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AIKS **ਨਾਦ**  
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**SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS GOVT DECISION TO  
SCRAP ARTICLE 370!**

# Glimpses of Hawan Performed by K P Association, Karnal in its new Kashmir Bhawan



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## THIS MONTH'S COVER

Photo courtesy  
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Cartoon by Ravindra Amin

RA

The cartoon sketch is by artist-psychiatrist Dr Ravindra Amin, MD. Dr Ravindra is an Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry at New York University, Grossman School of Medicine. My relations with Ravindra go back to early 80s in my erstwhile days in the beautiful city of Baroda (Vadodara), an important seat of education in India. He is a dear friend and an excellent artist, especially a cartoonist, besides being an accomplished psychiatrist in the US.

In one of his recent posts, he shared this cartoon done by him. The caption in it has a deep meaning in the historical perspective which caught my thoughts and set me thinking. I could relate this to Jews and Kashmiri Pandits. The former didn't forget but didn't reconcile either. Their struggle continues. The latter forgot every time, SEVEN times in the last SEVEN centuries and their struggle, too, continues. It seems, both missed the "reconciliation" part.

The current crisis in the Middle East, created by the dastardly attack by the Hamas terrorists on the innocent people of Israel that left 1400 dead and more than 100 taken hostage, is a continuum of the historic struggle of Jews for their rightful claim of their place of rising. Should they have reconciled to the holocaust and not laid their claim on their land, they would have been lost amongst the seven billion Homosapiens in the world, losing

their identity for ever. History has seen Egyptian civilization wiped out from the scene, only to be seen now in mummies and historical references. A struggle for identity is always at the cost of human lives. The current situation also has taken thousands of innocent lives. Only if there was reconciliation as the path, would there be peace.

The seven exoduses of the Kashmiri Pandits has resulted in this race getting scattered across the globe. We are slowly losing our identity because we are forgetting our past. Not just that, our identity is getting lost too in the new milieu we have adopted. It may be the time to pause and look back and not forget what happened to this race. We must not forget what caused our displacement. We must reconcile with the situation but never lose sight of the land of our own rising which has the most ancient culture and history.

If you thought "RECONCILIATION" means accepting the wrongs done to them as fate accompli, you are incorrect. Reconciliation allows the mind a space to contemplate on the reasons of the history and what made it happen and take corrective recourse that deters its recurrence.

Thanks, Ravin, for the caption. It set me to thinking!

युक्तकाम्य

Dr. Anubhakar

## From the President's Desk



### AIKS applauds J&K Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill

Passing of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill in the Lok Sabha, which seeks to nominate two members from the Kashmiri migrant community came as music to the ears after a long time. The efforts put in by All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) at various stages has borne fruits.

It began with the meeting with the Chairperson of Delimitation Commission on March 26, 2021 at her Office in Ashoka Hotel, Chankyapuri, where I along with Ms Alka Lahori, Dr Manorama Bakshi and Mr Sanjay Sapru (representing the KP civil society) met with the full bench comprising of Chief Election Commissioner and other important officials and made a presentation before the team on the issue of granting political representation to KPs. The presentation emphasised the need for a non-geographical constituency for Kashmiri Pandits in line with the Sangha Constituency in Sikkim for the 3200 Buddhist Monks registered in Buddhist monasteries there who are the only eligible voters to vote and contest. The commission was appreciative of the precedence to our demand and acknowledged our point of view. It assured us that whatever was possible would be done. A memorandum in this regard was also presented to the Commission which was reproduced in the next issue of NAAD.

Consequent to this meeting, the team was invited by the commission for another meeting held at Hotel Lalit in Srinagar, Kashmir and the team flew at a short notice for the meeting. The team was reinforced by the addition of more members residing in Kashmir, notable being Sh. BB Bhat, President of Zethiyar Asthapan and it turned out to be a large delegation. We made the presentation again on the lines made in Delhi. Commission assured that it will try to accommodate the interests of the displaced KP Community in its report. The meeting was followed by a Press Conference in Srinagar which was attended by the major local media and the same received a wide coverage. Here is the link to the video recording of the press conference:

<https://youtu.be/aWflw9BG2gw?feature=shared>

AIKS, thereafter, discussed the issue at various administrative and political forums to influence the think tank of the decision makers with our point of view. AIKS also approached the members of the community at the affiliate organisations level during its Affiliate Connect Programme held in different parts of the country to build a positive opinion in favour of the proposition by AIKS. Sensing an opportunity, the team went into overdrive and an extensive effort was made to reach out to various sections of the society. During the entire period the team remained in touch with the commission for the purpose.

These repeated and regular interactions with the authorities have borne fruit with the Commission recommending two seats to be reserved for KPs which will be nominated by the LG. It is a step towards the political empowerment that gives a voice to the beleaguered community.

AIKS expresses its gratitude to the Parliament of India, the honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Home Minister Shri Amit Shah and GOI for this affirmative action.

AIKS also thanks the State administration for increasing the pace for enrolling KP's as the voters of the UT. AIKS also hopes that GOI will roll out a comprehensive rehabilitation policy for KP's consistent with the aspirations of the people for granting them the minority status.



- Puran Patwari



## General Secretary's Column

*The activities of AIKS this month remained focused on political developments in UT of Jammu & Kashmir with the big announcement regarding reservation of two nominated Assembly seats, one male and one female, of the migrant community. The item wise activities, however, remained as follows :*

### AIKS welcomes New Chief Secretary

AIKS was overwhelmed with joy with the announcement of Indian Administrative Service topper (1988 batch) Shri Atal Dullu taking over as new Chief Secretary of UT of J&K. AIKS welcomes his elevation to the highest bureaucratic post in the state. He makes it the third community member to reach this coveted position in bureaucratic hierarchy after Shri PN Koul and Shri Vijay Bakaya. As a bright student and an IITian who has been a youth icon inspiring generations of student community especially KPs, Atal Dullu brings with him a dash of professional glamour and youthful energy to the post. AIKS welcomes him in his new role and hopes as highest bureaucrat and policy maker, Atal Dullu will address the grievances and concerns of the community especially those 'non-migrants' who never left the valley and are in bad shape due to apathetic attitude of successive regimes towards them which has left them bereft of quality education and access to job opportunities and healthcare. AIKS also hopes that as community member Shri Dullu will also look into the problems faced by PM Package employees in the valley as both categories of people are our remnants in the valley and deemed as community ambassadors in the valley.

### AIKS welcomes reservation of seats for Kashmiri Migrants in J&K legislature

AIKS welcomes the two nominated seats for Migrant community in J&K Assembly. The Parliament (Lok Sabha) on December 06, 2023 J&K Reservation (Amendment) and J&K Reorganization (Amendment) Bill, seeking (Reorganization) to nominate to the State Assembly two members (one male and one female) of the Kashmiri Migrant community 'in order to give displaced community a voice in the legislature'. AIKS lauded the move and congratulated the PM Shri Narendra Modi and HM Amit Shah for showing the political will to empower the beleaguered community. Though, President Dr Ramesh Raina in his personal representation and through voluminous Memoranda before the Delimitation Commission had asked for a territory less notional constituency on the lines of **Sangha constituency in Sikkim reserved** for Buddhist Monks where only Buddhists are the voters and contestants. That would have given it more representative character. Though it falls short of community expectations, Yet AIKS welcomes the nominated character of the seats by LG which it says will go a long way in alleviating the sufferings of the community by venting out their concerns and frustrations through this platform.

## AIKS President

### Community Speaker at PNBML

AIKS President Dr Ramesh Raina has been chosen as community speaker at the annual PremNath Bhat Memorial lecture to be held on 27<sup>th</sup> December, 2023 at Abhinav Theatre Jammu. Dr Jitender Singh, Minister in PMO and Dr Sudhanshu Trivedi MP and official spokesperson of BJP are going to grace the event as Guests of Honour. Pt PremNath Bhat fell to the assassin's bullets on 27<sup>th</sup> December 1989. He was a community leader and ideologue who worked relentlessly for community welfare and wrote extensively in national newspapers bringing to light the pathetic condition of KPs and their ever shrinking political space and economic squeeze. The lecture series is an annual event undertaken by the PremNath Bhat Memorial Trust (PNBMT) and a much awaited event by the intellectual class as a credible cerebral and academic exercise. PNBMT is also on the forefront of the battle for passage of the Temples and Shrines Bill pending in the Legislative Assembly.

## Migrant voter Card

### and Ayushman Bharat Card

AIKS lauds the role of State administration for preparing voter cards of 'migrant community' and also extending the ambit of Ayushman Bharat Health Card to KP migrants living outside UT of J&K. This has been the community demand for a long time. AIKS thanks, in particular, Relief Commissioner Shri Siddha for personally attending and overseeing his team at work at the different KP organizations in Delhi NCR for issuance of the cards.

## AIKS Holds AGM

As part of its annual exercise AIKS holds its Annual General Meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2023 at YMCA Hostel, New Delhi. Agenda of the meeting is shared in this issue of Naad. AIKS appreciates State administration for increasing the pace of registration of Kashmiri Migrants and extending the Ayushman Bharat Card to them.

## AIKS applauds Supreme Court verdict on Abrogation of Article 370!

The Supreme Court in its historic verdict today, the December 11, 2023, upheld the Union Government's move to abrogate Article 370 of the Constitution on August 5, 2019. The abrogation ended the special status conferred to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. The court held the Constitutional order that abrogated Article 370 as valid. CJI DY Chandrachud said that Jammu and Kashmir held no internal sovereignty after accession to India. The five judge bench comprising of the CJI and Justices Sanjay Kaul, Sanjeev Khanna, B R Gavai and Surya Kant were unanimous in this historic decision.

In his statement, Justice Sanjay Kaul said, *"it is something our country has had to live with without any redressal for the people who were forced to leave their homes. It wasn't a voluntary migration. Men, women and children of J&K have paid a heavy price."* He also recommended to the Government of India to set up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to look into alleged violations of human rights by both state and non-state actors in J&K. *It should be based on a dialogue and not become a criminal court, he added.*

The SC decision has vindicated the AIKS and other KP organisations' position on this issue. AIKS applauds the Supreme Court of India on this historic verdict!







- Ashok Ogra



# KASHMIRI PANDITS AND MIGRATION MOURNING

*'You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending.'* – (Somalian refugee)

Living a migrant life involves settling and unsettling experiences. The loss of an abode can lead to a longing that goes from minor to traumatic. For Kashmiri Pandits (KPs), forced to migrate en-mass in 1990, the pain of 'missing' comes out too strongly. Migration invariably involves three stages: Suffering, Struggle and Stability. For most of the KPs, the first ten years from 1990 were spent in complete suffering and hopelessness. The pain of missing was too much, and they

would often wonder why they were made the target by the terrorists -both home grown and Pakistani Jihadis. Sometimes, the guilt of why they left the place would seize them.

During the next decade (2000-2010), the hope they would be able to return started fading. Thus, the community focused on rehabilitation and resettling their lives including ensuring education for their children and most constructing houses in Jammu and elsewhere to escape the conditions of living in the 'migrant camps'. It was in the third decade of 2010 onwards that most KPs seemed settled to a new life with children having secured decent jobs – both in India and abroad. However, moving to distant places – both in India and abroad- as much it brings possibilities and opportunities, it also inexorably entails many losses that are hardly ever acknowledged. US based scientist turned author Dr. Ashok Raina effectively captures the present dilemma facing the community in the book HISTORY OF KASHMIRI & ITS PANDITS that he has edited: "Throughout the past nearly six centuries, Pandits have mastered the art of self-preservation. They have survived as individuals through the most adverse conditions. They found their strength in learning through education, hard work, and inner drive for success in whatever field of employment they chose.

However, will Pandits ever be able to return to their homeland? Unless the majority





community accepts the Pandits as equal shareholders of Kashmir and the two communities learn to live together in peace, the Valley is going to be in perpetual turmoil, and the Pandits will continue to remain homeless.” As a unique selling point, Dr. Ashok Raina brings together a diverse range of distinguished Pandit voices from across the world. In his foreword, Padmashri Dr. SubashKak hopes that the political situation in the Valley will improve and some of the displaced Pandits will be able to return.

One is tempted to ask both the distinguished contributors whether peace in the valley is only dependant on the wishes of the two communities - namely Muslims and Pandits. What about the role of Pakistan that thwarts any attempt aimed at bridging the gulf between the two communities? Noted community activist, Dr (retd. Col) TejTikoo, questions the versions of some of the

historians who have cast Dogra Raj (1846-1947) as inimical to the majority community. With facts, he demonstrates their useful contribution in uplifting the state subjects from poverty and backwardness. From introducing land reforms to setting up educational institutions, from strengthening irrigation systems to establishing hospitals, the Dogra rulers were the pioneers when compared with other princely states. The author dwells at length on the political developments of the 1930s that shaped the future course of Kashmir history till 1947.

Noted author, Prof. Tej. N. Dhar provides an absorbing account of the supremacy of the Shaivite philosophers and their debate with the Buddhists. “Khemraja, the disciple of Abhinavgupta, is believed to have said that when Vasugupta invoked the help of Shiva for taking part in a debate with the Buddhists, Shiva visited him in his dream, told him to go to the foot of the Mahadeva Mountain and read Siva-Sutras engraved in a rock. He promptly followed the advice and defeated the Buddhists.”

In another article titled 'The Hindu Rulers', Prof Dhar, with great clarity, elaborates on the prominent king of Kashmir,

LalitadityaMuktapida (724-761CE) whose rule he describes as the golden age in Kashmir. “Lalitaditya was not only a great warrior but also a benevolent ruler and a great patron of science, arts and architecture.... he built temples for Buddha as well as for gods like Shiva and Vishnu and Viharas, where scholars from both religions enjoyed royal patronage and made additions to scholarly knowledge,” he further adds. The arrival of Islam in landlocked Kashmir is the focus of PadmashriDr. Kashi NathPandit's article 'The Muslim Rule'. He notes that the task of carrying an Islamic banner to Kashmir fell not to the warriors but to the proselytized Iranian and Turanian (Turkistani) missionaries in the second half of the 14th century. He sheds further light: “Islam was brought to Kashmir by the descendants of the proselytized Zoroastrians, not the indigenous Arabs.”

One of the major beneficiaries of the 1990 migration has been a renewed interest among the Pandits in the ancient history of Kashmir. In their essay 'Kashmir Valley: Evolution and Pre-history', both Dr. Sundeep Pandita and Dr. Ashok Raina trace our roots with the skill of an archaeologist: “The trial excavations by Dr. Terra and Paterson have shown that two cultural layers existed in the area. The uppermost layer with potsherds belonged to the Buddhist period, which represents the fourth century AS. The second layer below, with highly polished black ware and potsherds with incised geometric designs, belonged to the late or early phase of the Indus Valley cultures, ranging from 3000 to 1800BC.” Both the authors succeed in inciting new thoughts and inspiring readers to continue exploring the past to gain better understanding.

In 'Post-Independent Kashmir' Dr. Bansi Lal Kaul briefly touches upon the important events of the state since 1947. He faults the then leadership in the manner the Shimla agreement was concluded: “having secured the release of the Pakistani prisoners of war from India, Bhutto started talking of a thousand-year war with India to avenge the

humiliating defeat of his country and the loss of East Pakistan.” Dr. Pandit's article on the Tribal raid of 1947 provides graphic details of the savagery let loose by the Pakistani raiders on the Hindus and Sikh population. He reveals that well known Pakistani personalities, including the Faquir of Manki Sharif and the Urdu poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz, visited Baramulla to boost the morale of the Tribal Lashkars.

With an interdisciplinary flavour, the book draws from cultural history and political science to shed light on the survival instinct of the KPs. That is what Bansi Lal Pandit brilliantly brings out in 'Pandits and their Unique Culture'. He claims that there is no historical data to show when Saraswat Brahmins became Bhattas. “The word Bhatta is derived from the Sanskrit term Bhartri, which means 'doctor' or 'intellectual'. Exactly how and when the term Bhattas eventually came to be known as present day Kashmiri Pandit is not known.”

The authors have succeeded in providing sketch of the history of Kashmir and its Pandits. The book makes for easy reading and has useful references at the end of each chapter. In the chapter 'The Genocide of Hindus of Kashmir', the authors, Dr. Satish Ganjoo, Ashwani Chungroo and Dr. Ashok Raina- recount the contempt and discrimination and killings of the Pandit community starting with Sultan Sikandar – the Butshikan or idol breaker (AD 1389-1413), and gaining traction with subsequent Muslim rulers. They provide a haunting portrayal when describing the onset of terrorism in Kashmir in 1990.

The authors raise a valid question: “Some Pandits took the abrogation of Article 370 and 35A as a positive sign and started going back to the valley. Others were motivated by the offer of government jobs. For the Jehadis, this would mean a failure of their plan of total Islamization. Consequently, they returned to their old tactics of killing one and, this time, scaring a dozen because there were no thousands left to be scared. Under these circumstances, will it ever be possible for the Kashmiri Pandits to go back to

Kashmir?” What emerges from reading this account is that the more Pandits long for home, the farther away it appears. That explains why most migrants continue holding on to the pieces of the past while waiting for the future. This is the thrust of Dr. Vijay Sazawal's article 'Will Pandits Survive without Their Kashmir'. Being one of the leading lights of the community.

Dr. Sazawal is best qualified to examine this question from a wider canvas. He is kind enough to provide his own conclusions: “The worst is probably over for the Shaivite Hindus living in the valley. Their primary challenge is to survive economically, and the past three decades have shown that Valley Pandits have discovered ingenious ways to acquire new skills to succeed in hostile environments. He goes on to paint a somewhat rosy picture: As militancy dies in Kashmir and the promised prosperity returns, Valley Pandits will grow in numbers from within. The prospect of peace will also likely help attract some displaced Pandits to return, especially those belonging originally to the rural areas of the valley. For those Kashmiri Pandits who live outside of the Valley, the bonds to their ancestral lands will never die.”

No one will argue with the optimism that Dr. Sazawal exudes. However, most Kashmiri Pandits face a dilemma. On one hand the hard fact that Pandits have built a life and left one behind. For them the valley that continues to witness targeted killing - is slowly becoming too invisible to follow back. On the other hand, is what Spanish psychiatrist Joseba Achotegui calls 'migratory mourning'- emotions associated with the losses that are caused by migration? Is migration only about leaving; isn't it also about returning? True, my footsteps carry me away but in my mind I continue to long. Unfortunately, in our case our migration has been politicised before it has been analysed. Tragically, few things are emerging to be true: we know where we are going; however, where we have come from is slowly disappearing.

*Ashok Ogra works as Advisor with reputed Apeejay Education Society.*



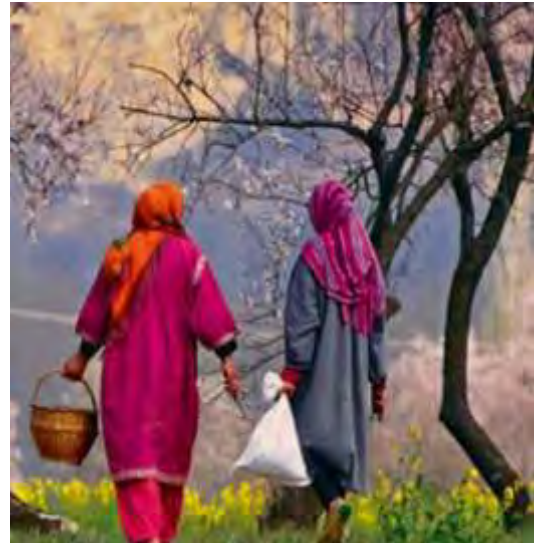
# Kashmiriyat Triumphs PAKISTANIYAT

*(Courtesy Daily Excelsior of November 2, 2023)*

As Kashmir significantly regains the path back to peace, normalcy and development, it is important to recount the ideological siege that Kashmir was subjected to in the last thirty years. While we move ahead on the path of peace and development, it is important not to forget what we went through in our dark times. It is worth mentioning that Kashmir's 5,000 years old sociocultural milieu was put under siege by the externally imposed extremist ideology. And how this extremist ideology aimed to violently change what Kashmir and Kashmiriyat stood for.

