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TRIBUTES TO OUR MARTYRS ON BALIDAN DIWAS!

**Joint Press Conference held in Jammu by AIKS, GKPD & JKVM
on Sept 03, 2024**



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Uma Kant Kachru

EDITORIAL BOARD

Prof. R.L. Shant

Sunil Raina Rajanaka

AIKS Secretariat, HQ

H. No. 308 (LGF), Sector 35
Ashoka Enclave Part -III,
Faridabad, Haryana - 121 003

Business Manager & Circulation Feedback

Bansi Razdan
98108 68397

Data Processing

Bharti Raina Kaul
8130538867

Layout & Design

Pranav Koul
Suman Kumar
M/s Print Orbit

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THIS MONTH'S COVER
Balidan Diwas!

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A year has passed since I wrote the last September Editorial. I refreshed my memory by opening this editorial and tried to reflect on what has changed for me and my community in these last 365 days. My inner voice, resoundingly, responded – **NOTHING!** Come the Day 14th September, and we replayed the ritual of meetings, to pay tributes to our martyrs for whom this day is commemorated as – Balidan Divas. In the last 34 years, if we have added anything to our history, it is, sadly, the two rituals – one is BALIDAN DIVAS and the other is VISTHAPAN DIVAS. On these two days, we meet at various places across the globe, reminisce the tragic and torturous killings of our brethren and the mass exodus of a whole race uprooted from its roots and thrown into the wilderness of this globe. We wrap up the rituals with some emotional and some fiery outpourings and then retire to our routine life, only to replay this act the next season.

There is a big question that emanates from this theatric – what has the community consolidated from these rituals? Except for not forgetting these great souls who sacrificed their lives for our future, there seems nothing tangible. Are these sacrifices worth just remembrance? My inner voice rebelliously retorts – NO! These sacrifices were to teach us the lesson of uniting, consolidation and one community purpose. We were expected to stand as a single unit that would fight for its return and rehabilitation with respect and glory. Well, that has been evading for the last 34 years. A formidable part of it is because of our own doing. All these three decades we created several platforms, had voices in diverse directions with no unanimity. This weakened our purpose of fight. It stunted the voice into noise and thus was never heard with concern by the powers at the helm. We, maybe unintentionally, betrayed the sacrifices that we ritualistically commemorate on 14th September and 19th January.

Look at the scenario today. Last five years got J&K into equality with the rest of the country after the abrogation of the Article 370; it saw the UT, particularly, the valley flourishing with reforms and newer business opportunities that brought substantial change in the economic status of the UT. Can we think of one benefit that accrued for the KP community? If we have, it is uncertainty for those brethren living in the valley and the ones serving there under the PM Package programme.

Ironically, while the UT is preparing to return to statehood and the valley is abuzz with the election fever, we are sitting on the fence, watching the turn of events and hoping something coming out for us from it. Isn't that a pity? When we should have been an equal participant in the process of electing our representatives who would work and fight for our concerns, we are not there in the battlefield. Even if there are candidates from the community, they are there more as representatives of a political party than that of the community. What might be a miracle, if any of them gets elected, their first commitment will be to the goals of the party they represent than us as the community. Under the new scenario, our masters will change but our woes will not.

I wonder why we have not been able to decipher, for three long decades, as to what is wrong with us. It was never a rocket science. Many wise persons have signaled from time to time that our fragmented society is our undoing. They kept warning us that there is no other solution to our problem than consolidation. The call of the hour is to dissolve the ego, merge all organisations into one strong front and fight as a unit. Remember, Jews too were in scant numbers but they succeeded only as one unit.

Food for Thought!
Namaskar!

युकाउकायउ

Naushachan

From the President's Desk



TIME TO BE REALISTIC

Our forced exodus in 90s is indeed a blackspot on the history of Kashmir, howsoever one might try to pass it off as a collateral damage of terrorism but that shall not stick because it was a violent displacement and dispossession because of a faith. 14th September every year reminds the displaced KP community of the horrors of the time which were compounded by the assassination of Pt Tika Lal Taploo on September 13, 1989 and that is how 14th September each year is observed as Martyrs' Day. His death rendered KPs as political orphans because he represented their strong and lone political voice. His death spread like a wild fire and the message was not lost on the community. Consequent to it triggered a chain of KP assassinations thereafter when KP intellectuals and veterans became victims this mad religious fundamentalist frenzy. With his death, KPs lost the most popular and tallest leader of the times.

