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AIKS ਭਾਰਤ **naad**

A Monthly Publication of *all india kashmiri samaj*



AIKS-KP DELEGATION MEETING WITH UNION HOME MINISTER

OBITUARY

With profound grief, we regret to inform that our beloved Mother

Smt. Dulari Kaul

Wife of Late Shri Brij Krishen Kaul hailing from Kilam (Kulgam), Anantnag Kashmir, resident of A-303 Crescent Apartments Sector-50 Noida Uttar Pradesh left for her heavenly abode on 11th April 2024.



Ancestry

Dulari Kaul was born in Srinagar to Late Shri M.N. Tiku, resident of Ali Kadal Srinagar. She belonged to an illustrious lineage which can be traced back to Late Shri Pandit Hargopal Kaul Khasta (Sher-e-Kashmir) and Late Shri Janki Nath Kaul (Vakil) from her paternal side and she had an equally illustrious lineage from her maternal side where she was the Granddaughter of the highly revered Jurist Late Shri B.N. Nehru who was one of the architects of the Constitution of the State of Jammu & Kashmir. Her Father-in-Law Late Shri Dina Nath Kilam was an eminent Landlord of Kilam, Kulgam and a very distinguished personality of Jammu & Kashmir who had held the distinguished office of Wazir-i-Wazarat as well.

A Virtuous and a Noble Soul

'Dul bhabhi' or 'Didda' or 'Dul Jigir', as she was fondly called, was a very large-hearted compassionate lady who always kept her doors open for her near and dear ones. She was a devout lady with very high moral principles. She was highly artistic by nature and had a very strong penchant for dramatics and classical music. Whether it was her knowledge of the Dharmic scriptures or her continuous endeavour to promote and protect her Kashmiri roots & culture or her much appreciated culinary skills, she was an absolute epitome of perfection. Her zest for life was unmatched and till her last breath, she fought tenaciously before departing for her eternal journey.

A Towering Inspiration

Our mother was a highly inspirational figure and it was her guidance & unwavering support that made her children well-accomplished achievers in their life and well-respected in the society. We will always remain indebted to our mother for what she did for us and our family.

- ❖ Madhulika Kaul & Mohan Kaul (Daughter & Son-in-Law)
- ❖ Bipan Kaul & Sushma Kaul (Son and Daughter-in-law)
- ❖ Ajay Kaul & Suneeta Kaul (Son and Daughter-in-law)
- ❖ Mudit Kaul, Harshul Kaul and Havish Kaul (Grandchildren)

Grief Stricken

The Kilams, Tikus, Aroras, Bhats, Nehrus and Kauls
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THIS MONTH'S COVER

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Union Home Minister**

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With the general elections announced by the Election Commission, the whole country is engulfed into a festival of sorts. This festival is unique in a way, because we have a chain of heroes being worshipped as Gods by different people. This milieu will continue till the D-Day on June 4, 2024. The results will see some euphoric and others brooding. The festivity ends with the new dispensation taking charge of the fate of this nation for the next five years.

In the middle of this festival, there is this miniscule group of displaced Kashmiris, though Indians citizens, who have no idea about who fights on their behalf and who are they to vote. Living in a state of exile for over 34 years, their fate has sent them to every corner of the world to fend for their livelihood. This demographic dissipation has thrown up a unique challenge. They have no idea about their electoral constituency and, therefore, who will they vote. A majority of them have, over the years, got the electoral registration of the place of their present abode. This has thrown up a dichotomy for the KP voter. While he does exercise his franchise at the place of his current abode, there is no one to represent the woes of his motherland and his return.

Over the years, the Election Commission of India (EC) formulated a method that would enable them to vote for a representative from the home constituency. Although it did not address their woes and, instead created umpteen hurdles that discouraged them to go and vote, yet many opted for it. The process was introduced for

the voter to fill up a tedious form called M-FORM through which he had to prove that he is the legitimate voter of his motherland.

AIKS, through its good offices took up this issue with the EC on several occasions in the past couple of years. In its latest meeting it presented an option for simplifying the process. The good news is that the EC accepted the suggestions and have now come out with a new notification under which the M-Form in the regions of Jammu and Udhampur has been scrapped. While as for the other places it still remains as a requirement, the formalities have been simplified and made voter friendly. This change has been welcomed as it brought a great sigh of relief to the KPs living outside the UT of J&K.

AIKS, in the past has been trying for an audience with the Honourable Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah. Pleasantly, it was obliged when the President, Dr Romesh Raina, along with other KP dignitaries from the KP community were invited for a meeting by the Home Minister. The outcome of the meeting has been detailed elsewhere in this issue of NAAD. There was a mixed response from the members of the community shared by them on Kashmir Interchange on Googlegroups. The entire chain has been reproduced in this issue of NAAD for the benefit of its readers.

At the end, I feel, as a community we have still reluctance to formulate a united forum that represents us as a community in front of the powers that be. This is our dire need.

Food for Thought!

Namaskar!

युकाउकायड *Abanishchian*

From the President's Desk



M-FORM PASSES INTO HISTORY

The campaign for Parliamentary Elections 2024 is gradually gaining momentum all across the Country and J&K being no exception. Reflecting on the immediate past, parliamentary elections, invariably used to be a quiet affair for local people than the assembly elections which, given its relevance in terms of the political control of the State, would lend lot of meaning to the entire legislative electoral process therefore aggressive campaigning. This time it feels different as Kashmir is at a critical juncture of transformation and that too at a fast speed. This transformation has rung alarm bells both in politicians as well as local political parties who, hitherto, used to call the shots. This election, therefore, is going to lay the foundations of a new Kashmir, post August 5, 2019 which symbolises the new path and destiny of a place that was at war with rest of the Country.

Among the changes that post 90 exodus of KP's inflicted on them, was the adoption of new ideas by redefining their connect with Kashmir. For a correct understanding of the current situation, the struggle for justice and acknowledgement of attempts to erase them from the socio-psychological memory of Kashmir remains central to the whole narrative of forced displacement and its reversal. Advocacy efforts in the face of systemic injustice therefore, seeks to shed light on their growing irrelevance consequent to long absence and running exile spanning 35 years. Navigating complex post exodus socio-political landscape and overcoming the challenges play a vital role in advancing the idea of the creation of a "Legitimate Minority space for Kashmiri

Pandits in Kashmiris" is what AIKS has been trying to hammer out both in its Vision Document and Ambala Declaration-2023. An electoral exercise like the one under way could possibly be a tiny step in its long arduous journey of actually realising the dream for their genuine minority space in Kashmir.

The upcoming Parliamentary elections followed by Assembly elections will serve as a beacon of hope amid the challenges of rebuilding our lives in the wake of great losses that this beleaguered community had to face. Right to vote assumes significance which has been protected by the election commission of India all these years by providing polling booths outside J&K to encourage the voting by the displaced Kashmiri Pandits. But, this exercise turned out to be too cumbersome to the extent that the people preferred not to vote instead. Filling of M-Form became a big obstruction because of its troublesome process followed by the gazetted officer attestation. It did not attract the voters to the extent as it ought to have been. What is this M-Form also needs to be correctly understood? It is the intimation of transfer of vote from one's respective constituency in Kashmir to the present day residence to avoid the fake voting. This practice became a bone of contention and instead of encouraging people to vote, it became an instrument of exclusion. It, therefore, was contested strongly. There were though few changes brought into it like simplifying the forms, so on and so forth, but not to the satisfaction and, as such, continued to remain a mental block for the voters. This time the issue was raised strongly yet again with the ECI and the end result was to scrap the filling of M-Forms but only from the UT of J&K and some relief for the voters outside J&K was in the form replacing the Gazetted Officer attestation with self-attested M-Form. It is a relief anyway.

There are different perceptions at play about the participation of displaced KP's in the electoral exercise underway as some sections of the society see it differently. Their argument about non participation simply is overlooked for the reasons of the people not prepared to give up the Kashmir's citizenship. With reservation of two legislative seats for Kashmiri Migrants there already exists a hope as it has for the first time created a "Legislative space for Kashmiri Pandits". With this window of opportunity, coupled with proposed several reconstruction initiatives lined up for Kashmir, a possibility of opening up of vacant spaces for Kashmiri Pandits is a probability. Never forget there are about five thousand Kashmiri Pandit boys and girls working under PM package and an undeclared number of people gradually moving to Kashmir to spend long summer holidays with an added attraction to visit Sharda Corridor.



- Puran Patwari



General Secretary's Column

There has been a lot of activity going around in the national capital in the context of the upcoming General Elections and in view of the fact that the exiled community being a crucial factor both in Jammu and the Valley.

AIKS-KP Delegation Meets Home Minister:

President, All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS), Dr Ramesh Raina along with the representatives from JKVM (President Dileep Mattoo), PNBMT (President Shri C L Pandita) and other social activists from the Kashmiri Pandit Community from Jammu, former MLC and BJP leader Shri Ajay Bharti, Shri H.L. Bhat, Shri Rajeev Pandita called on the Honourable Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah on 8th April and had an hour long meeting with him in a very cordial atmosphere where the representatives shared the problems faced by the exiled community for the past thirty-four years. HM gave them a patient hearing and assured all help. The focus of discussion was on the issues of **Passage of Temples and Shrines Bill, Slow down and difficulty in logging in to Distress Sale portal; Security concerns and job related issues of PM Package Employees; Unemployment and Sense of Insecurity among non-migrant community members living in the valley; Problems faced by Delhi NCR Relief holders** (Full report elsewhere in this issue of NAAD)

AIKS-KP Delegation Called on Chief Election Commission of India:

All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS), Dr Ramesh Raina along with the representatives from Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch (JKVM), Prem Nath Bhat Memorial Trust (PNBMT) and other social activists from the Kashmiri Pandit Community from Jammu had a meeting with

Chief Election Commission of India at its HQ in New Delhi. The meeting held twice in a week—1st and 8th April, was held in connection with KP voters and cumbersome M-Form which they are mandated to fill before casting their vote. The CEC took a call on the issue and announced through a notification the scarping of M-Form' in Jammu. Dr Raina also impressed upon the CEC for similar collation of KP voter data in Delhi and NCR and cities where there are cluster KPs settlers like Pune, Bangalore, Telengana, Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Faridabad, Gurugram, Noida, Ghaziabad, Shalimar Garden, Dilshad Garden, Uttam Nagar, Najafgarh etc.

OWP in J&K HC

Consequent upon Hon. J&K HC asking the petitioners to furnish details of the encroached upon land of temples and shrines in the valley, the PNBMT held a meeting with Rtd revenue officers like DCs and Tehsildars and Pathwaris in Jammu to get information from them about the land records of Temples and shrines across the valley and incidents of encroachments. The exercise is still underway.

Shuhul-Taaph and Navreh Celebration

An AIKS delegation led by its President Dr Ramesh Raina participated in KECSS's flagship cultural programme-- Shuhul-Taaph on 31st March at Lal Ded Bhawan in Pamposh Enclave and again on 7th April attend its affiliate Kashmir Sewak Samaj's (KSS), Faridabad, annual social and cultural event at Hari Parbat, Anangpur in Faridabad. The much awaited day-long events at both places were attended by KP community of entire NCR and Delhi.



Office of the Chief Electoral Officer

Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir
Nirvachan Bhawan, Rail Head Complex Jammu
Phone No: 0191-2477519 Fax No - 0191-2477389 Email ID: ceo-jk@nic.in



"Greater participation for a Stronger Democracy"

Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner (Migrant)
J&K, Jammu.

No. CEO-ELEC0COE/11/2024-1/5489-93

Dated 11-04-2024


Subject: General Elections to Lok Sabha, 2024- Scheme for Kashmiri Migrants to vote in person at transitory camps - Partial Modification-regarding.

Sir,

In continuation to this Office Letter No CEO-ELEC0COE/11/2024-1/2552-70 dated 23-03-2024, find enclosed herewith a copy of Commission's Letter No. 3/J&K-HP/2024-NS-1 dated 11-04-2024 along with Commission's order No 3/J&K-HP/2024-NS-1, dated 11-04-2024 wherein certain modifications have been made to the original scheme notified on 22nd March 2024.

You are requested to give wide publicity to the changes and take consequent action as required in the said order

Yours faithfully,


Joint Chief Electoral Officer,
UT of J&K, Jammu.

Copy alongwith Commission's order referred to above for information and necessary action to the :-

1. Deputy Secretary, in the office of Resident Commissioner, New Delhi
2. Assistant Commissioner, Panchayat, Udhampur
3. Assistant Commissioner, Relief (Migrant), Jammu.
4. Deputy Director, Horticulture, Planning and Marketing, Delhi.

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No. 3/J&K-HP/2024-NS-I

Dated: 11th April, 2024

To,

The Chief Electoral Officer,
Jammu & Kashmir,
Srinagar.

Subject: - General Election to Lok Sabha, 2024 - Scheme for Kashmiri migrants to vote in person at transitory camps-partial modification-regarding.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to your letter No.CEO-ELEC0COE/11/2024-1/5415, dated 9th April, 2024, on the subject cited and to forward herewith the Commission's Order No. 3/J&K-HP/2024-NS-I, dated 11th April, 2024 for necessary action and compliance.

2. Kindly ensure that frequent and repeated publicity/announcement is made in print/electronic media of all leading newspapers and All India Radio etc. in the next few days for the benefit of Kashmiri migrants.

Yours faithfully,



(B. C. PATRA)
SECRETARY

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Urgent
EO
Q

SECRETARIAT OF THE ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan,
Ashoka Road,
New Delhi-110001.

No. 3/J&K-HP/2024(NS-I)

Dated: 11.04.2024

ORDER

The Commission vide letter No. 464/J&K-HP/2024, dated 22.03.2024 had issued the scheme for Kashmiri migrants to vote in person at transitory camps or voting by means of postal ballot pertaining to any of the three Parliamentary Constituencies namely 1-Baramulla, 2-Srinagar and 3-Anantnag-Rajouri in the UT of J&K in connection with the ongoing General Election to Lok Sabha, 2024; and

Whereas, as per the scheme, Kashmiri migrant voters, who are residing at various relief camps in Delhi, Jammu, and Udhampur and who have opted to cast their votes in person through Electronic Voting Machines at the forthcoming General Election to the Lok Sabha, 2024 can do so at any one of the designated polling stations located at Delhi, Jammu and Udhampur; and

Whereas, Migrant electors residing at various places other than Jammu, Udhampur and Delhi can also download Form-M and Form 12-C from the Commission's website and after filling, such Forms shall be got verified from the Electoral Registration Officer of the areas where he/she is residing. The Electoral Registration Officers can have access to the details of migrant electors enrolled in different Parliamentary Constituency in Kashmir through ERO-Net. The ERO concerned, after verifying details in the Form-M will scan and upload it to electronically transmit the same to AROs Migrants at Delhi, Jammu and Udhampur for further necessary action; and

Whereas, in the meantime, representations have been received from several Kashmiri Migrant groups regarding the scheme, projecting the difficulties they face in filling of Form-M every election, mentioning that this brings a lot of hassle to them in exercising their right to franchise. They have informed that the Form-M procedure subjects these voters to additional bureaucratic hurdles compared to other voters and also the process of filling out the Form-M is often complex and cumbersome, requiring specific documentation, proof of migration status and attestation by a gazetted officer; and

Whereas, as per the usual practice, the representations were forwarded to Chief Electoral Officer, UT of Jammu and Kashmir for his comments vide letter dated 06.04.2024, and after due consultation with the political parties;

Whereas, the Chief Electoral Officer, Jammu and Kashmir has submitted his comments to the Commission on 09.04.2024 with due consultation with the political parties; and



Whereas, the Commission has gone through the report of the Chief Electoral Officer, UT of Jammu and Kashmir; and

Now, therefore, the Commission after taking into consideration the representations received from several Kashmiri Migrant groups regarding the scheme, feedback from the political parties and comments of the Chief Electoral Officer, UT of Jammu and Kashmir, has directed that the Scheme for Kashmiri migrants to vote in person at transitory camps and voting by means of postal ballot pertaining to the ongoing General Election to Lok Sabha, 2024, issued vide order dated 22.03.2024, shall be partially modified, as under:

A. For migrant voters of Jammu and Udhampur:

- a. All the 22 special polling stations (21 in Jammu and 1 in Udhampur) shall be mapped to camps/zones individually, ensuring that every zone has at least one Special Polling Station. In case there are multiple polling stations in one zone, the zonal officers shall earmark the intra-zonal jurisdiction for each such polling station keeping in mind the distance/ease of approach for each set of electors.
- b. In case there is any zone that does not have any of the existing Special Polling Stations, a new Special Polling Station shall be proposed by the ARO Migrant concerned in a suitable Government building following all extant directions of the Commission concerning setting up a polling station, including consultation with political parties.
- c. Consequent to this, the electors staying in these zones/camps shall be mapped to the respective polling stations by a table top exercise to be done by the respective AERO Migrants at Jammu and Udhampur. The zone wise polling stations list is attached herewith as Annexure.
- d. Electoral roll extracts corresponding to each of these Special Polling Stations shall be culled out of the basic electoral rolls of their respective assembly constituencies.
- e. Draft Electoral Roll Extracts, to be used as the rolls for respective Special Polling Stations, for each of the Zone shall be notified by the respective AERO Migrants at Jammu and Udhampur and published in the newspapers as well as given wide publicity by placing it at all conspicuous places in the zone including the Zone Office as well as other places of importance for the Migrants like Office of the Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner, J&K, websites, etc.
- f. All electors within 7 days of the notification of the draft electoral roll extract, approach the respective Assistant Returning Officers (Migrant) at Jammu and Udhampur in case:


- i. there is any omission of any eligible name in the draft lists
 - ii. s(he) wishes to opt for voting through postal ballot
 - iii. s(he) wishes to vote at the original polling station in Kashmir valley,
 - iv. those who have already submitted their Form-M, choosing a Special Polling Station which is different from the one allotted in the draft and wish to retain the same, as per choice already given in Form-M.
- g. After the passage of 7 days period, the Assistant Returning Officers (Migrant) shall notify the final Electoral Roll Extracts for each Special Polling Station and the same shall be used at these polling stations on the day of poll.
- h. A copy of these Final Electoral Roll Extracts shall be shared immediately by the Assistant Returning Officers (Migrant) with the Returning Officers/Assistant Returning Officers of the respective Constituencies in Kashmir for marking of the Electoral Rolls to be used at the original polling stations in Kashmir.
- i. In order to doubly ensure that no elector who opts for postal ballot by filling Form 12C gets the voting opportunity to vote at these special polling stations, the ARO Migrant Jammu who is the nodal officer for Postal Ballots under the scheme, shall ensure that in case Form 12C is received from any of these electors and the postal ballot has been dispatched, marking of 'PB' shall be made against the name of the said elector in the corresponding Electoral Roll Extracts.