In Kashmir, extremism and violence sponsored and nourished by the neighbouring country's establishment had led to the annihilation of native ideas like pluralism, amity and tolerance in the past three decades. We have seen how the extremist and regressive principles were violently asserted in the most malevolent manner in Kashmir than one could imagine ever. In the turbulent circumstances of 1947, it was the secular and democratic foundations which brought Kashmir closer to India while it rejected the two-nation theory. The idea of a secular democracy found natural coherence with the idea of Kashmiriyat which is based on the universal ethos of secularism and pluralism.

It is these pluralist ethos which have historically defined the idea of Kashmir and



Kashmiriyat. But unfortunately, we have had to pay a heavy price because of the mindless violence and political unrest caused by Pakistan's proxy war and cultural/ideological cleansing. Both politically and culturally, our existence came under severe attack. However, it is often stated that the pluralist ideals are best valued in places where they are under heavy onslaught. Their true value is realized in their absence and this is what Kashmiris like this writer have been tragically made to feel in their lives so far. As we mark the 76 years of Accession, it is time that we Kashmiris pledge to uphold and fight for the great pluralist ethos and identity

which our 5,000 years old syncretic culture has given to us. It is important to reclaim it collectively in the given circumstances if we are to survive. We just cannot let “Pakistaniyat” destroy us anymore. Pakistaniyat is something that is completely antithetical to what Kashmiriyat stands for.

Kashmiri culture over a long period of time has been marked by the ideals of Buddhism, Shaivism and Sufism. It was through the blending of these three philosophies that the idea of Kashmiriyat was nourished and propagated. Lord Buddha is said to have remarked that Kashmir is a land of Dhyana and Samagra (Contemplation and Meditation) for the peace, amity, tolerance and quietude it offered.

The Sufi mystic vision present in the teachings and literature poetry of Kashmiri saints and poets like LalaDed and Nund Rishi gave essence to the idea of Kashmiriyat. The whole focus of this great ideal was on pluralism, tolerance, amity, and brotherhood transcending all socio-religious and sectarian barriers. Lal Ded, or, Lalleshwari, as she is popular among Kashmiris of all backgrounds, is very important in the articulation of Kashmiriyat. Elaborating her universal mystical vision borne out of the philosophy of Shaivism, LalaDed writes:

*Shiva abides in all that is, everywhere  
Then do not distinguish between  
a Hindu and Muslim.  
If thou art wise, know thyself  
That is true knowledge of the Lord.  
I gave up falsehood, deceit, untruth,  
I saw the one in all fellow beings, and  
Preached the same doctrine to the mind.  
What then is the inhibition in eating  
The food offered by a fellow human being?*

Lal Ded's thought was further preached by a long line of mystics or Sufis as they spread the universal values and message. These mystics or sufis are respected by Kashmiris of all hues. One of the prominent figures among these is SheikhulAalam, or, Sheikh Nooruddin, or, Nund Rishi. He is often referred to as Lal Ded's spiritual successor. His teachings also form the core of

the idea of Kashmiriyat. Following the footsteps of Lal Ded, Nundi Rishi states his pluralist vision:

*We bear no ill will to each other,  
Should our love bind us all alike,  
Hindu and Muslim,  
Then surely God is pleased with us*

After Lal Ded and SheikhulAalam, the idea of Kashmiriyat as a way of life was further nourished and propagated by mystics and poets like RupaBhawani, Arnimal, Rahim Sahab, ShamasFaqr, WahabKhaar, SochaKral, Samad Mir, and many more. This led to the articulation of Kashmiriyat as the most fundamental as most defining element of Kashmiri identity.

Now take a stark look at what constitutes the “Pakistaniyat” for which many Kashmiri is rather foolishly suffered unabated. Many Kashmiris had fallen into the bait thus bringing death, destruction and misery upon themselves just for some guys enjoying power and privilege in Rawalpindi. It has been so, but now we need to orient our future generations in blunt terms so that they never again self-destruct themselves for the rich upper class Punjabi establishment of Pakistan. This establishment has been playing the failed, divisive and hate filled ideology of Two Nation Theory to conserve its unbridled power and privilege. The need is to demystify all the “myths” constructed about Pakistan by its propaganda machinery. We need to think about our lives, our own good, our own interests, our own welfare, our own future, rather than the upper class Punjabi establishment of Pakistan which has a long history of oppressing lower class Punjabis and all non-Punjabi ethnicities and nationalities in Pakistan besides non-Sunnis. In fact, on this count, Pakistan is a horrible, almost unliveable nation. It is not simply something worth dying for. Pakistani flag cannot cover the mass atrocities being committed by Punjabi establishment in Pakistan on a daily basis.

Pakistan is a country which is beset with the most rigid form of inequality and feudalism even in this modern age. In the rural areas of Punjab, Sindh, KPK and Baluchistan where



Jagirdari (feudalism) is still prevalent, ancient age type slavery still exists. Pakistan is essentially ruled by an exploitative nexus of feudal-military-clergy as numerous scholarly studies have shown. It was created in the name of Islam but it broke down into two parts within 24 years because of Punjabi and Urdu Speaking establishment's brutal political, cultural and economic oppression of Bengalis in the East Pakistan. Balochs, Sindhis, Mohajirs and Pashtuns from time to time have resisted against the Punjabi domination through movements like "Independent Baluchistan", "Sindhu Desh", "Jinnah Pur" and "Pakhtunistan". Shias, Ahmadiyas, Hazaras and Gilgitis also suffer from repression of all kinds. In order to suppress various ethnic struggles within Pakistan as its existence is so fractured, Pakistani establishment has a deliberate policy of encouraging extremism and fundamentalism to dilute these struggles for justice. There is no unifying factor in Pakistan except promotion of religious extremism and fundamentalism. But this comes at a cost of ultimate self destruction as these groups ultimately acquire much power and ideology. However, Pakistani establishment continues to use them against internal dissenters and also outside the country in Kashmir and Afghanistan. Within Pakistan, no dissent is tolerated and journalists and intellectuals are frequently targeted and forced into migration or submission. In recent times, intellectuals who dared to critique were brutally murdered. These include Sabeen Mahmud, Salman Taseer, Mashal Khan, and many others. Their killers enjoy patronage and protection of ISI.

Pakistani farce called democracy is controlled and dictated by the Punjabi dominated military establishment. Any politician who doesn't toe the line is shunted out like Zulfikar Bhutto, Nawaz Sharif and even Imran Khan now. The real power centre in Pakistan is not Islamabad, but the army General Headquarters in Rawalpindi. Pakistani military also has acquired immense wealth, land and corporate ownerships at the cost of poor Pakistani people. The military

establishment manufactures constant delusions and untruths to keep the gullible Pakistani masses in ignorance. As one famous Pakistani author and former ambassador writes: "About 95 percent of Pakistanis were born after partition, but the Pakistani education system reinforces a national narrative that airbrushes a lot of history out and photoshops a lot of non history into people's minds. So Pakistan generally has a national discourse that has not always been completely open. Pakistani nationalism has been built around two ideas: antipathy to India, and Islam as a political slogan. So those two mixed together do confuse the people, and don't forget that half of Pakistanis are illiterate and that 42 percent of school-age children don't go to school of any sort. Also, there are very well-organized Islamic political parties that use violence to make sure that facts and history are not openly discussed and debated."

Imagine if a country does this distortion in the minds of its own people by feeding lies and propaganda, how would it think of us? Isn't it our responsibility to expose such propaganda which is meant to harm us rather than anyone else. The stark difference between the two worldviews and ideologies has been fully elaborated hereby. The choice is clear— whether to choose life, amity, pluralism over division, hate, death and destruction. And now, it is so heartening to see that Kashmiris are slowly but surely realising the importance of peace normalcy and development. Through this and with the proactive support of the vibrant Government policy initiatives, they seem to have reclaimed the space from the clutches of external aggressors, thus thwarting the advent of Pakistaniyyat. There is a feeling of genuine hope in the air nowadays in Kashmir. Finally, we can say that despite the utmost nefarious endeavours of Pakistan to destroy Kashmiriyat and impose Pakistaniyyat over us, it is the time tested ideal of Kashmiriyat that has ultimately come out triumphs.

*(The author is Assistant Professor  
Amar Singh College, Srinagar)*



- Rajeshwar Dhar



# ISRAEL AND PALESTINE - Part II

## The Land of Lost Promises of Star, Cross and Crescent

*Part I was about the Genesis of (Hebrews) Jews, Their Holy Temples and Early Kings, State of Israel and Palestine, Abrahamic Religions of Jews-Christianity-Muslims, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Church of Holy Sepulcher, Al-Aqsa Mosque and Dome of Rock*

*Part II is about the Abrahamic Religion Faiths, Their Holy Books, Kingdoms of Israel and Judah, Canaanites, Their Various Conquerors and Rulers like Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Hasmonean, Byzantines, Romans, Arabs, Fatimids, Seljuk Turks, Crusaders, Egyptians, Mamluks and Islamists*

### Abrahamic Lineage

The History of Israel is of Southern Levant also known as Canaan, Palestine or the Holy Land, the Geographical location of the Modern States of Israel and Palestine. From a Prehistory as Part of the Critical Levantine Area to the Natufian Culture Ca10th millennium BCE to the Bronze Age Ca 2000 BCE with the development of Canaanite



*Visual History of Israel by  
Polish Born Jewish Artist Arthur Szyk*

Civilization, before being vassalized by Egypt in the Late Bronze Age, to the Iron Age, the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah were established and these entities that are Central to the origins of the Jewish and Samaritan People as well as the Abrahamic Faith Tradition. This gave rise to Judaism, Samaritanism, Christianity, Islam, Druzism, Baha'ism, and other Religious Movements. Throughout the course of Human History, the Land of Israel has come under the Sway or Control of Various Polities and as a result, it has Historically Hosted a wide variety of Ethnic Groups.

Thus, In its early stages, the Israelite Religion was derived from the Canaanite Religions of the Bronze Age and the Iron Age, it had become distinct from other Canaanite religions as it shed Polytheism for Monotheism. The Monotheism nature of Yahwism (Yahudi) was further developed in the period following the Babylonian Captivity, eventually emerging as a firm Religious Movement of Monotheism. In the 1st Century CE, Christianity emerged as a splinter movement out of Judaism in the Land of Israel, developed under the Apostles of Jesus of Nazareth. It spread widely after it was adopted

by the Roman Empire as a state religion in the 4th century CE. In the 7th Century CE, Islam was founded by Mohammad in the Arabian Peninsula and it spread fast and wide through the early Muslim Conquests, shortly after his death.

Alongside the Indian Religions, the Iranian Religions and the East Asian Religions, the Abrahamic Religions make up the largest major division in comparative and contemporary religions. By total number of adherents, Christianity and Islam comprise the largest and second-largest religious movements in the world, respectively. Abrahamic religions with fewer adherents include Judaism, Baha'-i-Faith, Druzism, Samaritanism, and Rastafari.

Jews have Abraham who is hailed as the First Hebrew and the Father of the Jewish People. One of Judaism's primary texts is the Tanakh, an account of the Israelites relationship with God from their earliest history, until the building of the Second Temple (Ca 535 BC). One of his Great-Grandsons was Judah, from whom the Judaism Religion ultimately gets its name. The Israelites were initially a number of Tribes who lived in the Kingdom of Israel and Kingdom of Judah. After being conquered and exiled, some members of the Kingdom of Judah eventually returned to Israel. They later formed an independent state under the Hasmonean Dynasty in the 1st and 2nd Centuries BC, before becoming a Client Kingdom of the Roman Empire which also conquered the state and dispersed its inhabitants. From the 2nd to the 6th Centuries, Rabbinical Jews (believed to be descended from the historical Pharisees) wrote the Talmud, a lengthy work of legal rulings and Biblical Exegesis which, along with the Tanakh, is a key text of Rabbinical Judaism.

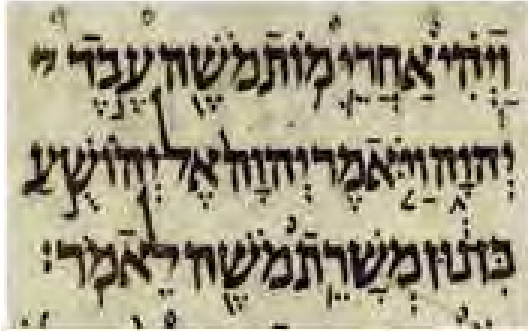
Christianity is based on the Teachings of the Bible and began in the 1st Century as a Sect within Judaism initially led by Jesus. His followers viewed him as the Messiah, as in the Confession of Peter and after his Crucifixion and Death they came to view him as God Incarnate, who was Resurrected and will

return at the end of time to Judge the Living and the Dead and create an Eternal Kingdom of God. Within a few decades this New Movement split from Judaism. Christian Teaching is based on the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. After several periods of alternating persecution and relative peace vis-a-vis the Roman Authorities under different Administrations, Christianity became the state church of the Roman Empire in 380 CE, but has been split into various Churches from its beginning. An attempt was made by the Byzantine Empire to unify Christendom, but this formally failed with the East-West Schism of 1054 CE. In the 16th century, the birth and growth of Protestantism during the Reformation further split Christianity into many Denominations. The largest Post-Reformation branching is the Latter Day Saint movement.

**Islam is based on the Teachings of the Quran. Although it considers Prophet Muhammad to be the Seal of the Prophets, Islam Teaches that Every Prophet Preached Islam, as the word Islam literally means Submission to God, the main concept preached by all Abrahamic Prophets which makes Islam Exclusive and Non- Inclusive Religion for Humanity.** Also, Quran is the Central Religious Text of Islam, which Muslims believe to be a revelation from God, other Islamic books considered to be revealed by God before the Quran, mentioned by name in the Quran are the Tawrat (Torah) revealed to the Prophets and Messengers amongst the Children of Israel, the Zabur (Psalms) revealed to Dawud (David) and the Injil (the Gospel) revealed to Isa (Jesus). The Quran also mentions God having revealed the Scrolls of Abraham and the Scrolls of Moses. The Teachings of the Quran are believed by Muslims to be the Direct and Final revelation and words of God. Islam, like Christianity, is a Universal Religion (i.e. membership is open to anyone). Like Judaism, it has a strictly Unitary Conception of God, called Tawhid or Strict Monotheism.



*The Star of David-Judaism, The Cross of Christianity, The Star + Crescent of Islam are Symbols Commonly used to represent the three Largest Abrahamic Religions.*



*Hebrew Liturgical Script*

### **Some Insights**

- *Assyrians belonged to a Major Ancient Mesopotamian Civilization which existed as a City-State from the 21st Century BC to the 14th Century BC, then to a Territorial State and eventually an Empire from the 14th century BC to the 7th century BC,*
- *Hellenistic or Hellenized Judaism, traditionally was a designation for Judaism in the Greek-Speaking world, including those Jews who spoke Greek and adapted (to some extent) a Greek way of life. It has been argued, however, that all Judaism after the conquests of Alexander was Hellenistic Judaism,*
- *Achaemenid Empire, also known as the First Persian Empire was the ancient Iranian empire founded by Cyrus the Great of the Achaemenid dynasty in 550 BCE. Based in Western Asia, it was the largest empire the world had ever seen at its time from the Balkans and Egypt in the West to Central Asia and the Indus Valley in the East,*
- *Hasmonean Kingdom, Maccabees founded the Hasmonean Royal Dynasty*



*Holy Books of Jews, Christians, Muslims*

*and established Jewish independence in the Land of Israel for about one hundred years, from 165 BCE to 64 BCE. Their Defeat of a much larger power was a Remarkable Feat. Israel had not known Self-Governance since 587 BCE,*

- *The Byzantine Empire, its most important legacy was preserving the traditions of Greece and Rome for around 1,000 years after the fall of the Western Half of the Roman Empire. It survived the fall of the Western Roman Empire in the 5th century CE and continued to exist until the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Empire in 1453 CE,*
- *Levant Countries, are Muslims conquered Countries in 634-638 CE Present Day Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Palestinian Territories and most of Turkey Southwest of the Middle Euphrates,*
- *The First Crusade, (1095–1099) was the First of a Series of Religious wars or Crusades, initiated, supported and at times directed by the Latin Church in the Medieval Period. The objective was the recovery of the Holy Land from Islamic Rule. While Jerusalem had been under*



*Muslim rule for hundreds of years, by the 11th Century the Seljuk takeover of the region threatened local Christian Populations, Pilgrimages from the West and the Byzantine Empire itself,*

- *The Earliest Initiative for the First Crusade began in 1095 CE when Byzantine Emperor Alexios I Komnenos requested Military support from the Council of Piacenza in the Empire's conflict with the Seljuk-led Turks. This was followed later in the year by the Council of Clermont, during which Pope Urban II supported the Byzantine request for Military Assistance and also urged faithful Christians to undertake an armed Pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The final Bastions of the Crusader states were lost in 1291 CE (having been founded originally in 1099 CE) to Muslim forces. In that sense, obviously the Muslims won the Crusades and the Christians were defeated.*
- *The name 'Canaan' is associated with the 'Promised Land' that serves as an ethnic catch-all term covering various indigenous populations, both settled and nomadic-pastoral groups, throughout the regions of the Southern Levant or Canaan and Israelite Culture as Canaanite in nature.*

## **The History of the Judaism, Jews and Muslims in the Land of Israel and Palestine**

The term "Jews" originates from the Biblical Hebrew word Yahudi and in its original meaning refers to the people of the Tribe of Judah or the people of the Kingdom of Judah. The name of both the Tribe and Kingdom derive from Judah, the fourth son of Jacob. Originally, the Hebrew term Yahudi referred only to members of the Tribe of Judah. Later, after the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel (Samaria), the term "Yahudi" was applied to anyone from the Kingdom of Judah, including the Tribes of Judah, Benjamin and Levi, as well as scattered settlements from other Tribes. The Land of Israel, which is considered by

Jews to be the Promised Land, was the place where Jewish identity was formed, although this identity was formed gradually reaching much of its current form in the Exilic and Post-Exilic period. By the Hellenistic period (after 332 BCE) the Jews had become a self-consciously separate community based in Jerusalem.

Jews and Judaism in the Land of Israel has its origins in the 2nd Millennium BCE, when Israelites emerged as an outgrowth of Southern Canaanites. During Biblical Times, a Postulated United Kingdom of Israel existed before splitting into two Israelite kingdoms occupying the highland zone, the Kingdom of Israel (Samaria) in the north and the Kingdom of Judah in the South. The Kingdom of Israel was conquered by the Neo-Assyrian Empire (Ca 722 BCE), and the Kingdom of Judah by the Neo-Babylonian Empire (Ca 586 BCE). Initially exiled to Babylon, upon the defeat of the Neo-Babylonian Empire by the Achaemenid Empire under Cyrus the Great (538 BCE), many of the Jewish Exiles returned to Jerusalem, building the Second Temple.



*Kingdoms of Israel and Judah*



*Shrine with Al-Aqsa Mosque built towards its South*

In 332 BCE the kingdom of Macedonia under Alexander the Great conquered the Achaemenid Empire which included Yehud (Judea). This event started a long religious struggle that split the Jewish population into Traditional and Hellenized Components. 165 BCE, after the Religion-Driven Maccabean Revolt, the independent Hasmonean Kingdom was established. In 64 BCE, the Roman Republic conquered Judea, first subjugating it as a Client State before ultimately converting it into a Roman province in 6 CE. Although coming under the sway of various empires and home to a variety of ethnicities, the area of ancient Israel was predominantly Jewish until the Jewish–Roman wars of 66–136 CE. The wars commenced a lengthy period of Violence, Enslavement, Expulsion, Displacement, Forced Conversion and Forced Migration against the local Jewish population by the Roman Empire and successor Byzantine State, beginning of the Jewish International Diaspora.

