white is Thy smile,

The human skull in Thy hand is white.

Thy axe, Thy bull, Thy earrings, all are white

*The Ganga flowing out in foams from your
matted locks is white.*

The crescent moon on Thy brow is white.

*O, all-white Shiva, give us the boon of complete
sinless-ness in our lives.”*

Swami Rama Tirtha, on having a glimpse of the 'Amareshwara Linga' uttered in ecstasy an Urdu couplet, which means:

*“Where ice is bedecked in formless movement,
There stands supreme-consciousness as Amar
Linga”*

Swami Vivekananda wrote about Shiva of Amarnath:

For whom all gloom and darkness have dispersed,

That radiant light, white beautiful,

As bloom of lotus white is beautiful,

Whose laughter loud sheds Knowledge luminous!

The worship of the *Linga* according to Vivekananda was originated from the famous hymn in the Atharva-Veda Samhita sung in praise of the Yupa-Stambha which represented the 'Eternal Brahman'. *The fire, the smoke, the ashed, flames, the black-wood and the ox connected with this Vedic sacrifice gave place to the conceptions of brightness of Shiva's body. His tawny matted- hair; His blue throat and the riding on the bull of Shiva and so on--- just so. The Yupa-Stambha gave place to the Shiva-Linga and was deified as the high Devahood of Sri Shankara.....In the Linga-Purana the same hymn is expanded in the stories meant to establish the glory of the great Stambha and the superiority of Mahadeva.”*



- C L Kaloo



BHAGAVAD GITA EXPLAINS BHAKTI YOGA



GITA JAYANTI is celebrated every year with great enthusiasm and this pious day falls on 3rd of December 2022. According to the version given by Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda- “The word 'Gita' means song, Bhagavad Gita signifies- song of the spirit. Various scriptural commentators have pointed out that phonetically, the syllables of Gita reversed, make the word “Ta-gi”- the renunciant (Tyagi). The main theme of the Gita is the renunciation by the soul of its incarnate wastful wanderings by conquering material

and physical desires and so reclaiming its blessed home in spirit.” How this can be attained through surrendering process- that is through “Bhakti marg” (path) or “Bhakti yoga” as explained in the Holy Gita is outlined here for information of the spiritual aspirants in particular and readers in general.

Bhakti-yoga or union with God through devotion has been classified by the Lord Krishna in the Holy Gita in Adhaya 12th. A question is raised whether a spiritual aspirant or yogis should worship the un-manifest, or a

personal God? In 12th Adhyaya- shloka 1 (12:1 B.G), Arjuna inquired:

“Evam satata - yuktaye - bhaktastvam paryupasate; Ye cappy aksaram avyaktam – tesam ke yoga – vittamah”

Means: which are considered to be more perfect, those who are always properly engaged in your devotional service or those who worship the unmanifest (impersonal Brahman)?

We find here that Arjuna refers to the devotee as described in 11th Adhyaya which speaks of a devotee or a spiritual aspirant who thinks of God as the Cosmic- Bodied Lord immanent in all manifestations, and who, therefore, works for HIM without personal attachment to anything, without feeling enmity to anyone, enshrining God as his supreme goal; and to the devotee who worships God directly by devotional service (Bhakti) which is the easiest means for union with the divine. Thus, those who worship the Lord directly by “Bhakti-Marg” are called personalists. Those who engage themselves in meditation on the unmanifest (the impersonal Brahman) are called impersonalists. So, Arjuna here inquires which technique is better for uniting soul with the spirit- say union with God. It may be explained that factually there are two classes of Transcendentalists and in this context, Arjuna is trying to settle the question of which process or technique is easier and which of the paths are most perfect. In other words, he is clarifying his own position because he is attached to the personal form of Krishna. He is not attached to the impersonal Brahman. The impersonal manifestation, either in this material world or in the spiritual world, is a problem for meditation. Actually, one cannot perfectly conceive of the impersonal feature of the absolute truth.

Now after listening to his disciple, Arjuna, Sri Bhagavan said in Adhaya 12th-shloka 2 (12:2 B.G)

“May avesya manoyemam – nitya yukta upasate; Sraddeya parayopetas – teme yuktatama matah”

Means: those who fix their minds on my personal form and are always engaged in worshipping ME with great faith (transcendental) are considered by ME, to be most perfect.

Thus, in answer to Arjuna's question, the Lord clearly says that he who concentrates upon HIS personal form and he who worships HIM with faith and devotion is to be considered most perfect in Yoga. Therefore, a pure devotee remains constantly engaged in Lord's devotion. Sometimes, the chants, sometimes he hears songs in praise of HIS glory, reads books about the Lord and more so

does other devotional services in temples or places of Pilgrimage; even serve the ailing humanity in one way or the other or according to his physical or economical capacity and through all this devotional service, he proceeds step by step to achieve the science of the union of soul and spirit (union with the God). Thus, this method of Bhakti yoga leads one to realization of God In and beyond creation. To dilate this scientific view point as given in the Holy Gita, all manifestations and

activities in creation are the Lord's cosmic yoga. HE is the singularity that evolves as these multi expressions and that unifies them in one cosmic consciousness of HIS ETERNAL BEING. The devotee who recognizes immanence (omnipresence) of God, and who follows the prescribed yogic steps to attain realization of Divinity, understands how the one becomes individualized and active in the many; and how, in a scientific way that descension from cosmic consciousness may be reversed in oneself into ascension or reunion with spirit. Even a yogi who attains the highest “Samadhi” (nirvikalpa) realizes God in duality as well as in unity. Thus, by following the scientific steps of “Bhakti-yoga”, he attains fixity of the mind on God and remains devoted



“Srimad-Bhagvatam” also states that one has ultimately to surrender into the Supreme and this surrendering process is called “Bhakti”



to Him in intense “Bhakti”. While rising above all material allurements, he attains progressively spiritual elevation. Thus, the Lord tells Arjuna,” That a devotee who fixes his mind on ME, worship ME with supreme single hearted devotion,” realizes that God is the sole object and goal of life. It is, therefore, through “Bhakti – yoga” or through intense devotion that acquaints a devotee with the technique of uniting soul and spirit. The Lord further explains to Arjuna in Adhaya 12th Shloka 3&4 that those who do not directly worship the God but who attempt to achieve the same goal by an indirect process also achieve the Lord. The Lord makes it clear from these two shlokas (3&4) about the type of worshiper who is devoted to the concept of God as the transcendent Supreme Being who is the creator and ruler of the universe. In deference to the supernal spirit, such a devotee leads a disciplined life of self control maintains even mindedness by faith in God, and behaves in a righteous, serviceful manner, but he follows no formal course of scientific yoga.

Thus, by various methods of concentration, he gradually detaches his ego from the senses and attaches his life force, mind and ego to the super conscious soul, and thereby he attains spectacle ecstasy (nirvikalpa). Now, further about paths of



“Jnana-yoga” and “Bhakti-yoga”, the lord explains to Arjuna in Adhaya 12th - shloka- 5th, (12:5 B.G), as quoted here under:

“Kleso dikhatavas tesam – avyak tasakta-cetasam; Avyakta hi gatih duhkham – deharadbhir avapyate”

Means: those whose goal is the un-manifested increase the difficulties; uphill is the path to the absolute for embodied beings.

It may be stated here that the spiritual aspirants or earnest devotees who follow the path of un-imaginable, unmanifested, impersonal feature of the Supreme Lord are called “Jnana yogis”, and the aspirants who are engaged in devotional service to the Lord are called “Bhakti-yogis”. The process of “Jnana-yoga” is very troublesome, whereas the path for “Bhakti-yoga”(The process of being in direct service to the Lord) is easier and is natural for embodied beings (human beings). The individual soul is embodied since time immemorial, and it is very difficult for him to simply (theoretically) understand that he is not the body. There is no doubt that impersonalists are unnecessary taking a troublesome path with the risk of not realizing the absolute truth, at the ultimate end. But the personalists, without any risk, trouble and difficulty approach the Lord directly.

“Srimad- Bhagvatam” also states that one has ultimately to surrender into the Supreme and this surrendering process is called “Bhakti”

Thus, I conclude that “Bhakti yoga” or pure devotional service to the God is the highest and most expedient means for attaining pure love for HIM and also the peak of spiritual existence. In this context, Lord Krishna says emphatically in Shloka 6&7- Adhaya 12th (12:6&7 B.G) “That those who venerate ME and worship ME whole heartedly, I become their Redeemer to bring them out of the sea of mortal births” (no longer to the cycle of births and deaths)

“Punarappy jananam punarappy marnum, Punarappy garab nivasam” (excerpt from a Sanskrit shloka)



- B N Bhat

CONFESSION

Confession is related to acceptance of guilt or a wrong doing. It, in fact, is very difficult to expose our own selves in relation to commission of vice. Vice is always a vice and smacks of foul with very unpleasant odour. When it comes to virtues, one feels elated, if, somehow, these stand highlighted. More supreme than the Supreme Court is the court of conscience.

Our conscience is a ledger. It keeps record of our actions, both good and bad. With all good, at heart, we feel happy, while the bad keeps us pricking, within. Pricks are off-spring of realization and confession and act as catharsis to un-burden us. We well said.

'Conscience, as ledger, our offences records.

Pricks, as punishment, it awards.

Warns it us against all that is foul.

Sense of guilt creates disturbing growl.

Oxford dictionary describes confession as:

- a) To acknowledge a crime reluctantly.
- b) Confession on account of commission of sin, made to a priest privately.

When confession is made reluctantly, a doubt remains that it could be bereft change of heart. Chances of repetition of the crime remain. However, when confession is made before a priest privately the chances of change of heart are more. There appears to be no coercion. It reflects a positive change; otherwise possibility of reformation remains doubtful.

Who is there who has not or does not fall a prey to flaws. Knowing or unknowingly vice gets committed. Rare are the people free from flaws. However, great is the one who confesses and regrets, with a resolve never to repeat these. Such a person is bold, as he knows where he falters and takes steps to redeem his short-falls.

Usually, a defaulter doesn't dare to confess and to be ridiculed. However, going through the auto biographics of elite luminaries, one comes across their confessions. They do so to inspire us that we, too, can bring about reformation in us, after having faltered here and there.

An honest offender wants to regret, but hesitates for fear of being stigmatized. How they must be feeling, within, is visualised by this modest writer, while giving vent to his personal feelings as an offender. It is reflected in verse form as:

Summers I have seen seventy three,
Still feel not myself free.
When dive deep in remote past,
My fouls up-surface on scale vast.

Some take me as a saint,
Skillfully hide I life with taint.
Shrewdness works as shield outside.
But what about that pricks inside.

Introspection highlights follies within,
Dare can't expose these in rhythm.
Ruthlessly ignored I gifts of Lord;
Humble feel I at my fraud.

Is it easy to surrender?
How to approach, I wonder,
A brazen face like me,
In autumn as a withered tree?

Devotees name Him sagacious,
Who forgives even the ferocious.
This is the hope that I nurse,
To provide a cure to all the curse.

Repent I, for being so late.
God is beneficent and all great.
Condone will follies quite at ease,
Infusing in me the fresh breeze.

Magnanimous named is ever He.
Why can't He be so to me?
Regrets, if surge, from the core,
With faith, the favours, do up soar.

With sincere confession, we sanitize our
conscience. How it supports to have 'Bliss',
is reflected here:

Conscience, pure when, win we the race.
Mind, stress free when, find we solace.
In reality, we find the Bliss hence.
Against all stress, it works as fence.