B. For the migrants who are staying outside Jammu and Udhampur

To remove the hassle of looking for a Gazetted officer to attest the Certificate appended with Form M, 'Self Attestation' of these Forms can suffice. However, in order to avoid impersonation at the Special Polling Stations, they shall be required to produce either EPIC or any of the alternate documents prescribed by the Commission for the identification of electors at Polling Stations.

- C. Other provisions and terms & conditions of the Scheme *ibid* issued on 22.03.2024 shall remain unchanged.

By order,



(B. C. PATRA)

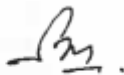
SECRETARY

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Annexure

| S.No. | Name of Zone/Camp | Adjacent areas of the Zone/Camp | Name of Polling Station and its adjacent areas (Jammu) |
|-------|---------------------|--|---|
| 1. | Nanak Nagar | Shastri Nagar, Rani Talab, Sanjay Nagar, Last Morh Gandhi Nagar, Digiana, Nai Basti, Preet Nagar, Shivaji Chowk, Gandhi Nagar, Bahu Plaza, Trikuta Nagar | Women College Gandhi Nagar Jammu |
| 2. | Zone Digiana | Brij Nagar, Krishna Nagar, Chatha, Miran Sahib, Airport area | Govt. High School Miran Sahib (Sagoon) |
| 3. | Zone Bhagwati Nagar | Bhagwati Nagar, Gole Gujral, Beli Charana, Canal Road, Jewel Chowk, Krishna Nagar, Mazdoor Basti. | Indian Institute of Management College Canal Road |
| 4. | Zone DC-A | Ustad Mohalla, Gujjar Nagar, DC-Office area, Fatu Jukan, Rajinder Bazar Raghunath Bazar, Parade, Residency Road, Indra Chowk, Jain Bazar, Old city Jammu | |
| 5. | Zone/Camp Muthi | Laxmi Nagar, Muthi Talab, | Directorate School Education Muthi, Jammu |
| | | Upper Roop Nagar, Aap Shamboo Upper Roop Nagar, Muthi Camp, TRT Buta Nagar, Buta Nagar, Neel Sheel Vihar | Govt. Mixed Higher Secondary School, Muthi, Jammu |
| 6. | Zone DC-B | Janipur Colony, Pamposh Colony, Gujjar Basti Janipur, Bhawani Nagar, Naseeb Nagar, | Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Janipur Jammu |
| 7. | Camp TRT Purkhoo | Camp Purkhoo, Purkhoo Gompul, Domana, Mishriwalla, Kana-chak, Jhiri, Nardhani Raipur, Kot Bhalwal | Migrant School Purkhoo, Jammu |
| 8. | Talab Tillo | Bhagwati Nagar, Bharat Nagar, Gole Gujral, Poonch House, Kabir Colony, Ajit Colony, Amar Colony, Bank Colony, Sunder Nagar, Nitco Lane | Agriculture Complex Talab Tillo Jammu |
| 9. | Camp Nagrota | Camp Nagrota, Toll Post, Doke Wazira, Sainik School, Kamini Market | Migrant School, Nagrota, Jammu |
| 10. | Camp Jagti-A | Camp Jagti, Dhammi, Panj Garain | Government Higher Secondary School, (Migrants) Jagti-A Jammu |
| 11. | Camp Jagti-B | Camp Jagti, Dhammi, Panj Garain | Government Higher Secondary School, (Migrants) Jagti-B, Jammu |
| 12. | Camp Jagti-C | Camp Jagti, Dhammi, Panj Garain | 1. Govt Middle School (Migrants), Jagti 2. Community Hall Jagti. |
| 13. | Zone Sarwal | Toph Sherkhania, Paloura, Patoli, Paloura Top, Indra Vihar | J&K Board of School Education, Rehari, Jammu (A) |
| 14. | Zone JKBOSE | Rehari Colony, Subash Nagar, Shakti Nagar, Rajpura, Shiv Nagar, | J&K Board of School Education, Rehari, Jammu (B) |
| 15. | Zone Mini-Stadium | Kachi Chawni, Dogra Hall, Exchange Road, CPO Chowk, Shakuntala area, Bakshi Nagar, | J&K Board of School Education, Rehari, Jammu (B) |

| | | | |
|-----|---------------------|---|---|
| 16. | Zone Talli Morh | Durga Nagar Sector-1 and 2, Chinore Bantalab, Ganga Nagar, Sukhi Naher, Raipur, Swarn Vihar, Police Colony, Dream City | Govt. Girls Middle School Check Changerwan Chinore Chowk, Jammu |
| 17. | Zone Ghomanasa | Udheywalla, Saari, Vishwa Bharti Colony, Akalpur, Sangrampora, Santra Morh, | Govt. Primary School, Ponichak |
| | | Barnai, Panchayat Ghar Dharmal, Dina Nagar, Saraswati Vihar Barnai, Patoli, Gurha Keran, Anuradha Puram, Nather Kothian, Geeta Colony, Khajuria Mohalla, Sharda Colony, Nagbani | Anuradha Higher Secondary School Barnai Jammu |
| 18. | Zone Bari-Brahmana | Kunjwani, Model Town, Kailash Resort, | Govt. Girls Primary School Gangyal |
| 19. | Zone Bakshi Nagar-B | Anand Nagar, Saraswati Vihar, Hazuri Bagh, Ram Krishen Vihar, Ganesh Vihar, Kailash Vihar, Manorama Vihar, Colonel Colony | Agriculture University Complex, Udheywala, Jammu |
| 20. | Zone Channi Himmat | Channi Himmat Colony, Narwal, Sabzi Mandi, Narwal Bye-pass, Transport Nagar, Police Colony Channi Himmat, Bathindi, Chowadi, Sidhra Colony, Rajeev Nagar, Qasim Nagar | Govt. Higher Sec. School Channi |
| 21. | Zone Udampur | Udampur and adjoining areas | Govt. Girls Higher Secondary School, Udampur |


(B. C. PATRA)
SECRETARY



-Alka Lahori



AIKS-KP DELEGATION MEETING WITH UNION HOME MINISTER

A historic event was created on March 8th 2024 when an impromptu meeting between Home Minister and a delegation of KP leaders took place in New Delhi. President, All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS), Dr Ramesh Raina along with the representatives from Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch (JKVM), Prem Nath Bhat Memorial Trust (PNBMT) and other social activists from the Kashmiri Pandit Community from Jammu called on Honourable Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah and had an hour long meeting with him in a very cordial atmosphere where the representatives shared the problems faced by the exiled community for the past thirty-four years. The Honourable Minister who seemed more than eager to listen to them gave a very patient hearing to the delegation. However, the focus points remained the following issues:

1. Starting with Temples and Shrines Bill – AIKS President Dr Ramesh Raina while stating that The Temples and Shrines as cultural symbols constitute our proud heritage, expressed a collective apprehension of the community that if left in a state of neglect and disrepair, the grand structures may be lost to the avarice of land grabbers-encroachers and vagaries of nature. Therefore, he urged for the urgent passage of the Bill which has been hanging fire for a very long time, so that these priceless heritage sites are brought under the management control of the community and are revived and passed on to our next generation in their pristine purity state.

2. About the Distress sale portal – Dr Ramesh Raina while apprising the Home Minister that the Portal which had started off well with many community members actually benefiting from it, however, of late it had not been working properly, slowed down people finding difficulties in getting the long pending issues settled.

3. PM Package Employees' Problems – Dr Raina, updated the HM about the practical problems faced by the PMPE while performing their duties in the valley, which mostly fall in the realm of security and non-availability of government accommodation. The honourable Home Minister was given the feedback of these employees that had been shared by them with the delegation.

4. Unemployment, Threat perception and Insecurity among non-migrant community members – Among other issues, the delegation also expressed concern over the growing unemployment rate among non-migrant community members in the valley and the constant threat perception that makes them feel insecure and vulnerable.

5. Delhi NCR Relief holders – Dr Ramesh Raina apprised the honourable Minister about many problems and hurdles faced by the relief holders in the NCR that delays the process of release of the monthly relief to them; the relief to some genuine and eligible members have even stopped, putting them to a lot of financial hardships and monetary distress, and other allied issues.

The honourable Minister gave a very patient hearing to all the problems shared by the delegation with him. He admitted that there are problems and some of which the ministry is already apprised of and is trying to work out permanent solutions for them. However, he said that due to the election Code-of-Conduct in force, the activity is temporarily on halt. He assured the delegation that once the Code-of-Conduct is lifted, the Ministry will work on finding permanent solutions to these problems. Honourable Minister also promised that he will invite the delegation again for further discussions for resolving these problems.

Watch the entire video on Belo link:

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=MxzNLI-62Sw&feature=shared>



PUBLIC RESPONSE TO THE VIDEO

The Googlegroup - Kashmir-Interchange - has been abuzz with reactions to the video message of the AIKS President, Dr Romesh Raina, giving an update on the meeting of the KP delegation with the Honourable Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah. For the lesser privileged, who do not have access to this Google group, the NAAD Bureau is happy to reproduce the entire chain of response exchanges for the benefit of the NAAD readers.

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=MxzNLI-62Sw&feature=shared>

On 4/9/2024 10:44 AM, Bushan Parimoo wrote:

Navreh Mubarak.

Return to valley has been put on back burner. From horse mouth.

Bhushan Parimoo

On Tue, 9 Apr, 2024, 5:41 pm Ravinder Tikoo, <ravi.tikoo@gmail.com> wrote:

Thanks for sharing.....

May kindly realize the hard fact that nobody is going back to valley to resettle...Any one going back would do so at his own cost and risk and security...No Govt on earth can guarantee security to individuals or a community as a whole. Person wishing to go back has to weigh all options beforehand....Even if say some leaders confirm the safety and welcome us back even then lone wolf could unsettle the feel good factor.....Did majority of people who came out since 1950 onwards till 1990 comeback anytime....No all eventually settled in the mainland.....and their children would know nothing of Kashmir...I came out in 1965 and never thought of returning because I would not get any job there.....My folks ran away in a truck ...and never to return.... May be in the next 50 years when the locals get more educated and enlightened with global situation we could see a ray of hope.... You never know when the situations turn for good or bad.....No going back for us and the next two generations at least.....

Thanks and best regards,

Ravinder Tikoo

On Tue, 9 Apr 2024, 19:05 Arvind Shah, <shah.arvindshah@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Ravinder Tikoo ji

Today, the contents in the post are expressions of a person, who concedes defeat even before thinking of facing the situation.

When the concepts and ideas of life are pegged into a pinhole, then the horizon appears to be just at the compound wall of one's house.

You have no idea of a section of Kashmiri Pandits, by choice, living and enjoying life in Kashmir. The biggest curse of the community, at present, is that we have become more scattered by physical disbursement, and then a section lives with limited mental dimensions, not to conceive the broader prospects of ancestral land of belonging: the motherland. The strongest concept with a section of Kashmiri Pandits is, "curse Kashmir in as many ways as you can." Even if, Kashmiri Pandit delegations meet government organs of function, we have to have a Positive Approach. I have had direct experiences to see how our organisations have been losing credentials because of our negative approach. Please read my editorial in latest issue of Shuhul Taaph. Orzuv Te'Aay

Arvind Shah
Author: S. Chand - Prabhat - Dreamland

On Tue, 9 Apr, 2024, 7:16 pm Bushan Parimoo, <blparimoo@gmail.com> wrote:

Very interesting! Aravind ji about Your view "that you have no idea of a section of Kashmiri Pandits, by choice, living and enjoying life in Kashmir." Question arises why you donot enjoy it yourself to ask others to follow. Taste in pudding is in its eating donot become leeches on community resources which should go to deserving in valley instead of Janjghars, lavish marriages, Mekhal that goes for days in costly halls besides cocktails in which women of all ages young old indulge in.

Bhushan Parimoo

On Tue, 9 Apr, 2024, 8:01 pm Arvind Shah, <shah.arvindshah@gmail.com> wrote:

*Dear Bushan Parimoo Sahab,
Namaskar*

I thought, you knew a little bit about me.

Whenever I write, it is based on study of some data - and direct ground level assessment.

What you advise me to taste, has been on my plate for quite some time, now.

Orzuv te Aay

Arvind Shah

On Tue, 9 Apr 2024, 20:54 Surindar Nath Pandita, <surindar.n.pandita@gmail.com> wrote:

I think, as a community, we may think better if we are able to think in any other language than Kashmiri and English. Our hybrid tongue has harmed us more than militancy.

Unable to cognate our thoughts exclusively in our mother- tongue we burp and fart in the hybrid language. When one burps the other farts. This generates a Bermuda Triangle of our community debates from which no one ever comes out alive and victorious.

This thread of exchanges is one more sortie over our Bermuda Triangle.

Any comments are welcome.

Dr. S.N.Pandita

On 9 Apr 2024, at 9:16 PM, Bushan Parimoo <blparimoo@gmail.com> wrote:

A scholars way of thinking. To me we need foot guides person in action ready to pay any price for the cause of the community.

No breast beating, crying foul, paying lip service to me we are running with rabbits hunting with hounds.

As Jagmohan said in his book, *Frozen Turbulence*, India doesn't require outside enemies. We have enough within.

One of readers expressed on the earlier post here *Wolves in the sheep skin*. My own concern to make mends with those whom left in lurch just imagine those times when we migrated in distress never thought of them nor after safely came this side of the tunnel raised voice for their safe rescue in a systematic manner.

Why migrants or others kept stoic silence of the relevant issue. Begarath Kooum we command no respect as community anywhere. In fact, me and like some of those went for intermarriage before migration commander lot of respect but migrants' way of life behaviour has put us too in poor light.

Bhushan Parimoo

On Tue, 9 Apr 2024 at 10:19 PM, CHAND RAINA <chaandkd@gmail.com> wrote:

My two points:

1. Please refrain from speaking on behalf of everyone by claiming that Kashmiri Pandits wouldn't return. While some may not wish to return, many are eager to do so. I am one among those who desire to go back. Anyone expecting miraculous solutions from the Modi/BJP government is mistaken.
2. Kashmiri Pandits are merely a talking point for them during elections. They are experts at picking the issue during election campaigns, but for the rest of the time, they have figures like Meenakshi Lekhi who label us as like Bihari migrants. How long will we let them weaponise souls of our martyrs?

Let's not be deceived by the hollow promises of this administration again. If we do, we risk forfeiting our right to be called Pandits. We would merely become another group easily misled by empty gestures like religious slogans, 15 lakhs into account or 500 rupee notes....

Kind regards

CK

From: Veena Bhat Pandita <veenabhatpandita@gmail.com>

Date: 10 April 2024 at 7:01:42 AM IST

To: CHAND RAINA <chaandkd@gmail.com>

Cc: Arvind Shah <shah.arvindshah@gmail.com>, CL KAUL <kaulcl1948@gmail.com>, "Dr. Vijay Sazawal" <sazawal@gmail.com>, Nand Zutshi <n.l.zutshi@gmail.com>, Ramesh Manvati <rameshmanvati@yahoo.in>, Ravi Munshi <ravi.munshi@gmail.com>, Ravinder Tikoo <ravi.tikoo@gmail.com>, Surindar Nath Pandita <surindar.n.pandita@gmail.com>, ashok handoo <ashokhandoo@yahoo.com>, kashmir-interchange@googlegroups.com

Subject: Re: --Kashmir-Interchange- AIKS-KP Delegation Meets Honourable Home Minister Sh.Amit Shah to discus...

Reply-To: kashmir-interchange@googlegroups.com

Dear all

I do want to express my views where I feel I can as a member on the issue being debated here:

1. Since KPs have no leader everyone is a Leader for the community himself at different stages whenever it is beneficial to him or her. So no one or for that matter any of our

organisations do not have the right to speak on behalf of the whole community as we are a scattered community now with more self-interests than the community interests.

- 2. Mr Arvind Shah has tried his best to get the exiled community settled at least at one place in Delhi but can't say its progress as I couldn't be a member of that project due to my own financial constraints. Besides this Mr Arvind Shah too tried a lot for helping the differently abled children of our community by many ways he thought it would be better, but can't say its progress further.*
- 3. Lastly my personal opinion that Arvind ji found its solace to live a retired life at Srinagar. But cannot say whether his all family members are also living with him there or it is a type of holiday home for the children as it is for every one nowadays where old couple stay alone and live lonely life, it is better to be in our own homeland with or without fear for old couples of our surviving generation and enjoy the heaven in summer and winters out of valley, likewise all including resident and non-resident of JK.*
- 4. All of us know including the delegation that met our HM for what purpose at this stage when he is presently a caretaker only and cannot extend any help this time or if they were sure that the reigns of HOME MINISTER will be controlled again by the same person and if so why the desired help could not be extended to our community during these 10 years of his tenure as HM rather we must understand the work, the progress that has been done, we often speak about through our posts is only attracting some portion of Muslim votes that is much more more than our KP votes.*

If we do not understand this policy of the present government projecting so much of progress in JK we have perhaps lost our intellectual gene.

The renovation of temples etc etc is only to attract the Hindu tourists of our Nation for the Muslim business class, ultimately it will fetch the return in the form of some Muslim vote bank, similar to 'CHANDE KE BADLE DHANDA', a pure Gujrati business mind-set, that proved their failure when Pt JL Nehru was declared as PM of India, beyond the tolerance of Gujratis.

Times change for everyone, Chanda and Dandha is more acceptable to the general public so is the present situation of 400 par is baar.

- 5. Coming to the KPs who didn't leave valley during mass exodus and stayed there in the valley, they too had a separate view as against the masses who left that time, so they didn't support their exodus, again a question mark on our community's unity.*

Their staying in the valley might have posed question mark on the people who left the valley as to how these KPs are still living there in the valley.

Our community had to face humiliation of being cowards to leave when others could stay bravely there.

Yes, we have faced such questions from many fronts even our own progeny questioned that it would have been better to die there rather to live a life of refugees in our own country, that status too was not given to the mass exodus of our community nor the status of internally displaced people.

Therefore, taking care of those who didn't support the mass exodus that time may not expect any support this time too and what support can be extended to them now when

the PMs package employees too are living there, earning their livelihood they too are KPs living in the valley.

Mr Parimoo has not given the full information as to what sort of support can be extended to them only and not to PM Package families.

6. *Coming to patriotism Nationalism etc etc. if we are really selfless Nationalists as a community of KPs, how many have surrendered their 'CHANDIS' when they or their children have started earning sufficient livelihood out of valley to show how honest and Nationalists are they?*

Do we think that the government does not know how much our refugee KPs are spending on the parties and marriages? Couldn't we built up a huge fund for developing our own infrastructure for our children who are not at present earning and unemployed.

Our NRI KPs claim to have funded n number of crores for the community but with no tangible results except for the funds in medical emergency cases. Perhaps rest of the funds were spend on shawls Dias photo shoots and such activities

7. *Conclusion is more or less in my opinion that KPs as of now need nothing and all are well settled may be some exceptions for which we tried to compile a list who really are in need of help but that list could not be prepared by any of our organisation so that the help reaches to the desired persons.*

Our community of KPs if compared to other Indian nationals anywhere in our country that is being debated all over, are far far better than the 90 percent population of our country and that is the reason our government cannot discriminate between the citizens of India when there are more deserving poor people all over in India.