After this time, Jews became a minority in most regions, except Galilee (Golan Heights). The area became increasingly Christianized after the 3rd Century, although the percentages of Christians and Jews were unknown, the former perhaps coming to predominate in Urban Areas, the latter remaining in Rural Areas. By the time of the Muslim conquest of the Levant, Jewish Population Centers had declined from over 160 to around 60 settlements. In 1099, the forces of the First Crusade conquered Jerusalem and nearby coastal areas, forming the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Over the following 200 years, Subsequent Crusader forces lost and recaptured Jerusalem until their final ouster from area in 1291 by Islamists.

### **Kashmir and The Centuries-old 'Myth or Reality about the Lost Tribes of Israel'**

Exiled in 722 BCE, it is believed that Jews had travelled to Kashmir taking the historic Silk Route and spread across various Countries in the Middle East, Persia and Afghanistan.

Countless research papers and series of studies have connected linkages or similarities between the Hebrew and the Kashmiri. Even some of the physical features including a peculiar skin disease were shared by the two ethnicities resulting in the conclusion that they have the same ancestry.

There are Long Standing Hypotheses that Kashmiri Population derives ancestry from Jewish or Greek sources. Various studies in last more than two centuries have claimed that there are Historical and Archaeological evidence of the ancient Greek presence in India and Kashmir, Based on this, Recent Joint Research done in the University of Utah School of Medicine, Salt Lake City, Utah USA with Department of Internal & Pulmonary Medicine, Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences, Kashmir SKIMS has examined this connection and have written in their joint paper that it is possible that the southern European and Mediterranean admixture seen in the Kashmiri individuals represents Greek or Sephardic Jewish Ancestry. However, these patterns are not Kashmiri specific and are seen in a number of nearby Indo-European Ethno-linguistic populations in northern India and Pakistan. Taken together, these findings have strongly suggested that the Kashmiri Population is Genetically similar to nearby Populations and does not have a Distinctly Different Ancestral Origin.

The Connection between Jews and Kashmir was suggested by Al-Biruni, the famous 11th-Century Persian Muslim scholar, in his Famed Chronicle on his journeys through South Asia, where in, he states that in olden times Kashmiris used to allow only one or two Foreigner Community to enter the City, particularly Jews for Commerce and Trade. François Bernier, a 17th-Century French Physician and Traveler who stayed for around 12 years in India and Sir Francis Younghusband, British Army Officer, Explorer and Spiritual Writer who also explored this region in the 18th Century, both have commented on the similar physiognomy between Kashmiris and Jews including Fair skin, Prominent Noses and Similar Head

Shapes. However, famous Kashmiri Writer of Lucknow, B N Sharga argues that despite the etymological similarities between Kashmiri and Jewish Words, Places and Surnames, the Kashmiri Pandits are of Indo-Aryan Descent while the Jews are of Semitic Descent.

Again, The Theory is based on Purported Similarities between Kashmiri and Hebrew Words, Phrases and Names. The name Kashmir locally known as Kasher itself is said to be based on the Hebrew word Ka(like) - Shir (Syria) means like Syria. In Kashmiri, we say Deeh for Smoke, Bana for Utensils, Hu for He, Az for Today, Nakha for Nearby, Nee for Take, Nafrat for Hate, Maluin for Maternal Home and many other words and in Hebrew these words also Sound and Mean the Same. More so, the names of approximately 350 Towns and Villages in Kashmir bear some resemblance to Place Names in Israel like Bandpoor similar to Beth Peor, Naboo to Mount Nebo, Pishgah to

Mount Pisgah, Mamre to Mamre etc.

Many historians say that when Alexander attacked the Punjab the Kingdom of Kashmir broke into many Regions and some of these Regions went to the Greeks. Alexander was accompanied by some Jews some of whom settled in Kashmir. Their Language influenced Kashmiri Language, hence, many names in Kashmiri are suffixed with Joo (Jew) as a mark of Respect ...still some old people say in conversation, AhanJoo&NaaJoo. It has also been proposed in the study that many of the Rural Tribes of Kashmir are of Greek Descent having Sharp Greek Features with Archaeological Evidence of Ancient Greek Presence in Kashmir.....

*(To be Continued)*

*The Author is Business Service Consultant and Writes for Goo-Eco-Politico-Sustainability.*

## **Raja Sir Daya Krishen Kaul** **Mansion at Raj Bagh, Srinagar Kashmir**

**- H L Kak**

Possibly the finest residence, built post 19th century, in Srinagar. Spread over 42 kanals or 6 acres, right on the banks of the Jhelum at Raj Bagh; the property features detailing and craftsmanship impossible today. From the best and rarest grade of hand-carved deodar wood (the renovation contractor said it himself) to Italian marble tiles and fireplaces what were imported a 100 plus years ago, each part of the mansion showcases finest levels of craftsmanship. A massive mansion that has only 6 bedrooms - each being a large suite measuring between 700 to 1200 sq.feet. There are multiple sitting rooms, fireplaces and entertainment rooms. Ignore the bare walls of the interior as the property is undergoing very complex renovation. The residence is over 100 years old. Currently taken on lease by Kashmir's largest hospitality group that is renovating it and making it a heritage hotel.

Sir Raja Daya Krishen Kaul (two titles, Raja from the King of Patiala and Sir from the Queen of the British Empire) was possibly the wealthiest man in Jammu & Kashmir after the Maharaja, and one of the most powerful men in northern India. Descended from the caretaker Pandits of Srinagar's ancient Ganpatyar temple, he was known to be a sharp fellow who at a young age became Wazir of Kashmir (equivalent of prime minister) and later the chief advisor and finance minister to the Maharaja of Patiala in the Punjab. At the time of India's independence, the family held more real estate than any other Kashmiri family across undivided India, including large holdings in Pakistan. The descriptions under each picture will tell the story of the remarkable craftsmanship that you may, or may not notice.



- K N Pandita



# SC LOOKING FOR ROADMAP TO RESTORE ELECTORAL DEMOCRACY IN J&K

The Supreme Court of India has been running a marathon session to deliver a verdict on the bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir State, restoration of its special status by abrogating relevant Articles of the Constitution and return of the electoral democracy. J&K is a complex issue and it has a complex history. If the SC is treating the petition in a special manner like constituting a five judges panel and conducting a marathon sitting which till date is running into twelfth

day, there is a history behind the case. It is for the first time ever since the Constitution of India was framed that the SC of India is discussing the J&K issue at such a length and with such intensity. As a layman, one would evince keen interest in what is being discussed, on what basis and with what intent. Perhaps, one would get simply lost in the plethora of arguments that are being pursued by the Honourable Milords.

One wonders whether the history of the





nation, prior to the partition and also the entire gamut of partition, does or does not form the background for discussing the legalities of the case. Because the erstwhile Article 370, which was declared a temporary measure, was incorporated in the Constitution, it makes J&K unique among the federating units of the Indian Union. For seventy years of constitutional rule nobody, neither the state nor the central government, approached the Hon'ble SC to change the status of Art 370 from "temporary" to "permanent". They must have reasons not to do so.

And what are the highlights of that "uniqueness"? These are (a) a carefully hatched conspiracy much ahead of partition of India, of launching an incursion into the princely state in October 1947. (b) desertion of Muslim battalions of State forces and massacring their erstwhile fellow soldiers. (c) massacre, loot, rape and arson of State Hindus and Sikhs by the invaders and their local and foreign accomplices. (d) Central and State government's total apathy to secure the Hindu and Sikh religious minorities against recurrence of physical, mental and psychological torture and discrimination.

Forty-three years later, in 1990, the incomplete task of annihilation of the Hindus and Sikhs in 1947 was completed through genocide and forced expulsion of native habitats. The striking peculiarity of this event is that the genocide and forced expulsion were brought to the doorsteps of the then Governor of J&K. The elected coalition government of the State, resigned as externally sponsored terrorism and mayhem reached its climax. The former chief minister ran away to his UK residence and his former ministers escaped to Jammu where they occupied government bungalow, deployed police and paramilitary personnel as guards and secretly established liaison with the valley and PoK -based terrorist-jihadist leadership.

The beleaguered religious minorities of Kashmir were left to their fate. For them, there was no law, no rule, no constitution, no court of appeal and security.

When the Union government awoke to its responsibilities as late as August 2019, the entire Kashmir valley leadership ganged up in the shape of Gupkar Gang to consolidate opposition to the Union government taking legal, constitutional and administrative measures to ensure that life and property of all residents of J&K are given protection and space to grow and flourish. Today, the Supreme Court is asking the Central Government to announce the time frame for elections and undoing all those measures it had taken on August 5, 2019 to reorganize the State with a view to help normalcy return to it.

***Forty-three years later, in 1990, the incomplete task of annihilation of the Hindus and Sikhs in 1947 was completed through genocide and forced expulsion of native habitats.***

Curiously, it is not asking the Union government whether the conditions have improved to the extent that nearly four hundred thousand people of the State forced to become internally displaced people living as refugees in their own country will be rehabilitated at their habitats by restoring their lands, houses, shops, properties, business, orchards etc. to them as these remain in the illegal occupation of their

adversaries who are the beneficiaries of Centre's enormous development projects. Today, the defence counsel impresses upon the SC that allegedly five thousand people remain interned in jails in Kashmir and justice should be meted out them. Yes, detention if illegal should be addressed. But the Honourable Court does not ask the defence counsel what he has to say about four lakh members of internally displaced community who are languishing in exile for three decades and half when terrorism-jihadism broke out in Kashmir. The Hon'ble Court does not think that genocide of a religious minority and forced extirpation of

nearly four hundred thousand persons of the religious minority are serious happenings related to the issue on which they are burning the midnight oil.

The Honourable SC is concerned about election, democracy, peoples' empowerment, rights, privileges of the citizens of J&K. That is a welcome development and we appreciate it. But in the light of the history of pre and post partition in 1947 and the eruption of terrorism-jihadism in J&K in 1990, it is logical that the Honourable Court discusses at length the meaning and implication of theories like election, democracy, minority rights, security to weaker and vulnerable segments of society end ensuring their right to life and property and dignified living. The Honourable Court should focus not on time frame but on situation frame. Rushing to electoral democracy without foolproof security and sustainability of vulnerable segments of society is tantamount to exposing them to constitutionalized and legalized

decimation. It means playing with the life and security of the minorities or in other words contributing advertently or inadvertently to the effacement of a diversified society.

When society is not there, no law and no constitution is there. A Supreme Court is not outside the parameters of a given society. The word "supreme" does not give it a right to distinguish itself as a separate entity within given society. An eye on history does not mean the knowledge of the past only. History is the three eyes of Shiva meaning past, present and future. This triad forms the fundamentals of a society. Had not the Union government succumbed to hastily pursue its political ends, and not rushed through elections in 1996 or 2006 to install a government with clear separatist agenda for J&K, things would have been different today. Only the third eye will help the Honb'le Supreme Court to understand the nuances of justice. Power is not in the constitution, power rests with the people and people mean the thinking human stuff.

## SHRADHANJALI !

Smt Nancy Bali nee Jaya Mattoo, W/o Late Shri Bansi Lal Bali, originally r/o Zaindar Mohalla, HabbaKadal, Srinagar Kashmir and presently living at 304/40, Shalimar Garden Extension-1, Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, left for her heavenly abode on 23 November, 2023 in Jammu. Smt Nancy Bali was the Massi of AIKS President Dr Ramesh Raina.

All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) expresses deep sorrow to Dr Raina and his family on this irreparable loss and prays to Lord Shiva to bestow Moksha to her Aatma and give strength to the family to bear this loss.





- Ashok Razdan



# MOVIE KANTARA AND KASHMIRI PANDITS - Part II

योअग्निःक्रव्यवाहनःपितृन्यक्षदृतावृधः । प्रेदुहव्यानिवोचतिदेवेभ्यश्चपितृभ्यआ ॥  
योअग्निःक्रव्यवाहनःपितृन्यक्षदृतावृधः । प्रेदुहव्यानिवोचतिदेवेभ्यश्चपितृभ्यआ ॥

*Agnidev carries the offerings of shradh so that the Yagya progresses. He also prays to Devtas and Pittra and carries offerings to them (Rig Veda 10.16.11)*

**O**n the day of Mahalaya Amavasya, there is a conjunction of Sun and the moon and it is believed that our ancestors visit us. All marriage rituals of KPs have Vedic roots. Upanayana or Mehkal which has Vedic roots is important part of religious duties of KPs. Achamana (which is sipping of water three times). Prokshana (sprinkling of water over body when bath is not possible) etc are vedic ritual also part of KPs culture. Red colour is the colour of Bindu of yantra at Sharika Mata temple, Parbhat Srinagar. Kalash Puja is a Vedic Puja and is important part of KPs puja Padati. In Circumambulation around the deity, path of sun is followed and it is important part of Vedic/Puranic ritual. KPs also follow most of sixteen Vedic samaskars and we also follow Vedic padati on birthday puja. On birthday we do puja of moli and we tie around our wrist. We also express our gratitude to sun, five elements (punch bhutas) and also pray to eight Chiranjeeves like Hanuman, Parashuram, Rishi Markendya, Kripacharya, Ashwathama, Mahabali, Ved Vyas, Vibhisna. Kahnethra is another ritual which initiates a child into Hinduism (it is like baptism in Christianity).

**Nilmath Purana and Bhringsha Samhita**  
Till 6th century most of Kashmiri pandits in Kashmir were following only Vedic traditions but with the arrival of NilmathPuran, most of people also started following Puranic rituals. NilmathPuran changed the ritual pattern in Kashmir. It



*Kheer Bhawaniat Tulmul, Kashmir*

stressed on fasts, pilgrimages, collective temple visits & worship and mantra japa. During NilmathPuran period, another book that stressed on worship of local Puranic deities was BhiringishaSamihita written by Maharishi Bhiringisha. This Samihita also stressed on visit to the local shrines of Kashmir and sacred places. This Samihita describes the glory of Ragnaya, Jeshta, Jawala, Sharda, Sharika shrines, AmarnathYatra, Harmukh Ganga, sacredness of holy springs and importance of the Shakti Puja. During this period also Tantric worship became popular in Kashmir. M.A. Stein who translated Rajtarangni into English language writes, "Kashmir is a country where there is no place as large as grain of sesame without Tirtha". During this period, Lord Shiva and his family, Lord Surya, Kubera, many Naga deities and Lord Vishnu became very popular. Goddess Uma manifests as River Vitasta according to NilmathPuran. Durga, Bhadrakali, Chakreshwari, Diti, Aditi, Chandrika etc became very popular deities. According to NilmathPuran, Shardamata is manifestation of Mother Durga. Because of NilmathPuran Kashmiri pandits shifted from Yajnas, fire sacrifices to Agamic traditions like worship of Murtis, Vrats, Utsavas, fasts, dana (charity), snan (sacred baths) etc. BhiringishaSamihita is written in the form of dialogue between Bhariav and Bhairivi and glorifies divine mother and manifestations. It has six sections on Sharika Mata. It describes Sharikamata as a divine mother which manifested as Sarika (starling) and dropped peak of mount Semeru as a demon Baka. The second section describes names of all deities residing at different places on Hari Parbat hill. It includes Shitla, Tara, Parvati, Tripursundri, Tripurbala, Mahakali etc. The third section describes days of worship with the offerings of milk, clarified butter, sugar, meat, fish etc. The fourth section describes the number of sacred rocks, fifth describes method of circumambulation. The sixth section describes the rituals, Beej mantra of SriChakra as manifestation of the divine mother. BhiringishaSamihita also describes

the glory of Jestha Mata, Kedara&Varhara at Baramulla, Kapalmochna at Shopian, Martand etc. It also describes the importance of river Vitasta, Wular Lake, various springs, hills and mountains of religious importance in Kashmir. It also identifies and names various rivers, pilgrimagescentres, spiritual places in Kashmir like Ganga, Godavari, Prayag etc. BhiringishaSamihita explains the importance of Shivratri and Navreh in Kashmir. It stresses on celebrating Shivratri on 13th day of Phagun as a Bhairavutsava. VatukBhairav and Ram Bhairav are represented by pitchers full of water in which walnuts are placed. Puja begins with whole day fast, yagya is performed at night along with worship of VatakNath, Shiv, Parvati, Gannas, yognis and Khetrapals. Vegetarian or non-vegetarian food is offered to deities. On this day, Lord Shiva appeared to Brahma and Vishnu as JawalaLinga or Linga of flame.

Hinduism in Kashmir is about Mantra, Yantra and Tantra. Mantra is the sound form of the deity and yantra is the visual form. SriChakrayantra engraved on Shila at Parbat hill in srinagar is worshiped by Kashmiri pandits as union of Shiva and Shakti, Srichakra has been described in LalitaTrisative. This chakra has nine overlapping triangles, four pointing upward and five downward which results in the formation of multiple triangles. In the centre is a dot, The Bindu. In this chakra, nine chakras are formed each having a name and different colour. The central Bindu has red colour, other chakras have yellow, blue, green, red, black, yellow, pink colours etc. Each chakra has presiding deity. The teeka of Kashmiri pandits is red vermilion and this red colour is decided by the colour of central Bindu. In the same way Mata Ragnaya has its own yantra, known as Shatkona, a six pointed star. Shiva and Shakti are represented by two triangles within a circular diagram. The mantra of the Bindu at Tulamulla is "Sri MaharagynaNamah". Swami Rama said, "A mantra is a sound, a syllable or a set of sounds. It is known not by its meaning but by its vibrations. It provides a focus for the mind and helps one become aware of his or her internal states. It is a way to understand one's self and to



coordinate one's internal and external worlds. The mantra is a friend that helps the mind to become one pointed and slowly leads the student to a deep state of silence, to the centre of consciousness within. It is a spiritual seed grown in the soil of the self."

Some ten thousand years back Ragniya Mata arrived from Lanka to Kashmir. She arrived at Tulamula in Ganderbal district after making stops at Manzagam, Loktipur, Raithen, Devsar, Tikker etc. The divine mother at Tulamula is AtmaLinga form in a heptagonal spring that flows from the west to the east. LingaBhairavi Goddess consecrated by Sadhguru at the Velliangiri in Tamil Nadu is also in the form of Linga. Swami Vivekananda visited Mata Ragniya temple at Tulamula in the years 1897 and in 1898 AD. In 1898 AD, he stayed at Ragniya temple from 30th September to 6th October. He used to engage in daily homa and offer maund (37 Kg) of milk daily as a part of his worship. The name Tulamulla has its origin in Mulberry tree. During Islamic rule all our temples, places of worship were destroyed by invaders. Kashmiri pandits invented a novel method of keeping their religion, culture and traditions alive by worshipping trees. Lower parts of tree were smeared with vermilion, Bran representing Ganesha, Mulberry as Bhairavi, Cedar or Pine as Kaali. There was a mulberry tree (Tulmul) even at Tulamula and linga of Goddess was near the root of mulberry tree. Construction of the new temple started during the reign of MaharajPratap Singh. Before the advent of the Islamic rule, access to the temple of Ragnya Mata was lost due to excessive flooding but was discovered in 965 AD. It is said that Ragniya Mata appeared in the dream of MrKrishanTaploo of Bohrikadal Srinagar and asked him to travel to Shadipur by boat wherefrom a snake will guide him to the sacred place. He went to Shadipur and was guided by a snake to a hollow trunk of Mulberry tree. At that place snake disappeared. MrTaploo demarcated the place.