- Sanjeev Munshi



SAMSKARAS AS PER KASHMIRI TRADITIONS



Samskaras, in Hinduism, can loosely be understood as milestones in an individual's journey of life, from conception to cremation. The word *Samskara* (Sanskrit: संस्कार) has various context-driven meanings, including preparation, purification and perfection from one's past state to one's future state, the purification of body by cleansing and mind by education. The term appears in the Śrutis, and in the Smritis of diverse schools of Hinduism as well as the texts of Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism (all Indian origin schools of thought). The term appears in Jaimini

Purvamimamsa-sutra (500-200 BCE) many times, where it again means to "prepare, perfect, polish" something, either through action, speech or mind training.

Traditional Hindu code of conduct places emphasis primarily on two qualities in a human being, which distinguish him from animals-education(vidya) and proper social and religious conduct (samskar). Of the two, education is more important because the other(samskar) does not come without it. Samskara giving shape to such excellent qualities as inner balance, refinement, polished

and civilized behaviour. In Hindu traditions, a human being is born at least twice (Dwij) – once at the time of physical birth through mother's womb, and second by intellectual birth through Guru's guidance. The first is marked through Jatakarman samskara ritual, the second one is marked through Vidyarambha or Upanayana samskara ritual.

Samskaras, as rituals, vary in number and detail according to regional traditions. These range from 40 samskaras listed in the *Gautama Dharmasutra* to 12-18 in certain *Grhyasutra* texts while Manusmiti mentions only 13. Various *Grhyasutra* texts, it appears, were drafted by various Rishis and were followed in different geographical areas across India, attaining some local colour, over time! We find mention of Kaushtaki, Agniveshya *Grhyasutra*, Sankhayana *Grhyasutra*, Asvalayana *Grhyasutra*, Paraskar *Grhyasutra*, Katyayana and Khadira *Grhyasutra*. Kashmir is said to follow the *Grhyasutra* propounded by Laugakshi (Laukakshi) Mahamuni, also known as the Kathaka *Grhyasutra*. While, most of the *Grhyasutras* list out 16 Samskaras, the Laugakshi *Grhyasutras* list out 24 Samskaras, namely:

बीजवापनम्, सीमन्तकरणम्, पुंसवनम्, जातकरणम्, नामकरणम्, सूर्यदर्शनम्, चन्द्रदर्शनम्, अन्नप्राशनम्, चूडाकरणम्, उपायनम्, त्रिविध्यकम्, उपाकर्षम्, चातुर्होतृकम्, चातुर्होतृकापवर्गः, प्रवर्ग्यव्रतम्, प्रवर्ग्यव्रतापवर्गः, अरूणव्रतम्, अरूणव्रतापवर्गः, औपनिषदव्रतम्, श्रीकामः, यशस्कामः, औपनिषदव्रतापवर्गः, गोदानम्, त्रैविध्यकापवर्गः

The main Samskaras as recognized all over India (including Kashmir) are:

1. Garbhadan/ Bijwapan Samskar (decision or intent to have a child)
2. Pumsavana Samskar
3. Simantonnayana Samskar
4. Jatakarman Samskar (Kah Nyether – at birth)
5. Namakarana Samskara (10th or 12th day)
6. Nishkramana Samskara (Baby's first day out, after completion of 1 month of age)
7. Annaprashanam Samskara (First solid food at 6 months' age)
8. Chudakarana Samskar (Zarr Kasay, in Kashmiri, @ age 1 or 3)

9. Karnavedha Samskar (Kan Tchombun - @ age 3 or 5)
10. Vidyarambha Samskar (age 5, first exposure to lipi, ganit or musical instrument)
11. Upanayana Samskar (age 8)
12. Vedarambha Samskar
13. Keshanta Samskar (first shave for boys at puberty)
14. Ritusuddhi Samskara (for girls at menarche)
15. Samavartana Samskar
16. Vivaha Samskar
17. Antyeshti Samskar (Last rites, including Cremation)

Some Samskaras may involve formal ceremonies, yajna (fire) ceremonies with the chanting of Vedic hymns. Others are simple, private affairs involving a couple, with or without friends or other families or a religious person such as a priest or a *pandit*.

Two major fallacies, unfortunately, have taken root in contemporary discussions:

- a) Samskaras are prescribed for men only – not girls/ women. *Nothing could be farther from truth, whether one studies Dharma Shastras or observes traditions followed in different societies.*
- b) Samskaras are prescribed only for Brahmins or Upper castes. This is not true and can be termed as another myth perpetuated to create divisions in Hindu society.

Special Samskaras

Observed by Kashmiri Pandits:

1. Truy (rituals performed on Day 3 of birth)
2. Shraan Sunder (First bath with water boiled in medicinal herbs on 7th/ 9th or 11th day)
3. Tsatjihim Doh (Ritualistic bath on 40th day of birth)
4. Vohorvod: First Birthday Celebration
5. Mangyith Anun: Rituals associated with child adoption (Dattak)

While each Samskar has its importance and value, in Kashmiri Pandit society the

Upanayana, (Mekhala or Mekhal in Kashmiri) probably was considered as important as the marriage samskara. In fact, marriage before Mekhal was not possible!

Upanayana Samskar represents a child's entrance into school. Upanayana (Sanskrit: उपनयन) literally means "the act of leading". The rite symbolizes drawing towards 'self' of a child, in a school, by a teacher. It is a ceremony in which a Guru (teacher) accepts and draws a child towards knowledge and initiates the second birth (Dwij). *Yajñopavita* ceremony announces that the child has entered into formal education and would start living with the Guru at his Gurukul (boarding school of the Guru). Several texts such as *Sushruta Sutrasthana*, mention that education and Upanayana samskara was open to everyone, including girls. Girls who underwent this ritual to pursue studies were called *Brahmavadini*. Those who did not study, Upanayana ceremony was performed at the time of their wedding. Upanayana is an elaborate ceremony, that included rituals involving the family, the child and the teacher. During this ceremony, a child receives a sacred thread called *Yajñopaveetam* (*Yoni in Kashmiri*), that he wears lifelong.

Upanayana ceremony is different from **Vidyarambha Samskar** that signifies "beginning of study", the child's formal attempt to learn means of knowledge at the age of 5. The ceremony is observed for all children of age 5, on Vijayadasami, the tenth day of Shukla Paksh (bright half) of Ashvin Masa (September–October). It includes a prayer to goddess Saraswati and deity Ganesh, a teacher is invited or the parents themselves work with the child, to write Lipi (alphabet), draw Samkhya (numbers) or pictures, and sometimes play with a musical instrument.

Education of a student was not limited to ritual and philosophical discussions found in the Vedas and the Upanishads. It included several arts and crafts, which had their specific though similar rites. Aitareya Brahmana, Agamas and Puranic literature

describe these as Shilpa Sastras, covering diverse arts such as sculpture, pottery, perfumery, painting, weaving, architecture, dance and music etc. Ancient Indian texts assert that the number of the arts is unlimited, but each deploys elements of 64 kala (, techniques) and 32 vidyas (, fields of knowledge). The training of these began from childhood, and included studies about dharma, culture, reading, writing, mathematics, geometry, colours, tools, as well as traditions (trade secrets). The rituals during apprentice education varied in the respective arts and crafts.

The Upanayan Samskar (Mekhala)

Kashmiri Yagneopavit Ceremony, as we see it today:

Today, the Upanayana rite is open to anyone at any age in our community. In fact, due to changed socio-economic conditions, ceremony is performed only for male children, usually just before Vivaha Samskar (marriage).

This has certain 'important' financial benefits - various rituals get clubbed, especially Mehndiraat and Devgon, saving time, money and effort! Since Family Pandit Ji (Kul Brahman) as an institution has vanished, particularly post 1990 Exodus, Pandit Jeas are invited to perform the Mekhala Samskar on a specific job basis. Not sure if all Samskaras that precede Upanayana have been performed by the family, currently Pandit Ji's also perform Garbhadan, Pumsavana, Simantonnayana, Jatakarman Samskar, Namakarana Samskara, Nishkramana,, Annaprashana, Chudakarana, *Karnavedha* and Vidyarambha at the time of Upanayana ceremony. I saw this first hand at a recent Mekhal cum wedding ceremony of a close relative.

The various steps involved in the Mekhala ceremony include:

Fixing of Pandit Ji to perform the ceremony:

In happier times, every family used to have a Kul-brahmin, a dedicated Pandit Ji who was akin to being a family member. The Kul-brahmin would be the 'go-to person' for all matters concerning religious ceremonies (Karm Kand) of the family – from conducting

Shivratri Pooja, birthday pooja for each family member to performing marriages, Yagneopavit, Shraad rituals etc. With decline in availability of Kul-Purohits, one has to identify a Pandit Ji well versed in rituals. All decisions and preparations have to be made as per his guidance.

Date Fixation:

The Ceremony has to be performed as per a given set of planetary configurations (Saath in Kashmiri or Muhurta in Hindi). This obviously is an Expert's job and the Pandit Ji is consulted. Currently, the ubiquitous Vijyeshwar Panchang ('Jantri' or 'neche pater') also lists out Mekhala Saath for each Moon Rashi, month wise!

Team for conducting Mekhala:

The Kul-Brahmin would need a team, including a senior Veda-Pathi Brahmin (known as **Chandra Tarukh** in Kashmiri) for reciting Mantras. Till 1960s, the ceremony also used to be attended by Pandit Ji's from Matamal (mother's family), Poff (Bua) and Massi's family. Thus, the event would have the august presence of 3-4 well versed Pandit Jis, giving it a grandeur missing from our current events which appear to be rich in cosmetics and aesthetics but limited in scholarship. Currently, responsibility for bringing his 'team' rests with Pandit Ji only.

Venue Fixation:

This used to be a tricky preposition since Mekhala entails a large scale homa(havan) and Kashmir weather is notoriously fickle. Most people would perform the ceremony in their own 'aangan' or in the courtyard of a neighbour. Covered spaces were not available commercially or in community centres like those are available today – so to minimise chances of rain induced damage/ disturbance, a Shamiyana ('sayebaan' in Kashmiri, a ceremonial tent) with a 'tarpal'(tarpaulin) as roof would be used. A big havan kund would be prepared and decorated (with paper buntings, in my days!). Now, of course, we have well-appointed venues in Temples or Community Halls of various Kashmiri Samitis where excellent arrangements exist for conducting

Mekhala. In 2019, I was lucky to perform Mekhala of my son at the Kashmiri Bhawan, Sect 37, Faridabad; the venue has a large and well covered Havan Kund with adequate sitting space for relatives and guests.

Listing out and buying Material for Mekhala:

The procurement would start from an auspicious day/ muhurta. The material needed for this big event can be classified into three sub-categories:

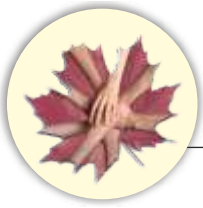
❖ **Hom-Havan related material:** Primary is the *Agnevether* – material to be used for hom-havan. List for this set was provided by the Pandit Ji (quantity + variety). Since Mekhala involves a pooja extending between 24-36 hours, adequate quantities of wood, ghee and other material would be listed and procured specifically for the event.

❖ **Material for the Waza:** Cook (Waza in Kashmiri) would provide a list of masalas, rice, dal, vegetables etc needed for the event, quantity depending on the expected guest list. Currently, a caterer provides these facilities, eliminating the need for buying material! The event being an Agnihotra, non-vegetarian food is absolutely taboo.