We too are as good as other citizens of India and cannot expect special status for ourselves hereinafter and god forbid we may also; not find a place in Hindu National Register as we may not be able to produce the proof of our forefathers to be the citizens of India.

We are in one way declared as Muslims being connected to Pt Nehru, a KP declared as Muslim by many pseudo historians quoting their theories through whatsapp university and IT cells & Event Management Companies in the rallies being conducted during elections.

By this mail some may get hurt, some may say old age effects and some may ignore by not even reading the long content and I apologise for that in advance.

Regards

Veena

From another mail trail

On Tue, 9 Apr 2024, 10:44 Bushan Parimoo, <blparimoo@gmail.com> wrote:

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=MxzNLI-62Sw&feature=shared>

Navreh Mubarak.

Return to valley has been put on back burner .from horse mouth.

Bhushan Parimoo

From: kashmir-interchange@googlegroups.com <kashmir-interchange@googlegroups.com> **On Behalf Of** Tej Tikoo

Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 1:31 AM

To: Kashmir Interchange <kashmir-interchange@googlegroups.com>

Subject: Re: -=Kashmir-Interchange=- AIKS-KP Delegation Meets Honourable Home Minister Sh.Amit Shah to discuss...

Respected fellow Displaced Community members in Exile.

Though I have been keeping myself away from the organizational politics of our community for sometime, I can't help but express my shock beyond belief, that Return and Rehabilitation does not find a place in the demands put forward by the AIKS-led delegation that met the Hon'ble HM today.

Does it mean that KPs have given up on its fundamental and core demand of reclaiming our centuries-old Kashir? Does it mean that we no longer want the central/ state govt to investigate our killings/ our cleansing out from our ancestral land in a well- planned conspiracy?

The demands put across by the delegation are certainly important, but none of these will amount to much if we do not settle back in Kashmir.

I recall having led the AIKS/GKPD/JKVM delegation in 2019 to the same Greh Mantri. The first two demands on our list were our 'Return & Rehabilitation' and investigation into our genocide. We had submitted some other demands too but bulk of the discussion was centered on our above two demands.

Omitting these two demands is an extremely sad development, particularly because AIKS itself has remained committed to these core demands for decades.

Community needs to know why these core demands have been sacrificed?

Hope the displaced community will continue to demand the fulfillment of these demands by the Centre irrespective of the exclusion of these by the above mentioned delegation.

Jai Hind. Jai Sri Ram

Col (Dr) Tej K Tikoo (Retd)

Former President AIKS

8 April 2024.

From: "Dr. Vijay Sazawal" <sazawal@gmail.com>

Date: 10 April 2024 at 7:01:42 AM IST

To: kashmir-interchange@googlegroups.com

Subject: RE: -=Kashmir-Interchange=- AIKS-KP Delegation Meets Honourable Home Minister Sh.Amit Shah to discuss...

Reply-To: kashmir-interchange@googlegroups.com

Namaskar.

Sir, you have raised an interesting point. But allow me to add some more spice to it. The Congress Party Manifesto, just released, also makes no mention of the R&R of KP's. Being in the opposition they could have easily exploited this issue whether or not they really meant it. But they have also remained silent on this subject.

I think this is a learning moment for the community. Get out of the bubble of self-delusions and put your feet on the ground where rubber meets the road. We need courage to face the reality. There are many options ahead, but we will be unable to pursue any as long as we (the community at large) remains trapped in a delusional space.

Regards,

Vijay Sazawal

From: CHAND RAINA <chaandkd@gmail.com>

Date: 10 April 2024 at 11:50:54 AM IST

To: kashmir-interchange@googlegroups.com

Subject: Re: -= Kashmir- Interchange=- AIKS-KP Delegation Meets Honourable Home Minister Sh.Amit Shah to discuss...

Reply-To: kashmir-interchange@googlegroups.com

Dear Respected Veena Ji and other dignitaries,

I am deeply dismayed to witness some individuals within my community expressing acceptance of the new set trend by political parties of "Chande Ke Badle Danda". This sentiment compels me to reflect on Mahatma Gandhi's wisdom in favouring Nehruji over many others during his time. The idea of seeking "Chanda" from the electorate, as suggested by some, and even proposing that Kashmiri Pandits should contribute to political parties instead of spending on their children's marriages for negotiating our return, is not just perplexing but unacceptable. It is ironic that we once criticised the Congress party for corruption while now entertaining and eulogising legalising Corruption by BJP. What a dichotomy.

Has not this practice already created a system where the voices of ordinary citizens are drowned out by the influence of money. It is concerning that no attention was given to the 21-day hunger strike by Sonam Wangchuk and the prolonged strike by fellow Kashmiri Pandits in Jagti. The current regime has turned democracy into a facade, serving the interests of the wealthy elite rather than the broader population because they know that rhetorics is in their favor. This dangerous trend poses a significant threat to democratic ideals of fairness, transparency, and equality, ultimately eroding trust in the democratic process itself.

Let us refrain from suggesting and promoting such principles, as they would degrade the entire ecosystem.

Modi/BJP has come, and they will eventually go, but what must endure is the legacy of intellectualism and grace left behind by our forefathers. We must always be conscious of this, and while not naming any community, we do have role model communities from which we can learn.

A sincere submission, Thank you Regards

CK

Re: -=Kashmir-Interchange=- AIKS-KP Delegation Meets Honourable Home Minister Sh.Amit Shah to discuss...

Dear Chand ji,

Navreh Mubarak to you and to all your loved ones.

I do not know you personally but I have often heard of you as one of the esteemed leaders of the Kashmiri Pandit community who possesses an enviable magical wand with which to turn

any discussion into a political discourse. Your two points are a testament to your skill. While there's much to be written about honorable return to the valley, I'll limit my observations surrounding your comments.

Why have you not already returned, particularly if you have been so eager to return? What are you waiting for? An ironclad guarantee for your physical safety and protection underwritten by the government, or is it an auspicious moment in time you are waiting for which is yet to come?

I often wonder, at what stage do individuals realize that there are no absolute guarantees in life? And, when would they stop demanding that the government cater to their unrealistic demands? If it were only one or two, then that's understandable but given our proclivity for exaggeration, we aren't satisfied with just a few.

One of the biggest misfortunes has been our inability to speak with one voice. Notwithstanding that, if more than three decades of government support - with occasional demand for more government doles - has not stirred the collective conscience of the migrant community to rise to the occasion and follow the footsteps of their own progeny, who despite numerous odds have excelled in whatever they chose to do, then the fault lies somewhere within them. If it were the Sikhs who were subjected to the same horrors that the migrants endured thirty five years ago, then I'm confident that they would have moved on to establish themselves a long time ago and would have flourished by the dint of their hardwork. That is not to say that at the time of the exodus and long thereafter, the KP migrants didn't need help? They rightfully did and received it such.

You may blame the current administration and I'm sure you would do just the same even if it were some other political party, but you can't escape the fact that the migrants, in general, have ingeniously used the befallen tragedy of immeasurable proportion to their benefit. For those who were complicit in that scheme, as well as others that are seriously desirous of going back and not just wagging their tongues, an honorable return is possible only when it is undertaken without preconditions and without the help of the government. Rest all is deceiving one's own conscience.

PS: The foregoing narrative might ruffle some feathers. I anticipate it might generate criticism. But, let the unblemished soul be the one that casts the first critique.

**Kind regards,
Ravi Munshi**

Dr. Ramesh Raina sahab ...namaskar mahra

Thx a lot Dr. Ramesh ji that you met MOH shree Amit Shah n discussed few issues with him about we KPS. But you have not discussed one of the utmost n very very critical n most n most important serious issue n a long pending demand of we KPS that is ENHANCEMENT OF MLY. CASH RELIEF FOR ALL THE RELIEF HOLDERS who r living in a very critical n very miserable condition at various parts of Jammu and Delhi NCR.

THIS POINT SHLD HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED IST. AS AMIT SHAH JI A LONG TIME BACK HIMSELF PROMISED WITH KPS DURING HIS IST VISIT TO JAMMU AFTER BECOMING HM.

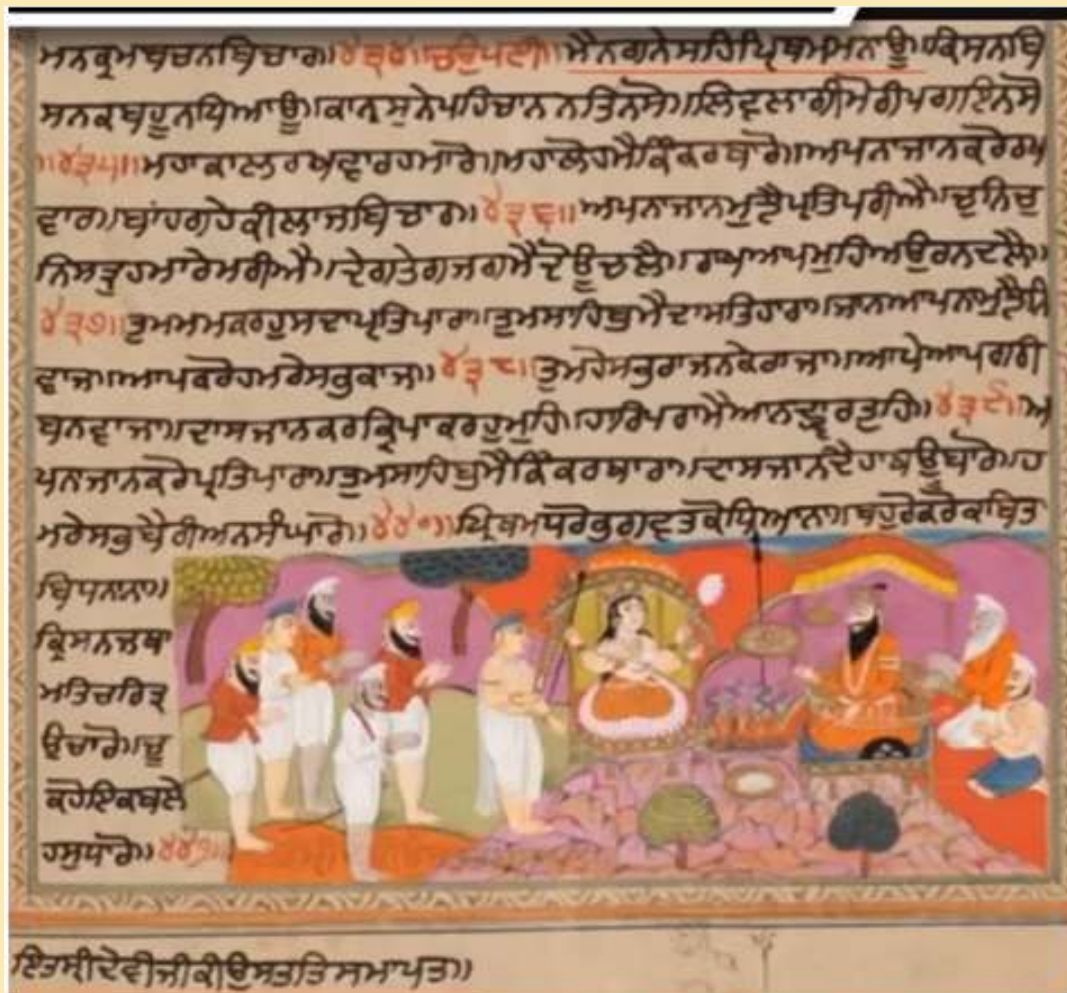
So I request u pl take up this matter with him definitely n very seriously when u again meet him.

Thanks n best regards,

Sanjay

Painting of Guru Gobind Singh Ji

- H L Kak



A 17th century painting of Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji shows him performing Chandi Yagya in front of his Kul Devi 'Naina Devi'. The Prayer to Mother Goddess by Guru Gobind Singh Ji, legibly written has been carried in the aforesaid painting.

As per the text written in this rare painting of 17th century, Shri Guru Gobind Singh says “Mai Na Pratham Ganesh Manaon, Kishan Bishan Kabhu Na Dhyaoun” meaning that I do not worship Ganesh first and never meditate on Krishna or Vishnu. In the same prayer Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji further says. “Tu Ne Hi Kishan Ke Ander Se Kansa Ko Maara, Tune Hi Ram Ke Ander Se Dashanan Maara, Tu Ambika, Tu Seetla, Tu Totla.” In the end of this prayer Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji writes “Iti Sri Devi Ji Ki Stuti Sampooran.”



POWER-POLITICS-POUNDS



Who would not acknowledge the fact that democracy needs elections and elections need money and political fundraising is a complicated process across the world. While, political fund raising in democracy is complicated for campaigns and there are many legitimate ways to get them, fundraising can also occur via illegal means, such as, influence peddling, extortion, graft, kickbacks etc. Different Governments have made different policies to limit political funding to legal ways and there is no doubt that political parties need funds. Individual donations are allowed in

some countries, corporate donations are allowed in some and there are provisions in Government treasury to fund election campaigns in some countries. Private entities can directly donate to political parties in India, unlike the US or Brazil. Indirect provisions like Political Action Committees in the US raise funds for poll campaign.

India's Supreme Court has banned Electoral Bonds in recent past, summing it as mysterious source of funding for elections with unconditional acceptance by Law Makers of India.

Out of the 172 Countries examined by The

Inter-Governmental group, **The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance**-Political funds from corporations cannot be directly passed over to political parties in 48 countries, but it can be done in the remaining 124. While private income by corporations can be donated directly to political parties in India, it cannot be done in the US, Canada, Brazil or Russia. However, there are other indirect provisions to seek political funds in many countries. For instance, Political Action Committees (PACs) or the Presidential Election Campaign Fund in the US provide for the funds used in election campaigns. The Federal Election Commission (FEC) regulates PACs, which are organisations that raise and spend money to elect or defeat candidates. PACs are not run by parties or candidates. They can be established and administered by corporations, labour unions, membership organisations or trade associations. Also, qualified presidential candidates may opt to receive money from the Presidential Election Campaign Fund, which is a fund on the books of the US Treasury.

Of course, political fundraising does not end after elections. The process of returning favours also comes into the picture. "Finance is a necessary component of the democratic processes. However, it may be a means for powerful narrow interests to exercise undue influence", says Noted **Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development**, adding that this can lead to policy capture, where public decisions over policies are directed away from the public interest towards a specific interest.

Since political funding has the potential for misuse, the funds must go through a formal banking process. According to the '**International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance**'- out of the 163 countries examined, political funds do not need to necessarily go through a formal banking process in 79 Countries, rest in 67 countries, it is mandatory in 17 countries and out of those in India it has stopped, now.

Based on Elected Representations-ERs, in Lok Sabha and Assemblies (Law Makers),

BJP's share of Electoral Bonds-EBs was 50.1% than its ERs of 46.2%, Congress had share of 11.6% EBs than its ERs of 12.7%. The biggest share of EBs was held by regional parties like BRS, TMS & BJD who had much larger share like BRS 8.5% to 0.8%, TMC 10.4% to 4.9%, BJD 6.2% to 2.6 respectively of EBs compared to ERs. Likewise, DMK & YSRCP had more share of EBs compared to ERs but Parties like SS, NCP, RJD, JDU, AAP and SP had less share whereas 7.6% of ERs did not accept EBs which includes CPM, BSP etc.

Also, the Data revealed that ED raids were conducted irrespective of EB purchased by corporate meaning thereby some ED raides were before EBs were purchased, some ED raides were after EBs were purchased, some ED raides were before and after EBs were purchased and no ED raides were there, in mostly, who purchased EBs. As such, so no prima-facie co-relation, till date, could be found for *quid-pro-quo* which has been Buzz in Political Circles.

Now, there are some corollaries which could be drawn with due respect to Supreme Court's Verdict,

Is Direct Political funding for Political Parties the right way!

Is Direct Political funding bereft of unaccounted money as a result of quid-pro-quo for such donors and that has been seen in the past process of unearthing unaccounted money from such donors!

Were EBs the right way of Political but should have been with transparency, as has happened, now!

However, we cannot negate the fact that quid-pro-quo would remain the sine-quo-non of any Democracy in the World!

***Data was released by TOI based on Formula of EBs v ERs**

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- Ravinder Gurtoo



KASHMIRI PANDIT GENOCIDE 1990 AND THEREAFTER – Part-III

Impact On The Community

3. Psychological

The forced exodus of Kashmiri Pandits in 1990 had profound psychological and sociological impacts on the community. Psychologically, many experienced trauma, anxiety, and a profound sense of loss, having been uprooted from their homes and ancestral land. The fear of violence and the memories of the forced displacement lingered, impacting their mental well-being. The forced exodus and genocide of Kashmiri Pandits in the late 1980s and beginning of 1990s has had lasting effects on the community. Many continue to face displacement, loss of cultural heritage, and psychological trauma. The events have strained inter-community relations and raised concerns about the preservation of Kashmir's diverse cultural fabric. Political and social consequences persist, influencing the region's dynamics and complicating efforts for reconciliation and peace. The traumatic events had a lasting psychological impact on the displaced Kashmiri Pandits, leading to emotional distress, loss of identity, and a sense of alienation. The migration initially disrupted the education of Kashmiri Pandit

youth, affecting their academic progress and career prospects which at that point in time had the worst psychological impact on their minds.

The displacement created an identity crisis for Kashmiri Pandits, as they had to redefine their sense of self and belonging in the new environments they found themselves in. Many individuals faced social isolation as they moved to areas where the culture and language were different, making it difficult to connect with the local communities. The events leading to the migration instilled a deep sense of fear and insecurity among the Kashmiri Pandits, affecting their sense of safety and trust.

The traumatic experiences and displacement led to trust issues, impacting relationships both within the community and with outsiders. Individuals developed various coping mechanisms, ranging from avoidance to over-vigilance, to deal with the psychological stressors associated with the migration. The psychological impact extended to the younger generation, with children often experiencing challenges in adapting to new environments and dealing with the collective trauma of their community.

The feeling of abandonment and betrayal by society and the state contributed to a deep-seated sense of injustice and resentment among some Kashmiri Pandits.

4. Cultural Heritage

The forced exodus disrupted the cultural and religious upbringing of Kashmiri Pandits, causing a loss of connection to their roots. Many temples and religious sites were vandalised, looted, or destroyed. The forced migration led to a loss of cultural continuity and a sense of displacement for the Kashmiri Pandit community. Efforts within the community are ongoing to preserve and revive their cultural heritage. The forced migration led to a disruption of the rich cultural heritage of Kashmiri Pandits and the community struggled to maintain its cultural practices outside its traditional homeland. With the migration, there has been a gradual erosion of traditional Kashmiri language and dialects among the diaspora, impacting the transmission of linguistic heritage to future generations. The vibrant festivals and cultural traditions of Kashmiri Pandits have faced challenges in preservation, as the community dispersed geographically, making it difficult to sustain the rich cultural practices.