Devi Mahatmya says that Kaali emerged out from the anger of Goddess Durga on Asthami to kill demon Raktabeeja (blood

seed). Each drop of blood creates new Raktabeeja, so Kaali drinks up whole blood before it can fall on ground. The divine mother is known as MahaKaali, NityaKaali, Raksha Kaali, Shamshana Kaali, Shayma Kaali. Shyama Kaali is also known as Dakshina Kaali. Ragniya Mata is satvik manifestation of Kaali. Swami Lakshmanji in his book titled "Kramanya Pradipka" discusses ancient Krama system of Kashmir Shivaism. He mentions that there are twelve forms of Kaali and essential meaning of these twelve aspects of Kaali. These twelve forms of Kaali are Adya, Matangi, Chhinnamasta, Shamshana, Bagala, Dakshina, Bhairavi, Tara, Shodoshi, Kamala, Guhya, Dhumavati. The twelve Ashtamis in Kashmiri calendar may be related twelve forms of Kaali.

In Hinduism, Puja is set of rituals to attain divinity. According to Agamas, Kalash puja is important part of tantric rituals. For Kalsha puja we need a patra (round pot) preferably of copper or any other metal or clay in which walnuts and water is kept. This decorated Kalash is placed on raw rice flour design of Lotus. Square in this design represents earth, circle represents water, triangle represents fire, crescent air and dot represents space. The water in the pot represents water of all holy rivers and oceans. Mantra recitation involves the invoking of presence of Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh, divine mother, Ganesh. Kalsha was first created during Samundermanthan or great churning of ocean. It was Mohini, form of Lord Vishnu who held Kalash first. In puja, burning of camphor symbolizes melting of ego.

In our day to day life we used to hear our grandmothers use the word "Prabdah" in their conversations with others. As a child I was very curious to know its meaning. Our elders were well versed in law of karma which is supreme in Hinduism. Karma is of three types, Sanchita, Prabdah, and Aagami. A bowman has already sent an arrow (Prabdah), a bowman is about to shoot an arrow (Aagami) and arrows & quiver on his back (Sanchita). Sanchita can be destroyed by attaining knowledge of God, Aagami can be destroyed



*Kaali Mata Represented by Tree*

by expiratory or Prayachitta. Prabdah cannot be changed but rare instances deep grace of Guru or God can change its effect.

The composer of the Devi Bhagvat Purana Maharishi Vyas explains to his student Rishi Janamjaiya about the Himalaya Parvata and its connection with Aadi Shakti Devi herself. Devi Gita is a conversation between Aadi Shakti and King of Himalayas named "Himavat" who is called to a personification of the Himalaya mountains itself and act as

guardian of the Himalayan mountains. In Devi Gita, Aadi Shakti herself describes the process of creation manifested by her SagunaSwarup and her cosmic presence in each part of the universe. Mahavidya is a combination of 10 Vidyaswarups of the Devi Shakti. The ten Devi's are Kali, Tara, Tripura Sundari, Bhuvaneshvari, Bhairavi, Chhinnamastika, Dhumavati, Bagalamukhi, Matangi (tantric form of Mata Sarawati), Kamalatmika (tantric form of Mata Laxmi).

*(To be continued)*

## MY SUPERB FAMILY



- Shailaja Wanchoo

Isn't my family superb!

It taught me how to fight.....how to survive in all adversity!

When I thought now no more, I have taken the last drop of drink....  
finished the last lees.....

they pushed me and pushed me showing there was yet so much to discover

Isn't my family superb!

they pulled me from the darkness and made me look into the eye of the  
enemy and vanquish them with my steely eyes.....

Isn't my family superb!

when I wavered and seemed to succumb, they gave me a mighty push to  
go forward and fearlessly defeat the enemy!

Isn't my family superb!

Thank you, mom, dad, siblings.....I owe you a big one.....

Thanks for being family and I hope we come together for Eternity!



- Rajeshwar Dhar



## Historical Moments for Times Immemorial - Jagatmata Sharda Devi of Sharada Peeth, Kashmir – Part V

- Part I was about Jagatmata Sharada Abode at Teetwal (Kashmir), Sharada Peeth Neelam Valley(PAK), Jagatguru Adi Shankaracharya visit to Neelam Valley and Sharada Consciousness across Globe,*
- Part II was about Jagatmata Sharada Peeth Kashmir, Seat of Learning and Wisdom, Neelam Valley and Shiva abode Harmukh Peaks,*
- Part III was about Pranprarthistha of Sharada Temple Teetwal by Jagatguru Shringeri and about Shringeri Sharada Peetham,*
- Part IV was about Jagatmata Sharada as Reassertion of Spiritual and Cultural Unity in Bharata as Shakti Rupa from Kashmir to Kamakhya to Karnataka to Koothanoor,*
- Part V is about Sharada-Saraswati Grace and Bharata Consciousness from Vedic Ages &*
- Part VI is about Sharada-Saraswati Grace and Cosmos Consciousness.*

### Sharada (Saraswati) Grace and Bharata Consciousness

*Sharada-Saraswati is a part of the Tri-Devi of Saraswati, Lakshmi, and Parvati -Trimurti of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva to Create, Maintain and Regenerate the Universe. The earliest known mention of Sharada -Saraswati as a Goddess is in The Rig-Veda. She has remained significant as a Goddess from the Vedic Period Through Modern Times of Hindu Traditions.*

She is generally shown as one dressed in pure white sitting on Lotus/Swan (Graceful Bird that glides majestically on water), having Four Arms, holding a Book, a Rosary, A Water Pot and a Musical Instrument called Veena - Each of these items have symbolic meaning in Hinduism as:

**White clothes** – Symbol of Purity and Simplicity (The Colour which has all other Colours).

**Lotus** – The Ultimate Truth and Spiritual Enlightenment (One being in mud blooms

every day remaining untouched by the impurities).

**Veena** – Music and Happiness. Besides this, its Strings are the Feelings & Emotions and Instrument Body is the Mind (Goddess Sharada-Saraswati plays the Veena that depicts full control over the Mind, Feelings and Thoughts, resulting in happiness).

**Book** – Source of Knowledge, Intelligence and Wisdom - The Vedas.

**Mala or Rosary** – Mala is used in Mantra for Prayers, Intentions, Counting or for Breaths (It is a tool for focusing the Mind – As Alertness, Focus, Concentration are the Fruits of Mantra Japa).

In Hindu Mythology there are many Avatars and Forms of Goddess Sharada-Saraswati. She is venerated as Sharada-Saraswati in Kashmir Shakti Peeth, as Vidhya Sharda-Saraswati in Basara and Vargal, and as Sharadamba in Sringeri. In some parts, she is known by her twin identities, Savitri and

Gayatri. She takes her Matrika (Warrior) Avatar as Brahmani. Jagatmata. Sharada is not only the Goddess of Knowledge and Wisdom but she is also the Brahmagyda herself and the Goddess of the Wisdom of Ultimate Truth. Her Mahavidhya forms are Matangi and Tara Mahavidhya which she manifests.

*As Mahakali, she is the destroyer of Ignorance, Ego and Darkness that surrounds the mind of the unlearned and lethargic.*

*As Parvati, she is Brahmagyda, the Ultimate Truth.*

*As Lakshmi, she is Vidhyalakshmi, who provides Wealth according to Skill.*

*As Vidhya, she is Formless Concept of Wisdom & Knowledge of All its Aspects.*

*As Gayatri, she is the Personification of the Vedas.*

*As Savitri, She is the Personification of Purity, Consort of Lord Brahma.*

### **Sharada-Saraswati across Bharata**

Sharada-Saraswati is Celebrated as a Feminine Deity with Healing and Purifying Powers of Abundance Flowing Waters in The Rigveda :

*अपोअस्मानमातरः शुन्ध्यन्तु घर्तेन नो घर्तप्वः पुनन्तु ।  
विश्वहिरिप्रं परवहन्ति देविरुदिदाभ्यः शुचिरापूतमि ॥*

[- Rig-Veda 10.17

May the Waters, the Mothers, Cleanse us, may they who Purify with Butter, Purify us with Butter, for these Goddesses bear away Defilement, I come up out of them Pure and Cleansed – Rig-Veda 10.17

Again, The Rig-Veda describes Sharada-Saraswati as the best of Mothers, of Rivers, of Goddesses:

*अम्बितमेन दीतमे देवितमेशारदांसरस्वति ।*

-Rig-Veda 2.41.16

Best of Mothers, the Best of Rivers, Best of Goddesses, Sharada-Saraswati. - Rig-Veda 2.41.16

The Story of Devi Sharada- Saraswati becoming a River on direction of her Consort Brahma is mentioned in the Srishti Khanda of Padma Purana as well as in Skanda Purana.

In some regions of Bharata, such as Vindhya Range (Parts of Madhya Pradesh,

Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Southern Parts of Uttar Pradesh) and Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal and Assam, as well as Nepal, Sharada is part of the Devi Mahatmya Mythology, in the *Tri-Devi* of Mahakali, Mahalakshmi and Mahasaraswati. This is one of many different Hindu legends that attempt to explain how the Hindu Tri-Murti of Gods (Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva) and Goddesses (Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati) came into being & Mahatmya also being worshipped here who destroyed Sumbha and other Asuras & is also part of another legend, the *Navshaktis* (not to be confused with *Navdurgas*) or nine forms of Shakti, namely Brahmi, Vaishnavi, Maheshwari, Kaumari, Varahi, Narsimhi, Aindri, Shivdooti, and Chamunda, revered as powerful Goddesses in Eastern Bharata. They have special significance, too, on *Navaratri* in these regions.

In Jainism, Sharada-Saraswati is also revered as Goddess of Knowledge and regarded as source of All Learning & also regarded as responsible for dissemination of Tirthankars Sermons. The earliest sculpture of Sharada-Saraswati in Jain's Religious Tradition is the Mathura Jain Sharada-Saraswati from Kankali Tila dated 132 CE. The Goddess is also revered by many believers of the Jain religion of North, West, Central and South Bharata. The Goddess has Prominent place in Many Buddhist Sects, too.



*Sharada-Saraswati Temple at Karnataka.*



*Sharada-Saraswati Temple at Rajasthan*



Besides, there are many temples dedicated to Sharada-Saraswati in Bharata. Some notable temples include the Gyana Sharada Temple in Basar on the banks of the River Godavari, Shri Wargal Sharada-Saraswati and Shri Sharada-Saraswati Kshetramu Temples in Medak, Telangana, in Karnataka, one of many Sharada-Saraswati pilgrimage spots is Shringeri, Sharadamba Temple, in Ernakulam district of Kerala, there is a famous Sharada-Saraswati temple in North Paravur, namely, Dakshina Mookambika Temple. In Tamil Nadu, Koothanoor hosts a Sharada-Saraswati Temple. In her identity as Brahmani, Sharada-Saraswati Temples can be found throughout Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.



*Sharada- Saraswati Temple in West Bengal*



*Sharada Idols in South Bharat Homes*

In Kerala and Tamil Nadu, the last three days of the Navaratri festival, Ashtami, Navami and Dashami are celebrated as Sharada Puja and worshipped in Homes with Blessings of Sharada for Start of Studies for Children. In Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand, Vasant Panchami is commonly known as Sharada-Saraswati Puja. On this day, Goddess Saraswati is worshipped in schools, colleges, educational institutes with music and dance. In Goa, Maharashtra and Karnataka, Sharada Puja starts with Sharada-

Saraswati Avahan on Maha Saptami and ends on Vijayadashami with Saraswati Udasan or Visarjan.

In other Manifestation, the Shilpins and Artists depicted Sharada-Saraswati as the Goddess of Knowledge and All Arts in Dancing Posture with Eight-Hands which is in Three Panels of the Hoysaleswara Temple, Halebidu Karnataka (Ca 1150 CE). She is in a classical Indian Dance Posture, holding a Pen, Palm Leaf Manuscript, A Musical instrument and The Tools of Major Arts.



*One of the Dancing Sharada in Karnataka*

As part of the 1200 Crores Morni to Kalesar, Tourism Development Plan announced, The Government of Haryana is developing the historic Sharda Mata Temple of Chotta Trilokpur. In 2018, the Haryana Government launched and sponsored the Annual National Mahotsav in its state named after Sharda Mata.

Kashmiri Pandits observe in Mag Shukla Paksh Tritiya as Gauri Tritiya (Gor Trai), Third Day, in Honour of Goddess Sharada-Saraswati. On this day the Family Priest brings a Portrait of the Goddess Sharada-Saraswati, on which are printed some Sharda-Sanskrit Shlokas in praise of the Goddess and Customary Presented to New Born Child or whenever, there is an addition of a Bride, for Marital Bliss, The Occasion is Special and the Family Priest of the Bride's Parents also brings a specially decorated

Portrait and in return gets a handsome honorarium. This is the Day of Teaching of the Child's First Alphabets after offering Pooja to the Goddess of Learning. This is borne out by the fact that the following day is called Sholaka Tcsoram or the Shloka Chaturthi. Obviously, on this day the child is taught the basic Sanskrit Shlokas like

त्वमेवमाताचपितात्वमेव, त्वमेवबंधुश्चसखात्वमेव।  
त्वमेवविद्याद्रविणत्वमेव, त्वमेवसर्वम्मदेवदेव॥

(O' Lord, You are Mother, You are Father, You are Brother, You are Friend, You are knowledge, You are wealth, O' God of Gods, You are Everything.)

नमामिशारदादेवीवीणापुस्तकधारिणीम्।  
विद्यारम्भंकरिष्यामिप्रसन्नाऽस्तु चसासदा।

(I Bow down to Goddess Sharada -Saraswati, holding a Veena and a Book in her Hand. I am starting my studies. May she always Shower her Blessings on us.)

शारदावरदादेविमोक्षदात्रीसरस्वती।  
नमस्तस्यै नमस्तस्यै नमस्तस्यै नमोनमः॥

(O' Devi Sharada You Provide Boon for Liberation, Salutes, Salutes, Salutes& Salutes to You Goddess)

सरस्वतीमहाभागीविद्याकमललोचने।  
विश्वरूपीविशालाक्षीविद्यादेहिसरस्वती॥

(O' Devi Sharada - Saraswati, the most Auspicious Goddess of knowledge, O' the one with lotus-like eyes, O' Large Eyed as you are the form of knowledge, bless me with knowledge and wisdom. We Salute You).

Shakula Chaturthi (Sholaka Chaturthi) is also known as 'Tripura Chaturthi' as the Goddess is Worshipped on this day in her Tripura Sundari Form. The Goddess is regarded as the energy aspect of the Supreme Divine of Marital Fertility. It is this aspect of energy that activates the Divine to Undertake the Five Functions of Creation, Sustenance, Destruction, Protection and Grace. This day, as Considered Auspicious, Kashmiri Pandit Families Cook Traditional Taher (Yellow Rice Mixed with Turmeric) for Puja Archana.

Gauri Tritya is also celebrated in other parts of Bharata mainly by Women Folk like in Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Gujrat & many States of South Bharata which Symbolizes Saubhagya (Marital Bliss), Whereupon, Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati are Worshipped.

Kashmiris Celebrate Sharada Jayanti on Badra Shukla Paksh Ashtami and Coincides with Ganga Ashtami Laleshwari Jayanti



Some Potraits of Gauri Tritya - Gora Trai

Sharada - Saraswati Dhyana Mantra  
(Meditation Mantras):

ओम् सरस्वतीमयादृष्ट्वा, वीणापुस्तकधारणीम्।

हंसवाहिनीसमायुक्तामाविद्यादानकरोतुमे॥

ओम् ऐंशारदासरस्वत्यै ऐं नमः

ओम् ऐंहीक्लीं महाशारदासरस्वतीदेव्यै नमः॥

(Salutations, O' Devi Sharada Sitting on Swan / Lotus, Holding Book and Bestowing Boon of Wisdom, Knowledge and Wealth on us, Om Aim Maha Sharada-Saraswatiye Namaha, Om Aim Hrim Kleem Maha Sharada - Saraswatiye Devayae Namaha)

..... (To be continued)



- Sanjay Pandita



## **Custodian of Culture**

# **THE LITERARY ODYSSEY OF BRIJ NATH WATTAL 'BETAB'**

Brij Nath Pandit, fondly referred to as "Betab," graced this world on the 20th day of November in the year 1953, amidst the idyllic embrace of Bonpora, Akingam, Anantnag, a quaint jewel nestled in the very heart of Kashmir's breathtaking landscape. Armed with the profound wisdom garnered from a master's degree in Political Science, he embarked upon a transcendent odyssey, one that spanned an astonishing 35 years, wholly devoted to the exalted cause of safeguarding and disseminating the opulent tapestry of Kashmiri language and culture. Through the eloquent mediums of mass media and the sublime realm of fine arts, Betab carved an indelible legacy, etching his name in the annals of literature and culture.

As a custodian of the Kashmiri linguistic heritage, Betab's illustrious career unfolded across various branches of media. He lent his mellifluous voice and impeccable diction to the airwaves, serving as a News Reader, News Editor, and News Correspondent for Doordarshan and All India Radio, both in the vibrant heart of Delhi and amidst the breathtaking landscapes of Srinagar and Jammu. He stands as a singular figure, the sole journalist from the state of Jammu and Kashmir to contribute significantly across all facets of the media spectrum.

Betab's resonance was not confined to broadcasting alone; it extended gracefully into



*Brij Nath Wattal 'Betab'*

the realms of print media. He held the prestigious positions of Consulting Editor at KoshurSamachar in 2008-09 and Editor (Hindi) at KoshurSamachar from 2009 to 2012. His words found their way into the esteemed columns of major newspapers such as Daily Excelsior, Rising Kashmir, Greater Kashmir, Aftab, and more, where his articles shone as beacons of insight and knowledge.



Research was his academic forte, and he left an indelible mark on academia. He actively participated in seminars and contributed invaluable research papers at distinguished institutions like the University of Kashmir, the University of Jammu, the University of Kurukshetra, and the India International Centre. In total, he authored around 50 research papers, delving deep into the treasures of Kashmiri literature and its multifaceted nuances. Betab's scholarly pursuits found publication in various prestigious journals, including Sahitya Akademi and J&K Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages. His literary endeavors radiated far and wide, making their mark in magazines like Samkaleen Bhartiya Sahitya, Miraas, Shiraza, Aajkal, Naad, Koshur Samachar, and Little Mag.

His unwavering commitment to the cause earned him accolades and awards from both national and state institutions. Among his numerous honors were the Senior Fellowship from the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, the National Award from the Central Hindi Directorate, and the Delhi State Urdu Academy's Best Book Award, to name but a few.

Betab's pen was not confined to prose alone; it gave birth to books that became milestones in their own right. His works, including "Bhakti in Kashmiri Literature" (English), "Ael'naash" (Kashmiri), "Harud the Autumn" (English), "Khaban Hund Kharidar" (Kashmiri), "Sargoshiyan" (Urdu), and "Mein KaviNahiHoon" (Hindi), continue to resonate with readers, touching hearts and minds.

His influence reverberated across esteemed literary organizations, where he served as an Advisory Board Member for the National Book Trust, BhartiyaJnanpith, SahityaAkademi, and the J&K Academy's Kashmiri sub-committee. Additionally, his contributions to dictionaries, including the co-authorship of the Kashmiri/Hindi Dictionary for the Central Hindi Directorate, showcased his commitment to linguistic preservation.

The world of visual storytelling became another canvas for Betab's creative expressions. He penned scripts for more than 100 episodes of television serials, each episode weaving together threads of Kashmiri culture and literature. His work extended to a film on the Kashmiri Bhakti poet Krishna Jo Razdan, a poignant tribute to the rich spiritual heritage of the region. Additionally, his six-part series on Kashmiri literature titled 'Meeras' for DD National, a 13-part Urdu TV serial for Doordarshan, and a 13-episode script on Sports in J&K further amplified his impact in the world of television.

While pursuing his scholarly pursuits at Amar Singh College, destiny wove a theatrical thread into the tapestry of BrijNathPandit's life. He became an integral part of the Nov Rang Drama club, where his thespian talents took flight, gracing the hallowed boards of Tagore Hall in Srinagar with unforgettable performances.