Lot of water has drained down the Vitasta since then. Kashmir has been gradually limping back if not to normalcy but definitely short of it. This has happened in the absence of its native aborigines called Kashmiri Pandits who continue to be in a running exile. Can it be then safely said that Kashmir is headed towards greater Islamisation with no checks and balances. The biggest example of such a religious tilt comes from none other than the major mainstream local political party of the place declaring in its political manifesto that holy Shankaracharya hill will be named as Takhat-e-Seleiman and Hari Parbhat as Kohi-Maran. Such pronouncements have become scary for the displaced KPs and other non-Muslim minorities of the place. There still exists a

common thread between rest of the political parties who also have made pronouncements like revival of Article 370 and pressing for the adoption of the resolution passed by J&K Assembly in 2000 that calls for greater autonomy which means a pre-1953 position and the people are taken on a garden path on such promises which looks unlikely to see the light of the day. Peeling off the layers from such manifestos and pronouncements it looks like the pot of greater autonomy and revival of article 370 has to be kept boiling to reap political benefits and to keep anti-India constituency and anti-centre constituency alive so that such spaces are not closed for milking the cow under the political dispensation, for hard bargain and concessions to be extracted from the Centre.

The so called narrative of late Jagmohan being behind the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits in 90s has again come to the fore with life being put into it to evade and protect the real culprits behind the heinous crime. This is a response to the Supreme Court Judgement that calls for constitution of Truth and reconciliation Commission which if constituted would definitely lift the veil and fix the accountability. But as has been seen during these 35 years, the truth of toxic exodus forced on KPs has been kept under the carpet all these years. Even though known terrorists who killed KPs have been arrested but for crimes other than assassination of KPs. Consequently, our fight has been multifold mostly centred on above mentioned issues to keep Kashmir politically, socially and culturally a place that genuinely accommodates minorities as equal shareholders; nothing more and nothing less.

Having said that upcoming elections in Kashmir constitute an important route to reconnect with Kashmir. As it is definitely helping in creating an electoral space for Kashmiri Pandits in Kashmir, participation in elections therefore, assumes significance. Any democratic process has its own dynamics that calls for assessing the pros and cons of an exercise such as the one whether it is worth to go ahead. My considered opinion is that under the changed political circumstances, participation would gradually help in creation of legitimate minority space for displaced KPs. AIKS has been pleading all these years that boycott of elections is not wise because we seem to be playing in the hands of those who are inimical and not favourably disposed towards us. Participation in elections may not do miracles but will definitely help in registering our presence for greater visibility on the socio-cultural map of Kashmir and that I think is a realistic thinking for all of us to explore.



- Puran Patwari



General Secretary's Column

Only a few days are left for start of process of election for the post of the President AIKS, who in turn will choose his new team for the next three years. The nomination forms will be available from 5th October 2024 onwards. I request the Affiliates to please clear their arrears before the start of the election process and associate your organisation actively with the process of elections. As AIKS is an affiliate driven organisation, affiliates have to play a leading role in formulating the long term policies of AIKS, especially in the present scenario where assembly is being formed and we will have the Govt. of our elected representatives in J&K. Also in view of the latest developments where Central Govt. is thinking seriously for rehabilitation of KP's back in Kashmir, KP organisations have a role to play. I also request the Life Members/ Patron Members of AIKS to come forward and participate in the forthcoming elections of AIKS.

AIKS organised a community meet at Muthi Camp Jammu: On 1st September 2024, the community meet was presided by Dr Romesh Raina, President AIKS, wherein a large number of community activists and representatives of the local organisations participated. The day to day problems faced by the KP's were discussed and the relevant issues were communicated to the concerned officers in the State Govt. The meeting also discussed about the long term programs of the Kashmiri Pandits. The KP organisations demanded the concrete answer from mainstream political parties, both national and regional, on their commitment to addressing the long standing issues faced by the displaced community. The key concerns included the threat perception, the injustice faced over the years and the need for a comprehensive roadmap for the return and rehabilitation of KP's in consultation with mainstream KP organisations. The key speakers included Dr. Romesh Raina- AIKS, Sh. Utpal Kaul- GKPD, Sh. Daleep Mattoo- JKVM, Dr. Manorama Bakshi- AIKS, Sh. Ashwani Kumar- GKPD, Sh. Vijay Bakaya- Apni Party, Sh. Ajay Bharti- BJP and Sh. Hira Lal Bhat- BJP.