The close-knit social fabric of Kashmiri Pandits has been affected, leading to changes in community dynamics and weakening traditional societal structures. Kashmiri Pandit art forms and crafts, deeply rooted in the region's culture, have suffered due to the migration, resulting in a decline in the practice and preservation of these traditional skills.

Places of worship and spiritual practices that were integral to Kashmiri Pandit culture faced challenges in preservation, with many temples left unattended or in disrepair. The distinctive Kashmiri Pandit cuisine, known for its unique flavours, has faced alterations as the diaspora adapted to different environments and culinary influences. Interactions with diverse cultures in new locations have led to intermarriage and cultural fusion, bringing about a transformation in the cultural identity of Kashmiri Pandits.

Despite the challenges, there have been commendable efforts within the community to preserve and promote Kashmiri Pandit culture through cultural events, organisations, and

digital platforms, fostering a sense of identity among the diaspora.

5. Health

Impact on the health of victims of genocide created many health issues particularly in women and children due to trauma and psychological impact. Women faced severe emotional trauma due to the loss of family members, displacement, and the brutality of the events. The psychological scars endured by women had long-lasting effects on their mental well-being. Reports of sexual violence and assault on women were distressingly common during the exodus, contributing to the overall trauma experienced by the community.

Displaced women had to cope with the challenges of rebuilding their lives in unfamiliar environments, often without proper support systems. Late marriages, reproductive disorders, problems in conceiving, miscarriages and other ailments became common in women. Children witnessed violence and experienced displacement, leading to psychological trauma that could manifest in various ways throughout their lives.

Many faced severe psychological trauma, including anxiety, depression, stress, diabetes and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), resulting from the sudden displacement, loss of homes, and the traumatic events they witnessed. The challenging living conditions in refugee camps and the subsequent resettlement posed additional health risks. Limited access to healthcare, inadequate sanitation, and crowded living conditions in the camps contributed to the spread of diseases. Malnutrition and stress-related illnesses further impacted the health of the displaced Kashmiri Pandits. Loss of identity, displacement-related stress, and the struggle to rebuild their lives had lasting implications on mental health. The trauma of the forced migration continued to affect subsequent generations, however, the long-term impact on the health and well-being of this

community underscores the importance of sustained efforts to address their unique needs and challenges arising from the tragic events of 1990. The abrupt relocation led to challenges in adapting to new environments, impacting mental well-being and contributing to a sense of alienation. Access to healthcare might have been disrupted during migration, affecting preventive care and timely medical attention for various health issues. The community experienced a rupture in social ties, affecting support networks and potentially leading to social isolation, which affected mental health.

Adjusting to new living conditions, often in refugee camps or temporary shelters, exposed individuals to environmental factors affecting health. The impact on the health of Kashmiri Pandits post-migration might extend across generations, with effects on the physical and mental health of descendants as well.

6. Humanitarian Crisis

The exodus resulted in a significant humanitarian crisis, with thousands of Kashmiri Pandits becoming internally displaced persons, facing hardships and loss. Displaced families often faced economic hardships, struggling to find stable employment and housing in their new surroundings. Many Kashmiri Pandits were specifically targeted, resulting in violent attacks, killings, and intimidation, forcing them to abandon their ancestral homes and seek refuge elsewhere. The crisis led to the tragic loss of lives, with reports of targeted killings of Kashmiri Pandits, creating a severe sense of insecurity and fear within the community.

The forced migration resulted in the displacement of a significant population of Kashmiri Pandits, leaving them without homes and possessions. The displaced Kashmiri Pandits faced challenging humanitarian conditions, including lack of shelter, basic amenities, and access to healthcare, leading to a dire situation for many families. The crisis inflicted deep

trauma on the community, with individuals and families grappling with the emotional scars of being uprooted from social milieu. The process of resettlement posed numerous challenges for the displaced community, including the need for rehabilitation, rebuilding infrastructure, and reclaiming lost property. The humanitarian crisis of the Kashmiri Pandits post-migration in 1990 continues to have lasting effects, influencing the socio-political dynamics of the region and contributing to discussions on human rights and justice. Over the years, efforts have been made to address these issues, including attempts at rehabilitation, however, the scars from the events of 1990 continue to influence the lives of Kashmiri Pandits, shaping their collective memory and sense of identity. They were forced to leave their homes due to escalating violence, threats, and persecution. The disruption in their professional lives added to the challenges they faced in resettling in different parts of India.

7. Family Conflicts

Findings confirm the profound effects of the genocide and its aftermath on individuals, families and communities. They articulated clearly and strongly how the past continued to shape their present lives. Their children learned and lived effects of the genocide and its aftermath as well, and in varying degrees expressed connections between their daily preoccupations to what had happened in the dark hours of the past. Children went to different parts of the country and over the globe for shaping their lives after the unfortunate events and parents got separated and for some it became a permanent affair.

The migration of Kashmiri Pandits from the Kashmir Valley in the late 1980s has been a complex and challenging experience for many families. Post-migration, some families faced internal conflicts stemming from the trauma of displacement, loss of home, and cultural identity. Issues like adapting to new environments, economic challenges, and generational gaps may contribute to tensions within families. Some property disputes were also noticed in the families. It's important to

recognize the diverse experiences within the community and the ongoing efforts to address these issues through community support and outreach programs.

8. Protection of Property

The government failed to implement adequate security measures to protect the homes and properties of Kashmiri Pandits during their mass migration in 1990. There was a significant lapse in intelligence gathering, which could have helped identify and neutralize potential threats to the Kashmiri Pandits and their properties. The evacuation plans for Kashmiri Pandits were poorly executed, leaving many of their properties vulnerable to looting and damage.

The government did not effectively address the root causes of the mass migration, including the rise of separatist sentiments and the targeting of the Kashmiri Pandit community. Law enforcement agencies were not deployed effectively to protect the properties left behind by the Kashmiri Pandits, contributing to their loss.

The absence of proper rehabilitation initiatives for the displaced Kashmiri Pandits further exposed their properties to neglect and potential seizure. The political instability in the region at that time hindered the government's ability to provide a stable and secure environment for the Kashmiri Pandits and their properties. The lack of swift and effective legal action against those responsible for property damage and looting failed to deter future incidents.

There was a breakdown in communication between the government and the Kashmiri Pandit community, leading to a lack of coordination in protecting their properties. The government's failure to garner sufficient international support and attention on the issue contributed to a lack of urgency in addressing the protection of Kashmiri Pandit properties post-migration.

9. Failure of state to Protect the Interests

The events further deepened mistrust and polarisation between communities in the region, affecting the social fabric of Kashmir.

Very little efforts were made to address the issues faced by Kashmiri Pandits and to promote reconciliation, but the scars from the events of 1990 persist. The failure of the government to provide adequate security measures for the Kashmiri Pandits during the peak of terrorism in the region contributed to their vulnerability and subsequent displacement. The governments, both at the state and central levels, have been criticized for not implementing effective rehabilitation programs for the displaced Kashmiri Pandits, leaving many in dire conditions. The lack of substantial economic support and job opportunities for the displaced Kashmiri Pandits has hindered their ability to rebuild their lives, exacerbating their sense of neglect. The slow pace of justice in prosecuting those responsible for the violence and displacement has added to the frustration and disillusionment of the Kashmiri Pandit community. The issue has often been overshadowed by political considerations, leading to a lack of sustained attention and commitment from successive governments in addressing the specific concerns of the displaced community. Displaced Kashmiri Pandit students faced disruptions in their education, and the government's failure to provide adequate educational support has hindered their academic progress. The long-standing neglect has resulted in psychological trauma among the displaced Kashmiri Pandits, with many experiencing the lasting effects of the violence and upheaval. The global community's limited engagement with the issue has further isolated the Kashmiri Pandits, with insufficient international pressure on the Indian government to prioritise their concerns and well-being. The BJP may have approached the issue cautiously due to its political sensitivity, aiming for broader resolutions to avoid exacerbating tensions. BJP governments may have prioritised overall development and stability in the region, attempting to create an

environment conducive to addressing various communities' needs but Kashmiri Pandits were ignored all the time. In coalition politics, governments often face challenges in implementing specific policies, and the BJP has been part of coalition governments in the past.

Resolving issues related to a specific community may involve legal and constitutional considerations, adding complexity to the decision-making process. The geopolitical context and diplomatic challenges associated with the Kashmir issue may have influenced the BJP's approach to handling specific community concerns. Addressing the concerns of Kashmiri Pandits requires tackling long-standing issues, and progress in such matters may not always be immediate but steps needed to be taken, where the government failed. It's essential to note that political decisions are multifaceted, and various factors contribute to a government's actions or inactions.

10. Political Remedies

Even years after the migration, challenges persist for Kashmiri Pandits, including the struggle to reclaim or retain their properties in Kashmir. Kashmiri Pandits faced forced migration, impacting their social dynamics.

Focus on Restoration: Political involvement may be driven by a desire to reclaim lost heritage and address displacement issues. Political engagement might be a means of preserving and promoting Kashmiri Pandit identity. Political activity could be aimed at ensuring the protection of the community's rights and interests. Efforts to address historical injustices and seek accountability may contribute to political engagement. Social inactivity might be a result of challenges faced in integrating into new environments post-migration. Younger generations should be more politically active as they seek to shape the community's future. Political engagement might involve connecting with diaspora communities worldwide to garner support. Political efforts could be focused on gaining international recognition for their

unique challenges. Political involvement may serve as a coping mechanism for the community's historical trauma. It's crucial to approach such discussions with sensitivity, recognizing diverse perspectives within the community.

Conclusion

Denial of genocide by a state undermines truth and historical accuracy. It perpetuates the suffering of survivors by invalidating their experiences. Denial hinders the process of healing and reconciliation within affected communities. It can lead to the distortion of public perception and understanding of past atrocities.

Those who do so are avoiding accountability.

The refusal to acknowledge genocide may impede efforts to prevent future atrocities. It can foster an environment where impunity for human rights violations is tolerated. Recognition and acknowledgement of past genocide are crucial for building a foundation of justice and peace. In conclusion, the resilience and indomitable spirit of the Kashmiri Pandit community shine through their arduous journey of struggle and displacement. Despite facing unimaginable challenges, the community has not merely survived but has managed to thrive against all odds. The tale of the Kashmiri Pandits is one of trying to preserve their cultural tenacity.

Moreover, the community's ability to rebuild and establish itself in new environments showcases the enduring nature of their cultural legacy. Despite the scars of the past, the Kashmiri Pandit community has embraced the opportunities that the future presents, contributing significantly to various fields globally. Their story is not just one of survival but a testament to the human spirit's capacity to rise above adversity and flourish, ensuring that the vibrant tapestry of the Kashmiri Pandit culture endures and continues to thrive in the face of challenges.



- Dwarka Nath Munshi



KASHMIR QUANDARY - I

DAY OF THE JACKAL

(The article is courtesy Koshur Samachar - January 1990 issue)

An innocent, unpretentious, innocuous little lady made big news headlines almost through the second week of December last. Her agony was indescribable and intense, though it was widely shared around the country. And it burned holes of anger, fear and apprehension in sensitive and right thinking minds. The disgraceful kidnapping of Dr. Rubaiya Sayeed in Srinagar was occasioned by nothing more than that she is the daughter of one who stands up to be counted as an Indian; and the lady was at that moment vulnerable, defenceless and helpless, and therefore wholly in the power of the perfidious. Seeded by unscrupulous, short sighted and seemingly the most unlikely politicians of different hues in Kashmir, their numbers have multiplied over time. For long years have they been working like snakes in the grass, spreading relentlessly and unchecked in all directions. For the last few years, they have been raising their hoods to here and there, and have now come out into the open, spitting their poison and hissing their contempt and hatred for all that stands for India, across the entire valley, with impunity. And so we are now witnessing an eruption of terrorism and bloodshed such as was unknown and indeed, despised in the valley till relatively recently.

We had known and experienced political and economic oppression, covert and overt, before and after freedom in 1947. But the unprecedented ferocity and violence of this ever growing fanatical tribe is all pervading and now

holds the valley in its vicious grip. Ironically, the powers-that-be have been watching the goings-on with disconcerting unconcern, or like they be with them and immobilised, yet treading on the deliberate caution so as not to cause any disturbance to them, leave alone checking their onward march.

Thus it was that only two months earlier, in September 1989, the arrest of a single gun totting young extremist had brought about widespread destruction and death, paralysed the cities and towns and indeed, the entire valley and put it on fire. That was a challenge in a series thrown from time to time by the constantly swelling anti-India forces, albeit the fiercest and most widespread, when they brought guns and grenades into action with a shattering ruthlessness. As usual the wrath was trained on the hapless Kashmiri Pandit community who have been experiencing a trauma for decades. But to that we shall return later.

The dastardly act of kidnapping, this time of a co-religionist, committed brazenly in broad daylight, in the presence of several people who chose to remain passive spectators and shamefully mute witnesses, is yet another highly sinister facet of the rising tide of terrorism in Kashmir. Here was a direct and taunting challenge to the honour, might and integrity of India which could do no better than look on helplessly. Two important Central Ministers flew into a cold Kashmir. As they

came out after their confabulations, all they could pronounce was that and I quote one of them in translation-"Kashmir is going in a direction to come to normal", whatever that meant. Eventually the authorities crumpled up and submitted to all the humiliating dictates, to the minutest details, of the secessionists. This secured the release of the lady in distress, to the relief and joy of a nation which had held its breath all the while. Yet the forbidding and harsh aspects of this exchange cannot be over-emphasised. It has created a dangerous situation of far-reaching import and incomprehensible dimensions, not only in regard to Kashmir but the nation as a whole.

The tragedy of these December events does not stop here. It has to be evaluated in its multifaceted aspects. First, the faithful Kashmiri can no longer raise his head in pride of the well-earned reputation of respecting women of all creeds as daughters and sisters. That holy and precious trust has been lost at the bar of one's own conscience. And after the excitement has worn off, panic must have taken its pace.

The Government and Administration, or what remained of them, have totally collapsed. Indeed, ever since Independence Kashmir was never ruled by law and justice. Even at the best of times it was a government of convenience, an arrangement wrought out to meet a crisis situation, which would soon drift into abject inactivity and exist only for personal power and pelf. Never was any serious effort made to earn genuine respect and legitimacy through the acceptance of political ideology and healthy economic and social bases. Pampering and purchasing loyalty are historically brittle and short-lived expedients.

Both at the State and Central levels, the basic issues and actualities were swept under the carpet, in the astonishing belief that time and undefined and inscrutable forces would take care of them. If there was ever any voice of sanity or of pain it was disregarded and stilled. No State is free from antinational and extremist elements, be it on principles and policy matters or mercenaries and misguided persons, aided, abetted and cheered by the nation's foes. Yet governmental intelligence agencies are there to smell and smoke them out. In our case one of the greatest failures has been on the part of these

agencies, notwithstanding the lavish outlays on them. The result is the cancerous growth of the secessionists, gradually eating into the vitals and disenchanting large masses of what they had embraced voluntarily and with love.

On the other side of the fulcrum are the high flying scribes, lofty intellectuals, political observers and their likes, who claim to protect the nation's and people's interests and investigate and expose the truth. It is an irony that in the frequent trips, of most of them to what was the Happy Valley, where nature has put up a splendid show of beauty and serenity, they could perceive only the surface, from their pleasure posts, provided by the government of the time and never reach the heart of the matter. Their pet theories, repeated ad nauseam have been that all that Kashmir needs is more employment, free elections and "more understanding of their aspirations". Such contributions have often compounded the complex situation. It might sound harsh but the fact is that the unlettered Kashmiri boatmen or peasant in the field or worker on the loom has a much deeper understanding of politics and its games than such worthies can imagine, which they know how best to keep closest to their chest. Their words are often used not to convey but to cloud and conceal their true urges.

Kashmir today is, for all practical purposes, governed by the weapon wielding extremist. Their word is the command and the law for the luckless land, which travels faster and more silently, than the wind, by simple gestures, signals and codes and obtains complete and sometimes grimly spontaneous compliance. The dazzling illuminations on Pakistan's birthday and the total black out next day, India's Independence day, Aug. 15, 1989, are too fresh in the mind to need elaboration. The release of the subversives was celebrated as their victory and India's defeat with macabre dances, songs and slogans. People poured out on to the streets in Srinagar and elsewhere in deluges, sweeping and destroying all that stood as a symbol of established order. Even Army personnel and convoys moving in normal course, were attacked. The whole valley was in an uprising of an unprecedented scale, putting even the holy relic upheaval in the shade. It was in fact, of insurrectional proportions. Where do we go from here? Before that we must examine the details of the course which brought the situation to this point.

(The author was the ex-President of AIKS and Ex-Chairman of AIKS Trust)



- Rajeshwar Dhar



SHIVA-SHAIVISM

SHIVARATRI



Shiva, The Almighty from The Dawn of Civilization

The Religious Beliefs underwent a process of Assimilation and Syncretism as Aryan and Dravidian cultures intermingled in the Indian Subcontinent over the Centuries. Shiva, in his various forms, became a unifying force, transcending regional and linguistic differences. The amalgamation of indigenous traditions with Vedic rituals led to the emergence of Shaivism as a prominent sect within Hindu Religion, with Shiva assuming a central role in the Pantheon of Deities, of course, with all the cultures contributing to the development of Shiva's Character, the theology surrounding him only became richer and greater.



Shiva is often depicted as an ascetic, immersed in deep meditation atop Mount Kailash, the abode of the Gods. In this state, He renounces the material world, symbolizing the transcendence of desires and attachments. His ascetic form embodies the essence of the yogic tradition, inspiring seekers on the path of spiritual awakening. The Ardhanarishvara, a unique aspect of Shiva, portrays him as half-male and half-female, conjoined with his consort Parvati. This union symbolizes the inseparable nature of the masculine and feminine energies, emphasizing the idea that creation arises from the harmonious interplay of opposing forces.

Shiva's cosmic dance, known as the Tandava, is a key theory surrounding Shiva

Dravidian Cultures intermingled in the Indian Subcontinent over the Centuries and thus religious beliefs underwent a process of Assimilation. This is a mesmerizing spectacle that symbolizes the eternal cycles of creation and destruction. In the Ananda Tandava (Dance of Bliss), Shiva dances with unbridled joy, portraying the dynamic interplay of the cosmic forces. The destructive aspect of the Tandava signifies the dissolution of the old, making way for regeneration and renewal.

Equally important theory is the churning of the ocean (Samudra Manthan) and during the churning of the Cosmic Ocean, various deities and demons collaborate to obtain the Elixir of Immortality (Amrita). However, the churning also releases a deadly poison (halahala), threatening to engulf the Universe. In a selfless act to save creation, Shiva consumes the poison, holding it in his throat. This episode underscores Shiva's role as the benevolent saviour, willing to endure suffering for the greater good of the Cosmos.