Upon venturing to Delhi, the illustrious Aziz Qureshi extended a hand of artistic camaraderie, inviting him to join his esteemed troupe and the renowned Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA). Under Qureshi's tutelage, Betab's artistry flourished, and he became a luminary in the world of drama. One notable gem in his repertoire was a poignant portrayal of the legendary Mirza Ghalib's life, a performance that left its indelible mark on stages in Delhi and Chandigarh.

As a poet he can be described as someone who possesses a profound understanding of spirituality and self-discovery. He uses symbolism effectively to convey the transformative journey of a seeker who identifies as Shiva. Through these lines, the poet showcases his ability to capture the essence of spiritual growth, self-realization, and the transcendence of worldly illusions. His words are both introspective and enlightening, inviting readers to contemplate the deeper meanings of life and existence.

**I am Shiva**

I

fought Maya

Lighted the lamp of knowledge



Moved inwards  
Meditated upon the fire of consciousness  
Offered my senses  
Anointed existence  
With these ashes  
And became  
Shiva.

Awards adorned Betab's illustrious career like jewels in a literary crown. His contributions were celebrated with reverence by both national and state institutions, as well as governments, and his efforts were commended by the very heads of the organizations he served. Among the esteemed honors bestowed upon him were the Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti Wardha Award, the Varta Gaurav Samman, and the Khelat-I-Gulistan. The pinnacle of recognition came in the form of the Mahatma Krishna Joo Razdan Saraswati Saman, a testament to his unwavering dedication.

In his literary odyssey, Betab's contributions extended beyond the boundaries of time and place. His devotion to the cultural and linguistic essence of Kashmir enriched not only his homeland but also the broader literary world.

Betab's influence extended well beyond his written words. He served as an active Advisory Board Member for esteemed literary organizations, including the National Book Trust, Bhartiya Jnanpith, Sahitya Akademi, and the J&K Academy's Kashmiri sub-committee. His guidance and expertise shaped the literary landscape, ensuring that the cultural treasures he held dear were preserved and celebrated.

Dictionaries bore witness to his commitment to linguistic preservation. His co-authorship of the Kashmiri/Hindi Dictionary for the Central Hindi Directorate, featuring a staggering 15,000 entries, was a testament to his dedication to safeguarding the nuances of the Kashmiri language. Administrative and technical terms also found their place in his dictionaries, further showcasing his encyclopedic knowledge.

Betab's gift for translation further cemented his legacy as a cultural bridge-builder. He skillfully translated a Dogri novel titled "HashePe," introduced Kashmiri poetry to Bhartiya Jnanpith for three consecutive years, and played a pivotal role in translating an anthology of Indian poetry into Kashmiri as part of the Sahitya Akademi project. His co-translation efforts extended to an anthology of Indian Poetry into Hindi, demonstrating his linguistic prowess.

Today, Brij Nath Pandit Betab continues to be a shining beacon of inspiration for those who strive to preserve and promote the cultural and literary heritage of Kashmir. His legacy transcends time, ensuring that the melodies of Kashmiri language, the richness of its literature, and the vibrancy of its culture remain etched in the hearts and minds of generations to come. Betab's life's work stands as a testament to the enduring power of literature and the profound impact one individual can have in preserving and nurturing their heritage.

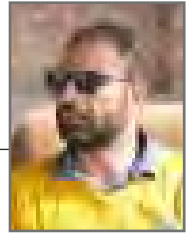
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## APPEAL!

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.



-Syed Rizwan Geelani



# Exclusive Interview of Vijay Dhar'

(Courtesy Greater Kashmir November 13, 2023)

*Vijay Dhar, the Chairman of DPS Srinagar, has emerged as a symbol of educational commitment and an advocate for communal harmony in the region. His journey unfolds through an illustrious life marked by diverse experiences, reflecting the evolving landscape of education in Kashmir. In an exclusive interview with Greater Kashmir Special Correspondent, Syed Rizwan Geelani, Dhar shares insights into his early life, the challenges he faced, his global exposure, and the establishment of Delhi Public School (DPS) Srinagar.*



Born in early 1940s, Vijay Dhar's educational odyssey began in Rangteng government school in the old city where he spent some time but his father's decision to send him to Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) in Delhi at a tender age marked a pivotal moment. Despite initial challenges, Dhar excelled in education, imbibing values that shaped his worldview. His experiences at Tyndale Biscoe School, where he learned swimming and performed the 'Dal Cross' feat, left an indelible mark on him. These early years laid the foundation for his later commitment to education.

"My early life, firstly, started from Rangteng government school in the old city in 1947 as my father went to the same school. I was in class 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> when I was sent to Delhi in 1948 or 1949 at Jamia Millia Islamia. Agha Ashraf Ali, the great educationist, convinced my father to send me to JMI," recalls Dhar. Being the only son and 'Chirag' of the Dhar dynasty it was very difficult for anybody to go

outside for education at that age. "When I landed in Jamia Millia in class 2, there I learnt to offer Nimaz. I had no knowledge about the Nimaz but Zakir Hussain Sahab was the principal of the institution and Agha Ashraf Ali was my mentor and I learnt Nimaz and Quran," says Dhar. As Dhar was about to start his academic journey at JMI, his grandmother was upset with the decision.

"There in Jamia Millia they used to give us one thali with big Roti and karchi of daal and we had to wear khadi as the freedom movement had taken off," says Dhar. I was there for two years and my paternal aunt (Buwa) came to see me there, and when she saw me, she started crying and on her return, she asked my father to take me back to Kashmir. "So, I was again back in the Valley when Bakhshi Sahab was our Deputy Prime Minister. I remember our flight from Delhi took seven hours to reach Srinagar. The flight would stop at Amritsar, Pathankot, Jammu, and then land in Kashmir," he says. But the education at Jamia had a long lasting

impact on Dhar's life. "It was tremendous and when I asked my father why he sent me to Jamia, his answer was that you will understand one day," Dhar says.

After coming back from Jamia, Dhar again ended up in Rangteng school till class 6th. Later, he was enrolled in Tyndale Biscoe in class 6th for two years and then in between was sent to Presentation Convent as well, as those days, Presentation Convent School was a co-education school. "I was in the Presentation Convent School in my class 8th and I remember that I did not have a good hold on English. When my Principal asked me to say a few sentences in English I could not. So, I was demoted to class 6th," recalls Dhar. "But then I learnt English very fast and got double promotion and got again shifted to Tyndale Biscoe in class 8th.

In Biscoe it was altogether a different experience of so many things like swimming and other activities. The teacher teaching me swimming would tie a rope and put me in the swimming pool. As I was Mantri's (minister's) son he would give me extra time but one day he got very angry as I could not learn swimming and he kicked me deep in the pool with a rope tied to me. And I landed up straight deep in the pool and I learnt how to swim on my own. Then I did the Dal cross as it was part of the school curriculum," he says.

Dhar, as an alumnus of Tyndale Biscoe School, is all praise for his alma mater as he holds great respect for the school as an institution that kept education going in the worst times.

"I cannot take credit for providing education. I think Mr Kaul and his wife did superb work all the time. They had to face bad times too but they stuck to provide a good education. When I passed my class 10th from Biscoe that is when I entered the society and realised the value of education I got in my life," he says. At this age Dhar could sit across with others and understand their part of religion and his part of religion. It was easy to show respect to the person offering Nimaz and reciting Quran because he had that background to respect other religions.

To start Delhi Public School, Dhar took inspiration from Mr Parvaiz Kaul and his wife and the education he got in Tyndale Biscoe. "I can't say that we can copy that but we tried whatever we could pick up," says Dhar.

## Witnessing

### Communal Harmony In Kashmir

Dhar later joined Amar Singh College Srinagar after passing his class 10th exams. He emphatically recalls growing up in Kashmir, highlighting a constant theme in his life – communal harmony. He asserts that despite changes over the years, he has never encountered discrimination or disrespect in the region due to his Hindu identity. This theme of harmony becomes a guiding principle throughout his life.

"It is a very interesting scenario which I think has not changed since I was a child. But of course there have been many changes like changes in education and other things," says Dhar.

## Global Exposure and Educational Insights

Dhar's travels to various countries enriched his perspective on education. He expresses admiration for Moscow's teaching methodologies for kindergarten. However, he confronts a paradox – despite Jammu and Kashmir being the first state to make education compulsory in 1952, the region struggles with low educational standards. Dhar underscores the need for a robust teacher-training programme to elevate education.

## Founding DPS Srinagar

Motivated by a desire to contribute to education, Dhar, along with his family, returned to Kashmir in 1992. Recognising the deficiency in educational standards, he decided to establish a school. The journey led him to approach the Delhi Public School (DPS) Chairman, seeking affiliation. Despite a challenging encounter regarding his religion, Dhar succeeded in establishing DPS

Srinagar in 2003, heralding a new era in education in the region.

“We went from here in 1990 like what everybody else did. But we came back in 1992 only because of my mother, that is a long story,” recalls Dhar. On their return, with a huge security, Dhar still remembers the warmth and reception they were given by the local Kashmiris. “We stayed here for five weeks with pathetic security. But the reception and love from our people was such that we never prepared our breakfast or dinner at our home. During those five weeks we were offered everything by our Kashmiri people here,” recalls Dhar. “Because of the security issues, a decision was taken that we will not visit their house and they will not enter our home.

“So we kept on coming here and in 1992 we were again here. I think it was in 1996 when we found that education was lacking here except for a few schools, particularly missionary schools, rest of the schools did not show that good education,” recalls Dhar. This was the moment when they decided to start a school. The initiative however was not a cakewalk for them but somehow they succeeded in it.

“We opened the school in 2003 but basic things started in 1998 and 1999. It took one long year to decide as I wanted to have a big name for it and we approached DPS New Delhi. We wanted to have a national curriculum and we spent six months in Delhi to get the affiliation. Once I was waiting to meet the chairman, one gentleman of the office asked me about the area where I have to set up the school. I said Kashmir and then he asked me a very annoying question about whether I am Hindu or Muslim. This irritated me and I asked him to tell his chairman that if this is the criteria then I do not need the affiliation,” Dhar vividly recalls the conversation. “So when I met the chairman I narrated the incident to him and said if this is the criteria then I do not need it. I told him that you have given 11 schools affiliation in Jammu and none in Kashmir. He gave me certain reasons and then I gave him a lecture

on Kashmir for five minutes. He stood up and apologised for being asked about my religion.” Such was the impact of the conversation that the chairman deleted 26 out of 29 clauses and declared that anyone from Kashmir who seeks affiliation should fill only three clauses instead of 29.

“He said that I was the first person who gave him a real picture of Kashmir. This is how we established DPS Srinagar,” says Dhar. He says that his grandmother and Tyndale Biscoe School were the inspiration for him to set up a school in the Valley. “My grandmother used to tell me that if you ever can do anything, build a school, then a hospital, after that think of building Mandir or Masjid.”

## Current Educational Landscape In Kashmir

Dhar reflects on the improvements in the present educational scenario in Kashmir but stresses the need for a comprehensive teacher-training programme. He advocates for incorporating emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the curriculum, a vision realised by introducing AI in DPS Srinagar from the third grade.

“The grading factor for education is the teacher for whom we should have a teacher-training programme. We need to educate the teacher first and then we can talk of education. Contemporary education has changed but when it comes to technology we are lacking in it. The most important part is AI which we are lacking,” says Dhar.

## Contributions To Educational And Social Upliftment

Dhar's commitment to education extends beyond DPS Srinagar. He initiated collaborations between private and government schools, aiming for mutual growth. He emphasises the importance of the government recognising the value of private schools and leveraging their facilities for broader educational development. Dhar, advocates for a collaboration between the private and government education sector which he believes is the way out to improve the



overall education sector in Jammu and Kashmir. "I don't understand why the government considers private schools as parasites, instead the government should use our facilities. I suggested to the government that each private school should adopt one or two government schools in their vicinity," he says.

Dhar recalled how the initiative was sabotaged in 2008, when DPS Srinagar in 2008 adopted one government school at Sonwar Srinagar. "We adopted Sonwar School and upgraded it. I remember there were 36 teachers and 80 children. We brought down the teachers to 18 and the student numbers increased to 180. There was a nearby school and we asked the government to combine these two schools. But after three years the government did not give any hopes of continuing with it," he said. "We have proposed to set up a college in the Valley and teach courses like AI and other technical courses rather than teaching history or geography. I can get you 10 professors from England using online mode of teaching. Let them (government) allow us to set up private colleges here," says Dhar.

### Views on Article 370 Abrogation

While refraining from labelling the abrogation of Article 370 as strictly good or bad, Dhar acknowledges the positive developments in health and overall development in Jammu and Kashmir post the abrogation. "I cannot say whether abrogation of article 370 was the best thing, a good thing, or a bad thing to happen but one thing is that after removal of Article 370 and Article 35-A there has been tremendous development in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in the health sector," says Dhar.

### Return of Kashmiri Pandits

Dhar is of the opinion that there are various options for the government to bring Kashmiri Pandits back but says that it has been 30 years now since they left. "Their children are settled outside and abroad and if they are coming back they must know that they are coming to what," he says. Dhar says that there will be a nostalgic factor associated with parents and

grandparents but raises apprehensions about the young generations. "There are KPs working as teachers and also in other departments. But we must ask them if they are happy," he says.

### Legacy and Inspirations

Dhar's life journey, from a student at Rangteng School to the chairperson of DPS reflects a transformative era marked by technological advancements. His inspiration stems from dedicated teachers at Tyndale Biscoe School and the teachings of his father, D P Dhar, emphasising the importance of giving back to society. "The teaching of my father to me was very little but only one thing which is the motive of DP Dhar Memorial Trust is 'Learn to Give'. He always used to tell me that giving money to someone was easy but we should learn to spend time with people. That has been a great teaching for me," recalls Dhar.

Dhar is satisfied with his life as he has been able to provide a platform of education to people and has around 700 employees. "If you ask me if I have done something great in education, I will say I have not, but at least I have projected a better standard," says Dhar while recalling an incident of a mother who approached DPS management for a form to admit her kid in the school. "When the lady came to me in 2003 and asked about the fees, I said it was Rs 1200. She returned and said she cannot afford it. After a few days she again came to me and asked for the form but I reminded her of financial constraints. She said I will do whatever possible at my end but will ensure that my kid studies here at DPS Srinagar because I trust you," he says.

### Tailpiece

Dhar's profile encapsulates a remarkable individual who, driven by a passion for education and communal harmony, has left an indelible mark on the educational landscape of Kashmir. His commitment to fostering a new generation equipped with the latest technologies and values continues to shape the future of education in the region.



- Ashok Manvati



# BE POSITIVE – EVERY TIME NEED

33 long years have elapsed since our displacement in 1990, effectively consuming two generations of homeless (in our own country) Kashmiri Pundits. Our struggles are continuing unendingly since then. However, the priorities have changed from time to time. In 1990 immediate nightmare was to find a shelter. And hundreds fell to the merciless snakes, scorpions and scorching heat while dreamingly longing for cool breeze from the brooks, rivulets & shady Chinars, ethnic aroma of their farms & patios. Suffering the inhuman conditions in tents, our respected parents, unmindful of such unbearable conditions did not compromise with children's education as a result of which most of the community children are well placed today around the globe, making their respective families and community proud, much to the envy of the people responsible for our forced exodus.

Whereas education is always a priority, political struggles with governments continued. In last 33 years, whichever KP organization, whosoever, in whatsoever manner was involved in whatsoever activity – political, social, humanitarian, administrative – tried to help the community, address the community issues, to the best of their / his / her capacities, understandings, prevailing situations and available resources of intellectual, financial and political. Therefore, we all must appreciate the efforts of one and all. Though defined objectives, set goals and expectations may not have been



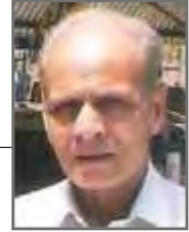
met many a times, or there might have been even complete failures somewhere down the line, but we must appreciate the effort made. After all each pinnacle of success is built upon a pyramid of hundreds of bricks of failures, hopes, expectations and perseverance.

Every government, state or central, has generally shooed us away with lollypops of unfulfilled assurances since 1990. But the struggle must continue. It is essential to criticize so as to synthesize a jewel of thought, but criticism must be objectively positive, NOT subjectively personal that detonates the energies.

We request Especially Youth to come forward, participate, deliberate, debate and suggest way forward to reclaim our ancestral ethnic geographical identity – Kashmir.



- H.L Kak



## Descendants of Tibetans in Kashmir

Descendants of the Tibetan refugees now settled in Eidgah area. Tibetan refugees, who had fled China after their failed uprising against Chinese authorities during 1950s, had settled in Srinagar's Eidgah area.

However, their descendants allege that “successive regimes have failed to make them state subjects of Jammu and Kashmir though they are given voter ID cards and are entitled to vote.” “For us vote is to prove our loyalty and nationality. We are Kashmiris but nobody treats us one,” said Muhammad Yousuf, who showed his indelible ink mark on his figure to prove that he has voted. “Every election we come in large number to vote, because if we don't vote then elected representative won't listen to our grievances,” he said adding that they are facing identity crisis. “In Tibet we are called Kashmiris and in Kashmir we are being called as Tibetan. We have lost our identity over the years,” Yousuf said and claims that his fore-fathers were originally from Kargil district, who had then migrated to Tibet and after uprising and oppression against Muslims by communist in China they fled back to their original place which is Kashmir. The Regional Public School situated at Eidgah which houses the polling station for Tibetan colony had recorded 89 votes casted out of 179 votes. While the number of people waiting outside the booth was increasing with each passing moment. Tibetan colony set-up by the state government for Tibetan refugees is situated right opposite the Kashmir's largest Martyrs graveyard at Eidgah. The colony houses more than 60 families. However, as per the resident of Tibetan colony from employment to civic

facilities, they face plethora of problems, which they believe can be resolved through their votes. “We have only one tool to get our pleas heard, which is vote,” said Shehnaza, a Tibetan descendant who was waiting outside polling booth to cast her franchise. “We cannot apply for government jobs nor can purchase land,” she says. “We've been living here since 1959 but don't enjoy the same rights as those of the natives of Jammu and Kashmir,” she says. Under Kashmiri law, noncitizens face certain restrictions, including not being allowed to purchase land or get government jobs.

Tibetans continue to live in Kashmir under refugee status, even if they were born in the state. China sent troops into Tibet in 1950, after an independent government had been leading the autonomous region for nearly 40 years. Many Tibetans, including the Dalai Lama, fled the region after a failed uprising against Chinese rule in 1959. More than 42,000 refugees left Tibet in January 1960, according to the Central Tibetan Administration. More than 140 Tibetan families fled together from Tibet to Srinagar. Tibetans are settled here at three places in Srinagar: Makhdoom Sahib, Badamwari and Eidgah. “Not being able to own land or property is the biggest challenge for Tibetans”, says, Hassan, a young Tibetan born in Kashmir. “Housing is a main problem”. “Even if we have resources, we can't purchase land to construct a house, as we don't possess state-subject certificates,” Hassan states and adds that he has voted for candidate who has promised them to fight for their identity and rights'

*Ex- GM,ONGC;Ex-Advisor Gail(India) Ltd and Engineers(India) Ltd.*



- Rohit Kachroo



## The Vital Role of Speaking Kashmiri within the **KASHMIRI PANDIT COMMUNITY**

Recently, at an exclusive CXO's in-person event, I had the opportunity to meet a Kashmiri Pandit holding a leadership position in the corporate world. During dinner, I attempted to converse with him in Kashmiri. However, he seemed hesitant and switched to speaking in English, likely because other CXOs present were from the corporate world. This encounter compelled me to convey a message to the community about the importance of preserving our Kashmiri language. There should be no shame in speaking or promoting one's mother tongue. On the contrary, it should be embraced with a sense of pride.