AIKS issued Press Communiqué at Jammu: During the AIKS press release on 2nd September 2024 at Jammu, AIKS reiterated its stand on rehabilitation

of KP's and demanded the following:

1. To remain steadfast in their demand for justice and rehabilitation for the Kashmiri Pandit Community.
2. The community is advocating for a permanent settlement in the valley, ensuring their return to their homes & hearths.
3. Concrete steps for the preservation of Cultural heritage.
4. Reference made to change the names of the scared Hindu sites such as Shankaracharya Hill as Takht-i-Sulaiman and Hari Parbat as Koh-e-Maran not acceptable. This tantamount to revisionism that seeks to erase the region's Hindu heritage. Such actions not only affront communal harmony but also sow the fresh seeds of doubt about the things to flow.
5. Establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission for civil society, as also recommended by the Supreme Court.
6. Passage of Temples and Shrines Bill for the control and management of KP Temples, shrines, and their Cultural Centres.
7. Ensure well-being of PM package employees and those KP's who did not leave the valley in the wake of terrorism and thereafter.
8. It also demanded the improved living conditions for the people living in migrant camps in different areas in Jammu.

AIKS also demanded an action oriented response from all political parties.

AIKS in association with JKVM and GKPD observed Balidan Diwas:-

To pay homage to the Martyrs who laid down their lives for the sovereignty of the nation and the pride of Kashmir, "**The Janam Bhoomi**". AIKS in association with JKVM and GKPD observed Balidan Diwas. The program was organised at the B.K. Ganjoo memorial Shahid Sathal, Kali Bari Marg, BSNL Colony near Gole Dakhana, New Delhi from 4.00 pm to 7.00 pm. on Saturday, 14th September 2024. A large number of Biradari members participated in this programme. The presence of a sizeable number of youth of our community was very encouraging.



ALL INDIA KASHMIRI SAMAJ (REGD.)

(APEX BODY OF INDIAN & OVERSEAS KASHMIRI PANDIT ORGANISATIONS)

House No. 308, (LGF), Ashoka Enclave Part-III, Sector 35
Faridabad Haryana 121003, Telephone: 0129-4061043
Web: www.aiks.org; E-mail: hqaiks@gmail.com

Dr. Ramesh Raina

President

Mobile : 9891160674

Email : romeshraina001@yahoo.co.in

Date: 20 Aug, 2024

Nobel Laureate Mr. Muhammad Yunus
Chief of Interim Government,
Bangladesh.

Your Excellency,

We, in India, are extremely concerned about the latest developments in Bangladesh after the protests that erupted against the previous government. The mayhem that ensued has left most of Bangladesh in disarray.

What is more worrying to us in India is, that this anti-government protest has systematically been extended to violence against the minorities, particularly Bangladeshi Hindus. In the capacity of being the President of All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS), I and the Hindu community in India are distressed and shocked at the reports of persecution, extensive burnings of Hindu properties, lootings, killings and women molestations happening in Bangladesh these days.

Sir, having been victims of genocide in Kashmir ourselves since 1990, I can visualise the pain, agony and horror that the Hindu community in Bangladesh must be going through. This is despite their resting faith in their countrymen when they chose to stay back after the partition of India and significantly contributing in building the country since its independence from Pakistan. The atrocities of rape, arson, loot, merciless killings are heart wrenching and blatant violation of human rights in Bangladesh these days. As the authority at the helm of the government, it is incumbent upon your administration to take the task of stopping the atrocities on the minorities on top priority. The government must also immediately constitute a committee for a thorough investigation into these horrendous acts of barbarism and violation of human rights upon the Hindus of Bangladesh and hand down severe punishments to the perpetrators that would serve as deterrent for the future.

It is our hope that under your stewardship, these atrocities on minorities will form the part of your priority to bring order in the country with the government protection to their lives and properties.

Looking forward to your favourable response.

With best regards,

Dr Ramesh Raina

AIKS affiliated Units at:

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

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



**ALL INDIA KASHMIRI SAMAJ (AIKS)
GLOBAL KASHMIRI PANDIT DIASPORA (GKPD)
JAMMU KASHMIR VICHAR MUNCH (JKVM)**

Date - Sept 2, 2024

PRESS COMMUNIQUE

In the backdrop of J&K Assembly elections, three major organisations of Kashmiri Pandits namely the All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS), Global Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora (GKPD), and the Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch (JKVM) together addressed a joint Press conference on sept 2, 2024 at Jammu Press club to extract the commitment from the mainstream political parties of the J&K towards resolving long unresolved issues of unending running exile under the topic ***“Mainstream Political Parties need to clear their stand on the redressal of the core concerns of displaced Kashmiri Pandits and a clear cut roadmap for their return and rehabilitation”***. On behalf of their respective organisations, the Press Conference was addressed by Dr. Ramesh Raina. Dr. Utpal Koul, Daleep Mattoo, Ashwani Bhat and Dr Manorama Bhakhshi. The representatives of these major KP organisations unanimously sought a straight and clear answers from the mainstream political parties of the place about the steps and measures they intend to take post elections to restore the faith and confidence of the displaced Kashmiri Pandits, address their threat perception and injustice meted out during all these 35 of years of exile.