One of the Central Theories in Shiva's narrative is his marriage to Parvati, an incarnation of the Goddess Shakti and she undergoes intense penance to win Shiva's heart. Their union represents the cosmic balance of complementary forces, with Shiva as the still and unchanging principle (Purusha) and Parvati as the dynamic and creative energy (Prakriti). The divine marriage is a symbol of the unification of opposites, giving rise to the Cosmic Dance of Life

The story of Ganesha, Shiva and Parvati's son, is another compelling facet of Shiva. When Shiva inadvertently beheads Ganesha, Parvati is grief-stricken. To console her, Shiva replaces Ganesha's head with that of an Elephant, symbolizing wisdom and the overcoming of obstacles. This also introduces the concept of Shiva's third eye, which opened in a burst of fiery energy when he was angered, reducing the God of Love, Kamadeva, to Ashes.

Shiva, The Cosmos and Auspicious One

Shiva's roots are thought to be embedded in

the Prehistoric Indus Valley Civilization, where evidence of Proto-Shiva symbols has been discovered. Over the millennia, the worship of Shiva evolved and found its place in the Pantheon of Hindu Deities. As such, it can be safely said that Shiva is one of the oldest Gods in the world and it has been actively worshiped for thousands of years. Shiva, one of the principal deities in Hinduism, is a complex and multifaceted figure whose significance extends far beyond the bounds of religious worship. Revered as the God of destruction and transformation, Shiva plays a pivotal role in the intricate tapestry of Hindu theology and spirituality, especially, with the great dimensions of Shiva's character, His Mythology, Symbolism, Iconography and the profound impact he has had on Hindu Philosophy and Culture.

Archaeological excavations in the Indus Valley, a cradle of ancient civilization that predates the Vedic period, have unveiled artefacts bearing symbols reminiscent of Shiva's later Iconography. The discovery of a seal depicting a Proto-Shiva Deity in a yogic posture, often identified as Pashupati, The Lord of Animals, provides a tantalizing glimpse into the ancient roots of Shiva worship. This Archaeological evidence suggests that the worship of a divine figure with Shiva-like attributes may have existed in Prehistoric times, further reinforcing the notion that Shiva's origins are deeply embedded in the Cultural and Religious fabric of the Indian subcontinent.



(Ca 2350–2000 BC, The Pashupati Seal, showing a seated and Tricephalic (three faced) figure, surrounded by Animals.)

Shiva in Vedas and Puranas

The Puranas, a genre of ancient Indian literature, play a crucial role in shaping the narrative of Shiva's mythology. Texts like the Shiva Purana, Linga Purana and others expound upon Shiva's divine exploits, elucidating his role as the supreme deity and the cosmic dancer. The Puranic narratives weave together the diverse strands of ancient traditions, creating a cohesive tapestry of mythology that encompasses Shiva's marriage to Parvati, his cosmic battles and his benevolent manifestations. While the historical accuracy of these narratives is challenging to ascertain, they provide invaluable insights into the evolving religious landscape of ancient India.

Shiva's origins are equally deeply entwined with the Vedic literature, the oldest sacred texts of Hinduism. While the Vedas primarily venerate deities associated with natural elements and cosmic forces, the Rigveda, the oldest of the Vedas, contains hymns that may hint at the nascent presence of a deity resembling Shiva. The Rudra hymns in the Rigveda describe a fierce and unpredictable God associated with storms, thunder, and the natural forces of destruction and renewal. Over time, these early depictions of Rudra would coalesce with other divine concepts to evolve into the multifaceted Deity we now recognize as Shiva.



(Ca1828, Creation of the Cosmic Ocean and the Elements, from the Shiva Purana)

Parvati, The Consort of Shiva

Parvati, an incarnation of the Goddess Shakti, is a fundamental figure in Hindu Culture. She epitomizes Strength, Fertility, Marital felicity,

Devotion, and Power. Her role extends beyond that of Shiva's consort – she is a Deity of equal stature, embodying the active energy principle necessary for the Universe's existence and functioning. Parvati is often depicted as the Mother Goddess, nurturing yet fierce in protecting her children and devotees. Parvati represents both the gentler aspects of Shiva's nature and his counterpart in maintaining the balance of the Universe. Her devotion to Shiva is a central theme in many stories, often highlighting her role in tempering his ascetic and destructive tendencies. The mythology surrounding Parvati's pursuit of Shiva as a spouse, involving rigorous asceticism and devotion, is symbolic of the human quest for spiritual growth and enlightenment.



(Shiv-Parvati Family with Ganesha, Kartikeya and Ashoka Sundari)

Ganesha, Kartikeya and Ashoka Sundari

Shiva and Parvati have two sons and daughter each significant in Hindu Religion- Ganesha, Kartikeya and Ashoka Sundari. Ganesha, the auspicious, is revered as the remover of obstacles and the lord of beginnings. He holds a special place in Hindu worship, often invoked at the start of any venture for auspiciousness. The story of his creation and how he came to have an Elephant's Head,

involving both Shiva and Parvati, underscores themes of maternal love, filial duty, and the complex relationship between Shiva and his family.



Ganesha on Lotus



Kartikeya on Peacock



Ashoka Sundari on Lotus

Kartikeya (also known as Murugan), the God of War, an elder brother of Ganesha is a symbol of valor and youthful vigor. He is often depicted as a handsome and fierce warrior, leading the divine armies against demonic forces. In South India, particularly, Kartikeya is worshipped extensively and considered the epitome of beauty, bravery, and wisdom.

Ashoka Sundari, the least untold daughter of Shiva, also known as Tripurasundari, was created from the wish-fulfilling tree Kalpavriksha when Parvati wished for a daughter to reduce her loneliness. The words in her name are derived from her creation. Ashoka refers to the easing of Parvati's Shoka, which means 'Sorrow', while Sundari means 'Beautiful Girl'. The birth of Ashoka Sundari is recorded in the Padma Purana. In one of the variants of the Tale of Nahusha, Parvati once requested Shiva to take her to the most beautiful garden in the world. As per her wishes, Shiva took her to Nandanvana, where Parvati saw a tree known as Kalpavriksha which could fulfill any wish. Since Kartikeya, the son of Parvati, had grown up and left Kailash, as a mother it caused immense grief and loneliness to her. She asked for a daughter from the wish-fulfilling tree to end her loneliness. Her wish was granted and Ashoka Sundari was born. Parvati prophesied that Ashoka Sundari would marry Nahusha of the Lunar Dynasty, who would be equal to Indra, the king of Heaven and in absence of Indra, Nahusha was also made the regent of Heaven. Ashoka Sundari does not appear in any significant Hindu scriptures, barring in the Padma Purana.

The Cosmic Union of Shiv-Parvati Dynamics

The Union of Shiva and Parvati is emblematic of the Union of Consciousness and Energy, the passive and active principles of the Cosmos. They are often portrayed in a state of harmonious duality – Shiva as the formless consciousness (Purusha) and Parvati as the dynamic, creative energy (Prakriti). This union is not just a marital alliance but a Cosmic One, representing the synthesis of opposites, essential for creation and life.



Wonder Sculpture of Shiva (left) and Parvati (right), at the Museum of Kalinga in Orissa, India.

Ardhanarishvara, Symbolic Unity

One of the most profound representations of Shiva and Parvati's relationship is the Ardhanarishvara-An Androgynous Composite form of Shiva and Parvati, symbolizing the inseparable nature of Masculine and Feminine

energies. This form conveys the message that the Male and Female principles are equally essential for the universe's existence and balance. Ardhanarishvara is a powerful icon that speaks to the unity and equality of all genders and the interdependence of contrasting energies.



(Wonder Sculpture of Ardhanarishvara (center), half female (Parvati) and half male (Shiva), feminine-masculine equivalence, by Ricardo Martins.)

(to be contd.....)

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|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Calendar of Month | Sankat Nivaran Chaturthi | 27 th April 2024 |
| | Aashtami (Krishna Paksha) | 01 st May 2024 |
| | Ekadashi (Krishna Paksha) | 04 th May 2024 |
| | Amavasya | 08 th May 2024 |
| | Kumar Shashti | 13 th May 2024 |
| | Sankranti | 14 th May 2024 |
| | Ashtami (Shukla Paksha) | 16 th May 2024 |
| | Ekadashi (Shukla Paksha) | 19 th May 2024 |
| | Ganesh Chaturdashi | 22 nd May 2024 |
| | Poornima | 23 rd May 2024 |
| Note | Panchak starts on 02nd May 2024 ends on 06th May 2024 | |
| | ----- | |
| | Vaishakh (Krishna Paksha) from 24th April 2024 to 08th May 2024 Vaishakh (Shukla Paksha) from 09th May 2024 to 23rd May 2024 | |



- Surinder Koul

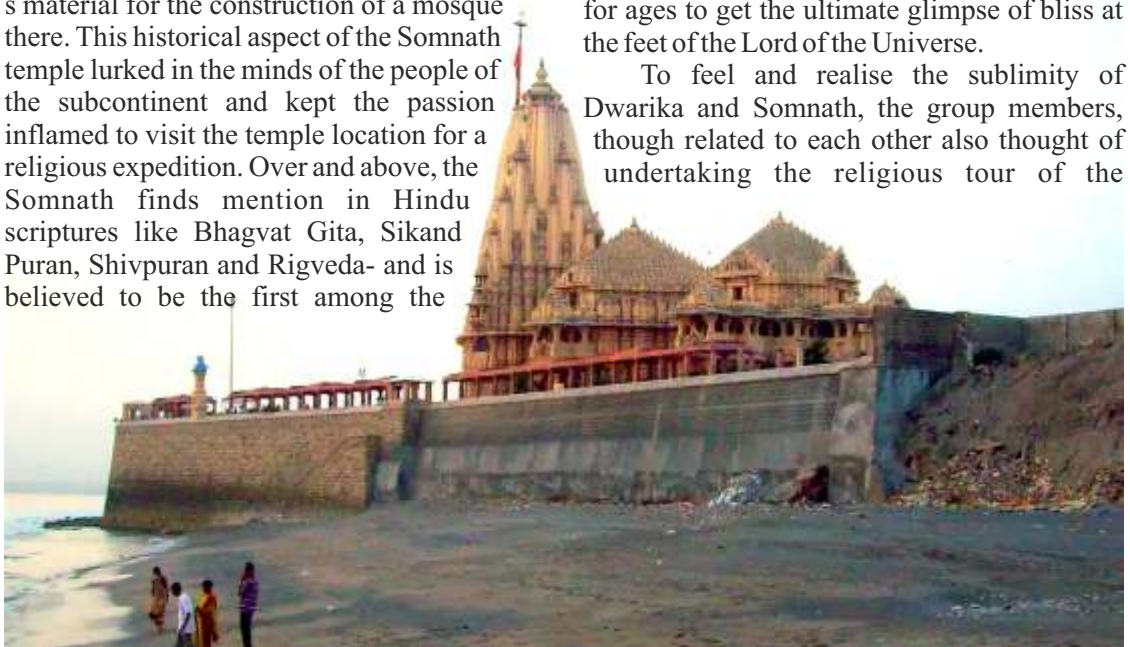


DEMOSHGO ON TRIP TO SOMNATH, DWARIKA AND DIU

A long cherished desire to visit Somnath, Dwarika, and Nageshwar, the highly revered Hindu religious epitomes was accomplished by a group of 22 members under the auspices of Demoshgo. To pay obeisance to these divinely, revered pilgrimage sites had been haunting the minds of the members of the group for many decades. Moreover, they yearned to visualise Somnath after it had been destroyed and vandalised by foreign invaders several times and carried the loot of the temple with them to the neighbouring land as material for the construction of a mosque there. This historical aspect of the Somnath temple lurked in the minds of the people of the subcontinent and kept the passion inflamed to visit the temple location for a religious expedition. Over and above, the Somnath finds mention in Hindu scriptures like Bhagvat Gita, Sikand Puran, Shivpuran and Rigveda- and is believed to be the first among the

twelve Jyotirlinga of Hindu religious beliefs. Equally, Dwarika, an ancient and prosperous capital city of Lord Krishna's kingdom situated on the river Gomati is a highly esteemed, and sacred place of worship. The coastal belt of Saurashtra is dotted with many Hindu religious sites where Hindus from across the country and abroad throng to pray to the deities. Evidently, it is the divine essence of Somnath and Dwarika that attracted, Divine lovers and spiritual seekers, Seers and saints, and believers to line up to the sanctum sanctorum for ages to get the ultimate glimpse of bliss at the feet of the Lord of the Universe.

To feel and realise the sublimity of Dwarika and Somnath, the group members, though related to each other also thought of undertaking the religious tour of the



Saurashtra region. Before barging for such an escapade, the core members of the group diligently sized up a tour plan of star accommodation hotel bookings for night stays, deluxe coaches for logistic requirements and itinerary as per the liking of the group members envisaged. Along with the visit to Dwarika, Somnath, and Nageshwar, places they had a night stay in Porbandar midway in the long drive between Somnath and Dwarika. The night stay in Diu on the last leg of the trip was meant to add thrilling excitement on the beach site in tent accommodation and to enjoy rocking music on the deck of a cruise ride under crescent light. The whole tour programme formulated was reflected in the newly created WhatsApp group of members to keep them abreast of the itinerary.

As per the charted tour plan shared with the members, the group converged in Mumbai airport on the 6th of Jan, from three different capital cities of India to undertake a trip to the holy sites. From Mumbai, the members flew together on the flight to Jamnagar where the group was received by the Tour guide Chetan at the exit gate of the Jamnagar airport, who escorted the group to the standby deluxe coach for boarding on the way to Dwarika. The drive-by-road transport up to Dwarika from Jamnagar was 140 km. The professional guide narrated the noteworthy religious and philosophic background of Dwarika Desh and its series of temples spotted in and around areas. While driving through the remote rural road network, the guide escorted them to a homemade Kathiawari, a vegetarian, Neelkant restaurant for lunch where there was no restriction to the quantity of dishes one would like to have. It was a Thali system with a variety of dishes. Every item of dishes was put in abundance. Half of the journey was already covered and still half of the journey was left to reach Dwarika. Many patches of the road were un-metalled and a little traffic bottleneck delayed the time to reach the hotel Hawthorn, in Dwarika. The outfields along the Jamnagar to Dwarika highway were refreshing with crop fields and village life in scattered hamlets and their livestock tethered by the side of thatched hutments.

The G-22 arrived at the Hotel Hawthorn by coach around evening time and were served welcome drinks by the hotel front office. The Admin collected the room keys from the reception counter which were distributed among the members as per enlisted allotted rooms. The group members were asked to identify their pieces of baggage for delivering them to their respective rooms. Chetan, the guide had given the hope of visiting the Dwarika temple to participate in the evening Aarti at 7 p.m. after checking in the hotel on the first day of the arrival. Before the members dispersed to their respective rooms, Chetan told the members of the group that they should assemble in the lobby of the hotel by 6.30 p.m. to board the bus to reach Dwarika temple for Darshan. The Dwarika temple was hardly six km from the hotel so it was a short bus drive. Every group member reported in the lobby of the hotel and was happy to attend the evening prayer at Dwarika temple which housed the image of Lord Krishna. During the journey towards the temple, the coach was filled with Hara Krishna, and Jai Krishna chants. This was the exuberance of devotion among the members that overflowed in the coach for Lord Krishna. On alighting from the coach in the parking place, the group members followed Chetan closely who was to guide them inside the temple sanctum sanctorum. To enter the premises of the temple from the main gate through the crowded pathway was to shoulder in and bulldoze oneself. At the same, every member was keeping track of the others so that none of them got lost in the crowd. The conical spire of the temple with beautifully carved out intricate images in stones along the gradual rise in the terrace upward was rich in its grandeur. But to reach the Lord Krishna in the centre of the temple was an upheaval task. There was a long queue. Devotees were pushing and jostling over others or jumping the line to make headway at the cost of others. There was no organised system from the management of the temple to streamline the movement of the devotees near the idol of the Lord Krishna. The men in uniform standing

around also pushed favoured persons from sideways into the temple precincts. As a result, at the threshold of the sanctum sanctorum devotees were bumping and banging into among themselves to touch the image of the Lord Krishna. There was every danger of getting knocked down or hit with a stone wall under public push and nudge. With great perseverance, and resolve the members were able to make headway to be before Lord Krishna's images to pay Him their obeisance. It was a moment of happiness for every member that they achieved the pilgrimage of one of the Char Dams, a step towards Moksha or salvation. The women lot of the group sneaked through a walkway, where they quickly got the Darshan of the Lord Krishna. Chetan kept track of the group members after Darshan and led them to the parking ground to embark on the coach to commute back to the hotel for a night stay. The first day of the tour went on smoothly and members were in a jolly mood. They were intimated about the next day, the 7th Jan, the programme of visiting Nageshwar, Beyt Dwarika and other temples that were falling in the Dwarika district. They were also told to be ready near the coach soon after they had their breakfast to make it convenient to touch Nageshwar Jyotirling temple before the commencement of morning puja. Nageshwar Jyotirlinga is located on the route between Dwarka city and Beyt Dwarika on the coastline of the Arabian Sea in Saurashtra. Nageshwar Shivlinga is one of the twelve swayambhu Jyotirlingas in the World.

On the following day, the group departed from the hotel for Nageshwar temple to pay respect to the idol of Jyotirlinga. Still, on reaching the temple site, the group found a long queue of devotees inching towards the innermost sanctum. Based on a cursory look at the length of the queue and practical experience, Chetan, the guide estimated a wait of four hours for the group to enter the sanctum. It was decided by the group to rush to Beyt Dwarika for the auspicious sight of Lord Krishna. To access Beyt Dwarika, the group drove to Okha in a coach where the

members were to be ferried across the water body of the Arabian Sea to step on the shore of Beyt Dwarika. The ferrying huge boats were anchored in the bay of the shore. There was heavy vehicular traffic on the road. Frequent traffic jams of cars and big coaches packed with devotees were stuck up to a good distance. No traffic regulatory personnel were there to control the traffic flow or give directions to lessen the burden of traffic jams. The pebbled roads with pits and water puddles were littered with polythene leftover bags and heaps of used paper plates and poly covers of snacks all over. It was looking most shabby and filthy as if the local municipality board had gone on strike. The group members made a space for their merry-making behind local hawkers and shanty shops selling saleable commodities of instant use. With their jovial and dancing poses, all members snapped themselves on the seaside with caps and hats which were sold there on shanty outlets. In the meanwhile, the ferrying across the sea of devotees to Beyt Dwarika was suspended due to choppy water between Beyt Dwarika and Okha Beach. So the hope of visiting Beyt Dwarika to bow before the idols in Beyt Dwarika temples, Shri Keshivraj temple and Nandanvan point was dashed to the ground. In place of this dejection, Chetan, the guide drove the group in the coach to a Shivrampur beach, Devbhoomi, Dwarika, which was phenomenal in all respects. It is a long, flat untrodden, pristine stretch of beach twelve km away from Dwarika. The members had a thrilling experience of finding a variety of water-based adventure activities. They took a motor launch drive of about a mile to the nearby coral rock in the Arabian Sea for fun and colourful photo shoots of the group. The group members had an idyllic sitting on the beach to draw pleasure out of the silence and tranquillity in the surroundings while observing the beauty of the blue water surface of the Arabian Sea. Some members participated in jet skiing over the waves of the Arabian Sea, sprinkling a cascade of brackish water drops around which was immensely joyful. The members had a good time on the beach under the sun and had some

snacks with tea and tasted roasted corncob. After they had a mesmerising time on the beach, the group decided to reach the hotel for a swim in the pool and some wished to rejuvenate themselves in the Hotel spa. The group members could not visit the Nageshwar temple on the scheduled date, so it was agreed upon during dinner time to visit the temple on 8th Jan early morning before breakfast time. Accordingly, all members were poised to go for Darshan in the early morning and had breakfast on return at the hotel. All the pieces of baggage were loaded into the coach. Members boarded the coach to travel the distance of 104 km from Dwarika to Porbandar along the coastal built of the Arabian Sea.