❖ **Material for Distribution amongst Relatives:** Used to be listed in consultation with senior ladies of the clan. Most important would be the clothes for the extended family, particularly saris for the clanswomen known as *Kalvalyun*. Currently, instead of traditional Sari + Athoru, expensive gifts are planned for important guests and clanswomen.

❖ **Fixing of an auspicious day/ date (Saath) for sending out invitation to neighbours, relatives and clansmen.** This is, of course, preceded by the printing of invitation card. Currently, the trend has changed to sending out an 'e-invite' over WhatsApp or email. Invitation Cards in 'physical' form can now be considered an endangered species!

(to be Contd.... ..)



- Chaman Lal Raina



KRISHNA DARSHUN

Krishna Joo Razdan

The topic, which I am going to discuss, is to focus on the Shaktivad of Kashmir, in the spiritual heights of Pandit Krishan Joo Razdan., available in his immortal poetic work. I am concentrating on his representative poems, published under the title "Krishna Darshun", edited by Pandit Sham Lal Razdan.

I remember my grand-mother, used to recite in early fifties "byal tai maadal vyana gulab pamposhu dastai; Chhakh Maha Vedhya Zagath Mata; Samivey Karav Athavaas ; Katha kari Kari gava lokachaar aar yiyatanai shamboo". These were the popular Bhakti poems sung by the Kashmiri Pandits. I happened to listen to these Bhajans in satsang/ devotional congregations. Bel Tai madal Bhajan was in the air from the Radio Kashmir, Srinagar, as well. These Bhajans had a strong effect on me, in understanding, what the genius of Pandit Krishan Joo Razdan would have been, to depict spirituality through his Bhakti Poems, in Kashmiri by the Kashmiri Pandits.

He was a Mahatma. I should call him a Rishi, because Rishi is always a Kavi, but a Kavi (poet) is not always a Rishi. Mahatma Krishan Joo Razdan's poetry is integrated with the spiritual ethos, welded with the strong metaphysical approach to find Lord Shiva in Saguna form. But Saguna Shiva is always with Shakti, hence, we have the



beautiful Shiva Parinaya — a trans-creation of the Shiva Purnam, in his native language Kashmiri.

When we go through the Shakti/ Devi Sahsrnamas, we read "Shiva – Shakti Eka Roopinyai Namah" It verily, suggests that

Shiva and Shakti are identical in nature. this is very Spanda of the Trika philosophy.

A devotional poet always pays obeisance to Shri Ganesha. So did Mahatma Krishna Joo Razdan. In his devotion to the Adi Deva/ in Kashmiri, AADI DEEVAS ASTUTI, he refers to Adi-Shakti, and sings in ecstasy, “Adi shakti hundey Adi Kaaro Eika Danta Veeda Vyastaaryo.” A great significance has been attached to Adya Shakti in the Agamas of Kashmir. The Adi Shakti is the Primordial energy, who is the Iccha –Shakti of Shiva. Shakti is revered with the Sanskrit 'E' Bija Mantra. Sanskrit alphabet is the fourth phoneme of the Varna-Mala, revered as the Turiya Avastha or transcendental state of mind. It has the supreme significance in the Chakreshvara Puja, and in the Matrika Pujanam, very special to the Kashmiri Pandit religious ethos.

Mahatma Razdan Ji further says: “Pama shakti Hundi seevaa karo, Yechha Putra Vyavharo”. The word Parma Shakti is Absolute Energy, which is independent, therefore, Parvati could create Ganesha through her innate Iccha Shakti /will power. Iccha Shakti is the Moola Rekha / Base of the Moola Trikona of the Chakreshvara at Hari Parbat., He has referred to Vallabha, in the same Stuti or devotional songs, as being the consort of Maha Ganesha. Vallabha is the Shakti of Ganesha, Vallabha means attachment, drawing together. Therefore, the Kashmiri Prepyun says Vallabha Sahitayai Shri Ganeshai.

Ridhi and Sidhi are often used with the symbolic Ganesha in India in the form of Swastika. But Vallabha is within the recesses of heart of Ganesha, which again lays emphasis on the Shakti concept within religious symbols as given by Pandit Krishan Joo Razdan .

He has again used the word 'Avidya', which according to the Devi Atharva Shirsha is to destroy ignorance and evil by Shri Durga. The Sutra is " Saa Vidya Cha-Avidya Cha". She kills Mahishasura, for being the very personification of evil and ignorance.

He says in the scene of Posh Pooza of Shiva and Parvati:

"Lakhmi Meethiya Chhas Diwaan Daamaanas".

According to the Markandeya Purana, Lakshmi is the incarnation of Maha Lakshmi the Para Shakti., She is none else but the Ashta dash Bhuj Sharika. Lakshmi is Artha / riches and wealth, and is the second Purushartha, in the Vedic ethos. Maina -- the mother of Parvati--Uma prays to Maha vidya, which is the first attribute of the Shri Ragnya, revered as Shri Bhavani. She also addresses to Mahamaya, which is the elixir of life in human understanding of the concept of Jagatmata, the Mother hood aspect of the Divine, to grace the couple of Shiva and Parvati

Further, she says that Hari Parbat is the Lila of Shri Sharika. That conveys the message of the creation of Kashmir out of Satisar by Kashyapa Rishi. Shri Sharika is verily, Sati. Such is the affinity of Mahatma Razdan Ji for Shrika, Hari Parbat and the Chakreshvara. He says:

Parbatai Sharikayi Leela Parasui. For Himvan and his wife Maina, Parbat is more auspicious as they want to pray Shri Sharika for the good and auspicious days to come for Shiva and Parvati. The 'Poshi Pooza'--the floral laudation for Shiva and Parvati would be at the Chakreshvara spot, as per the wishes of Maina--the mother of Uma. adored as Parvati. Therefore, Shiva was to come to Kashmir from Kailash range of mountains, for receiving the hand of UMA—what a beautiful description given by Swami Krishan Joo Razdan.

He affirms that Shaktipat as defined in the Trika philosophy is the essential feature to receive the Energy force from Shiva through Guru. He describes the place of Nishat for the same, Dal is the Shakti and Shiva is the Nishat.

He sees the Divinity in Radha as the true personification of Shakti, who along with the Gopis are longing for Krishna. In her ecstasy, she visualizes the Gopala Krishna. Thus Krishan Joo Razdan refers to the Motherhood aspect of Divinity, both in the Vaishnavite and the Shaivite faith.

Mahatma Ji is all praise for Vakh and says "Chhai Tasunz Va'ini Suyi G'yani Chhuyi"

He who recites the Bhavani Sahsrnama is verily, a Gyani.

He has chosen some of the names for Maharagnya Bhagawati from the Bhavani Sahsrnama and explained their efficacy to understand the spiritual import in those words. These are Mahavidya, Maha Lakshmi Shiva Priya, Vishnu Maya, Durga Sarva Mangala Mangala, Kalika, Sharika, Shri Shiva, Chandra – bhaga, Vitasta, Saraswati, Gomati, Syendh/Sindhu, Jamuna/Yamuna.

Mattan's Tsaaka, Ganga, Gaya, Vatak Pooja, Ekta, Rudra Sandhya, Pavan Sandhya, Godhavari, Shraddha, Aapya, Lanka, Dwarika, Shabda, Bharamri, Ulka, Tullamulla Nag, also find significance, in the

works of Pandit Krishan Joo Razdan.

In the poem dedicated to Shri Raj Rajeshvari, Krishan Joo Razdan says about Shri Rajeshvari that the Divine Mother is OMKAR in the Tullamulla spring. She is the Ragnya Devi as raja Rajeshwari. She incarnates with different colours, and is the Jal Tattva or Primal Water element, personified in the form of Raj Rajeshwari. Krishan Joo Razdan wants to ascend to the heights, along with the Raj Hansas, the mystic swans, who are always in tune with the Divine. Shri Raj Rajeshwari is the Raj Hamsini.

There is the element of spirituality and devotion in the works of this great saint-scholar, a Brahma Rishi. His works should be viewed through literal meaning of the words, subjective meaning, objective mysticism with sociological significance and spirituality.

OBITUARY



SH. AUTAR KRISHEN TIKOO - SHAHPURI

A son of the soil & a renowned Kashmiri professional, former Chief Engineer of Doordarshan, Sh. Autar Krishen Tikoo - Shahpuri of downtown Habba Kadal expired on December 11, 2022 and was cremated in presence of large number of people at Indirapuram crematorium in Gaziabad. He is survived by his wife Smt. Sarla Tikoo and two daughters Sumedha and Sumegha. Legal eagle Sh. Ashok Bhan, his Sambandhi, described Sh. Tikoo as a man of deep culture, ever smiling gentleman and a competent professional with a commitment towards the Kashmiri music and promoting rich Kashmiri plural cultural and spiritual ethos. Rest in Peace Shri Autar Krishen Tikoo.



- Dr. M K Mam



SUNSHINE VITAMIN VITAMIN-D



Vitamin-D is important for overall health of bones. It is unique because it is naturally made in the skin from direct exposure to sun light that is why it is known as ‘sunshine vitamin’. Vitamin D plays an important role in calcium metabolism and bone mineralization. It helps in absorption of calcium and phosphorus from the small intestine and maintains adequate serum calcium and phosphate levels that is required for bone mineralization, muscle contractility, nerve conduction and general cellular function of all cells in body. An intake of 800 to 1000 international units of vitamin D per day for adults is recommended. Vitamin D deficiency prevails in majority of people all over the world. It is not uncommon to see patients irrespective of age visiting a doctor with complaints of generalized weakness,

aches and pains and feeling tired and exhausted, and on a workup most often it is found that vitamin D is low. Major source of vitamin D in most humans is synthesized in skin from exposure to natural sunlight, thus inadequate exposure to sunlight is a major cause of Vitamin D deficiency (VDD).

What is Vitamin D? Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin. There are two forms of vitamin D i.e., D2 & D3. Vitamin D2 i.e., ergocalciferol comes from irradiation of the yeast and plant sterol ergosterol. Vitamin D3 i.e., cholecalciferol is found in only fish, cod liver oil and is produced in our skin. Vitamin D3 is naturally synthesized in the skin when ultraviolet B (UV-B) radiations from the sun act on 7-dehydrocholesterol in the skin. Vitamin D that is manufactured in skin is

biologically inert. From skin this inert vitamin D travels through blood stream first to liver and then to kidneys, where it gets activated, thus biologically active form of vitamin D- Calcitriol is formed. This active form of vitamin D goes to various parts of body and is responsible for most of the biologic actions of vitamin D. Over the years we have also realized that vitamin D is not an ordinary vitamin but is a hormone in real sense.



Vitamin D Deficiency: In children VDD causes a metabolic disease called rickets. It is seen very often in developing countries among the poorer sections of the society and is mainly due to nutritional deficiency and inadequate exposure to sunlight. Absorption of calcium and phosphorus from the intestine is reduced and the mineralization of bone is defective. Child has a stunted growth; bones are soft and bend easily due to the pressure of weight bearing and other stresses producing deformities not only in the limbs but also in the chest and skull. There is broadening of the wrists, knees, and ankles. Children commonly present with knock knees or bowing of legs at the knees. With overall improvement in education, health care and child care things are getting better.