Holding onto our Identity and Culture, No Matter where we are “The Kashmiri Pandit community”, once deeply rooted in Kashmir, endured a heart-wrenching genocide and forced exodus in 1990, finds itself scattered across the globe. As we grapple with the consequences of this diaspora, it's vital to understand why speaking our native language, Kashmiri, is not just a choice but a necessity for preserving our unique cultural heritage, especially within our own community and for the younger generation.





Preserving our Cultural Identity Kashmiri language is more than a medium for communication. It embodies our distinctive culture, traditions, and collective identity. Speaking in Kashmiri connects us to our roots, reminding us of our origins and the shared journey that defines us as a community. Our language is an integral part of our identity, and by preserving it, we maintain our sense of belonging. Fostering unity and Continuity Language plays a pivotal role in uniting a community. For us, scattered across different corners of the world, speaking Kashmiri acts as a bond that bridges geographical distances and sustains our sense of unity. A common language helps us share experiences, stories, and emotions, fostering a sense of solidarity and togetherness. Passing down Values and Traditions Language serves as a vessel to transmit values, traditions, and moral beliefs from one generation to the next. Speaking Kashmiri to our children involves passing down not just words, but the essence of our cultural heritage. Our language enables us to instill the values that define us as a community - compassion, resilience, and unity - in the younger generation. Preserving historical and Cultural Significance, Kashmiri is more than just a mode of communication; it encapsulates the history of our land and our people. Every word and phrase in Kashmiri is a reminder of our past, our struggles, and our triumphs. By speaking Kashmiri, we keep our historical context alive, ensuring that our heritage

remains vivid and doesn't fade away with time. Facilitating communication and understanding being fluent in Kashmiri enables effective communication, especially with the older generation that may not be proficient in other languages. It facilitates meaningful conversations and strengthens family bonds. Moreover, being multilingual broadens our intellectual horizons, enhancing our ability to comprehend and appreciate diverse cultures.

Preserving a Language in Peril sadly, the Kashmiri language is at risk of becoming endangered. If we, as a community, don't actively use and pass down our language to our children, it may face extinction that too in this digital era. By speaking Kashmiri at home and with our younger generations, we play a pivotal role in preserving this beautiful language, ensuring it thrives for generations to come.

As a dispersed community, we bear the responsibility of safeguarding our unique cultural heritage and identity. Speaking the Kashmiri language isn't merely a choice; it's a duty to our ancestors, our community, and our future generations. By embracing our mother tongue, we ensure the continuity of our rich traditions and values, promoting unity and preserving a vital part of our history. Let us unite in our commitment to celebrate and preserve our language—it's a beacon of our legacy and a testament to our resilience.

*Rohit13@hotmail.com*



-Sukanya Bhan

# OUR CULTURE WILL NOT BE EXTINCT



A raging debate within the Kashmiri Pandit community today is about how our blood race might become extinct. There is fear that we might end up seeing a demographic decline like the Parsis – because the younger generation has chosen to get married to people from other communities. Of course, it is a result of social existence - scattered across the world, after the fateful exodus in the 90s. This fear among elders is understandable; however, if they don't allow

their children/ grandchildren to choose their own partners, we'll be taking a desperate U-turn into the medieval ages.

Here's how I see it – if our elders are able to instill good values and practices in their families, there will be no threat to the community. But the responsibility of carrying forward the cultural practices and traditions should not be overlooked by our generation either, simply because they chose an inter-caste marriage.

One inspiring example comes from my own family, where my elder sister fell in love with a Punjabi man fifteen years ago which drew a lot of criticism from everyone, but she stood her ground. They got married, moved abroad, landed a high-paying corporate job, and eventually gave birth to a child in a couple of years. When the kid turned two years of age, she performed his Mundan according to Punjabi customs.

And today, in his sixth year, my sister decided to perform his Mekhal. There were lot of questions framed- why is it required now that you are married to a Punjabi but her answer was- just because I am married to a Punjabi man, doesn't mean I will forget my roots and individualism. I would make certain that my child learns about the traditions, customs, and practices of both communities.

Today, this child is fluent in five languages: Danish, Punjabi, Kashmiri, English, and Hindi.

The Mekhal ceremony lasted three days. My sister's mother-in-law and all the other Punjabi ladies who were dressed in Dejhoor, stole the show. It was a lovely family gathering with the confluence of two different communities, where there was genuine appreciation for each other's rituals and beliefs.

For non-Kashmiris, who don't know the

relevance of Mekhal – allow me to provide some context: It was originally intended for children where they would say Bhikshaamdehi –Give me alms (during the ceremony) Nothing, just to be able to collect money as a fee to the Guru before going to commence studies in the Gurukul. At that time people would go to a Gurukul. Now it's not that there's just one teacher. Who goes to a Gurukul now? Now people study in schools. This ceremony used to be just for Brahmins. At that time no one else was studying, right?

What do they do now?

Now also they collect money. The priest takes that money now. In these days it's just symbolic, one ritual.

Mekhal (or thread ceremony) entitles the boys to wear a 5 string thread around their neck (signifying that they are Brahmins) and once they get married it is converted to a 7-string thread (2 more for the wife). According to some Priests, earlier (in Treta Yuga) women also used to wear these threads. But in Kalyug, just men do/ can. And only Brahmins. It is still considered a great thing (a punya) if you contribute/ donate during the Mekhal ceremony of people.

Needless to say, we had a great time. The feast, songs, and endless gossip over the three days gave us memories that will be worth a lifetime.

## Calendar of Month

Sankranti	December 16, 2023
Ashtami (Shukla Paksha)	December 20, 2023
Ekadashi (Shukla Paksha)	December 22, 2023
Poornima	December 26, 2023
Ashtami (Krishna Paksha)	January 04, 2024
Ekadashi (Krishna Paksha)	January 07, 2024
Amavasya(Kheche'Maavus)	January 11, 2024

## Note

Panchakstarts on December 17, 2023 ends on December 21, 2023  
Panchak starts on January 13, 2024 ends on January 18, 2024

Margashirsha (Shukla Paksha) from December 13, 2023 to December 26,2023  
Poh (Krishna Paksha) from December 27, 2023 to January 11, 2024





- Tej N Dhar

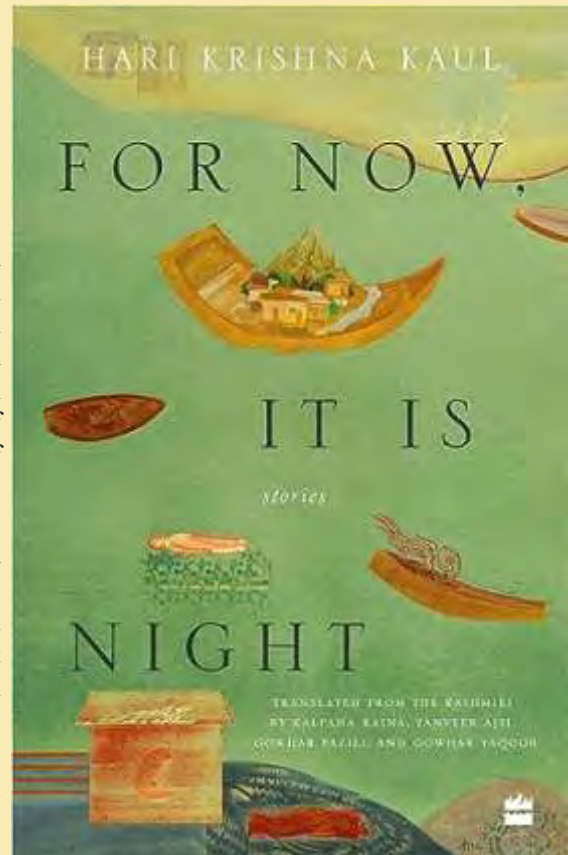
## FOR NOW, IT IS NIGHT

*Stories by Hari Krishan Kaul;  
Harper Perennial,  
2023; pp. 204; price Rs 399; PB.*

**H**ari Krishan Kaul is an acclaimed writer and one of the best-known exponents of the short story in Kashmiri. He wrote the stories for over a period of nearly four decades, which are available in four published volumes. Named after one of them, *For Now, It is Night* is a collection of seventeen selected stories from all the four, translated into English by Kalpana Raina, Tanveer Ajsi, Gowhar Fazili, and Gowhar Yaqoob.

The stories encompass the small world of the lives of the people of Kaul's Pandit community, delineated with sensitivity and compassion, within their social and cultural moorings, and heavily intertwined with the lives of the Muslim community, with whom they have an extraordinarily complex relationship. Kaul's sharp and observant eye, his ability to charge the ordinary with unusual significance, by exposing cracks in the well-maintained veneer of cordiality among people, and his writing that is simple yet elegant, characterized by wit and humour, ranging from the sunshiny to black, and irony that is both gentle and mordant, make him a writer of great distinction. His narratives reflect his rich understanding of the craft of the short story, from the well-made classical variety of writers like O Henry and Guy de Maupassant to the modern, expressionistic kind of Anton Chekhov and James Joyce.

The stories in the volume vary in their length, content, and form. The first one "Sunshine" centres around Poshkuj, a strong matriarch, who has a marked presence in most Kashmiri households. She has come from Srinagar to stay with her second son in Delhi. Through her, the story brings out the cultural differences between Srinagar and Delhi and the lifestyle of her two sons, interspersed with little bits of humour. Since her daughter-in-law makes her uneasy by constantly contesting her understanding of the world around her and because she misses the social life back home, she wishes to return to Srinagar earlier than she had planned, but with buckets of sunshine. The second story "The Saint and the Witch" has a tighter structure than the first one, a narrative with short and crisp dialogues, occasioned by the sudden death of Ramjoo, in which he appears a saint and his wife a witch. When, at the very end of the story, his wife





reveals publicly that she is pure like a virginal girl, it comes off not only like the surprising twist of the kind in Maupassant but also carries an epiphanic charge of the Joycean kind.

“Curfew” and “For Now, It is Night” are like the impressionistic stories of the Chekhovian kind: reflections occasioned by a happening or situation, with hardly any noticeable spatial or temporal movement. In the first one, curfew brews frustrating thoughts in its protagonist, because he does not have a job of his choice. Trapped in his room, curfew makes him see his father’s true self, his interfering nature, the mess within his family, the crookedness of the walls of his room, and the crumbling state of the house he lives in, which he imagines somebody putting on fire. The second one is mostly about the reflections of Makhanji and his conversation with Swamiji, which takes on a metaphysical turn, occasioned by their getting stuck at Ramban, on way to their home in Kashmir. “A Late Winter” is about the ruminations of its protagonist, who has returned to Kashmir from Delhi with his wife a little earlier than he usually would. He finds himself caught between the taunts of his nagging wife and of his son, who accuses him of pushing him out of his home only because he wants to escape the cold Kashmir winter and enjoy the warmth of Delhi.

In “The News,” the scene of the death of Bab breeds strange thoughts in the protagonist and colours everything that follows with a nightmarish air. He agrees with his wife’s suggestion to inform others about it only to escape from the scene. His walk on the dimly lit road, his stray reflections, the rebuff he receives from the people he had gone to inform, his desire to shut himself with his wife in a cozy bed, and the final image of the two of them trapped with the frozen withered body of Bab border on the surreal. Death, once again, dominates “The Mourners,” in which a group of young people look at it with unusual indifference. The unbelievable casualness with which the bier of the dead body of the mother of Pedrois carried by his friends, when they stop to listen to cricket commentary, and the tone and tenor of their conversation is suffused with tinges of black humour. The loud wailing of Tarzan and Pedro at the end of the story is like a scene from the work of Samuel Beckett.

Kaul’s interesting experiments in the making of stories are in evidence in “Tomorrow: A Never-Ending Story” and “A Song of Despair.” The first one is about two friends Sullah and Makhan, who study in a government school. Their camaraderie, their spicy dialogues, peppered with cuss words and raw humour, and the way they are treated by their teachers in their school are both comic and deeply realistic. Kaul freezes them in time, to make us see that though the world around them has changed, their condition has not, for the rot in the school system has only worsened with the passage of time. The contrast between the government and private school and the students who study in them brings out the stark social inequalities among people, creating scope for humour too. In “A Song of Despair,” Kaul creates an extraordinary narrator in the person of Roopji who, deserted by sleep, and troubled by heat and problems in his life, finds an excuse to poke in the affairs of other people and tell us the story of Roopji and his father, Kishan Chand, whose laughter “would startle new brides and rattle the windows” of houses. Kishan Chand had defied social convention and his father to become a singer, and when he brought a bride from a village, his father disowned him publicly. She gives him a son Roopji, who gets a master’s degree in chemistry, but takes to music, almost like what his father had done in his time. For the sake of social respectability, Kishan Chand gets him a job in a college and arranges his marriage to Sheela. But Roopji neglects his wife and spends time in musical soirees, which causes gnawing sadness to his parents.

Kaul writes satirically about politicians in “One Sahib and the Other,” in which he exposes the hypocritical politeness of political leaders in a deadpan style. Though proclaimed political rivals, they enjoy each other’s company and friendship, but make people fight each other for

them. Cruel and biting humour characterize “The Tongue and the Egg,” in which the houses of people are raided for collecting eggs needed for mixing their whites with mortar for laying the marble floor of the mansion. The intricate texture of the story, in which the hands of the police are tied, people store their tongues in “fridges for safekeeping,” holy and wise men turn indifferent to human misery, and people are forced to polish the floor of the mansion by licking it with their tongues, give it a Kafkaesque air.

In “Sunshine,” when Poshkuj is astonished by the presence of Muslims in Delhi, and wonders “if they fear living in Delhi as we fear living in Kashmir,” Kaul drops a subtle hint about the complex inter-community living in Kashmir, which permeates the texture of “That Which We Cannot Speak Of.” The story shows that relation between the two communities is quite intricate, for it veers between cordiality that sometimes touches heartwarming proportions and a subdued hostility that has the potential to explode. A small happening like the election victory of Maqbool Sahib opens cracks in this relationship, for it pushes the protagonist to remember his difficult association with him and invites taunts and jibes from Maqbool and his brethren. Maqbool openly says that people who live under “Delhi’s patronage should leave.” Magga says “God willing, we will smoke these rats out.” Nazir Woin says, “But we won’t let them take their women.” The fear of the Pandits, who are called Battas out of spite on such occasions, is clear from their conversations— “Give them half a chance and they’ll slaughter us all in an instant”—and their memory of how they were terrorized in 1931.

“The Lights on the Other Side” and “A Moment of Madness” are sad stories of pain and suffering. In the first one, Nathji incurs debts to build a house, away from an old,

cramped locality, for his son, who has already flown away from the country to America. He and his wife are compelled to live a lonely, desolate life, and Nathji thinks that he is no more than a caretaker of his house. The second one is about the pain suffered by the Pandits because of their forced exile. The protagonist Jawe Lal is on his way to Hanuman temple in Delhi to give twenty rupees in charity because after nearly a week of anxious waiting he has heard from his son who has gone abroad. On his way back, he ruminates on his unhappy situation in an unfamiliar place, for “He, who would have sacrificed the world for Kashmir, was exiled from his homeland forever in an instant.” He empathizes with the rickshaw puller who had come from Bihar to Delhi to make a living and pays him all the money he had wanted to give in charity.

The collection appropriately ends with “To Rage or to Endure,” in which Kaul frames a narrative that moves from the realistic to the fabular mode. The protagonist’s move from the cold and snowy Kashmir to a hot and blazing place outside it is suggested through a trail of metaphors, in which he and his Ded end up like two dots in a hostile universe, with no one to call their own. Even the Sun, who feels equally helpless, reminds Ded of an earlier Ded, who spun thread stronger than iron chains, to bind people of different faiths. But because that is a thing of the past, the Sun tells Ded that “You rage because you were used to snow and shade.” The protagonist realizes that his Ded is on the way out, but he must continue living, outside his ancestral home, and learn to endure and adapt.

The translation of the stories is first rate. The essays by their translators that appear at the end of the volume dwell on issues related to the art of translation and provide insightful accounts of their understanding of the stories. *For Now, It is Night* is a must read for people interested in literature and should be of special interest to the lovers of Kashmiri literature.



- Uma Kant Kachru



## Painting Exhibition - Shabir Santosh

On 17<sup>th</sup> November I attended the opening of the painting exhibition of Shabir Santosh in the Main Art Gallery of Bikaner House. Before I express further, I must clarify that I am neither an art critic nor a connoisseur. My limited exposure to art has been through the works of my father, late Mr. P N Kachru. The only commonality between Shabir and me is that we are children of well-known artists from Kashmir.

There is a peculiar challenge for an artist if he is the progeny of a famous artist. Her/ his work immediately gets compared with that of the father. Shabir, I am sure, will relate to this phenomenon. Although I have been privy to some of Shabir's paintings, which I published in the special issue of NEELAMATAM last year that was dedicated to the Painters of Kashmir, yet when I stepped into the art gallery, I was expecting to see the work with some amount of parental influence in it. Shabir's works proved me wrong. The paintings on display had everything different from the style and the type of art compositions of the veteran late Shri G R Santosh.



Shabir Santosh



The works of Shabir display a unique harmony between animals, birds and the human beings. The three living beings are mystically juxtaposed into one another that each one seems to be merging into the other with a celestial flow. He has carefully used a colour scheme that has enhanced the smooth flow in the paintings. There is a strong influence of cubism in his style which he has, very skillfully, used in constructing the subjects of his paintings. Shabir stands out with a style of his own that makes him different from the inherited art form.



# My Favourite 15 Start-up Ideas for Social Entrepreneurship

## Educational Travel

Educational travel is a combination of well-planned tours, location visits, and cultural immersion, all set with clear learning objectives in mind. With the world embracing travel again, this space is booming, and there is opportunity for start-ups at every level.

Whether you're building an app that helps to plan educational travel trips or creating a service that hosts such tours, there's no doubt that, with a bit of tourism experience, you can definitely find a niche in this space.

## Clean Beauty Products

The clean beauty market has seen significant growth in the last few years, and that upward trend is not expected to stop any time soon. Clean beauty products are created mindfully without toxic ingredients and with clear

labeling that gives the consumer peace of mind about what they are purchasing.

Much of this segment is focused on the use of natural ingredients rather than chemicals or man-made components. Opportunity in this sector will depend on your market accessibility and the magnitude of the problem you're solving. Often, solutions for those who experience adverse reactions to certain products are your best bet for a successful offering.

## Online Courses

You probably know the saying that knowledge is power, so it cannot be stressed enough how important it is to have access to a good education. Sharing knowledge through online courses makes education more accessible and provides a service for people interested in learning the skills you have to teach them.







to make this a reality, research your idea, gear your online courses towards teaching valuable skills that can help students find employment or enhance their quality of life.

### Sustainable Clothing Line

Fashion is one of the most wasteful industries on the planet. If you're thinking about starting a clothing line, consider making it a sustainable one! A sustainable clothing line can make an impact by creating thoughtful garments that are long-lasting and ethically made out of sustainable materials such as linen or hemp.

### Charity App

Creating an app is one of the most popular startup ideas. Make philanthropy more accessible by creating a charity app. This could be an easy space to crowdfund for charities, make donations, or fulfill a need in your community. Since most adults have smartphones, a charity app startup can provide an easier way for charities to gain the funding and support they need in order to help the people who need it most.

### Farm-to-Table Startup

As consumers become more aware of the impact that food choices have on their health and on the environment, sourcing produce directly from farms, essentially cutting out the large supermarket chains, has become a very popular trend. Farm-to-table start-ups have a wide range in which to operate. There is tech

required for economics and inventory management on the farm's end, and on the customer's end, there are online marketplaces, delivery methods, and payment solutions to explore.

### Volunteering Platform

There are many people in the world who have the time and inclination to volunteer but simply don't know where to start. Volunteering platforms can help steer these people in the right direction and benefit charitable organizations at the same time.