In Porbandar, the group had a round of Mahatma Gandhi's birthplace and the museum that had been raised on the premises commonly known as Kirti Mandhir. Sodhama Mandhir which was a short distance from Gandhi's birthplace was another sightseeing spot. In Sodhama Mandhir the lady members got involved with a local group of Gujarati ladies who were chanting hymns of Lord Krishna. They participated in the Gurbha dance performed by the inhabitant women's group in reciting the prayers in the name of Lord Krishna. Every member felt their dance was worth clicking to catch the pictures of their admiration for the divine bent of mind. After the dance at Sodhama, was over, the members retraced their path to the hotel for a night's sleep. On the following day on 9th Jan, the group was scheduled to be in Somnath at the distance of 131 km from Porbandar.

Somnath was the next destination, the group members had to visit. The members vacated the hotel rooms and were to get seated in the coach after their breakfast to get ahead towards Somnath Mandhir. In Somnath, the group checked in at the Hotel Lords for a night stay. Chetan, the guide briefed the members in the hotel lobby about the performance of Rudra Puja and Jal Abshikh at Puran Somnath Mandhir, which Maharani Ahalibhai, the queen of Malwa, built. As per the guidelines given by Chetan, male members wore white coloured dhoti and white shirts whereas the

female members were draped in a sari to carry out the Puja at the temple on 10th Jan. Since there is limited space for circumambulation around Shivlinga, the group of 22 members was sublet into three groups comprising seven persons in each for doing the puja before the idol. From the hotel, the members commuted by three-wheelers as the road that led to the temple site was narrow and flanked by congested civil houses. As the members got off the three-wheelers near the Purana Mandhir, they were shepherded into the compound of the temple where two Priests started the ritualistic part of puja by chanting mantras. The priest took each sublet group of seven persons turn by turn for Jal Abshikh and Rudra Puja of the Jyotirling Shiva idol. Everyone in the group was satisfied with the solace and peace they got while worshipping the Param Shiv, the great Lord. From Puran Somnath, the group walked towards the original Somnath Mandhir. There was a strict checking by the police at the main gate.

Somnath temple, a massive structure looked impressive and magnificent in its glory. Its location and surroundings on the tip of the shore of the Arabian Sea, with sea breeze and the rhythmic grating sound produced by the ebb and flow of the waves along the sandy shore was a captivating view. Historians say that the temple of Somnath was destroyed and vandalised seventeen times, but its rising like Phoenix to its stateliness is astounding. Its conical spire hoisting the orange-coloured fluttering flag at the top and the engraved pillars and floors of various designs of deities, horses, elephants and tortoise depicts the richness of Indian cultural heritage. Inside, the temple walls are gold plated and in the innermost is the idol of Shiva Jyotirlinga of black stone adored by all whosoever visited revered age-old Somnath temple from far and wide of the country and abroad. The rooftops of the temple are decorated with golden Kalush dooms along the roof lining. The most amazing part for the Demosgo group members was that they managed to hoist the newly stitched flag out of fifty-two yards on the mast at the top of the

Temple conical pinnacle. Demosgo's name is the symbol of mutual love, oneness and respect the four sisters had, genes of which are transfused among their children that culminated in a strong bonding among the cousins in the form of Demosgo, the name of the group. Therefore, flag hoisting at the holy temple was a triumph of their togetherness and cordiality who humbly sought blessing from Lord Mahadev. In the evening hours, members watched the light and sound show described in the baritone voice of Amitabh Bechan, a famous actor, who was elegant. The commentary about the origin of Somnath temple and its chronicle details and the upheaval it had gone through the ages in the hands of invaders was enlightening. The bliss of the whole activities in and around the temple did not pinch the members with exhaustion or any shape of sluggishness but was itself all bliss. To return to the hotel, Chetan hired three-wheelers to carry the group back to the hotel for a night stay.

On the following day, the 10th Jan, the group after breakfast departed in the coach for Triveni Sangam which is a confluence of Hiran, Kapila and Saraswati rivers for Pinddhan of the departed souls of their families under the supervision of a priest. From Triveni Sangam, they went for the sightseeing of Bhalka Tirth, a place where Krishna was killed by an arrow shot by a hunter in His foot. The members also visited Golok Dham Tirth known as Dehotsarg, where Lord Krishna was cremated after the arrow shot at His feet that spread poison in the body. Members took group photographs at both religious sites as a token of remembrance back at home. As the sightseeing was over the members returned to the hotel for the last night's stay in Somnath. At dinner time members recapitulated their novel experiences and views on their visits to the holy places in Somnath were of enormous interest. Soon after dinner, the members in a routine manner gathered in the lobby to gather the details about the time of departure for their last leg of the tour to Diu and other relevant details about the journey hours

required to cover the distance of 83 km unto Diu on 11th Jan. The group members boarded the coach for their onward travel after they had their good breakfast at the hotel. The drive was very smooth on a well-metalled road. The scenic view of the Arabian Sea along the coastline highway was enchanting. The coach reached the beachside hotel, The Fern, within more than an hour. The members were checked into tent accommodations, which were fitted with the latest amenities. It was quite a different acquaintance for the members of the group. The weather was pleasant. The sun was up in the sky and bright. The wide-open area near the beach was bewitching. Members were given keys to their allotted tents after serving them welcome drinks. The air was fresh without any humidity despite being close to the sea.

Every member of the group treasured the tent accommodation. The buffet lunch that was served for the group in the dining hall of the hotel was of many varieties. The Admin of the group declared all members were to assemble on the lawn in the evening for the drinks which they were denied in previous days of the tour, for upholding the religious sanctity. Besides arrangements were made for an evening cruise ride with seaside dinner on the small ship's deck, over which all members were exultant. During the drinking session, members volunteered to narrate some humorous anecdotes from their lives for the common entertainment of the group till the time approached for getting on the cruise.

And the evening on the cruise deck was enthralling with rock music. Group members jumped in the fray for elaborate dance and joyful yells with the energising film songs played on the deck. The atmosphere was so surcharged that even other tourist joined the group in their dancing rhythm as if they were intoxicated. It was hilarious hours on the deck on the cruise which left indelible memories of lovely pleasure and the mirthful climax of the trip.

*Then let me go- I care not whither,
My feet may lead, for my spirit shall be.
Free as the brook that flows to the river,
Free as the river that flows to the sea.*

(Olive Runner)



- Sanjay Pandita



MAHARAJ KRISHAN SANTOSHI A JOURNEY THROUGH WORDS



In the enchanting realm of Hindi literature, a name resonates with poetic prowess and an unwavering commitment to the written word – Maharaj Krishan Santoshi. Born in the year 1954 in the picturesque town of Mattan, nestled within the district of Anantnag, his

literary journey unfolds as a tapestry of remarkable resilience and dedication. From his modest beginnings in the serene valley of Kashmir to the national recognition he now commands, Santoshi's life embodies the enduring power of literature to transcend time

and space. Santoshi's initiation into the world of literature commenced during his college days at Degree College Anantnag. Here, amidst the rustling pages of his textbooks, he was captivated by the verses of English Romantic poets like Keats and Shelley. His early writings, scribbled with the sentiments of youthful love, filled notebook after notebook, foreshadowing the poet he would one day become.

However, it was the profound impact of poets such as Faiz, Sahir, Krishan Chander, and Manto, coupled with his exposure to communist ideology, that would alter the course of Santoshi's literary voyage. He transformed into an "argumentative comrade" and delved deeper into the world of progressive literature. His reading material often found its origins in the tomes published by "Progressive Publishers Moscow," and he voraciously consumed literature, with Maxim Gorky emerging as his favorite author. In the year 1980, Santoshi unveiled his first collection of poems, aptly titled 'Iss Bar Shayad' (इस बार शायद). Remarkably, he took a hiatus from formal publishing until 1992. During this interlude, his poems found solace in the pages of various Hindi journals, such as Sherraza, Pahal, Sakhsharkar, Jansatta, Vipasha, and many others. His second collection, 'बर्फ पर नंगे पांव,' emerged in 1992.

Yet, the 1990s marked a tumultuous period in Santoshi's life as he, along with his community, faced the harsh realities of exodus from the Kashmir Valley due to terrorism. This harrowing experience profoundly altered his sensibilities. Santoshi, along with other Kashmiri writers of diverse languages, began to express their lamentations, anguish, nostalgia, and thoughts fearlessly.

In 1996, Santoshi unveiled his third collection, 'यह समय कविता का नहीं' which held a special place in his heart. It encapsulated his exile consciousness and the historical dilemma of his people. Despite the odds stacked against him, Santoshi's journey as a

poet continued, and recognition from the Hindi mainstream finally started pouring in.

His subsequent poetry collections, *वितस्ता का तीसरा किनारा* (2005), *आत्मा की निगरानी में* (2009), and *गणतंत्र में गौरैया* (2023), further solidified his position as a prominent Hindi poet. In 2009, he ventured into the realm of short stories with *'हमारे ईश्वर को तैरना नहीं आता,'* from which two stories were translated into English and included in anthologies edited by Arvind Gigoo and Adarsh Ajit. Moreover, it was Arvind Gigoo who undertook the herculean task of translating Santoshi's poems into English, culminating in the collection titled "The Chinar is My Address," published by Peacock Publishers in New Delhi.

Santoshi's literary contributions have not gone unnoticed. He has received several prestigious awards, including the Central Hindi Directorate Award for 'बर्फ पर नंगे पांव,' the Best Book Award from the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages for *'वितस्ता का तीसरा किनारा,'* and the Uttar Pradesh Hindi Sansthan Award 'Souhard Samman' in 2021. The awards bestowed upon him, including the Central Hindi Directorate Award, the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages' Best Book Award, and the Uttar Pradesh Hindi Sansthan Award, stand as testament to the profound impact of his work. These accolades not only acknowledge his literary prowess but also highlight the importance of his contributions to Hindi literature.

His commitment to literature extends beyond his own works; Santoshi has also worn the editor's hat, curating two books. One is an anthology of exile literature of Kashmiri writers titled 'हम लौटेंगे वहीं,' and the second is a collection of selected writings by Sahitya Academy awardee Rasool Pompur. Santoshi's influence transcends language barriers, with his poems and short stories translated into languages as diverse as Gujarati, Telugu, Punjabi, Dogri, and Kashmiri. His relentless dedication to literature, marked by extensive reading both in the original and in translations, showcases his profound passion for the written word.

In the vast tapestry of Indian literature, Maharaj Krishan Santoshi stands as a luminary, a poet, and a storyteller whose words have resonated with readers across borders and cultures. As he continues to weave his literary magic, Santoshi remains a beacon of inspiration for generations of writers yet to come. With his upcoming short story collection, *‘कश्मीर : एक प्रेम कथा’*, the journey of Maharaj Krishan Santoshi in the world of literature promises to be an ever-evolving saga, touching the hearts and minds of readers far and wide.

Maharaj Krishan Santoshi's literary odyssey is a testament to his resilience and unwavering commitment to his craft. His ability to capture the essence of human emotions and the complex socio-political landscape of Kashmir in his poetry and short stories is nothing short of remarkable.

Santoshi's poetry often delves into the human condition, reflecting the turbulence and hope that coexist in the hearts of those who have experienced displacement and conflict. His words become a mirror to the pain and longing of his people, providing a voice to those who have been silenced by adversity.

In his short stories, Santoshi exhibits a keen understanding of the human psyche, often exploring the intricacies of relationships, identity, and the pursuit of meaning in a world filled with uncertainty. His ability to create relatable characters and compelling narratives has earned him a place among the finest storytellers in the Hindi literary landscape.

Santoshi's dedication to promoting the voices of Kashmiri writers, both through his editing of anthologies and his translations, further underscores his commitment to the literary world. His efforts ensure that the rich tapestry of Kashmiri literature finds a wider audience, bridging the gap between languages and cultures.

As he continues to explore the depths of human emotions and the socio-political realities of his homeland, Santoshi's upcoming short story collection, *‘कश्मीर : एक प्रेम कथा’*, promises to be a poignant addition to his body

of work. It is bound to resonate with readers, inviting them to contemplate the enduring power of literature to heal, inspire, and provoke thought.

In the ever-evolving landscape of Hindi literature, Maharaj Krishan Santoshi remains a literary luminary whose words echo across time and space. His writings serve as a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the transformative power of literature to bridge divides, evoke empathy, and illuminate the darkest corners of our world.

With each new creation, Santoshi continues to shape the literary landscape, leaving an indelible mark on the hearts and minds of his readers. His verses are not mere words; they are a mirror reflecting the collective conscience of a people who have weathered storms and still stand strong.

Santoshi's ability to capture the essence of human experiences, whether it's the pangs of love, the agony of displacement, or the quest for identity, makes his work universally relatable. His poems are like whispers of hope in a world often marred by strife and uncertainty, offering solace to those who find solace in the written word. As his literary journey unfolds, Santoshi remains a beacon of inspiration, not only for writers but for all those who believe in the transformative power of art and literature. His commitment to his craft is a testament to the enduring spirit of creativity and the unwavering belief in the ability of literature to transcend boundaries and connect hearts.

Maharaj Krishan Santoshi's journey through words is not just a story of a poet and storyteller; it's a testament to the enduring power of literature to illuminate the human experience, to give voice to the silenced, and to remind us all of the beauty and resilience of the human spirit. His legacy will continue to inspire generations of writers and readers, reminding us that, in the world of words, there are no borders, and the power of a single pen can change the course of history.

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- Rohit Kachroo



REVIVING ROOTS AND REINFORCING TIES

The Vital Role of Kashmiri Pandit Community in Marriage Celebrations

A fortnight ago, I had the pleasure of attending a wedding in Jammu, celebrating the union of a close relative. Reflecting on this joyous occasion, I pondered over the significance of Kashmiri Pandits participating in such ceremonies, contemplating their crucial role in preserving heritage and strengthening bonds so that this option can contribute in Reviving Roots and Reinforcing Ties.

The Kashmiri Pandit community, renowned for its rich cultural heritage, has endured numerous trials, notably the tumultuous exodus of 1990. This pivotal moment not only dispersed families but also posed a significant threat to the longstanding cultural fabric that has bound this community together for generations. In these challenging times, it becomes imperative for the Kashmiri Pandit community to unite, preserve its cultural

identity, and pass down traditions to the next generation. One crucial avenue to achieve this is by wholeheartedly participating in all marriage functions of our relatives without exception. This article explores the profound significance of attending these functions as a means of keeping relations alive, strengthening community bonds, with a special emphasis on involving our children in order to carry the culture forward.

Marriage functions within the Kashmiri Pandit community transcend mere social gatherings; they serve as a poignant reflection



of our cultural and religious heritage. These ceremonies are deeply rooted in age-old rituals and customs passed down through the ages. By actively participating in these functions, we not only ensure the continuity of these invaluable traditions but also keep our rich cultural heritage alive. Moreover, engaging our children in these celebrations provides a unique opportunity to educate them about their roots, fostering a deep appreciation for the customs and traditions that render our culture truly distinctive. This commitment is instrumental in preserving our culture and its cherished traditions.

Strengthening Family Bonds through participation in marriage functions extends beyond the celebration of love; it represents an opportunity to reconnect with relatives, both near and distant. The exodus of 1990 led to the geographical dispersion of many families, necessitating the mending of these geographical gaps. By involving our children in these gatherings, we offer them a chance to forge connections and strengthen family bonds that may have been strained by the physical distance. In the face of challenges, the Kashmiri Pandit community must stand united to preserve its identity. Attending marriage functions is not just a social obligation; it is a powerful demonstration of unity within the community. These events serve as a platform to showcase solidarity, mutual support, and collective problem-solving. By involving our children in these gatherings, we instill in them the crucial importance of unity, ensuring that the tradition of standing together continues.

In an interconnected world, the value of networking and relationships is immeasurable. Attending marriage functions is a unique opportunity to reconnect with relatives and establish new connections within the community. By involving our children in these events, we help them create a network of individuals who can provide support and opportunities in various aspects of life. This network can prove invaluable for their personal and professional development. The scars left by the exodus of 1990 have led to mistrust and apprehension within the Kashmiri

Pandit community. Attending marriage functions acts as a means to rebuild trust within the community. By involving our children in these gatherings, we impart to them the significance of trust, solidarity, and support among community members. This trust is indispensable for the well-being and growth of the community.

Marriage functions are not just about joy; they mirror life's multifaceted nature. In every family, there are moments of happiness and moments of sorrow. Attending these functions is an opportunity to share in the joy of newlyweds and their families, and also to provide support during challenging times, such as illness or loss. By involving our children in these events, we help them understand the importance of being there for family and community members in times of both celebration and hardship.

Beyond preserving traditions, involving our children in marriage functions is an essential step in passing down our cultural legacy. Our children need to witness and partake in these events to comprehend their significance and appreciate the depth of our cultural heritage. By participating in these celebrations, they not only learn about their roots but also develop a profound connection to their cultural identity, ensuring that our traditions are carried forward to the next generation.

The Kashmiri Pandit community boasts a unique cultural heritage that has weathered adversity. Attending all marriage functions of our relatives is not just a social responsibility; it is a profound way to rekindle our cultural heritage, strengthen familial bonds, foster unity, rebuild trust, and provide support within the community. Moreover, involving our children in these events is crucial to ensure the continuity of our traditions and culture. By doing so, we contribute to the longevity and prosperity of our community and safeguard our cultural legacy for generations to come. I'm apprehensive about a future in which marriages are exclusively conducted online, as e-marriages.



Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch Celebrated “SAMOOHIK SHIVRATRI MAHOTSAVA”

Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch thanks all Biradari members for the continued support to the organisation and its activities. Maha Shivratri Samoohek Milan has been a flag ship of the activities undertaken by Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch since its inception. The programme is organised in a unique manner by organising the community gathering on the following Sunday to Shivratri to propagate the message of togetherness, love and Universal peace.