VDD in adult causes osteomalacia which is an adult counterpart of rickets in children. There is failure of mineralization of bone and the bones become thin and brittle. The patient presents with vague aches and pains, generalized bone pains, muscle weakness, tiredness, fatigue and at times pathological fractures in spine

Factors Affecting Formation of Vitamin D:

- i) **Geographic location :** Vitamin D produced by skin depends on the amount of sun and intensity of UV-B radiations which vary with the altitude. It is reduced in latitudes away from equator.
- ii) **Season :** In winter there is less of sun. It is weaker and also the days are shorter, thereby the skin will form less of vitamin D. Again, we spend less time outside and wear more clothes, so there is less exposure to sun and less formation of vitamin D.
- iii) **Atmospheric pollution:** Air pollution absorbs solar UV-B radiation and also acts as a barrier to UV-B radiation thus reduces the effectiveness of sun exposure in producing vitamin D in the skin, with the result vitamin D formation decreases. This intensity is also affected by the amount of cloud cover or smog.
- iv) **Use of sunscreens :** Sunscreens filter out or block UV-B rays of the sun, so the amount of UV-B rays entering the skin decreases thus affecting the formation of vitamin D in the skin. It has been reported that wearing of a sunscreen with sun protection factor of 30 reduces vitamin D synthesis by 95%.
- v) **Sitting behind the window :** In winter it is always nice to sit behind the window with glass panes and enjoy the warmth of sunrays passing through the glass panes with windows closed in a room. Yes, we do get warmth but no Vitamin D as glass panes in windows filters out most of the UV rays thus affecting the production of vitamin D in the skin.
- vi) **Dark skin :** Darker the skin means that there is more of black pigment called melanin and this melanin in skin acts as a

natural sunscreen and prevents penetration of UV rays in the skin. Thus, dark skin forms less vitamin D as compared to fair skin.

- vii) **Time of day :** It has been reported that the sun's UV rays are strongest during middle of the day i.e. between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.
- viii) **How much sun exposure:** It's difficult to tell how much exposure to sun is "enough" for vitamin D formation as so many variables are involved. In general, people with fair skin should spend about 10 to 20 minutes in midday sun whereas dark skinned people need to spend at least three to five times longer exposure with arms and legs exposed.
- ix) **Age :** With age the amount of 7-dehydrocholesterol in the skin decreases and also there is decline in activation of vitamin D in the kidney, thus it affects the formation of vitamin D in elderly.
- x) **Clothing :** Clothing decreases the amount of UV rays of the sun entering the skin and thus reduces the formation of vitamin D. Wearing of strict skin concealing garments like long robes and head coverings, burqa and purdah system prevalent in some communities as a socio-religious and cultural practice does not allow adequate exposure to sun thus makes them prone to VDD. As regards the type of clothing, loose cotton clothing can allow some UV radiation as compared to synthetic or woollen clothing.

Other Factors Leading to Vitamin D Deficiency:

- 1) **Diet and Vitamin D:** Some food items like fish especially salmon, cod liver oil, dairy products cheese and yogurt have some amount of vitamin D. It is present in small amounts in meat, milk, egg yolk and vegetables. It has been reported that the amount of vitamin D in the fish decreases by 50% when it is fried, however there is little change if we just bake it. Vegetables and grains are poor sources of vitamin D. Our dietary sources usually fall short of the requirements of vitamin D, so this has to be taken care of by supplements and the

foods like milk and cereals which are fortified with the vitamin D. Malnutrition and under nutrition has been a major problem in most of the developing countries especially in children as such it is but natural that people will have deficiency of important nutrients which include vitamin D , calcium, proteins etc. It has also been reported that diets rich in phytates and phosphates can deplete vitamin D stores and increase calcium requirements.

2) Medical Problems:

- i) Disease of Liver and Kidney: Chronic kidney and liver diseases affect the metabolism and formation of vitamin D as it is there that the inert vitamin D gets activated.
- ii) Malabsorption of fats: Vitamin D deficiency can occur in medical conditions like chronic pancreatitis, celiac disease, Crohn's disease, surgical resection of small intestine or stomach etc. as there occurs malabsorption of fats.
- iii) Medication: Some of the drugs like anticonvulsants, anti TB drug Rifampin, steroids, drugs to treat AIDS etc. affect Vitamin D metabolism and thus reduce its level.
- iv) Genetics: There are various genetic factors that do influence production and utility of vitamin D in the body.
- v) Obesity. Obesity has been linked with lower blood levels of vitamin D as some of this fat-soluble vitamin gets stored in the fat tissue with the result the circulating level of vitamin D is low in obese people.
- vi) Lack of awareness: There is a lack of awareness in the people about vitamin D and its importance. Educating the people and making them aware of the importance of vitamin D, having a balanced diet with all the essential nutrients including Vitamin D and calcium is essential.

(to be continued.....)

*Former Vice Principal, Professor & Head of Orthopaedics,
Christian Medical College, Ludhiana, Punjab.*



The Evolution of Indian Entrepreneurship Mindset

AFTER 75 YEARS OF WINNING INDEPENDENCE, THE INDIAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP STORY IS MAKING WAVES GLOBALLY MAJORLY BECAUSE OF PARADIGM SHIFT IN MINDSET OF A JOB SEEKER TO A JOB CREATOR.



As India enters its 75th year of independence, it is time to acknowledge the contribution the country has made to the global entrepreneurial ecosystem. From an emerging market, we have consolidated our position as one of the fastest-growing markets for emerging tech companies. The Indian start-up ecosystem is the third largest in the world today with over 100 unicorns (valuations of US\$ 1 billion or more) emerging in the last decade. In 2022 alone, 42 technology-led start-ups have joined the coveted unicorn club. What is noteworthy is that these startups span across sectors and industries ranging from fintech to agri tech to

health tech and many more, attracting global investors and venture capital. Backed by government initiatives and support, the Indian entrepreneurship story is making waves globally, too. However, it is important to reflect and understand how the Indian start-up ecosystem has evolved.

Evolution of an ecosystem

Like most economies and cultures, entrepreneurship has been an integral part of the country for centuries. India's current entrepreneurial ecosystem is a result of three waves of entrepreneurial activity with distinct focus areas – information technology (IT), consumerism and innovation. The success of

Indian IT businesses over the years has empowered the country's middle class. As the economy liberalised, incomes grew and more capital was available. This resulted in increased consumption and the advent of smartphones ensured that the Internet was easily accessible, causing models around e-commerce, specialised retail and hyper-delivery networks to become popular.

Over the last two decades, India evolved from being an IT services and business process outsourcing hub to becoming a significant R&D centre for multinationals, with new business models being created almost daily. I believe the next wave of unicorns is going to be much more diverse and will focus on cutting-edge technologies like robotics. The talent landscape has also changed dramatically. As recently as eight or 10 years ago, most of our entrepreneurs emerged from business families. Today, that is not the case and many of our young entrepreneurs are not from business backgrounds.

Start ups cannot operate in a vacuum, they need a supporting eco-system to nurture them. Entrepreneurs have been setting up businesses in India since kingdom come. It is no secret

that these entrepreneurs have originated from a dominant caste. How did this community sustain entrepreneurship over the ages? By developing a sustainable eco-system that matched the needs of the traditional businesses. The core of this eco-system is the incubation facility within the business that enabled the next generation entrepreneur to dabble in incremental innovation, funded by angel funding drawn from the surplus generated by the cash cow of the business. Prototypes were developed and test marketed through access to vendors and distributors and the sales force. Timely customer feedback on the prototype led to building the minimum viable product and the soft market launch. Business mentoring from the experienced elders substituted for any classroom learning.

The mind-set of the community was that business was a 'dhandha', (living), requiring hands-on exposure which was more useful than classroom based 'Higher Education', that 'jugaad' (improvisation), substituted for frugal innovation, backed up by the belief that , no matter what business, profits could be extracted by the sleight-of-



hand expertise of the chartered accountant.

Those from non-business communities lacked the vital eco-system for creating a start up. Education, particularly technical education, drew them as a means for joining 'service' and pursuing a rising career which they considered superior to dhandha. The two professions ran their own divergent paths with their own benchmarks for success. So from the surnames, chances were, you could determine that Birla was, and Bhattacharya was not, in business. However, the emergence of technology as the key driver of a venture and the consequent necessity of professional education for new venture creation has forever botched up the age old divergence in mindset.

So, what is it that has changed?

In my mind, education has played a very important role in driving the growth of most businesses. It has enabled the leveraging of digital and various other technologies, playing a very important role in creating a vibrant business environment. The emergence of new avenues of funding has also changed the landscape. Earlier we only had banks that provided working capital, but now we have non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), angel funders, private equity and venture capitalists. I strongly believe that if you have a good business, potential prospect, or project, it will not be difficult to raise money.

The willingness to fail has also increased substantially, which is a very good sign because not all businesses are going to succeed. Education provides one with a safety net so one can always go back to the drawing board or the job market if one's business plans do not materialise.

A lot of Indian business models are also emerging from studying global trends and observing what happens in other countries. For example, I went to New York about five or six years back and I made it a point to see what new products or services were being developed. One of them was AllBirds—a company developing footwear from natural materials. A few months later, I saw a similar company in India doing the same thing.

Therefore, when a business model is based on a similar concept established abroad, the key factor is to be a first mover here. I believe that we need to move up the value chain to succeed globally and develop products that require high-end manufacturing. Because India's talent pool is much more skilled and educated, it provides a huge opportunity. Secondly, focusing on products that are inherently Indian such as yoga, tea and Ayurveda. A lot of global trends are emerging in these areas—especially after the pandemic where there has been an increased focus on wellness. However, I do not envisage these businesses getting as big as IT and pharma.

Looking ahead

When I started my business of consulting and training way back in 1997, I quickly found out that the learning curve is much steeper. However, as your business grows so does your role. From doing things yourself, you must be willing to get things done or delegate work. I find that today many entrepreneurs are not able to do that. My mantra has always been that you recruit talent that is better than you and nurture them like your children.

Excerpts from article by Harsh Mariwala in businessline published in August 2022, other few articles from Times of India and my own personal thoughts and experience.

**IF YOU DON'T BUILD YOUR DREAM
SOMEONE WILL HIRE YOU TO HELP BUILD THEIRS**

-DHIRUBHAI AMBANI







The Last Spiritual Relic of Kashmir Shaivism

Sushri Prabha Devi takes Maha Samadhi!



The second closest disciple of Shaivacharya Swami Lakshman Joo, Sushri Prabha Devi Ji left her mortal garb on 17th December, 2022 to merge into Supreme Consciousness. Devi Ji was the younger sister of Devi Sharika Ji, the supreme disciple of Swami Lakshman Joo and spiritually attained Shivite herself.

Devi Prabha Ji had submitted herself at the feet of Swami Ji in her childhood who initiated her into the spiritual practices of Shaivism. She dedicated her life to the study and practice of Trika Darshan, popularly known as Kashmir Shaivism, and lived with Swami Lakshman Joo and Sharika Devi Ji in Ishwar Ashram, Ishabar at Nishat in Srinagar. Having been qualified in Hindi and Sanskrit, Devi Ji studied the Trika Darshan scriptures under Swami Ji. She, thus, had the unique distinction of having got initiated into the study and spiritual practice of the philosophy.

Over the decades Devi Ji had a large number of disciples and devotees upon whom she showered boundless blessings and teachings of her Gurudev, Swami Lakshman Joo. Owing to advancing age, last few years, she made Faridabad her permanent abode and lived with Prof. Sudhir Sopory and Smt Meena Sopory who dedicated their time in devotion and service to her.