Given these issues, it has become imperative for the mainstream political parties to convince the beleaguered Community about their intentions of timely execution of a policy framework regarding the above-mentioned issues of concern and a roadmap for their honourable rehabilitation in Kashmir consistent with the noted KP community stand aired through regular organisational meetings and Media all these years. It also calls for taking the frontline KP organisations into confidence.

It therefore demanded

1. To remain steadfast in their demand for justice and rehabilitation for the Kashmiri Pandit community.
2. The community is advocating for a permanent settlement in the Valley, ensuring their return to their homes and hearths.
3. Concrete steps for the preservation of their cultural heritage.
4. Reference made to change the names of sacred Hindu sites such as Shankaracharya Hill as Takht-i-Sulaiman and Hari Parbat as Koh-e-Maran not acceptable. This tantamount to revisionism that seeks to erase the region's Hindu heritage. Such actions not only affront communal harmony but also sow the fresh seeds of doubt about the things to follow.

5. Establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission for civil society, as also recommended by the Supreme Court.
6. Passage of Temples and Shrine Bill for the control and management of KP temples, shrines and their Cultural centres.
7. Ensure well-being of PM package employees and those KP's who did not leave Valley in the wake of terrorism and thereafter.
8. It also demanded the improved living conditions in the people living in migrant camps in different areas in Jammu.

AIKS, GKPD AND JKVM It strongly demanded an action-oriented response from the political parties and not merely in their respective organisational papers and slogans that would fade away with the passage of time. It therefore decided to remain steadfast in their demand for justice and rehabilitation for the Kashmiri Pandit community and as a first step would jointly follow up the issue with the powers that be.

Dr. Ramesh Raina
9891160674
President, AIKS

Dr. Utpal Kaul
9818447636
GKPD

Sh. Daleep
Mattoo
9625353980
JKVM

MATA LALESHWARI



Painting Credit : by Pankaj Raina

Press Conference Reports from Jammu & Srinagar

KPs ask political parties to clear stand on community issues

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Sept 1: In the backdrop of the upcoming Jammu & Kashmir Assembly elections, three major Kashmiri Pandit organizations—All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS), Global Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora (GKPD), and Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch (JKVM)—organized a crucial in-house meeting of prominent KPs. The event was held today at Muthi Phase-2. The primary objective of the meeting was to seek inputs and wise counsel from key community leaders.

The KP organizations demand concrete answers from mainstream political parties, both National and Regional, on their commitment to addressing the long-standing issues faced by the displaced community. The key concerns included the threat perception, the injustice faced over the years, and the need for a *comprehensive roadmap for the return and rehabilitation of KPs in consultation with mainstream KP organizations.*

The representatives of KP organization said given that these elections are taking place after the recent abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A, and the subsequent formation of Jammu and Kashmir as a Union Territory, the importance of KP participation in the electoral process cannot be overstated. While the Kashmiri Pandit vote percentage may be small, it has the potential to significantly

influence electoral outcomes across several constituencies. The meeting is expected to result in important takeaways that will inform the KP community's approach in the upcoming elections, ensuring that their votes are cast judiciously for the larger welfare of the community post-elections.

The key speakers included Dr. Ramesh Raina, president, AIKS, Utpal Koul, GKPD, Duleep Mattoo, JKVM, Dr. Manorama Bakshi, vice president, AIKS, Ashwani, GKPD. The political leaders who spoke included, Vijay Bakaya general secretary Apni Party, Ajay Bharti and Hira Lal Bhat of BJP.

During the meeting, the discussion focused on the need for creating a strategic roadmap for the return and rehabilitation of the Kashmiri Pandits, taking into account the general feedback and interaction within the community. Key issues raised included increasing the relief for displaced families, providing proper livelihood opportunities and jobs for displaced youth, and addressing the dilapidated state of quarters for displaced community members currently residing in camps.

The outcomes of the meeting will form the basis for further discussions and actions, ensuring that the concerns and aspirations of the Kashmiri Pandit community are effectively addressed during the upcoming elections.