This year the programme was celebrated at KECSS - Lal Ded Centre, Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi on 17th March 2024. Samoohek Shivratri Mahotsava is organized every year and constitutes of felicitation of Prominent Personalities etc. Community members who make an outstanding contribution in the area of Literature/social work/gallantry are recognised and felicitated by various awards and certificates.

This year's awardees are as below:

- ❖ “**Pt. Tika Lal Taploo Memorial**” award sponsored by **Pt. Tika Lal Taploo foundation** was awarded to “**Smt. BABITA BHAT**” for her exceptional work in Kashmir. A very enthusiastic and a brave personality, Smt. BABITA BHAT Ji has been working on ground in Kashmir.
- ❖ “**Pt. KRISHEN JOO RAZDAN SARASWATI PURUSKAR**” for literature to **Sh. Ashok Kumar Dhar (Gowhar)**

He has penned down a number of publications as under :-

1. Sonzal (सोंजल) 2011, a collection of Bajans
2. Sehra ve 'Y Saffar (सहराँव्य सफर), a collection of Gazals 2014
3. Bittur te Bavath (बितुर त बावथ), a Collection of Gazals 2018
4. Yi Naar kar chhevi (यि नार कर छेवि), an essay Book 2018
5. Gyan e Ganga (ज्ञान गंगा), a collection of Bhajans released in October 2023.

Sh. Ashok Gowhar Ji has participated in various literary programs organised by All Radio Jammu. He has been felicitated by Gulistan news channel Jammu Kashmir.

- ❖ “**Pt. Krishen Joo Razdan Saraswati Puruskar**” for literature to Sh. Arvind shah Ji.

Some of his Best Sellers are:

1. **Children's Books** : Texts on Children's Book Series with illustrations by Tom Arma - Publisher Dreamland.
2. **Educational Books** : Handbook of Communication Skills and English Grammar and a Series on Parts of Speech - Publisher Prabhat Prakashan
3. **Translations** : Selected Poems of Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ji, Translated into English and Biography of Virath Kohli - Publisher Prabhat Prakashan.
4. **Pictorial Kaishur Kaidea - Words and Vibes** : Selected Kashmiri Poems Translated into English - Publisher Sangarmall Foundation.

He has been associated with Govt of India: Ministry of Culture - Ministry of Education - Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, as a member of different expert groups like Selection Committee for Awards and Language, Books in Kashmiri etc.

❖ **“Yashaskar Samman” to Sh. Shuban Krishen Pandit Ji.**

Sh. Shuban Ji i was a fearless leader. He lived in Habba Kadal Constituency, which was dominated by Muslims. He was loved and admired by most of the people in the constituency. On 1 Dec 1989 he was threatened by Bitta Karate, a JKLF militants. He decided to leave the valley and settle for the time being in Jammu. He was a dedicated activist, ready for any kind of social work. He worked with Late Shri Amarnath Vaishnavi ji, Sh. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Sh. Lal Krishan Advani Ji,

Sh. Narender Modi Ji during the rath yatra. He served the community and never hesitated to fulfil his responsibilities entrusted to him. He served as the Vice President of Kashmir Displaced District.

On March 24, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Shri Shuban Pandit Ji provided shelter for homeless people, money for jobless people. He arranged oxygen cylinders for the patients. He created a great awareness for the Domicile Certificate among the community members and continuously worked on social activities.

❖ **“Yashaskar Samman” to “Amar Balidan Trust”**

A non-profit, social upliftment organization. The main purpose and objective of creating the trust was to help and facilitate those people of the community who had no source of income especially after the turmoil in Kashmir and the poor, destitute, orphans, militancy hit victims, and all those who were suffering from abject penury.

The trust has been working since its inception with utmost dedication and devotion. The trust is involved in annual Samohik Yegnopavit, guidance and counselling to community students for admission of poor children in various professional institutions, organising medical camps and check-ups, distributing uniforms to KP sports persons, distributing stationary to 50 to 60 needy annually to talented students, financial help to widows having no source of income and the trust is also involved in organising different tournaments in the field of sports as well as essay competitions.

The trust is associated with KMECT for providing medical help to those who are suffering from chronic ailments.



The Chief Guest for the event was **Retired Vice Admiral Raman Puri, PVSM, AVSM, VSM** was also felicitated on the occasion. Addressing the gathering Sh. Raman Puri Ji applauded the efforts by the team JKVM towards preserving and nurturing Kashmiri Pandit culture and language.

Kashmiri Speaking Competition:

JKVM organised virtual and physical global competition for Kashmiri speaking “**Late Smt Lalita Kaul Sahib and Late Sh. A.N. Kaul Sahib Memorial Award**” during the month of February 2023. A trophy, a certificate and a medallion is awarded to the winners. The winner in each category as follows -

| Category | Winner | 1st Runner Up | 2nd Runner Up |
|-----------------|------------|---------------|---------------|
| Junior Category | Jatin Bhat | Amaya Dhar | Ira Koul |
| Senior Category | Vani Bhat | Tanisha | Sanaya Tickoo |

Also children have been shortlisted for the **Late Smt. Bimla Kaul Memorial consolation** prizes for Kashmiri speaking, given by our veteran activist **Sh B.L.Kaul, Deep** to the top three performers – **Kimaya Malla, Tanishka, Sanjaya Tickoo, and Vani Bhat** were awarded.

Painting Competition:

A painting competition among the young children was also organised virtually with the theme Maha Shivratri. Three children each from junior and senior category are awarded with Trophies, certificates, medallion for 1st, 2nd and 3rd in each category respectively. The winners declared are -

| Category | Winner | 1st Runner Up | 2nd Runner Up |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Junior Category | Chahel Rayu | Mayank Bhat | Ashmita Bhat |
| Senior Category | Kashvi Razdan | Mannat Chopra | Dhanya Bradoo |

The award ceremony for the winners of online competitions Kashmiri speaking, Painting, Dress and Watuk Model will be held separately.

Kashmiri Dress Competition:

Kashmiri Dress competition among the youth and seniors was also a centre of attraction. Kartik Pandita and AaroHi were declared the winners. The programme culminated with the vote of Thanks by the Treasurer.





- Avtar Mota

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

Author - Dr Ramesh Tamiri
Publisher - Published by the Author,
2023

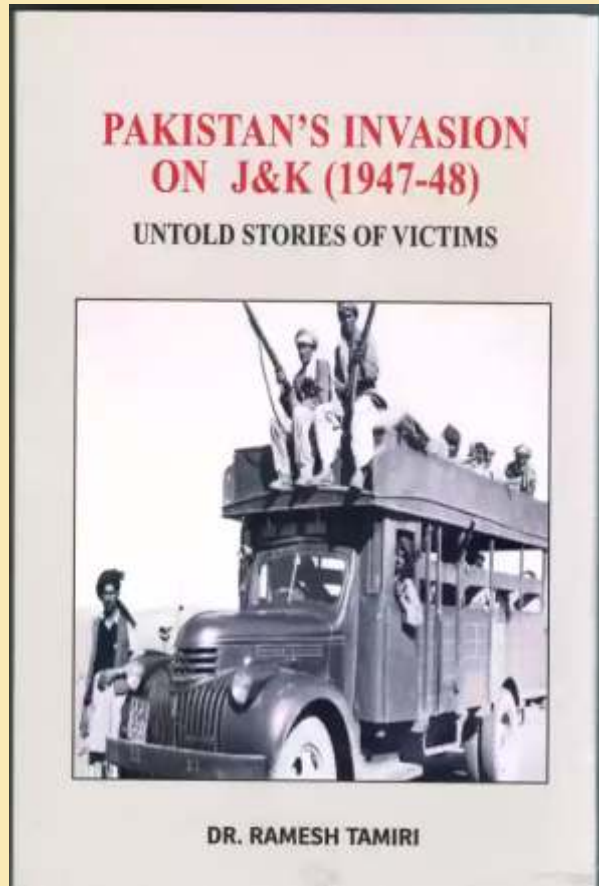
Total Pages - Hb Rs 995; pb 595.

Dr. Ramesh Tamiri is an ophthalmologist by profession. However, he is more known as an innovative thinker, author and a writer who's work abounds in intensive research and objectivity. In his write-ups that I keep reading, he appears to be having a flair for revealing nothing more than what is true. Seldom have I noticed him balancing facts to be politically correct or skirt out through a mid-path that pleases all. The strength of his argument silences even his toughest critic. The enormous ground work that he does before publishing anything places him on a high pedestal in comparison to the usual copy-paste writers that thrive in the present-day world. This is his second book after, 'Painting and Theatre in Kashmir: Suraj Tikun's Journey'. This book established him as a writer of different class and calibre.

The present 342 page book, 'Pakistan's Invasion on J&K (1947-48) : Untold Stories Of Victims ', published in

December 2023, is a result of about two decades of extensive research and hard-work. Tamiri has reached out to the victims or their families to record firsthand accounts of what befell them and their nears and dears during those dark days (1947-48). **What Pakistan did in October 1947, can't be called, "Tribal Raid" to play down the genocidal atrocities committed upon Hindus and Sikhs of J&K State as it existed prior to 1947.** The entire area that is presently known as POK, was cleansed of Sikhs and Hindus who were Killed, tortured and made to flee. There are innumerable stories of gruesome rapes, plunder, kidnappings and killings. The book recounts thousands of women jumping into the rivers or wells or consuming poison to save their honour. It also informs of a designed operation by Pakistani army and government to forcibly annex Kashmir and cleanse the area of Hindus and Sikhs once Maharaja Hari Singh refused to accede to Pakistan.

Apart from the Introduction, Analysis and Conclusion, Postscript and Endnotes, the book has been set in five sections, viz; Pakistan Invasion, Muzaffarabad District, Jammu Region,



Baltistan and Gilgit Region. The section on Invasion provides details of the conspirators who planned and tried to execute the atrocious plan for forcible annexation of J&K with Pakistan after cleansing it of the minorities primarily Hindus and Sikhs. As per the book, the principal conspirators of the plan were Liaquat Ali Khan (Prime Minister of Pakistan), Khan Abdul Qayoom Khan, Nawab of Mamdot, Sardar Shauqat Hayat Khan, Latif Afghani (communist), Mian Iftikharuddin, Major Khurshid Anwar (leader National Guards), Col Akbar Khan, Col M Z Kiani, Col Sher Khan, Col Taj Mohammad Khanzada, Col R M Arshad, Major A S B Shah, former INA officers including Col Habibur Rehman, Khwaja Abdur Rahim (Commissioner of Rawalpindi, Gujrat and Jhelum) Pir Manki Sharif, Mohammad Ali Khan Hoti, Ch Hameedullah Khan (Muslim League), Furqaan Batallion (Ahmedi and a pro-British group) and many more. Two British Commanders namely General F Messervy and General D Gracy had complete knowledge of the Invasion plan. It was also decided to recruit Pashtun tribesmen for the invasion of Kashmir through the call of 'Jihad 'after striking a deal with their leaders that the '**Lashkars**' were free to plunder, loot and rape. The broader plan of the Invasion had sub-Plans like, 'Economic Blockade ' 'Inciting Muslim soldiers in the State's forces', 'Border Raids', 'Communal Violence', 'Arresting Shiekh Mohammad Abdullah and the Maharaja', etc. While Jinnah reported camped at Abbottabad in anticipation of the '**expected victory**', a committee was set up to draft a '**Declaration of Freedom**'. The members of this committee were **poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz**, Mian iftikharuddin, Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmed and Professor Mohammad Ishaqye. Others associated with this plan included **Dr M D Taseer (former principal S P College, Srinagar)**, Nasira Siddqi and many more. **The Khudai Khidmatgars led by Badshah Khan, Zalmi Pashtuns and Ahrar leader Maulana Ghulam Ghaus opposed this plan.**

In the Muzaffarabad section, the author presents some hitherto unknown facts like the positive role of Akram Hussain of Kotli in saving lives, treacherous role played by deserters from State's forces, the heroic fight by the Sikhs with Pakistani marauders at Gojra and Naluchi, the heroic fight of Capt. Ram Prakash with the invaders at Kotli, role of Brigadier Paranjpe in saving ten thousand lives at Kotli, and the role of Aga Jan Khan in saving many Hindu and Sikh girls. No less was the role of RSS leader Kedar Nath Sahni in arranging all possible food and eatables for the fleeing victims from Kotli. In and around Muzaffarabad town, hundreds of women and girls were raped, kidnapped and taken to Pakistan and sold there. Thousands of men were brutally killed after looting their assets. Thousands of women in Muzaffarabad and adjoining villages jumped into the Kishenganga River to save their honour. There are stories of savagery, rapes and molestation the moment Pakistan sponsored marauders arrived in Muzaffarabad and adjoining areas. Those who trekked for many weeks dodging the marauders and arrived in India were totally emaciated and had lost most of their relations in the mayhem and firing from the invaders on hapless fleeing victims. Those who were put in camps, lived miserable life and were repatriated as late as 1951 by International Red Cross. Many amongst the 47 Kashmiri Pandit families residing in Muzaffarabad were also killed.

Unfortunately Mirpur, a town that had 80% Hindu population, faced worst carnage, killings and genocidal atrocities. The stories of the brutal massacres of Hindus and Sikhs at Dharmsal, Kas Guma, Thathal, Alibeg Camp, Akalgarh, Mirpur courthouse, Dutiyal Camp and many more places send shivers down the spine. **The book informs that when Pandit Prem Nath Dogra and Balraj Madhok sought Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru's intervention to save lives in Mirpur, he is reported to have told them, “ Talk to Sheikh Sahib“.** Hindus and Sikhs living in Rajouri town

also faced worst atrocities during the Pakistani occupation. The painful story of Lala Anant Ram Kaila and his family tears to the eyes. At the same time the humanism of a local Gujjar Mian Abdullah in giving shelter to many Hindus in his Kothar is praiseworthy. Hindus and Sikhs of Budhal, Samote, Daraj, Dandakote-Ganjauli, Gota and Chitti Batti also faced similar extreme atrocities.

The book brings forth the reign of terror unleashed by Pakistan in Skardu (Baltistan) that was a part of the J&K State. The Hindu and Sikh employees or traders or soldiers at Skardu, Khaplu, Shigar, Bunji, Drass, faced worst from Pakistani marauders. Many Kashmiri Pandit victims and their relatives had horrible tales to tell to the author. The book also recounts how Nationalist Resistance and the role some patriots like Major Prithi Chand, Sonam Narboo, Shridhar Kaul Dulloo, Major General Thimaya, Air Commodore Meher Singh saved Ladakh. Gilgit, a part of the J&K State with all its principalities like Hunza, Nagir, Punial, Koh-Ghizar, Yasin and Ishkoman were also ravaged by Pakistanis. The book illustrates role of Brigadier Ghansara Singh in Gilgit who was held captive by Pakistanis. In Gilgit also, many Sikhs and Hindus were forced to change faith by the marauders.

The book exposes Pakistani design of not only annexing Muzaffarabad, Bhimber, Poonch, Mirpur, Rajouri and other places by force but also the underlying plan to cleanse these areas of the presence of Hindus and the Sikhs by rapes, abductions, forcible conversions, killings and plunder. It also brings forth details of valiant resistance by Sikhs and Hindus at Muzaffarabad, Mirpur, Bhimber, Kotli, Deva Vatala, Budhal and many other places. The commendable role played by some saner Muslims like Master Abdul Aziz, Munshi Ferozdin, Abdul Aziz Thekkedar, Mir Zaman, Haji Mohammad Khan and many more in saving Hindus and Sikhs has been deservedly highlighted in the pages of this book. The book informs that more than 38000 innocents lost their lives in this holocaust. And the wounds of this calamity linger on to this day. I conclude this book review with lines from poet Ali Sardar Jafri's poem **Sarhad (border)** wherein the poet seeks reply to some questions from Pakistani authorities.

"Yeh tank taup ye bombaare aag bandookein,
Kahaan se laaye ho kis ki taraf hai rookh in-kaa
Dayaar e waaris o iqbal ka yeh tafa hai?
Jaga ke jung ke tufaan zameen e nanak se
Uthay ho barq giraane kabir ke ghar par?
Ghulam tum bhi thay kal tak ghulam hum bhi thay,
Naha ke khoon mein aayee thi fasl e aazadi..." **Ali Sardar Jafri**

**"These tanks, canons, bombers, fire and the guns
Where from have you procured all this?
To which direction are these aimed?
Is it a gift from the land of Waris Shah and Iqbal?
From the land of Guru Nanak,
You raise thunder of war hurricanes
to put Kabir's dwelling on fire.
A slave you too were till yesterday,
A slave we too were till yesterday,
Drenched in our own blood,
We reaped the crop of freedom."**

PRESS RELEASE

Swami Mast Bab Ji's 1st Punya Tithi Observed All Over India

Badgam Kashmir
29 March '2024

Swami Mast Bab ji's first Death anniversary 'Punya tithi' was observed with special puja and Hawan at His ashrams in Hushru Badgam, Badipora Chadura Badgam, Karala Delhi, Shalimar Garden U.P, Patoli in Jammu and Haridwar today.

D C Badgam Akshay Labroo joined the devotees at Hushroo Badgam in paying obessiance to Swami Ji. Swami Mast Bab ji left his Physical body last year and was last legend of Nand Parivar connected deeply to Sharda Peeth PoK.

In a Press release Ravinder Pandita Chairman of Save Sharda Committee has said that Swami Ji's mission on Sharda Peeth will continue and His services to the community especially after forced exodus from valley will be remembered.

- Ravinder Pandita
Tel : 9811143024



Introducing Soul Inspirations, the Cultural YouTube Channel – Illuminate your path to spiritual awakening!!

Embarking on a Cultural Journey:

In a spirited effort to honour and safeguard our community's cultural legacy, we are thrilled to unveil the Soul Inspirations YouTube Channel. This ground-breaking endeavour is a heartfelt ode to the myriad hues of our vibrant heritage.

The inauguration of the YouTube Channel was a momentous occasion, graced by the esteemed presence of Padma Shri awardee Dr. Sudhir K. Sopory, President of Kashmir Sewak Samaj Faridabad and former Vice-Chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi.

As we embark on this enriching cultural odyssey, our initial offerings include a captivating compilation of Bhajans and immersive puja content, serving as a reminder of our cherished traditions. However, our vision extends far beyond mere documentation; we aspire to cultivate a thriving digital haven where every aspect of our cultural heritage finds its rightful place.