Devi Prabha Ji's departure has saddened the entire Kashmiri Pandit community which has created a vacuum in the spiritual practice of Kashmir Shaivism. Though we have many philosophical scholars of Trika Darshan today across the globe, Devi Ji was the last Spiritual Relic of Kashmir Shaivism amongst us.

ALL India Kashmiri Samaj pays its tributes to Devi Prabha Ji on attaining Maha Samadhi and prays to Lord Shiva to bestow Moksha to her Aatma!

NAMAH SHIVAI!



- Urmila Pandita



HIS HOLINESS

SWAMI GOVIND KAUL JI MAHARAJ OF KASHMIR

*Jyon Naino mein Putli,
Tyon Maalik Ghat Mahin,
Moorakh Log Na Jaanhin,
Baahar Dhundhan Jaahin.*

Swami Govind Kaul Ji Maharajthe one and only among his contemporaries who ripped open the spiritual juggernaut and excelled beyond spirituality. His leitmotiv was to identify ultimate self within. A born saint, as he was, wore the crown of spirituality from his childhood'The Real Emperor of Kashmir'.

Swami Govind Kaul Ji Maharaj was a resident of village Wanpoh, situated in South Kashmir, on Qazigund -Srinagar National Highway. The banks of river 'Nandi' lend a pure and pious aura to the area which is a meadow, within the close vicinity of Khudwani road. This site of animating consciousness, rich with green verdure and beautiful wild flowers was originally 'Vanposha' which turned into its current name 'Vanpoh' with the passage of time.

The village is venerated because of other towering saints like Krishna Joo Razdan, a name that reverberates in every Kashmiri in the form of his soulful poetry. Saint Krishna Joo Razdan happened to be his maternal uncle (Mamaji).

Born to Revered Aftab Kaul and Vyeshmali, Swami ji was brought up in a prosperous Zamindar Dattatreya Koul family and naturally followed the tradition of his



Swami Govind Kaul

elders to be an ardent Shaiivite. His elder brother was Sh. Harihar Koul, who brought out the magazine 'Harihar Koul Kalyan', that focused on improving the quality of life of Kashmiri people in general. Parents and relations surrounding Swami ji belonged to spiritual caliber, as he, himself would describe in his poetry 'Santay mol maej,



Bhagawan Dedh

santay maam' which implies that all his near and dear ones around him, are saints. Swami ji was born 'Punya Vibhuti.' As per common belief it was unfolded that once kid Govind was playing in attic (dab). It was raining cats and dogs. Suddenly a blitz hit him. His mother and grandmother got scared with the thought of any untoward happening but both the ladies were awestruck when the child remained unharmed. From that day Govind got serene and silence prevailed upon him. Prior to leaving mortal frame, his uncle Swami Krishna Joo Razdan expressed his last yearning that headgear (kantope) of child Govind, be kept on his chest. This also added to spiritual acumen of child Govind. At this juncture, he started devoting his time, more and more in his 'soul searching'. It is said that

Eternal Guide had graced Govind with transcendental initiation in the form of blitz. Though he owed introduction to shastras and yoga to his elder brother Harishwara and his uncle Swami Krishna Joo Razdan, yet his thirst for knowing ultimate reality remained unsatiated. For attaining spiritual enlightenment, he met several peers, faqirs and saints of his time. This quest led him to a vision. Accordingly, he went to Lahore in order to meet Maharshi Shivbrat Lal Varman Ji, who was popularly known by the honorifics 'Data Dayal' and 'Mahrishi'. It is said that Swami Ji was a young lad of sixteen and in his youthful endeavour he traveled half afoot to reach the destination (Lahore). The satsang was going on and devotees were engrossed in bewitching discourses of Maharishi ji, who suddenly asked his disciples to cook something as some important guest was expected,' Kashmir ke

Shehanshah Aa rahay Hain'. A venerable seat was laid along his side. Lo, who was it? A sixteen years old young man, very handsome and six feet plus tall was ushered in his presence. Maharishi uttered 'Ijazat hai'. Swami ji entered, exhausted and rundown. He was honorably escorted to seat and served food. There and then Maharishi ji instructed him to give Naam Daan, as he was a saint since his birth and needed only to fulfill 'Guru bin gati nahi' by going to Maharishi ji. Maharishi ji graced Govind with a turban displaying 'turra', an indication of honour, which can be visualised in all his photos. Tankodi Chandra (Saint from Varanasi), Sant Lal ji of Shahpur and Swami Rama (looked upon by his devotees as Saakshaat Lord Shiva) of Kashmir, besides other pranyogis n jnanyogis of his time

showered many benedictions on him. The intense longing for spiritual enlightenment ended through mere glimpse of Data Dayal ji Maharaj. This episode confirmed that Swami ji belonged to supreme caliber. The prediction of Data Dayal was further confirmed by Baba Faqir Chand Ji Maharaj of Manavta Mandir Hoshiarpur Punjab, who happened to be an elevated soul and Soul brother of Swami ji. The spiritual attainment of Swami ji can be judged from the Bhajans that have been written by this Emperor of Kashmir. Swami ji was also known as King of Kings in Kashmir valley. This title was crowned/ conferred upon him by a renowned Kashmiri saint Swami Nand Bab Sahib Ji Maharaj.

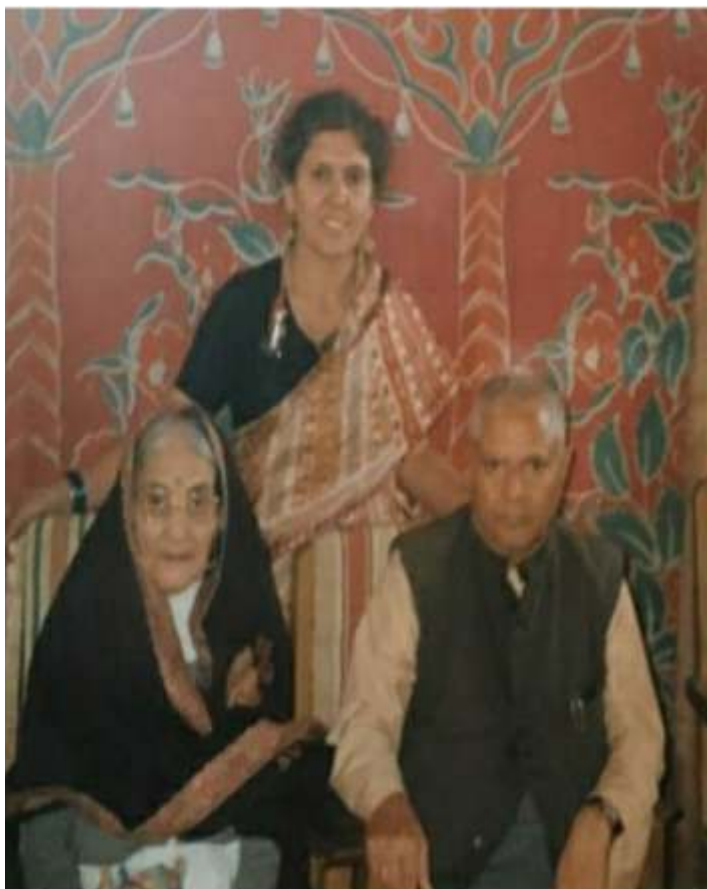
Swami ji was not formally educated but on spiritual front, there was no parallel to him who could match his spiritual excellence. He had a towering personality, six ft above height, graceful countenance, illuminating soul searching eyes with tremendous spiritual glow on his face. Nobody was left untouched by his aura of spiritual dynamism. He was always clad in neat and clean attire that included 'Kafani' and turban, which added more charm to his personality in order to render it more magnetic and powerful.

Among his followers, there were Hindus, Muslims, Christians, elite class, rich, poor, righteous and rogues as well. Above from discrimination, he loved them alike Swami Ji was saint of masses, he practiced alternative system of medicine to free them from various diseases, be it mental or physical. This is clear from the episode when Sadiq Ganai, a thief, ventured into room where Swami ji used to

sit. The thief had notion that Swami Ji had hoarded wealth given to him by local and foreign disciples. Strenuous search in the room could not yield good results for him. It was wintery cold night, as such Sadiq Ganai thought of buzzing out of the place. As soon as he opened the window to jump out, Swami Ji called him. He told him not to go empty handed. There and then initiated him into core spirituality. Swami ji mused, "Hato Sadiq Ganaiyo boz, yi asraaruy vanhayo boz, manhaya chhuyi yi fitnay saaz buland parvaaz Goovendo", which meant 'O Sadiq Ganai listen, I am unfolding mystery that mind is root cause of all conflicts, evils or



Amaji (Somawati)



Mata Kamlaji, Pandit Dayal Ji & Acharya Ratnaji

temptation and strife. So avoid it and focus on elevated goals". Swami Ji was composed and serene in disposition. He did not believe in building establishments. No doubt he was a prosperous landlord of his time, yet he did not encourage huge following. He believed in the fact that even if only one person followed the spiritual path in real sense that would be equivalent to thousands of followers. He described it in one of his Bhajans, "Shesh fush anan yuth no foshi", which implies 'not to get angry if your followers ruin you'. Despite a good following, he showered his love to all equally. Every disciple felt that he/she is the special one.

He would ask for nothing while entering into initiation accord with his disciples. To his chosen ones, he would give 'Deeksha' himself without a request from them, as he

knew that this soul has to get liberated through him only. This was true for Bhagyawan Dedh who had gone to Sufi saint Ahad Zargar, but was directed to seek refuge of Swami ji. Most of his disciples have attained highest level of spirituality. Prominent among them are, Dr. M. Boss, from Zurich University, Switzerland, Dr Erina Hawk, WHO Project Incharge in Psychiatry Hospital Srinagar (during seventies), Bhawani Bhagyawan Pandit, Mata Kamlaji Kachru, Pandit Dayal Prithvi Nath Pandit Ji Maharaj, popularly remembered by his followers as Buji or Bobji. Swami ji himself had coroneted them with the status of guru and had authorised them to instill the seed of spirituality amongst the seekers, whosoever approached them. Swami Govind Kaul was fountainhead of spirituality.

Mata Bhader Dedi, Dr. G.N. Khashu, Mata Gowjigri, Amaji (Somawati), Ratna Ji, Kotwal Saheb and many others were

turned into spiritual stalwarts through his grace. Behan Sarla Bhat is presently putting every effort to conserve the seat of these spiritual stalwarts at Mohinder Nagar, Jammu.

With unassuming personality, he could be discerned busy in daily domestic chores, tending cow, yet engrossed inwards. Locals would spot him sitting under chinar tree for days together, unaffected by seasonal vagaries, spring autumn or snowfall. Many a time people would remove snow mountain that covered him and he would remain unmoved.

He would advocate core 'Grihastha Ashram'. He personally served his invalid mother for years together. This was followed by his disciples also. Mata Kamla Ji would sit for meditation in attic while collecting fuel for hearth in wee hours. Similarly, Ama Ji

(Somawati) would sit in 'clay store' (Metchi Khout), where pure clay for sanitation was stored for whole year, as a precedence in Kashmiri Hindu Community. Both these pure souls made no display of 'secret search', instead they advanced in the spirituality totally unnoticed by family members till the spiritual fragrance emitted out of their 'Being'.