Niches in this space can include specific locations, types of organizations, forms of volunteer work, and even certain target markets such as corporates who want to get their team members involved in volunteering as a team-building activity. **Volunteers.org is one platform to learn from.**

### Mental Health Startup

The increased interest in and awareness of the importance of mental health in the last decade or so is certainly a positive shift for humanity. This increased focus has also brought with it opportunities for startup founders in the mental health space. Whether it's a service, an app, or a product, if you've got an idea that will fit into the mental health industry, get on it now.

**HopeQureWellness, TickTalkTo, YourDost and Amaha are some of the examples of Mental Health Startups in India.**



## **Modi Government is Abreast with the Issues of the Community** **- Dr Jitendra Singh**

Talking with a delegation of Pt Prem Nath Bhat Memorial Trust (PNBMT) in Jammu, Dr Jitendar Singh, Union Minister in PMO with Independent charge of Science & Technology, said that the Modi Government is fully abreast with all the issues of the community. He called upon the delegation members to create awareness about the Startup boom among the youth who still need to get its advantage to the hilt compared to other parts of the country. He emphasised the need to streamline Prime Minister Narendra Modi's progressive initiative and appealed to the youth from the displaced Kashmiri Pandit community to take advantage of the startup boom.

Maintaining that Kashmiri Pandits have played a remarkable contribution in varied fields not only in the erstwhile State of J&K but the nation as a whole, he said their contribution to Indian aesthetics can't be ignored. He urged the community intelligentsia to play a broader role and come forward in highlighting the welfare and developmental policies of the Modi Government.

He further said, "Modi Government is the first regime in the country which has launched many job-oriented schemes for the youth in the private sector. Under the PM Svanidhi Scheme, the loan is provided for vendors.

Assuring the KP delegation that the Modi Government is fully abreast with all the community issues, Dr Jitendra Singh said that in any future arrangement, the community's equal and adequate representation and voice about managing shrines and temples is necessary. The delegation was led by senior KP leader Dr K N Pandita Padam Shree awardee, who was accompanied by Prof P N

Trisal a linguist, Hira Lal Bhat, Trustee PNBMT and co-convenor, BJP Kashmir, A K Raina vice president, AIKS, Roshan Lal Pandita, chairman of PNBMT, Virender Raina, president Panun Kashmir, I K Raina, social activist and Shadi Lal Rais, secretary PNBMT.

They stressed that there should be a connection of the community with the Government so that it does not feel alienated and also noted that the measures be taken for the protection of Hindu shrines and temples in Kashmir by constituting a Shrine Board as an autonomous body for their upkeep and preservation or posterity.

## **KPS urges the Government to Process Rehabilitation**

Kashmiri Pandits, in a meeting of Kashmiri Pandit Sabha (KPS), urged the Government to pace up the process for their rehabilitation. The demand was raised in KPS's newly constituted executive committee meeting. President K K Khosa chaired the meeting to guide the Sabha for the ensuing term he was recently elected.

The members also thanked over seven hundred life members of the Sabha for reposing their trust in the leadership of K K Khosa due to his visionary outlook and unflinching integrity required to take care of more than a century-old prestigious organisation. Speaking on the occasion, the members urged the government to pay heed to this vital issue of return and rehabilitation without further procrastination by reaching out to the displaced Kashmiri Pandit community leadership and evolving a robust policy, particularly given the positive changes that have taken place in the UT in past five years.

## **PNBMT Holding Chetna Diwas on the 27 December**

Prem Nath Bhat Memorial Trust (PNBMT) is organising community meetings to underline

significant demands and guiding the community speaker to put it before the Chief Guest and the community on the Chetna Diwas, which will be held on 27 December 2024.

In the series of meetings, PNBMT interacted with the activists and leading individuals of various KP organisations at Patoli Brahmna to decide on the agenda of the C. PNBMT interacted with the activists and leading individuals of various KP organisations at Patoli Brahmna Jammu. It is pertinent to mention that PNBMT has been relentlessly waging the struggle to pass a bill that would ensure the protection, preservation and reclamation of the age-old temples and shrines of Kashmir for the last two decades.

Before this meeting, events were also organised at Lale Da Bagh, Patoli Brahmna, Anuradha Puram Barnai and Muthi Village in which a large number of prominent members of the society from those areas participated and provided their valuable inputs to the members of the trust. The members from these areas also brought up issues related to the PM Package employees and the permanent rehabilitation of KPs.

### **Yoga Camp Held in Sanjeevni Sharda Kendra**

Sanjeevni Sharda Kendra, Jammu, organised a Yoga Camp on 28 November 2024 at its centre to learn various asanas, pranayama and other yoga-related exercises. The yoga camp was held under the guidance of an expert teacher and exponent of Indian classical dance, Smt. Nalini Dhar. A large number took part in the yoga camp. Concluding the camp, Smt. Dhar urged the participants to make yoga part of their daily lives.

### **KOA Pledges Support to the Community**

On her recent visit to Jammu, President Archana Kakroo, president of KOA, pledged KOA support to uplift the community through various projects. She was speaking at a function organised by the community organisation. KOA provides services through Education Assistance (EAP) and Save a Child (SAC) programmes for an extended period.

### **"Kashmir after Kalhana", The Book Released**

In a function held in Jammu, the book "Kashmir after Kalhana" by Dr R L Bhat was released in the Writers Club at K L Sehgal Hall Jammu. The Padam Shri awardee, Dr K N Pandita, presided over the function, while Dr R L Shant was the chief guest at the event. Dr Bhat has over one dozen books on varied subjects to date.

Pardeep Koul Khudbali managed the stage. While reading the paper on the book, Prof P N Trisal, a famous linguist, highly acclaimed Dr Bhat for his literary works and said the author, being a well-known writer, has mastery over Sanskrit and Persian. He said the author had done an exhaustive study of Kashmir history before writing the book. Maintaining that distortions have been made in Kashmiri history, he credited Bhat for exposing the same with historical evidence and background. While talking in his book, Dr R L Bhat pleaded that the younger generation must study Kashmir's history and know the facts. He said even some Muslim historians have put the facts about the Hindu period of Kashmir straight, but some distorted them at a later stage and created confusion among the people.

*Source: Agencies  
Editing: Vijay Kashkari*

**Facts are many  
but the truth is one.**

**TAGORE**





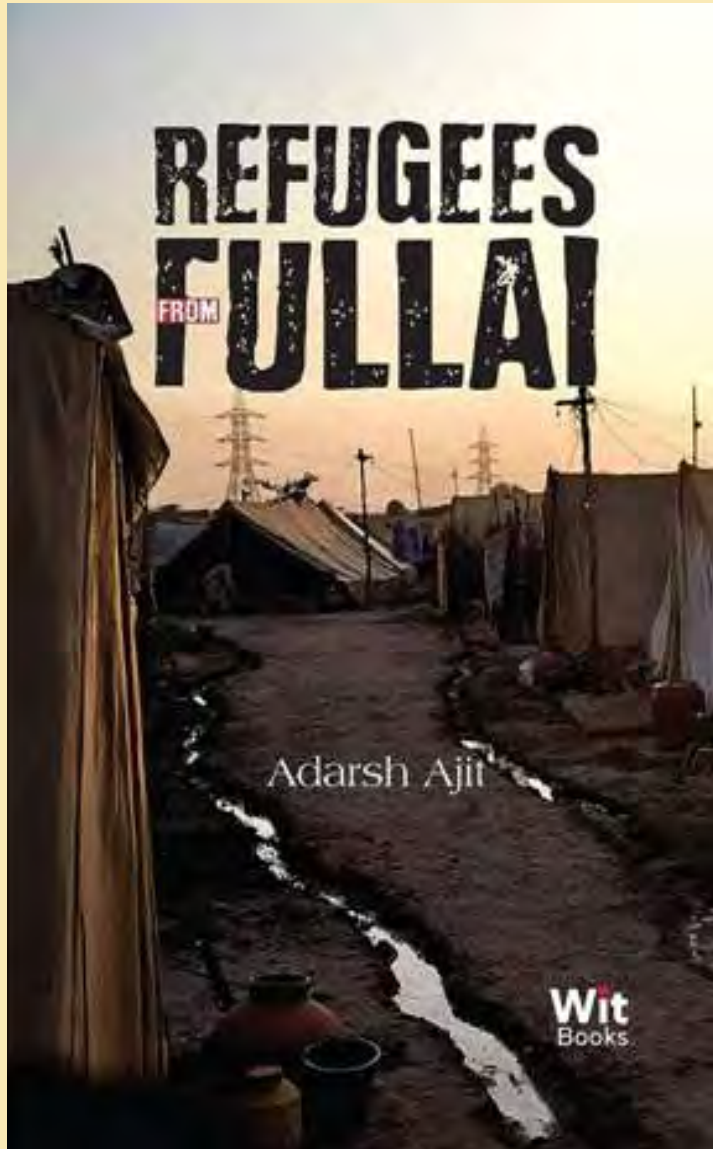
- Satyarth Pandita

## REFUGEES FROM FULLAI

by Adarsh Ajit

*A Poignant Tale of Love, Loss and Longing*

'Refugees From Fullai' by Adarsh Ajit is a poignant, engaging and emotionally charged novel that delves into the lives of the Pandits pre and post-exodus from their homeland, Fullai. Set in the future, 14 years from now and 16 years after the book's release, the story begins in a place called Bargat, where the protagonist resides. The author has cleverly chosen to use fictitious names for the real places, which serve as just metaphors adding depth to the narrative. It commences with a call from the protagonist's old friend, Posh, visiting him in Bargat, setting the story in motion. Tragedy strikes when the protagonist receives news of his mother's demise, becoming a defining event that sets the tone for much of the initial chapters, revolving around mourning and grief. Like a skilled alchemist, AdarshAjit deftly amalgamates historical nuances, human complexities, and existential dilemmas to create a work of profound significance.



Like the two states of dreaming and waking, the novel deftly oscillates between the past and the present, conjuring a literary chiaroscuro that heightens the reader's sense of



dislocation akin to the exiled Pandits. The book talks about the changed attitudes of the Pandits post-exodus and their indifference towards a serious occasion such as Death. Throughout the novel, the unnamed protagonist emerges as a sort of complex and enigmatic character grappling with conflicting thoughts and emotions that neither the readers nor the protagonist fully comprehends.

Noteworthy amidst the intricate tapestry of this literary composition is the deliberate play of nomenclature. While certain personages are bestowed with names, others remain shadowed in anonymity. The protagonist, shrouded in a cloak of namelessness, reverently invokes his wife by her name while his siblings – three brothers and a sister – languish in a state of unspoken obscurity. Within the family, his daughter's name finds resonance, while the son remains faceless in textual silence. Amidst the constellation of names, the father's designation finds a place, yet the mother, held in the deepest chambers of the protagonist's heart, remains unnamed. Such deliberate elisions of names act as both a mirror and a void, inviting the readers to dwell within the enigmatic interplay of identity and oblivion.

One chapter hints at the protagonist's hidden contempt for a 'Swami' who performs rituals on the day of his mother's death. "Had my cousin not held me, I would have slapped him," the protagonist remarks when the Swami, on entering the house, comments "The head should be towards the east; otherwise, she will go to hell." The protagonist in the subsequent paragraphs hints at the hypocrisy of the Swami, who had advised the protagonist once not to take his daughter to any doctor but rather chant a specific mantra for certain times. However, a conversation between the Swami and his wife reveals to the protagonist that the Swami had advised his son to take medicines and seek a doctor when his wife told him about his health. The protagonist expresses displeasure with Swami and contemplates Swami's hypocrisy in other matters, and yet he continues visiting the same Swami as if he derives some sensory pleasure from seeing the malicious nature of Swami. Alternatively, it could be that the protagonist deliberately chooses to visit Swami despite knowing his flaws. This choice might serve as an excuse for the protagonist to dismiss or mistrust any other saints or peers, using Swami's behaviour as a justification. The protagonist is in a perpetual dilemma like a child who does not believe in any *satsangs* or religious functions, saints or peers, yet he keeps the photograph of a lady saint handed over to him by a group of travellers in his Pooja room until three years later he comes to know through media channels that the lady was a fraud. The protagonist's internal conflict and his perceptions of Swami's hypocrisy raise intriguing questions about his motivations and beliefs.

Within the novel's core lies an emotionally resonant account of filial love, where the protagonist's heartrending journey through the corridors of loss and grief elicits a profound empathic response. The major portion of the book chronicles his mother's persisting illness, highlighting his deep love and care for her. Yet, the trajectory of this tale goes beyond the personal as Adarsh Ajit delves into the socio-political undercurrents that roil the collective consciousness of the Pandit diaspora. Slowly the political threads start to weave into the story with the introduction of Ishqpechan, a leader of the Pandit organisation called Maen Fullai. Ishqpechan is introduced as a genius, a literary and well-read man but above all, a liar. The tale meditates on the birth of the Pandit organisation,

the support that it garnered and lost throughout the years, the split of the organisation into three factions, and the changing colours of the treacherous and morally corrupt leaders leading the whole Pandit community astray and leaderless. The plight of the Pandit community, bereft of a steadfast and enlightened leader, becomes an emblem of sorrow and aimless wandering. The hues of their destiny change like the kaleidoscope, each revolution engendering disillusionment and despair.

On one hand, the protagonist lays bare the atrocities committed by the Muslims of Fullai and, on the other hand, balances the scales by lauding their inherent benevolence. In one chapter, the protagonist writes that one time when his mother was ill, he went to a Pandit doctor, and as he knocked on the door, he was lied to by the Doctor's father about his unavailability, whereas the protagonist had himself heard the Doctor speaking to his wife and thus it was then a Muslim Doctor who had shown willingness in helping him. In another episode, when the protagonist's mother needed blood, all his Pandit relatives refused to help, whereas his three Muslim friends came out like messiahs and managed to come despite the road blockage and other hurdles along their way. The protagonist nonetheless confesses, "I knew there was a conflict in me regarding the identity of Muslims of Fullai", and again at another place, "Muslims are difficult to understand. On the one hand, they kill, and on the other hand, they offer water." Thus, with nuanced strokes, he portrays the juxtaposition of good and evil, compassion and cruelty, perpetrated by both Pandits and Muslims alike.

The tragic tale, which is actually a memoir of the protagonist, who writes it from a place revealed only at the climax and culmination of the book, travels through the memory lanes of the protagonist, where he recalls the horrible days when rapes, mass murders, and kidnappings were at their peak in the valley of Fullai, evoking horror and anguish in reader's hearts. Later, he meditates on the unbearable conditions the Pandits faced after their exodus to Bargat. The portrayal of hardships endured in Bargat, replete with snakebites, dehydration, days and nights spent under puny canvas tents and the ominous dance of nature's furies, draws one towards a visceral confrontation with the bitter fruit of diasporic existence.

Overall, 'Refugees From Fullai' appears to be a deeply emotional and introspective novel that delves into the complexities of human emotions, relationships, and the impact of historical and political events on individual lives. It is a poignant and thought-provoking read that leaves a lasting impression on its readers. In essence, 'Refugees From Fullai' is an emotional tribute by the author to his mother and motherland and is reminiscent of a heartfelt poem by an Iraqi poet, capturing the ache of separation and the hope of reunion:

*"Mother  
what does the void cling to?  
The hope of seeing you again  
is a wound  
which opens  
onto an avalanche  
of words."*



**ALL INDIA KASHMIRI SAMAJ (REGD.)  
(APEX BODY OF INDIAN & OVERSEAS KASHMIRI PANDIT  
ORGANISATIONS)**

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**AGM CIRCULAR**

Ref: 1005/AGM(3)/2023/AIKS/2021-24

Dated: 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023

To,

>All Affiliate units of AIKS/Patron and Life Members

>Special Invitees

The Annual General Body Meeting (AGM) of AIKS will be held as per the below mentioned schedule:-

**DAY, DATE & TIME: SUNDAY, 17<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2023 FROM 2.00 P.M TO 5.00 P.M**

**VENUE : CONFERENCE ROOM, GROUND FLOOR YMCA TOURIST HOSTEL JAI SINGH  
ROAD, NEW DELHI - 110 001 (ENTRY GATE NUMBER 1)**

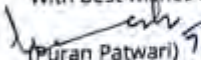
**AGENDA:**

- 1) Two minutes silence to be observed in remembrance of departed souls.
- 2) Welcome address and the opening remark by President Dr. Ramesh Raina.
- 3) Approval of the minutes of the previous AGM held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2022.
- 4) Presentation of General Secretary's report by Sh. Puran Patwari.
- 5) Approval of audited Balance Sheet for the year 2022-23 and presentation of Un-audited accounts for the year 2023-24.
- 6) Approval of appointment of Auditors Ms. Perminder Kaur & Associates for FY 2022-23 and 2023-24.
- 7) Approval of membership of new Life members and new patrons of AIKS.
- 8) Approval of Kashmiri Welfare Association Karnal and Kashmiri Hindu Sabha Telangana as new affiliates of AIKS.
- 9) Update on AIKS Trust Court Case.
- 10) Update on Civil Writ Petition, Other Writ Petition (OWP) filed by AIKS.
- 11) Update on Shakti Nagar Project.
- 12) Discussion on future programs of AIKS and follow up in the wake of changing scenario in Kashmir.
- 13) Any other item with the permission of the Chair.
- 14) Expression of gratitude by Dr. Manorama Bakhshi.

You are requested to attend the AGM on the above mentioned date/venue and time. Please confirm your participation. Affiliate organizations are requested to nominate members from their units for attending the meeting and intimate us about their participation in advance. The activity report of the affiliate units and other suggestions should also be sent in advance.

Looking forward to your participation.

With best wishes and warm regards,

  
(Puran Patwari) 7/11/2023  
General Secretary

**AIKS affiliated Units at:**

**Inland :** Agra, Ahmedabad, Allahabad, Ambala, Amritsar, Bangalore, Bahadurgarh, Baroda, Bhopal, Chandigarh, Dehradun, Delhi, Dharamshala, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Gurgaon, Gwalior, Hyderabad, Indrapuram, Indore, Jabalpur, Jaipur, Jammu, Jodhpur, Kolkata, Lucknow, Ludhiana, Mumbai, Moradabad, Nagpur, Noida, Panchkula, Pune, Ranchi, Sahibabad, Shimla, Srinagar, Udaipur, Varanasi, Karnal, Tilangana.

**Overseas :** U.K. & U.S.A



- Rajinder Premi



# International Human Rights Day!



Today the 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2023, is the Human Rights Day. Nobody is talking about the basic human rights of the exiled Kashmiris. The Govts have also so far not taken any serious cognizance of the atrocities, sufferings, human rights violations inflicted on the minorities in Kashmir. We have been over looked, ignored, marginalised for no faults of ours. Why are we not being taken seriously? Why is Union Govt, being a mute spectator to all this?

Don't we all know that National Human Rights commission passed a well-considered verdict on 11-6-1999 on the mass exodus/ethnic cleansing of our law abiding community. The Govt, since then remained silent on this valid report of recommendations.

Despite our strong & valid arguments on the issue of genocide (I myself being one of the petitioners also referred in the verdict) the NHRC full bench then termed our genocide akin to it. Since then there has been no follow up on this verdict either way.

My only idea today is, again, to awaken the world conscience to our genocide. Nobody is talking about our rehabilitation/resettlement back in our homeland.

Although a half-hearted exercise was undertaken by the then J&K Govt (Shri M.L.Koul report) which did not take off and also by GOI in 2008 devised a policy document on our rehabilitation, which was linked with our return. Although this policy was adopted & approved by J&K cabinet but it also did not find many takers. Only one, Employment component out of the whole package was given a practical shape. Rest remained resting in the Govt. files. This speaks volumes about the apathy of the Government which we need to understand.

34 years have passed but our wounds are still raw.

I today once again want to appeal:

1. To GoI to pass a bill on recognition of genocide of Kashmiri Pandits in the ensuing session of the Parliament.
2. NHRC for a follow-up action by asking the two Govts about action taken report on its recommendations.
3. To the Hon'ble Supreme court of India to take a suo motu cognizance of our mass exodus, violation of our basic human rights, atrocities, sufferings & above all our genocide.