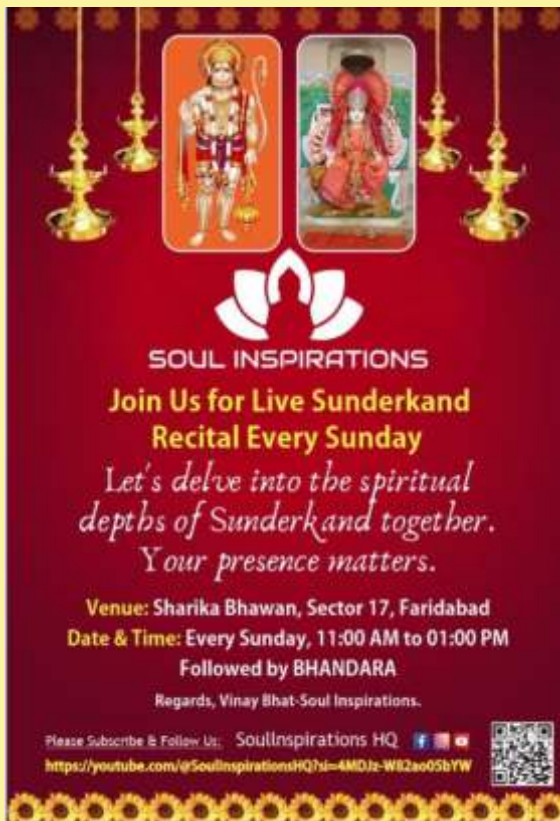
Furthermore, the YouTube Channel endeavours to be a nurturing platform for the latent talents within our community. Through engaging showcases and collaborative projects, we aim to amplify the voices of our gifted individuals and propel them onto the global stage.

We extend a heartfelt invitation to both, our community members and kindred spirits from around the world to join us on this resplendent voyage. By subscribing to our channel [link: <https://youtube.com/@SoulInspirationsHQ?si=sGbGNmSkKVwrFI1>], you become an integral part of our mission to safeguard, celebrate, and propagate our cultural treasures. Your unwavering support will serve as the cornerstone of our endeavours, guiding us towards greater heights of significance and visibility.

For suggestions, please reach out to Shri Vinay Bhat at 9810421789 (WhatsApp only) or vinay@bhat.co. Your input is invaluable as we strive to foster a community-driven space that thrives on collaboration and collective passion.

Let us unite in a shared commitment to preserve and exalt the quintessence of our cultural heritage through the Soul Inspirations YouTube Channel.

Warm regards,






SOUL INSPIRATIONS


**Join Us for Live Sunderkand
Recital Every Sunday**

*Let's delve into the spiritual
depths of Sunderkand together.
Your presence matters.*

Venue: Sharika Bhawan, Sector 17, Faridabad
Date & Time: Every Sunday, 11:00 AM to 01:00 PM
Followed by BHANDARA

Regards, Vinay Bhat-Soul Inspirations.

Please Subscribe & Follow Us: SoulInspirations HQ   
<https://youtube.com/@SoulInspirationsHQ?si=AMQJz-Wl2ao05bYW>



Letter to the editor

Dear Editor

Ref- (i)- If not for the sake of herself at least for the reputation of the University of Westminster, Nitasha should move the concerned authorities and forums (ii) Nitasha can rely on the important and effective support of the leader of free world the USA especially in this election year 2024.

Nitasha Kaul a Kashmiri Pandit of Indian origin a OCI card holder and a citizen of the UK and professor of Political science and International relations was deported from Bengaluru airport on the charge of being anti-India as reported and discussed at <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/Nitasha-kaul-orders-from-delhi-indian-origin-writer-deported-from-bengaluru-airport-5126489> and <https://thewire.in/video/watch-i-was-treated-like-a-criminal-im-not-anti-indian-nitisha-kaul-on-her-deportation-to-uk>

But it raises an important question that Nitasha is a professor of Political science and International relations at the prestigious university of Westminster then how come she could not understand the simple laws of international relations moreover by her acts of omission as given below Nitasha has allowed the government of India (GoI) to propagate the myth of 'sovereign decision' as reported at <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/sovereign-decision-mea-entry-denied-writer-Nitasha-kaul-9188934/>

(1) Why Nitasha didn't move the government of her country the UK to seek explanation from the GoI as to why it was impossible for the GoI through government of Karnataka (On who's invitation Nitasha went to Bengaluru to attend a conference) or by itself to ask Nitasha in time to cancel her journey to Bengaluru which would have avoided unnecessary harassment and humiliation of a citizen of the UK on Indian soil [The government of the UK can always move the 'International Court of Justice' to constrain the GoI to provide such explanation in case the GOI doesn't provide such explanation directly to the government of the UK].

(2) Why didn't Nitasha move the US-establishment (The White House and US-congress may be through the embassy of the USA in the UK) to complain that on the basis of her testimony (which was allegedly misrepresented and distorted by the GoI) to US-Congress she was harassed and humiliated at Bengaluru airport. Nitasha should know that unlike constitution of other democratic countries the constitution the USA gives first place in the hierarchy to legislature and not to the executives and if people are harassed and humiliated for the testimonies before US-congress (Even allegedly by distorting or misrepresenting these testimonies) then people will avoid appearing before US-congress which tantamount to obstructing the power and jurisdiction of US-Congress which the US-Congress wouldn't tolerate and would certainly take some remedial and justifiable measures.

(3) Though the past record of the USA doesn't inspire confidence but in the present scenario Nitasha could rely on the support of the USA for free world because presently the USA is engaged in Cold War - II of Western liberal democracy led by the USA v/s Authoritarian Chinese democracy hence the USA will support the case of Nitasha in every way for the victory of the free world.

(4) Why Nitasha (a professor of Political science and International relations) has not come out with public statement that the myth of sovereign decision being propagated by the MEA of the GoI is legally untenable because we're living in a globalized world where the global order of the

UNited Nations (sponsored by the USA in 1945) have made it mandatory for every member country to respect the civil and political rights of the people on their soil as enshrined in the ICCPR of the UN and these human rights are enforceable by the courts in India as per section 2(d) of The Protection of Human Rights Act 1973. which reads as - “[Human rights means the rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the constitution or embodied in the international covenant and enforceable by courts in India]” and section 2(h) of this Act (as given at https://nhrc.nic.in/sites/default/files/PHRA_Bilingual_2018.pdf) which reads as - “[“International Covenant” means the International covenant on civil and political rights and the international covenant on Economic, social and cultural rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on the 16th DEcember 1966 and such other covenants or convention adopted by the General Assembly of the UNited Nations as the central government may by notification specify.

(5)- why Nitasha [who is already a (Overseas) Citizen of India, an OCI card holder] didn't move the Supreme Court of India against her said harassment and humiliation on the soil of India in violation to the national and international laws. Moreover Nitasha should have also complained to the Press Council of India against the Times of India and ND TV Who allegedly didn't get the version of Nitasha before publishing the version of the GOI which tantamount to sully the image of Nitasha by wrongly projecting her as guilty of sedition and anti-Indian without giving her an opportunity to clarify her position (as revealed during her said interview to 'the Wire'). .

(6)- Nitasha when asked to clarify (during said interview on 'The Wire) her alleged statement about Hindutva forces where she allegedly said that India / Hindutva forces are using the plight of Kashmiri Pandits as stick to beat Pakistan, Nitasha should have said two things:-

(i)- India neglected its duty (which is the main cause of chronic & ghory Kashmir problem) of carrying out plebiscite (for knowing the wishes of the people) in united J&K by getting it free from invaders and outsiders as mandated by the IoA of J&K to India which reads as [Consistently with their (GoI) policy that, in the case of any State where the issue of Accession has been the subject of dispute, the question of Accession Should be decided in accordance with the wishes of the people of the State, it is my Government's wish that, as soon as law and order have been restored in Kashmir, and her soil cleared of the invader, the question of the State's Accession should be settled by a reference to the people. Yours Sincerely Sd/- Mountbatten of Burma] ? as mentioned at <https://ikashmir.net/historicaldocuments/115.html> . Whether India gets united J&K free from outsiders and invaders on its own or with the help of the UN or with the military support of some of its friendly countries is the head ache of India as per international law and Kashmiris (whether Hidus or Muslims) have no responsibility about it (which Nitasha as professor of political science and international relations should know).

(ii)- The Kashmiri Pandits (like her) have grudge against Hindutva forces that they only pay lip service to the cause of Hindus which is evident from the fact that in hundreds of thousands they could go to Ayodhya to demolish Babri Masjid and for other kar seva but couldn't come to Kashmir to protect the Kashmiri Pandits who were expelled by force by militant Jihadis and separatists and that too in Hindu majority India with the result hundreds of thousands of Kashmiri Pandits are still not rehabilitated in their native land of Kashmir.

It is hoped Nitisha would rectify her above mentioned mistakes and would still move the said authorities & Forums if not for the sake of herself then at least for the sake of the University of Westminster so that an unfortunate impression doesn't gain ground that when professor of political science and international relations of this university can't get justice under international laws then how hopeless is the level and quality of education of the students of this department in this otherwise esteemed university. *Regards*

Hem Raj Jain (An US-Citizen and Author of “Betrayal of Americanism”), Shakopee, MN, USA, Whatsapp - +1 6128395628 and +91 7353541252, Presently at- Bengaluru, India.

PRESS RELEASE

Kashir Sabha, Ambala ZANG TRAI CELEBRATIONS

The programme commenced at 04.30 P.M. with the installation of photographs of community stalwarts, in the Community Hall. All the members present on the occasion paid rich floral tributes to the following Biradari Members, who have immensely contributed to the affairs of the community:

1. Sh. N. N. Koul 2. Sh. B. N. Tikoo 3. Sh. T. N. Pandita 4. Sh. B. L. Mujoo 5. Smt. Pitta Mujoo 6. Smt. Prabha Raina 7. Smt. Avinash Raina 8. Smt. Mohini Bhat 9. Sh. J. K. Zutshi 10. Sh. J. L. Kaul 11. Sh. Raman Braru

The Aarti was conducted by Pt. Ganesh Ji; which reverberated the sanctum Sanctorum of Mahamrityunjay Mandir, after which the Prasad was distributed. Tea and Mathis were served to one and all. Smt. Prabha Ji Kaul, mother-in-law of Sh. M. J. Raina; who graced the occasion, gave a sack of salt and a coin to all the ladies present, in the programme. The programme was compered by Sh. Bharat B. Das, Publicity Secretary of the Sabha. Speaking on the occasion Prof A.K. Watal recalled as to how, we used to celebrate this festival in Kashmir and the importance of celebrating such programmes to keep alive our culture and traditions. Sh. Rajinder Kaw also spoke about the importance of Zang Trai and the purpose of its celebration.

Among others, the following attended the programme: Sh. & Smt Veena Raina Kaul, Renu Braru, Kirni Das, Usha Watal, Sushma Razdan, Anjali Mujoo, V.K. Razdan, Sunil Braru, Renu Braru, Suresh Chander Koul, Virender Kumar Bhat, M.K. Raina, V.K. Mujoo, Neha Kaw, Dr Amit Malik, Avdesh Upmanyu, Priya Upmanyu, Manan, Sunil and his family members.

Rajinder Kaw
General Secretary – Kashir Sabha Ambala



Top 5 Scholarships for Indian Female Students

In celebration of National Girl Child Day 2024, five prestigious scholarship programs were designed exclusively for female students in India. These scholarships aim to break barriers, promote education, and create opportunities for girls to excel in various fields.

1. **AICTE Pragati Scholarship for Girls:** The AICTE Pragati Scholarship encourages girls to pursue technical education in India. The Scholarship is open to girls admitted to the 1st year of a degree or Diploma program in any AICTE-approved institute. The Scholarship is limited to one girl per family and is extendable to two if the family income is less than Rs. 8 Lakh/annum.

The Scholarship covers tuition fees, an incidental amount of Rs. 2,000 per month for ten months, and reimbursement for candidates with a tuition fee waiver.

2. **Begum Hazrat Mahal National Scholarship:** Formerly known as Maulana Azad National Scholarship, it targets meritorious female students from Minority Communities.

The Scholarships are open to girls from six Minority Communities with a minimum of 50% marks in the previous qualifying exam and an annual income not exceeding Rs. 2.00 lakh. The Scholarship includes Rs. 5,000 per month for Class IX & X and Rs. 6,000 for Class XI & XII.

3. **Postgraduate Indira Gandhi Scholarship for Single Girl Child:** The Scholarship assists single girl children pursuing non-professional postgraduate education, applicable to single girl children in regular, full-time 1st-year Master's Degree course. Master's recognizedt-graduate colleges.

The Scholarship amounts to Rs. 2,000 per month for two years during the entire duration of the postgraduate course.

4. **CBSE Merit Scholarship Scheme for Single Girl Child:** Recognizing parents' efforts in parent education for girls and encouraging meritorious students, the Scholarship is open to a single girl child who secured 60% or more marks in CBSE Class X. Presently studying in Class XI & XII in CBSE-affiliated schools. Selected students will get Rs. 500 per month for a maximum of two years.

5. **Women Scientist Scheme-B (WOS-B):** The Department of Science and Technology (DST) is implementing a dedicated scheme 'Women in Science and Engineering-KIRAN (WISE-KIRAN)' to cater to women of all walks of life to enhance their participation in the field of Science and Technology (S&T) with ultimate goal to bring gender parity. DST's Women Scientist Scheme-B addresses challenges faced by women with a break in their S&T careers, offering opportunities for their return.

The Scholarship is open to women aged 27-57 with qualifications in S&T areas. Permanent employees are ineligible.

The Scholarship amount varies, based on qualifications, ranging from Rs. 31,000 to Rs. 55,000 per month.

NICE Foundation National Scholarship

NICE Foundation has been registered under the Trust Act 1882 (Reg. No. 1962) from the Government of India N.C.T. New Delhi & works in different fields of Educational, Commercial Training, Outdoor Activities, and Social Activity.

NICE Foundation conducts the National Scholarship Exam at the National Level all over India. In which students from Std. 5th to

12th and Degree / Diploma Students from any board or university can participate.

The Examination is based on a Multiple-Choice Questions pattern, which will help students to be more practised & careful while attempting the questions. The questions and the marking scheme are designed so that a student can develop subject knowledge, decision-making ability and reasoning power.

The Foundation's task is to search for young talents through the Scholarship Exam. This self-assessment event indicates the examinee's readiness to take up new challenges in the education sector and many other spheres.

Eligibility: 5Th to 12Th - All State Board/ ICSE/ CBSE qualified students.

The examination is given in English, Hindi & Marathi languages. Diploma & Degree (Any Stream & Any Year)- Qualified from any University. The examination is given in English and Hindi languages. The exam is based on the subjects as per the Current Educational Standard and General Science: 25 Questions For 25 Marks. The student will be tested in Mathematics, General Knowledge, Reasoning & Analytical, and Comprehension. All the papers carry 25 Questions for 25 Marks. The examination will be conducted online. Apply Online on the website www.niceedu.org. National Scholarship Exam Registration for Educational Year 2024-2025 will start from Wednesday, 01 May 2024.


DTE Maharashtra Revised Schedule of CET

| S No. | Name of CET | Revised Date of CET |
|-------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | - MHTCET PCB Group: - PCM Group: | (22 nd , 23 rd , 24 th , 28 th , 29 th , 30 th) April 2024 (2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th , 5 th , 9 th , 10 th , 11 th , 15 th & 16 th) May 2024 |
| 2. | MAH-B.BCA/BBA/BMS/BBM-CET | 7 Monday, 27-05-2024 To Wednesday, 29-05-2024 |
| 3. | MAH-BHMCT CET | Wednesday, 22-05-2024 |


Admission Alerts

| | |
|----|--|
| 1. | IISERs Admission to 5-Year BS-MS (Dual Degree) and 4-Year BS Degree Programs: Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs) Aptitude Test IAT-2024 will be conducted on Sunday, June 9, 2024, at 9:00 AM, at various centers across the country. Reservation for Kashmiri Migrants - 3 seats per IISER (supernumerary) Online application closes (IAT-2024) May 13, 2024 (Monday) |
| 2. | Indian Institute of Sciences Bangalore Four-Year Bachelor of Science (Research) Program: Selection will be based on the merit list of one of the following national examinations. 1. JEE Main -2024 2. JEE Advance-2024 3. NEET(UG)-2024 IISER Aptitude Test (IAT) 2024 Last date for online submission of applications (website closes at 23:59 hours on 07.05.2024 Reservation/concession/relaxations for Kashmiri-Migrant (KM), Kashmiri Pandits/Kashmiri Hindu Families (Non-Migrants) living in the Kashmir valley. Website: https://bs-ug.iisc.ac.i |
| 3. | G. B. PANT University of Agriculture & Technology, Pant Nagar: Admission to Undergraduate, Masters', MCA, MBA/ MBA (Agribusiness) and Ph.D. programmes of the University. The Wards of Kashmiri Migrants/Kashmiri Pandits residing in Kashmir valley and J& K Residents may apply for admission to Undergraduate programs only. End date to apply: to 30-04-2024 website: www.gbpuat.ac.in or Admission Portal www.gbpuat.org.in |

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| 4. | Joint Integrated Programme in Management Admission Test 2024 (JIPMAT 2024): in IIM Bodh Gaya and IIM Jammu. JIPMAT 2024 Registration up to 21-04-2024 up to (05:00 P.M) JIPMAT 2024 Date of Examination 06-06-2024. Website: https://jipmat.ntaonline.in/ |
| 5. | Thapar University Patiala Punjab: Admission to the First Year of BE/BTech Program (2024-25) Candidates who have not appeared in the JEE Main – 2024 can be considered for admission in the branches: Biomedical Engineering, Biotechnology, Civil Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Civil with Computer Applications, Electronics (Instrumentation & Control) Engineering, Mechanical Engineering Mechatronics. Applications received till May 08, 2024 Application Fee (Rs) 1500 After May 08, 2024 Application Fee 2000 Website: https://admission.thapar.edu |
| 6. | Banasthali Vidyapith Admissions Higher Education 2024 (Women University): Last date of submission of Admission Form: April, 30th 2024 Website: http://www.banasthali.org/ |



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



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



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



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



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



Seeking a suitable alliance for my Son. DOB-17/09/1993, Height- 5.11 ft, Qualification- BE in Computer Science & MBA Finance (Mumbai University). Occupation: Sr. Manager in Kotak Mahindra Bank, Mumbai. Earlier he was working as Relationship Manager in HDFC Bank. Family Details - Father: Sh. Predemen K Tikoo, Rtd Dy-SP and Mother: Smt. 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 - vakirajinder@gmail.com .



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

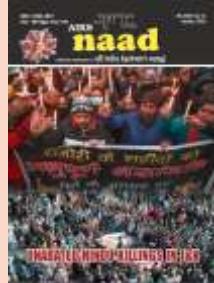


Looking for a bride for my son, born 10.10.1993 at 11.55pm at Delhi, Height 174 Cms. He has done B.Tech (Chemical) from BITS, Dubai. Currently working as Engineer with L&T in Saudi Arabia, getting Rs.3.50 lacs per month. Father working as GM with L&T, Saudi Arabia. One engineer elder sister married to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



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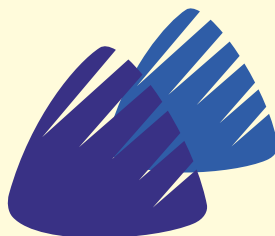
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