In the evening of Shravan Shukla Paksha Chaturdashi, 12th August 1973 at 7.30 PM Swami ji left his mortal frame to mingle in ultimate. Jyoti Jyot mingled.

Swami ji has defined the spiritual travel from Saakaar -sagun upasana to Nirakaar (formless) school of spirituality with quite ease and feeling of universal love and devotion. In his Kashmiri Leela kavya, the introduction of practical experiences related to Sahaj Samadhi, Surat Shabd yog, sahaj chakras, devotion, Naad Bindu concept, the description of various sounds and colours at various stages of spiritual awakening, have been laid threadbare. This mystery was revealed by Kashmiri Sufis and saints in miniscule earlier but Tulsi Sahib of Hathras, Kabir ji, Radha Soami saints and others had spoken vividly on 'Kingdom of Ultimate' which lies within. Saint Ramananda's philosophy also had tremendous spiritual impact on him. Prominent Shaivacharya Swami Laxman joo was amazed and all praise for his dissection of spiritual realm through recorded experience at various stages. The simple, palatable and vivid explanation has not been given so far in Kashmiri literature that makes his poetry supreme source of practical experiences in the path of spiritual journey. As such Swami Govind Kaul's Poetry is par excellence. As a Mystic poet, he had command over typical Kashmiri, with perfect rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, assonance and other ornaments of poetry. These bhajans are rich in imagery and the vocabulary he employs to convert his inner experiences suggests unmistakably, how he too must have followed the same spiritual path that Lalleshwari had treaded several centuries before him. Swami ji abridged his experiences in his poetry collection 'Govind Amrit'. He was deeply influenced by the thought current of

Mansur-Al-Halaj as well and he used popular idioms of own Kashmiri native dialect, being a blend of Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic. Pushker Nath Ji (Master Ji) has made strenuous efforts to infuse the spirit of Swami Ji's poetry through social media.

Devotional strain is significant in his lyrics, which transpires that he had followed 'ardent bhakti path' also during his spiritual journey. The sustained devotion, coupled with different spiritual practices, led him to the attainment of Self Realisation. In his bout of ecstasy, he bursts out 'chovnus lol mus' i.e. 'Lord bestowed unto me the nectar of purest form of eternal love, I gulped it through the sport of' ultimate Ananda that the creator plays'. In such ramblings, he yearns for association of lord on banks of supreme consciousness and Swami ji stoops to kiss the feet of perceived godhood. He turns nostalgic and bursts 'Di darshun bhaktvatsalo valo lagyo me lol ho aam' Pangs of love make him cry 'vuchhaan chhukhna bu ma galo' He wants to stay on 'his nishast'. During this phase, the 'sound of silence' reverberates within him. Bewitched, charm of Godhood casts spells on him. Swami Ji shares his experiences about existence of God with the passage of various states of wakefulness (Jagrat), dreaminess (Swapna), deep sleep (sushupti), turi and turiyateet avastha (fourth and fifth state of pure consciousness)-void or witness state i.e. Sakshi Bhava. He furthers his experience, 'na turi turiyateet 'i.e even beyond witness state or sakshi bhava. He exclaims 'Adhu kyah vanaan mout ma banu, Sanu gom chom amrit'-I may turn insane as I am not within wits after intake of spiritual nectar'. Divine mother Vaikhuri, the primeval energy, pervades through all universal objects and her immanence is discernable everywhere. Swami ji feels solace as Ma Vaikhuri is 'dayasendh' -the bestower of pure Atman and intelligence, so as to overcome darkness of ignorance.

Swami ji held that it is benign Godhood that leads a person to attain association of Enlightened Masters, who materialises union of 'thought' and 'kun-the word or Shabd'.

Spiritual masters have clairvoyance and thereby they choose the disciples. When a person seeks refuge of Perfect Master, he becomes free from all worries. Thus a stage of 'Ahlay Raza'-'ultimate surrender to almighty, where every discipline vanishes', is attained. This enjoyment deepens, when there is absenteeism of the ideas. Mind and subtlest of subtle appetencies vanish. This eternal beauty leaves no place for thoughts. The concept of 'I' is erased. The super ego, the main creator of worldly problems, worry and fear, is washed off. Since the thought created the world, fragmentation followed. This rebel invited all troubles, killed the relation with 'self' and also enveloped the pure 'state' of love. But as soon as ultimate beauty is realized, the ideal vanishes. One becomes 'absent' beyond vacuum and is centered inwards.

Swami ji was a Perfect Living Enlightened Master, who would not leave disciples in lurch. He worked on his disciples through his radiation till they achieved ultimate goal of Godhood or self realisation. He believed strongly on kinetic theory of energy and could visualise that human beings (material and subtle) is a pack of bindu-atom which is in oscillating motion and creates octave in universe midst the silence. This symphony is sound of silence accompanied by the light produced due to friction of atoms and molecules, the system works like a blitz which bewilders before the sound is heard.

This is the innate experience to substantiate the 'science of soul' described in various bhajans of Swami Ji.

Silence prevails while writing about such great spiritual master, who has torn apart all aspects of spiritual journey and given a clear insight into crux of Vedas and Upanishads, besides, explaining all the stages of spirituality, methodology thereof and end result also, in local Kashmiri language, with deft easy, palatable, poetic compositions. It is up to seeker to consume this potion of soul.

He would ask for nothing while entering into initiation accord with his disciples. To his chosen ones, he would give 'Deeksha' himself without a request from them, as he knew that this soul has to get liberated through him only. This was true for Bhagyanwan Dedh who had gone to Sufi saint Ahad Zargar, but was directed to seek refuge of Swami ji. Most of his disciples have attained highest level of spirituality. Prominent among them are, Dr. M. Boss, from Zurich University, Switzerland, Dr Erina Hawk, WHO Project Incharge in Psychiatry Hospital Srinagar (during seventies), Bhawani Bhagyanwan Pandit, Mata Kamlaji Kachru, Pandit Dayal Prithvi Nath Pandit Ji Maharaj, popularly remembered by his followers as Buji or Bobji. Swami ji himself had coroneted them with the status of guru and had authorised them to instill the seed of spirituality amongst the seekers, whosoever approached them. Swami Govind Kaul was fountainhead of spirituality.



**AIKS Congratulates
Dr. Chaman Lal Raina
on receiving
the Coveted Award**



-Tej N Dhar

Undercover in Bandipore

Author: Ashok Kaul

Publishers: Vitasta Publishing Pvt Ltd, New Delhi

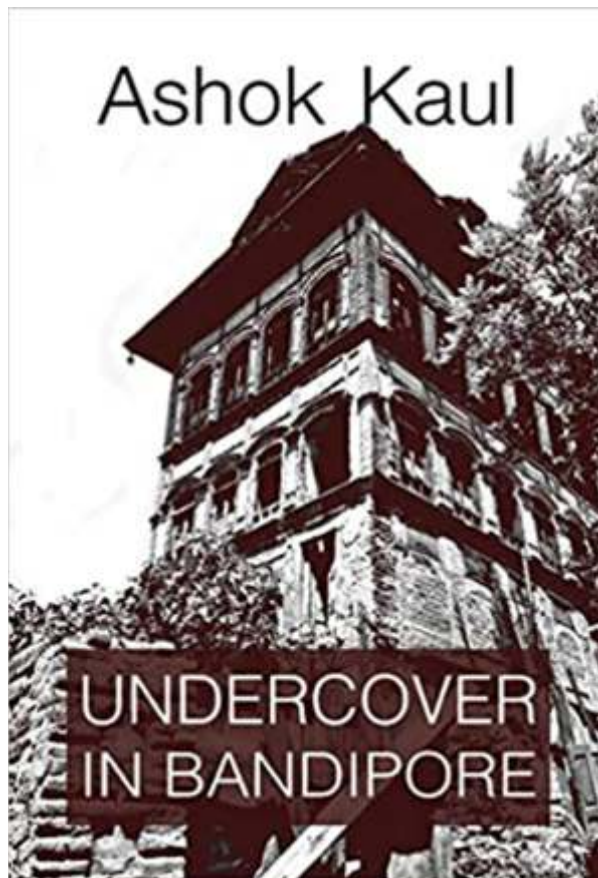
Pages: 351; Price; Rs 395.

In the Preface to his novel, *Undercover in Bandipore*, Kaul claims that it “hold[s] up a mirror to the turmoil in Kashmir,” explores “several dimensions of militancy and its different trajectories,” and weaves a “powerful and absorbing mesh of narratives that has, so far, remained untold in stories about Kashmir.”

Barkat's is the leading narrative in that mesh and provides a frame for the novel, for it begins and ends with him. Parash meets him in a taxi driven by him and brings him home. His father Babb becomes his teacher, but after some time, Barkat disappears. His absence stimulates Parash's memories of his past in Bandipore, of his friends Hasan and Rashid, who, after his exile from the Valley, had been left behind to cope with the spread of militancy, which he calls the “story of Kashmir and its estrangement.”

The story of Kashmir is unravelled in the conversations of Rashid and Hasan and Muza, and much later of Bilal and Raaz Babb too. The conversations of the first three unravel the militancy as a phenomenon that has come to stay in their lives. It has caused job losses, misery in the lives of people, and brought into prominence organizations like the Hurriyat—which panders to its mentors in Pakistan, fixes calendars for hartals and stone-pelting by young local lads—and a steady influx of militants from across the border, who also raise and train local militants. The militancy narrative makes explicit references to the killing of Burhan Wani, the incidents of braid-chopping, the connection between politicians in power and militant organizations, the glorification of young men killed by security forces as martyrs, and many other actual happenings.

Rashid, Hassan, and some others like Wali Mohammad also comment on these incidents and happenings and exchange views to make sense of what they see and hear.



Since they belong to the generation that had spent their growing up days with the Pandits of the Valley, they view the present critically and with sadness too, and say that “The human soul is dead;” “the sons are caged and killed;” “azadi is a mirage,” and used only for exploiting people, who are fed on “fraudulent and seductive narratives.” They bemoan the loss of old, harmonious, social order and the death of Rishi tradition, see the dependence of Kashmiris on outsiders in their day-to-day lives with sadness, and feel that they are “left with only the silence of our graveyards.” They also think that the absence of Pandits from the Valley has adversely impacted the growth of a progressive society, and are unhappy with the parochialist nature of the new order.

An interesting aspect of these conversations, in which Razz Babb joins them quite frequently, is that all of them speak like intellectuals, or, to be more precise, like expert sociologists, which is reflected in their use of specialist phraseology: social and cultural capital, primordial discourses, epistemological connect, and so on. Perhaps that is what Kaul calls the “untold aspect” of the Kashmir story, in which militancy is subjected to a critical scrutiny and expressed in a language that is not usually associated with ordinary beings. Or maybe, this is his way of bringing out the suppressed feelings of people who feel that militancy has proved destructive for them, but are afraid of admitting it publicly!

Apart from this, the account includes several other interesting aspects of militancy, which provide for some smaller narratives about young men and women, in which Barkat, who had disappeared years ago, makes a comeback, as an important character in what is unfolding in Kashmir. Bilal, the elder son of Muza, figures prominently in this part. He has left his home, moves around unknown locations, which is the cause of worry for his parents. Bilal is not a gun-wielding militant; his job is to arrange the admission of young women to important universities outside the state, where they are to develop links with left-wing intellectuals and inspire them to speak and write against the Indian state and its actions in Kashmir, so that more and more young men and women become sympathetic to the cause of Kashmiris. One such narrative that is developed at some length is about Husna, who takes admission in the JNU, successfully influences her teacher Shankar to speak in seminars against the government and publish essays in newspapers and journals. When she realizes that she is in love with him, which encourages him to ask her to marry him, she gets into serious conflict with herself. She feels guilty and is helped by a Muslim friend from Kerala to extricate herself from this difficult situation.