Modi hai to kya mumkin nahi hai?

This is our respectful prayer today on Human rights day.

Regards & best wishes.

Rajinder Premi, with all Martyr families.



## PRESS RELEASE

### KP Association Karnal organizes first Hawan in new Kashmir Bhawan

December 10<sup>th</sup> 2023

Kashmiri Pandit Association of Karnal organized first annual hawan in the new Kashmir Bhawan at Karnal today. Hundreds of devotees took part in the hawan, organised first time in a designated Kashmir Bhawan that the association has taken possession of. Association President, Gautam Kaul said that we look forward to more such community functions after renovating the Bhawan.

Save Sharda Committee Kashmir Regd members, led by its Chairmain Ravinder Pandita, also took part in the day long hawan.

MsMegha Bhandari, Municipal Commissioner of the area and MrSanjay Bathla, OSD to Chief Minister-Haryana also attended the function.

**- Ravinder Pandita**

**Tel: 9811143024**



# Dr. Ramesh Nirrash's literary triumph: Unveiling three masterpieces, honored as an unsung national hero

## EARLY TIMES REPORT

**JAMMU, Dec 7:** Renowned poet, writer, Ayurvedacharya, and music director, Dr. Ramesh Nirrash, unveiled his literary treasures, "AACTHMAN & NAABAD" in Kashmiri and "SWARANDARA" in Hindi, at a gathering of intellectuals, poets, and artists from across India. The Writer's Club Hall in Jammu witnessed a cultural extravaganza

as the unique "Deep Prajavlan," a united stand with lights in hand, creating "Divya Prakash" for the first time in Jammu. Sh. Sanjeev Verma initiated this enchanting display, symbolizing unity and enlightenment.

Two of Dr. Nirrash's books, "AACTHMAN & NAABAD," were released during the event by esteemed guests, including Sh. Chand Narayan Bhat, a renowned music mae-

ful renditions from Dr. Nirrash's newly released books, captivating the audience.

Guests of honor expressed their admiration for Dr. Nirrash's literary contributions. Sh. Bharat Singh Manhas expressed hope for the future of the Kashmiri language, while Sh. Ashok Aima applauded Dr. Nirrash for his work in bringing out poetry collections in Kashmiri. Mr. Sameer Bhat and Mr. Pankaj



Dignitaries pose for group photograph.

ganza as Dr. Nirrash was not only celebrated for his literary achievements but also honored with the prestigious Unsung National Hero Award.

The ceremony was graced by the honorable Chief Guest, Sh. Sanjeev Verma (IAS), Commissioner Secretary General Administration, along with distinguished guests, including Prof. Ashok Aima (former Vice-Chancellor, Central University of Jammu), Bharat Singh Manhas (JKAS, Secretary J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages), Mr. Pankaj Sharma (Chief Bureau of News 24), Mr. Sameer Bhat (ETV URDU), and Sh. A.K. Naaz (President Nagrad Adbi Sangam). The highlight of the eve-

ning was the unique "Deep Prajavlan," a united stand with lights in hand, creating "Divya Prakash" for the first time in Jammu. Sh. Sanjeev Verma initiated this enchanting display, symbolizing unity and enlightenment.

Two of Dr. Nirrash's books, "AACTHMAN & NAABAD," were released during the event by esteemed guests, including Sh. Chand Narayan Bhat, a renowned music mae-

stro, who was honored with the Guru Shresht Life Time Achievement Award. Ms. Naina Sapru Trisal, a well-known singer, received the Divya Swar Kokila Award, while Dr. Ramesh Nirrash himself was honored with the Unsung National Hero Award.

Sh. Sanjay Pandita, CEO of SS Coating and founder of Divine Reh Social Cultural Religious Organization, was recognized with the Divine Karamyogi Award for his significant contributions.

The event saw performances by eminent singers, including Kuldeep Kalla, Jyoti Raina, and Ms. Chanchal Sharma, who presented soul-

ful renditions from Dr. Nirrash's newly released books, captivating the audience. Guests of honor expressed their admiration for Dr. Nirrash's literary contributions. Sh. Bharat Singh Manhas expressed hope for the future of the Kashmiri language, while Sh. Ashok Aima applauded Dr. Nirrash for his work in bringing out poetry collections in Kashmiri. Mr. Sameer Bhat and Mr. Pankaj

## PRESS RELEASE

*LoC Teetwal*  
21 st.November '2023

### ***GoC 15 CorpsRajiv Ghaiinaugurates Vegetarian eatery at LoC Teetwal.***

Lt. Gen. Rajiv Ghai, Commander 15 Corps BadamiBaghCantt visitedCrossing Point LoC Teetwal,today and threw open to public a Vegetarian Eatery meant for Veg food lovers, who throng Sharda Temple and other places around Teetwal. Among those present were GoC 28 Infantry Kupwara Girish Kalia, 104 Brigade Commander Kumara Das and thousands of locals & Children. On this occasion a 104 ft high Indian flag was erected & unfurled right on LoC.ShardaYatra Construction Committee members Ajaz Khan & others were also present on the occasion. RavinderPandita Head & Founder of Save Sharda Committee thanked Indian Army for setting up of the vegetarian eatery. "This will not only cater to yatrīs of Sharda temple but to the locals also in general" said RavinderPandita.

A colourful event marked the event and Tiranga Cricket tournament was also started at Shan-e-Teetwal cricket ground today.

**RavinderPandita**  
**Tel : 9811143024**





## Five Essential Skills that Students Need to Succeed in Life

Students today need comprehensive skills to thrive in an ever-evolving world. Sumeet Mehta, Co-founder & CEO of LEAD, identifies five crucial skills that Indian schools should prioritize to prepare their students for the future :

1. Language and communication as a skill
2. Thinking as a skill
3. Collaboration skills
4. Self-regulation skills
5. Computational thinking as a skill

Nilesh passed out of school in 2002 with 97 per cent marks, was feted as a board topper and was looking forward to a successful life and career as a software engineer. Twenty-one years later, Nilesh says ruefully, "My schooling prepared me to score in exams but did not prepare me well enough to succeed in the exam of life."

This is not just Nilesh's story. This is the story of school education in India. Our narrow focus on rote learning and cracking exams is creating generations of Indians who are good at memorizing and following orders but do not possess the skills to succeed in life. And since school, where a child spends 7 hours a day for 12 years of their life, is where foundations are built, we must build essential skills for life success in school. This needs to get done in the short window of the next 15 years when India still has the advantage of a young population and can hope to reap the much-talked-about demographic dividend.

Skill-based learning doesn't mean a different syllabus or separate subjects. It just means learning the current subjects differently. The goal of learning shifts from knowledge accumulation to knowledge application. The content of the syllabus is not just to be memorized. It is used to think, collaborate, create and communicate. This

requires a paradigm shift in our approach to schooling. However, we need to make a critical paradigm shift to enable our students to succeed in life. Students today need comprehensive skills to thrive in an ever-evolving world. Sumeet Mehta, Co-founder & CEO of LEAD, identifies five crucial skills that Indian schools should prioritize to prepare their students for the future:

### 1. Language and communication as a skill

Reading is different from reading with comprehension. Deep comprehension means interpreting, connecting with your life and reading between the lines. Writing is different from handwriting. It involves being able to put down your thoughts coherently in readable form. Similarly, listening and speaking are barely taught in our schools. This issue is exacerbated in schools where the medium of instruction is different from a child's native language. The solution is to help students pick up language as a skill, whether English, Hindi or any other language.

### 2. Thinking as a skill

Because of our insistence on memorization, we rob our students of the vital life skill of thinking. Thinking is an active skill. We must use our curriculum to develop different thinking dispositions among students - the ability to think deeply about something, connect seemingly disconnected thoughts, think from two different perspectives, and analyze and evaluate opinions based on evidence. Most successful people use these skills to their advantage, and they can be learned in school!

### 3. Collaboration skills

They say that if you want to go fast, go alone. But if you want to go far, take your team along. The ability to work productively with other people is a massive asset. Because we only test our students for their knowledge and



reward them for their test scores, there is hardly any incentive to learn collaboration while growing up.

But we need to help students learn the skill to sometimes lead and sometimes follow, the skill to take turns, the skill to be objective when evaluating options as a team and not get stuck to their ideas, and the skill to disagree without being disagreeable. We see such skills in successful leaders, and they can be built in school.

#### 4. Self-regulation skills

In a world where distractions and over-consumption are becoming the norm, self-regulation is becoming increasingly important. The skill to discern what to do and when. The skill to focus when needed and not compulsively multi-task. The skill to manage one's emotions and moods. These are life skills that are much more important than exams.

#### 5. Computational thinking as a skill

With machines and technology increasingly becoming an integral part of our lives, we must help our children grow up as more than mere consumers of technology or, worse, a cog in the immense data mining endeavour that AI is becoming.

They need to develop computational and algorithmic thinking. They need to learn the language by which they can exercise influence over machines. That's why they need to have coding skills. India is expected to add 183 million persons in the working age group (15 – 64 years) by 2050 – a huge demographic opportunity for our nation. The question is – are India's schools adequately equipped to bring this opportunity to life?

*Courtesy: Divya Chopra*

### Top MBA Entrance Exams 2024 Part -1

Top entrance exams for MBA in India that are the gateway to popular MBA colleges in India include CAT, XAT, SNAP, NMAT, CMAT, IIFT, MAT, MAH CET, IBSAT, etc. The MBA aspirants planning to pursue the course in the 2024 academic session must know about these top MBA entrance exams. Since appearing for the MBA entrance exams is mandatory for admission to the course, aspirants must know

all the information about these tests. If an aspirant is aiming for IIMs, they must appear for the CAT, but if an aspirant is aiming for a Tier-2 private MBA college, they should appear for CMAT or MAT.

IIM administered CAT is the most popular entrance exam for MBA in India as over 1,200 MBA colleges select candidates for admission based on marks obtained in this exam. Following CAT, the second most popular MBA entrance exam is CMAT, conducted by the NTA. 1,000 MBA colleges across India accept CMAT scores. The third most popular MBA entrance exam is XAT, which XLRI Jamshedpur conducts. Over 800 MBA colleges in India accept XAT scores.

Apart from these exams, there are more than 50 entrance tests for admission to the top MBA colleges in India. Most popular are MAH-CET, TSICET, APICET, KMAT and TANCET.

Some prominent entrance tests at the University/College level include XAT, SNAP, IIFT Exam and IRMASAT.

#### CAT 2024 (Common Admission Test)

The CAT 2024 exam will be held on November 24, 2024, for admission to 20 IIMs and other top MBA colleges in India. The exam is conducted by one of the top six IIMs. CAT 2024 is most likely to be completed by IIM Calcutta. The CAT 2024 registration process will begin in the first week of August 2024 and continue till the third week of September 2024. The official notification will be released on July 30, 2024. The CAT is a moderate to high-difficulty level exam. Thus, it is essential to start preparing early. Aspirants should start CAT 2024 preparation at least nine months in advance.

#### SNAP 2024

##### (Symbiosis National Aptitude Test)

It is a university-level entrance examination for candidates wanting admission to management programmes. Symbiosis International University conducts the Symbiosis National Aptitude Test (SNAP). This entrance exam is conducted annually for candidates seeking admission to MBA-

Management courses from universities and affiliated institutes. To gain admission, candidates are required to submit the application form online. The SNAP 2024 Admit Card will be released on 4 December 2023.

## **MAT 2024**

### **(All India Management Association Test)**

The MAT 2024 Application Form will be released in the last week of March 2024. All India Management Association (AIMA) is the conducting authority of this entrance examination. It is a national-level entrance test conducted four times every year in February, May, September, and December. This exam is conducted to provide admission in PG management programmes such as MBA, PGDM, etc.

## **CMAT 2024**

### **(Common Management Admissions Test)**

Over 1300 MBA colleges will accept CMAT 2024 scores for admission. The CMAT 2024 exam will be conducted in April or May 2024. The National Testing Agency will conduct the CMAT exam 2024 in two shifts for admission to MBA/PGDM colleges approved by AICTE. The CMAT exam is a national-level test conducted annually. It is shown online for three hours at multiple exam centres across India. CMAT is a speed-based entrance test in which candidates are tested on their quantitative aptitude, data interpretation skills, logical reasoning, verbal ability, English language comprehension, innovation and entrepreneurship and general know

### **IIFT (Indian Institute of Foreign Trade)**

IIFT exam is cancelled for 2024. The cancellation of the IIFT 2024 exam stems from the decision made by the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) to consider CAT 2023 scores for admissions in 2024 and subsequent years exclusively. Previously, the IIFT exam was administered by the National Testing Agency (NTA).

### **XAT 2024 (Xavier Aptitude Test)**

XAT 2024 will be conducted on Sunday, January 7, 2024. XLRI (Xavier School of Management or formerly Xavier Labour

Relations Institute) conducts XAT for XAMI (Xavier Association of Management Institutions). XLRI is running XAT at all India levels to select the most appropriate students for management education. More than 160 institutes are using the XAT score for admission.

XAT 2024 will be conducted across India in the cities that include Ahmedabad, Allahabad, Ambala, Amritsar, Bengaluru, Bhopal, Chandigarh/Mohali, Chennai, Dehradun, Delhi-NCR, Hyderabad, Indore, Jabalpur, Jalandhar, Jaipur, Jammu, Kolkata, Kota, Lucknow, Mumbai, Mysuru, Nagpur, Nashik, Pune, Surat, Udaipur, Vadodara, and Varanasi,

XAT Associates added are Ahmedabad University, SRM University-AP, MCC Boyd Tandon School of Business, Regional College of Management Badruka School Of Management, Fuel Business School, Deccan Education Society's Institute of Management Development and Research (IMDR), IIEBM, Indus Business School, National Insurance Academy, Hari Shankar Singhanian School of Business, Jaipur, Chanakya University, Bengaluru, JK Business School, Haryana, KIET Group of Institutions, Ghaziabad, and Sir Padampat Singhanian University (SPSU), Udaipur

## **XATopper's Tips**

### **ATMA 2024**

#### **(AIIMS Test for Management Admissions)**

ATMA is an eligibility test for AIIMS (Association of Indian Management Schools) programs like MBA, PGDM, MCA, MMS and other management courses. The date of commencement for registration for 2024 is expected to be the first week of June 2024. The centre-based online test may be in July 2024.

### **OJEE 2024 (Odisha Joint Entrance Exam)**

OJEE is a state-level entrance exam conducted by the OJEE Cell for admission to MBA/PGDM, MCA, and M.Tech courses. The OJEE 2023 was held in the computer-based test (CBT) mode for different papers. Based on OJEE scores, candidates can apply for

admission to various programmes offered by OJEE-participating colleges.

Over 40 top B-schools accept OJEE scores in Odisha. A few of these colleges are Utkal University, IMIT Cuttack - Institute of Management and Information Technology, RCM Bhubaneswar - Regional College of Management, FM University Balasore - Fakir Mohan University, CV Raman Global University, Bhubaneswar, IIPM Rourkela - Indian Institute for Production Management, Gandhi Institute of Management Studies, Gunupur, Srusti Academy of Management, Bhubaneswar, Trident Academy of Technology, Bhubaneswar, BIITM Bhubaneswar - Biju Patnaik Institute of IT and Management Studies, North Orissa University, Baripada, RIMS Rourkela - Rourkela Institute of Management Studies, PJ College of Management and Technology, Bhubaneswar, NIST Berhampur - National Institute of Science and Technology, GITA Bhubaneswar - Gandhi Institute for Technological Advancement.

### **Registration (Online) is expected in March 2024.**

#### **IBSAT2024**

IBS Aptitude Test or IBSAT is a national-level entrance exam conducted by ICFAI Foundation for Higher Education (deemed to be University) for admission to MBA/PGPM programs. IBSAT scores are accepted by nine ICFAI Business Schools (IBS), namely IBS Hyderabad, IBS Mumbai, IBS Bengaluru, IBS Pune, IBS Gurgaon, IBS Kolkata, IBS Ahmedabad, IBS Jaipur, and IBS Dehradun. IBSAT is a two-hour Computer-based test (CBT) comprising multiple-choice questions. IBSAT is a computer-based test that is generally conducted over a window of two days in December. Qualified candidates will have to first attend a selection briefing round and then appear for the final selection rounds, including Group Discussion (GD) and Personal Interview (PI) rounds. Registration may start in July 2024.

Continued next month

### **National Testing Agency (NTA) NIFT Admissions-2024**

NTA will conduct the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) Entrance Examination for Admissions-2024 in Bachelor's and Master's Programmes. Dates for submission of online application forms

✓ From 05.12.2023 to 03.01.2024

*Last date for submission of online application forms with late fees of Rs. 5000/-*

✓ From 04.01.2024 to 08.01.2024

#### **Date of Exam**

✓ 05.02.2024

*The exam Fee for the open category is INR 3000*

### **Eligibility for Bachelor's Programmes (B.Des&B.F.Tech).**

Passed the plus 2 level examination in the 10+2 examination pattern from any recognized Central/State Board of Secondary Examination. The maximum age should be less than 24 years as of 1st August of the year of admission.

### **Eligibility for Master's Programmes (M.Des, M.F.M and M.F.Tech) and Ph.D,**

Educational Qualification for Master of Design (M.Des) Undergraduate Degree in any discipline from any Institute/ University recognized by law in India. Or Undergraduate Diploma of a minimum three years duration from NIFT/NID

#### **There is no age limit.**

The mode of the exams is Computer Based Test (CBT)-GAT Paper Based Test (PBT)-CAT. Candidates who desire to appear in the exam may read the detailed Prospectus for NIFT Admissions-2024 and Information Bulletin to apply online only at <https://exams.nta.ac.in/NIFT/> Seats will be offered for admission as State Domicile Preferential Seats to candidates who belong to Jammu, Kashmir, Ladakh and Kashmiri migrants.

*Feedback: vijaykashkari@gmail.com*





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



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



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





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



Looking for a suitable match for my son. DOB-29/08/1994, Place Of Birth-Jammu, Height-5.9 ft, Qualification- CSE Mumbai University, Pursuing MS in AI & ML from European University, Job-Senior Analyst, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) Mumbai. Presently- WFH District- Kulgam, Anantnag,Kashmir. Present Address- Jammu. Preferably Girl should be BE. Phone No-7889558793,7889479480



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



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



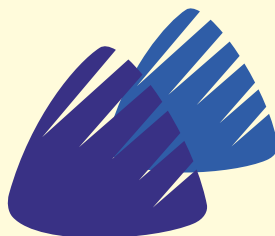
Looking for a suitable match for our son, Manik Patwari, DoB: 21-12-1994, Place of Birth: Faridabad (Haryana), Time of Birth: 09:35 AM, Height: 5'5" ft. Qualification: B-Tech (Mechanical Engineer) from Deen Bandhu Chhotu Ram University of Science and Technology, Murthal Sonipat) Haryana. Job Profile: Presently working as Engineer in M/s Sanden Vikas India Pvt. Ltd, Faridabad. PREFERENCE: Working KP Girl. Present Address: H. No B/29 Ashoka Enclave Part 2 Sec 37 Faridabad and Valley Address: Sangri Colony Kanlibagh Baramulla Kashmir. For more details please contact: puranpatwari@yahoo.co.in, Mobile number: 9811561341, sunilpatwari007@gmail.com, Mobile number: 9810191189, Ramesh Bhat Mobile number: 9310357707



Suitable alliance for son born in Delhi on 26th January 1996, Ht. 175 cm. Done B.Tech. (DTU) and MBA (IIM Calcutta) currently working in reputed MNC in Hyderabad. Family in Delhi. Girl preferably Engineer from NIT / MBA from reputed Institute. Contact: sanjay253126@gmail.com, 9810444670



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