The reappearance of Barkat in the narrative provides space for Kaul to intensify the scrutiny of militancy. His life after his disappearance is revealed to the reader in his conversations with Razz Babb. After leaving Varanasi, he is picked by a group that lures him to join jihad, sends him to Pakistan, where he becomes Abu Tasleem, is sent to Syria for three years, and then moved to Kashmir to take charge of the operations there. Barkat's story confirms that militant activities are not confined to the Valley; many organizations in other parts of India are also actively involved in them.

Barkat operates from the forests of Bandipore, establishes connection with people involved in militancy, and becomes friendly with a widow Tahira. In his conversation with the Pakistani militant commanders in Kashmir, Kashmiris are denigrated because they are a “suspicious community,” who consider jihad an industry. To ensure that they are brought on the right track, they devise strategies to ensure that they are “cut off from their history and memory.”

Barkat is also attracted by Razz Babb, because he reminds him of the Babb he had

ditched in Varanasi. Razz is shabbily dressed in a long pheran, spends his time in a small hole of a place, is fed by local people and also visited by them for seeking advice. His conversations with them are a mix of the mystical and the sociological and there are several stories about his vast knowledge of languages, sciences, religions, and philosophy, and he keeps on spouting bits of these in his conversations. Barkat tells him how he squandered several good opportunities in his life and landed himself in the useless jihadi struggle. He uses his stay in Kashmir to think of a new beginning for himself and convinces Tahira to be his partner, and leaves Bandipore to prepare for this change in his life. Since he has aroused suspicion in the Pakistani commanders operating in the Valley, they see to it that his two trusted people, Razz Babb and Tahira, are shot dead by them.

The last part of the narrative moves outside the Valley, in a place close to Varanasi, where Barkat has assumed a new name: Madhav Kishore Mishra, opened a mission called MKM Mission House, which he uses as a base for arranging lectures and seminars, and invites Parash to take part in these events. Then he disappears once again, but not before handing over the charge of the place to Parash and leaving behind a letter, which reveals that in Bandipore he had tried to locate the two boxes of his Varanasi Babb, but failed. He could only find some of his books and some old clothes, which he leaves for Parash.

Kaul has written a thought-provoking novel that provides interesting details about the militancy in Kashmir, lays bare the pain in the lives of its people, and even makes us believe that a large section of the Muslim community understands, and is therefore critical of, what has overtaken them, and that Pakistan has sold them “dreams through Hurriyat which brought drugs, death and destruction.”

Calendar of Month

Sankat Nivaran Chaturthi - Maarg	12 th November 2022
Kumar Shashti	26 th December 2022
Ashtami (Shukla Paksha)	30 th December 2022
Ekadashi (Shukla Paksha)	02 nd January 2023
Poonima	06 th January 2023
Sankat Nivaran Chaturthi	10 th January 2023
Ashtami (Krishna Paksha)	15 th January 2023
Ekadashi (Krishna Paksha)	17 th January 2023
Amavasya	21 th January 2023

Note

Panchak starts on 26th December ends on 31st December 2022

Poh (Shukla Paksha) from 24th December 2022 to 06th January 2023

Maagh (Krishna Paksha) from 07th January 2023 to 21st January 2023

KPs Demand Constitution of a Committee for Rehabilitation

Kashmiri Pandits in Jammu have expressed concern for the continuation of the protest against the government over selected killings in the valley by the employees employed in Kashmir under the PM package.

A KP organisation Kashmiri Pandit Sabha threatened to intensify its agitation if the government did not stop threatening to withhold the salaries of KP employees and forcing them to come back to the valley, where terrorists threaten them.

The protesters appealed to the Union government to bring back the entire Kashmiri Hindu community living as refugees in various parts of the country back to the valley and rehabilitate them with 'security, honour and dignity.'

KPS President Flays Government

The Kashmiri Pandit Sabha, Jammu, in a meeting under its chief, KK Khosa, lambasted the LG administration for its 'insensitive and shocking attitude' and arm-twisting KP employees to return to work.

"While the UT government is well aware that it has failed to provide security and also in creating a congenial environment in the valley where the Kashmiri Pandits and other minorities could live and work without any fear, such repressive measures and rigid attitude will be resisted by the minorities in general and the KP community in particular," Khosa said.

"Unabated targeted killings of the minorities, including the Kashmiri Pandits, especially in the aftermath of the abrogation of articles 370 & 35A, are a stark reality and remaining in denial about the undercurrents will further complicate the situation in Kashmir," he said.

Khosa said there is a total disconnect in

the valley between the people and the administration, even among KPs who have been living there for the past three decades.

"Let normalcy return to the valley so these employees feel confident and secure again."

"The UT government must understand that they have been rendering their services in the valley with dedication for the past more than a decade and it is only now that the conditions in the valley have deteriorated," he added.

Five-Member BJP Committee Meets LG

The five-member Committee constituted by BJP to look into the problems of the package, non-package, reserved category employees posted in Kashmir and minorities living there since 1990 headed by former Deputy CM, Dr Nirmal Singh as chairman today called on Lt Governor, Manoj Sinha here at Raj Bhawan and apprised him about the ground situation in the Valley.

For the security and safety of minorities and the employees working in Valley, the committee asked for a thorough review and suitable amendments in orders for strict adherence to employee Biometric attendance. LG Manoj Sinha assured the appropriate action.

Package employees stage protest, reiterate relocation demand

Expressing serious concern over the delaying tactics of the Government in fulfilling the demand of package employees after the recent target killings in Kashmir, the PM package employees, under the banner of All Migrant Employees Association Kashmir (AMEAK), staged a massive protest demonstration in Jammu to press their demand of relocation to Jammu. They were also demanding that the Government should frame a Committee to look into the problem.

Hundreds of package employees marched barefooted towards Press Club from Relief Commissioner's Office and sought attention of the Government towards their long pending demand of relocation / deployment. These employees were also seen blowing quench shells repeatedly while saying that they performed such kind of an activity to awaken the administration from its deep slumber.

The protesters also criticized the Government for harassing the employees by different kinds of pressure tactics. They also showed their anguish about the Government for stopping of their salaries. They appealed the concerned authorities to release their salaries till the issue gets resolved.

PNBMT Reiterates Demand for the Passage of Temples Bill

Pt. Prem Nath Bhat Memorial Trust (PNBMT) in a meeting reiterated its demand for passage of Kashmiri Hindu Shrines and Temples Bill.

In a meeting held at Durga Nag Community Hall Anuradha Puram, Barnai Jammu, under the leadership of its chairman, Roshan Lal Pandita. The meeting threadbare discussed the various issues of Kashmiri Pandits including the problems faced by package employees and minorities in Valley.

The chairman of the Trust announced that the Trust would take up the issue of the PM package employees during the observance of Chetna Diwas on 27 December 2022, forcefully.

KPs Protest Israeli Filmmaker's Remarks

Enraged over Israeli filmmaker Nadav Lapid's criticism of "The Kashmir Files", the internally displaced Kashmiri Pandits (KPs) staged a vociferous protest in Jammu and asked Nadav Lapid to apologise to the entire

community.

The KP community also asked the BJP government to convey in "strongest possible words" its resentment to the government of Israel.

A KP woman Vidisha Raina expressed regrets that I&B minister Anurag Thakur didn't object to Lapid's statement then and there at the International Film Festival of India (IFFI).

Nadav Lapid, the jury head of the 53rd IFFI, on Monday had described "The Kashmir Files" as "propaganda" and "vulgar." film.

Ensure Pandits' safety, or let them leave

A hit list that includes the names of 56 Kashmiri Pandit government employees has triggered panic in the community. Issued by The Resistance Front (TRF), which is believed to be a front of Lashkar-e-Taiba, the hit-list is the latest in a series of moves by such groups to create terror among Kashmiri Pandits and other religious minorities to drive them out of Kashmir Valley. The TRF emerged in the months following the Modi government's revocation of Article 370 and Article 35-A in August 2019. It has carried out dozens of attacks on security forces and civilians. Over the last couple of years, the TRF has targeted Pandits and non-Kashmiri migrant labourers and killed several of them. What makes the latest hit-list particularly worrying is that the information relating to the Pandits employed under the Prime Minister's Rehabilitation Package seems to have been leaked from the Education Department, where they are employed.

*Courtesy, News agencies
Report by
Vijay Kashkari*



National Model Vedic School in Puri

Amid chants of hymns, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan recently inaugurated the country's second Rashtriya Adarsh Veda Vidyalaya (RAVV) in Puri, intending to spread knowledge of the Vedas among people.

The RAVV, the National Model Vedic School, has come second on the campus of the Central Sanskrit University Puri. Maharishi Sandipani Rashtriya Ved Vidya Pratishthan is the first such school in Madhya Pradesh's Ujjain.

"Feel fortunate to inaugurate this institute, also called the Shree Jagannath Rashtriya Adarsh Veda Vidyalaya. The objective of this institute is to conserve knowledge of the Vedas and spread it among people," Pradhan said.

The institute, a residential school where education and lodging will be provided free of cost, will help promote the Sanskrit language as well, he said. Besides courses on the four Vedas -- Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajurveda and Atharvaveda – students will get a chance to opt for science, English, mathematics, Vedic mathematics, social science, computer science and agriculture as part of the curriculum.

Admission will be based on merit in 'Veda Bhusan' fourth (Class 9), 'Veda Bhusan' fifth (Class 10), 'Veda Vibhusan' first (Class 11) and 'Veda Vibhusan' second (Class 12), officials said. Courses will begin in the 2022-23 academic year.

The officials said four more schools would come up at Badrinath in Uttarakhand, Sringeri in Karnataka, Dwarka in Gujarat, and Guwahati in Assam. As stated by the education minister, a separate Veda Studies Board has been constituted as per the suggestion of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The minister said Vedas are not just some "mantras"; all that is written in the Vedas are

scientifically proven facts of life. "There are remedies for humanism in the proper pronunciation of the Vedas," he said.

MoUs and partnerships

Sona BLW Precision Forgings Ltd recently signed a MoU with Ashoka University to provide three-year scholarships to 14 eligible women scholars from economically weak sections. They are pursuing Computer Science or Maths as their major/minor in the undergraduate programme.

NSDC recently partnered with Varthana Finance Private Limited to provide financial assistance to students in the skilling ecosystem.

Pfizer India recently signed an MoU with Father Muller Research to strengthen evidence generation and encourage young researchers to gather real-world evidence on drug efficacy and proven therapies from existing electronic patient records.

The Technological University of the Shannon, backed by Education in Ireland, recently entered into a pact with MIT World Peace University, Pune to form an institutional partnership in Pune.

Amity University, Gwalior, recently signed a MoU with Edu Brain Overseas to get the best international internship programmes and overseas placement opportunities for its students.

Media and Entertainment Skills Council recently signed a MoU with CBSE to contribute to students with a specific focus on skill development, education, and training for the media and entertainment sector.

Samsung recently launched its CSR programme Samsung Innovation Campus, in India, to upskill youth in future tech domains. It signed a MoU with the Electronics Sector Skills Council of India to train 3,000 less-privileged youth.

The company also announced the Top 10 teams of the inaugural edition of its

competition, Solve for Tomorrow. Along with FITT, it conducted a three-day Design Thinking Bootcamp and pitch event at the IIT Delhi campus.

Simplilearn recently partnered with Meta Immersive Learning to launch Spark AR (<https://bit.ly/3St4xdz>) to provide a comprehensive understanding of the skills required to create primary effects using AR. The organisation also recently declared the results of its latest Career Impact Survey.

The School of Vocational Education, TISS, recently signed an MoU with Samagra Shiksha, Government of Maharashtra under the Maharashtra Young Leaders Aspiration Development Programme, to provide employment and vocational training to 15,000 students of Class 12 in Maharashtra.

Dual degree in Real Estate

RICS School of Built Environment, Amity University, recently collaborated with Northumbria University to offer a dual degree programme in Real Estate. For details, visit, <https://www.ricssbe.org/> SPJIMR recently became a knowledge partner with the Capacity Building Commission. The partnership will include several short-and long-term programmes based on learning resource creation, curriculum design and delivery, and programme impact assessments.

Orientations and convocations

Shiv Nadar University, Chennai, recently welcomed its second batch of students by inaugurating its orientation programme, 'Shubharambham'22'.

Noida International University recently held an orientation for students of its new batch. Also, its School of Law and Legal Affairs recently organised the third National Moot Court Competition 2022, in which 12 colleges and 135 students from across the country participated.

Healthcare Sector Skill Council recently organised a convocation ceremony of Skilled Healthcare Professionals where graduation certificates were awarded to over 100 candidates under the Covid Frontline Workers courses.

Research and surveys

Anant Centre for Sustainability at Anant National University, Ahmedabad, and the Terwilliger Centre for Innovation in Shelter at Habitat for Humanity, recently launched a research report on Shelter Solutions for Migrant Construction Workers to develop an overall understanding of the housing challenges of migrant construction workers, especially in the pandemic-related lockdown in India.

University Living recently released a survey-based report which reveals that eight out of 10 students are likely to experience culture shock in some way or form when they move overseas.

Commonwealth Master's Scholarship in the United Kingdom

Online applications are invited for the '2023 Commonwealth Master's Scholarship' for pursuing full-time Master's Degree courses commencing from September/October 2023.

The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (CSC), UK, offers scholarships, under six developmental themes of science and technology for development, strengthening health systems and capacity promoting global prosperity, strengthening global peace, security and governance, strengthening resilience and response to crises and access, and inclusion and opportunity

Interested Candidates must submit their applications on the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission's Online Application System as well as to the Ministry of Education's SAKSHAT Portal.

The link for the online application is <https://proposal.sakshat.ac.in/scholarship/>. The portal will be receiving applications till 16.00 hrs on 6th December 2022.

Applicant must be holding a first degree of at least upper second-class (2:1) honours standard or a second-class degree (2:2) and a relevant postgraduate qualification (usually a Master's degree) by September 2023.

University Grants Commission Launch Course on CyberSecurity

The University Grants Commission recently launched courses on cyber security and data protection for undergraduates and postgraduates, intending to help students from non-technical streams to develop an understanding of cyber security issues.

The courses were launched to mark Cyber Jagrukta Divas and will be introduced in universities and colleges under elective or optional categories for students from all streams.

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IITs Accepting CAT Score in 2023

Department of Management Studies, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi, Shailesh Jha Mehta School of Business, IIT Bombay, Vinod Gupta School of Management, IIT Kharagpur, Department of Management Studies, IIT Madras, Department of Management Studies, IIT Roorkee, Department of Management Studies, IIT Dhanbad, and Department of Management Studies, IIT Kanpur.

Top Colleges Accepting CAT Scores between 90-100 Percentile

- ❖ Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Visakhapatnam, IIM Nagpur, IIM Sambalpur,
- ❖ IIM Sirmaur, IIM Jammu, IIM Amritsar, Goa Institute of Management, Goa, Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar, DoMS, IIT Roorkee, DIME, IIT Kanpur,
- ❖ IISWBM Kolkata, BIM Trichy, and Great Lakes Institute of Management, Chennai.

Top Colleges Accepting 80-90 Percentile in CAT Exam

- ❖ Nirma University, Ahmedabad Rs. 10,92,000
- ❖ Alliance School of Business, Bangalore Rs. 8,14,000-17,95,000
- ❖ Xavier Institute of Management and Entrepreneurship Bangalore Rs. 11,00,000
- ❖ Amity Business School Noida

Top Colleges in India Accepting CAT Scores of 80-85 Percentile

Great Lakes Institute of Management, Chennai, TAPMI Manipal, FORE School of Management, GIM Goa, IRMA Anand, KJ Somaiya Mumbai, Christ University, BIMTECH, Greater Noida

Top Colleges in India Accepting CAT Score of 70-80 percentile

XIME Bangalore, ICFAI Business School Hyderabad, New Delhi Institute of Management, SOIL Gurgaon, Jaipuria Institute of Management, IMS Ghaziabad, Jagan Institute of Management Studies, Rohini, KIIT School of Management, ITM Navi Mumbai, IFIM Business School, Bangalore, Sri Balaji University Pune, Birla Institute of Technology and Science Pilani, Flame University, Mumbai, VIT Business School, Vellore, O P Jindal University, Sonapat.

Feedback: vijaykashkari@gmail.com

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For supporting Naad, we appeal to our community members for sponsorships and advertisements.

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Half Page	(B/W)	- Rs. 2500/-
Centre Spread	(Colour)	- Rs.12,000/-

APPEAL!

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



AIKS
Matrimonial Service



Seeking alliance for our son born on Date: 08 November 1994, Time: 10:45 AM at Faridabad Haryana, Height: 176 cm, Qualification: BTech (Computer Science from RGPV University Bhopal), Job description: Currently working as Senior Associate at PWC (Big 4) in Bangalore earlier worked as Product Consultant at Yardi Softwares in Pune, Salary: 7 figures. Permanent Address: Rajghat Baramulla, Kashmir, Present address: Talab Tillo Bohri Jammu, Interested may contact on Email: puranpatwari@yahoo.co.in, anjaliapatwari04@gmail.com, Mobile No: 09811561341, 9086516792.



Seeking alliance for our only daughter born at Faridabad on 5/5/1993 Time: 9.27 PM, Qualification: MBBS and currently pursuing MD pathology. Height 5ft 3 inches. Interested may contact with kulawali and tekni Email: neenac2@yahoo.com, Contact no 8191895075.



Looking for a well-educated boy for our daughter (DOB- 14/01/1992; TOB- 1:00 pm; Height- 5'5"). She has done B.Tech (ICT, Mumbai) and MBA (ISB, Hyderabad). Working for a top MNC in Hyderabad. Interested may contact- ravimunshi711@gmail.com or whatsapp- 9137417928



Looking for a suitable match for our son, born on January 02, 1991 at 06:30 PM at Jammu. Height: 5'11", B.E (C.S.E) Computer Science from VTU University. Presently working as Team Leader inside Sales in (M.N.C) USA Company at Bangalore with handsome package (seven figures). Interested persons may contact on: WhatsApp No. 7006171324, 9055272134, 8717090262, 8717090264, Email-Id: hldhar1958@gmail.com



Looking for a well-educated boy for our daughter (DOB- 14/01/1992; TOB- 1:00 pm; Height- 5'5"). She has done B.Tech (ICT, Mumbai) and MBA (ISB, Hyderabad). Working for a top MNC in Hyderabad. Interested may contact- ravimunshi711@gmail.com or whatsapp-



9137417928Wanted Suitable match for Kashmiri Pandit Boy born on 16th of Feb,1991(In New Delhi) at 03.10 hrs Height: 5' 9" MBA (International Business Studies) from Mumbai. Presently working in Pune with UK Based MNC, Family originally from Naidyar Rainawari (J&K) settled in Pune. Interested may contact Mr. Sanjay Raina 9619630232/8600400232 or mail at: sanjayraina007@yahoo.com



Seeking alliance for my only son. DOB: 19.08.1987 at Srinagar, Time: 7.45 PM, Ht. 176 cms. Education: Btech Computer Science & MBA from Tata Institute of Social Sciences. Working at Bangalore as Director in Razorpay. Highly placed and handsomely paid. Interested may contact at WhatsApp no.8803004092.



Looking for a suitable match for our son born at 12.59 AM on 4th October, 1997 at New Delhi, height 5.11ft. He is MBA from a Govt. University, working in Gurgoan in a multinational company. Family residing at Noida (Ext.). Father working in the Ministry of Finance and mother superannuated from the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India. Interested may contact on 9540818777 / 9540819777 for Tekni, Kalawali etc. (both numbers are also available on whatsapp).



Looking for a suitable educated Kashmiri Pandit Karkoon girl of age group 32 to 34 Yrs for a handsome Kashmiri Pandit Karkoon boy of 34 Yrs age• BMS (Mumbai University) serving as Manager eastern region, in a reputed learning solution company Mumbai with an annual salary above 8 lakhs Per Annum Contact nos WhatsApp /phone 7006144793, 9419195317, 9419878796



Looking for a suitable girl for my son. Please find below the details: Date of Birth: 02/09/1991, Place of Birth: Jammu, Time of Birth: 10: 16 am, Qualification: B.Tech(Mechanical), Employment Details: Presently Working in Luminous India(Himachal Pradesh), (Previously working in Uno Minda). Valley address : Handwara and Present address is Durga Nagar, Bantalab Jammu, Height : 5ft 9inch, Contact/WhatsApp number : 9469554886



A Non-Karkun family but no bar within Hindu Kashmiri Community cherishes traditional values but has Modern Outlook, seeking academic & professionally qualified match, for our daughter. Jaipur (Rajasthan)/ 04:28 pm /25-01-1993/ B.Tech (ECE) throughout Distt. / 164cms-5'5")/ Job-MNC Bangalore. kbrazdan53@gmail.com, 9982129955



Looking for a suitable match for our Son born on July 29, 1988, at 4:57 PM. Place of Birth: Srinagar, Height: 5feet 10 inches. He is MBA from Kurukshetra University, working in Delhi and earning 7 figures annual salary. He is a Low amngalik. The family originally belongs to Budgam and presently resides at Butta Nagar, Jammu. Interested may contact at Email: rahulbhatn88@gmail.com & Mobile no: 9650836408, 8803769763.

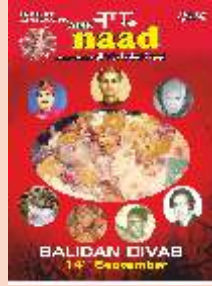
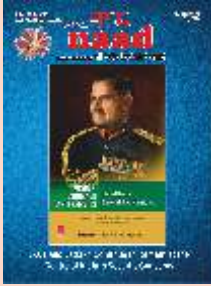


Suitable alliance sought for our daughter, born 1993, Ht. 155 Cm; BE Electronics & Communications and PGD in liberal arts from the Ashoka University. Presently working for a NOT-FOR-PROFIT organization, specializing in Public Policy Implementation & Behavioral Sciences. Currently based in Rishikesh. Interested may contact with Tekni/Kulawali through Email: maharajk1951@gmail.com / WhatsApp no. 70061 03276.



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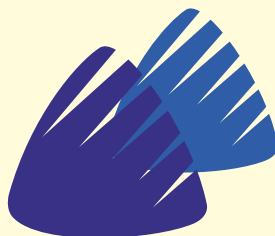
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