KP organizations urge parties to address core issues ahead of polls

Jammu, Sep 03 : In the lead-up to the Jammu & Kashmir Assembly elections, three prominent Kashmiri Pandit organizations—All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS), Global Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora (GKPD), and Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch (JKVM)—jointly addressed a press conference at the Jammu Press Club.

The focus of the conference was to demand clear commitments from mainstream political parties regarding the resolution of the ongoing issues faced by displaced Kashmiri Pandits.

Speaking at the event,

Dr. Ramesh Raina, Dr. Utpal Koul, Daleep Mattoo, Ashwani Bhat, and Dr. Manorama Bhakhshi represented their respective organizations.

They collectively called for political parties to present a concrete roadmap for the return, rehabilitation, and preservation of the cultural heritage of Kashmiri Pandits.

Key demands included the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the passage of the Temples and Shrine Bill, and improved living conditions for those residing in migrant camps.

(KNS)

Political Parties Must Address 35-Year-Old Grievances of Kashmiri Pandits, Say KP Groups

Mohsina Bhat/JammuKashmirPolitics
Published: September 3, 2024

Srinagar, 03-Sept: In the backdrop of J&K Assembly elections, three major organisations of Kashmiri Pandits namely the All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS), Global Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora (GKPD), and the Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch (JKVM) together



addressed a joint Press conference on sept 2nd at Jammu Press club to extract the commitment from the mainstream political parties of the J&K towards resolving long unresolved issues of unending running exile under the topic “Mainstream Political parties need to clear their stand on the redressal of the core concerns of displaced Kashmiri Pandits and a clear cut roadmap for their return and rehabilitation”. On behalf of their respective organisations, the Press Conference was addressed by Dr. Ramesh Raina. Dr. Utpal Koul, Daleep Mattoo, Ashwani Bhat and Dr Manorama Bhakhshi.

The representatives of these major KP organisations unanimously sought a straight and clear answers from the mainstream political parties of the place about the steps and measures they intend to take post elections to restore the faith and confidence of the displaced Kashmiri Pandits, address their threat perception and injustice meted out during all these 35 of years of exile. Given these issues, it has become imperative for the mainstream political parties to convince the beleaguered Community about their intentions of timely execution of a policy framework regarding the above-mentioned issues of concern and a roadmap for their honourable rehabilitation in Kashmir consistent with the noted KP community stand aired through regular organisational meetings and Media all these years. It also calls for taking the frontline KP organisations into confidence. It therefore demanded :

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Mohsina Bhat <http://www.indiannewsbureau.com>



– B L Saraf



KASHMIRI PANDITS AND THE UPCOMING ASSEMBLY ELECTION



Election to constitute Jammu and Kashmir Assembly is on course. Subject to any unforeseen situation, the process will conclude on 8th October 2024 and some days later, a popular government will be in place in Srinagar, hopefully. As the election is held after the gap of six years and in a totally altered political and administrative set up, coupled with their 35 years of enforced exile, the Internally Displaced Persons of Kashmir (IDPs) are watching it with keen interest, probably, as never before. The ensuing election springs a hope for them to see an end to their wilderness which has consumed better part of their productive lives and inflicted on them myriad kinds of psychological and physical miseries.

As the election process is getting

underway the IDPs have started asking political parties and the politicians, in the fray, to spell out in unambiguous terms their program and agenda with respect to the return and rehabilitation of KPs in the Valley – who constitute bulk of the IDPs. Well, at times it sounds inadvisable for a contestant to make a community specific commitment while he is an election campaign but living, as the IDPs have been, in the unbearably traumatic conditions – with no hope of immediate closure to their agony – it sounds natural for them to probe a politician's mind who is set to rule their destiny.

Having a bare look at the election manifesto of the political parties, who matter in this election, a standard line or two is visible to flatter the IDPs. In the 32-year long Van Vass, IDPs have seen each of these political

dispensations (national including) ruling J & K, at one time or the other. Two National Parties (BJP and I N C) contesting the Assembly elections have, by turns, ruled Delhi during the same period. So, track record of the contesting political dispensations vis a vis KPs is before us to judge the things in a proper perspective. Some of them did something to ameliorate the inhuman living conditions of the displaced Hindus by providing accommodation fit for human living and jobs to the unemployed young.; others did try to protect the IDP's property rights, back home, by an appropriate legislation; and few did a lot by ensuring that the community's human resource is developed by facilitating their technical education and then harnessed suitably. But these measure have proved a mere "Band Aid" treatment; the core and existential issues of the displaced persons remain unaddressed till now.

Before calling upon the political parties to spell out their commitment to address the "long outstanding issues" faced by the displaced community it is incumbent upon the community itself to show a clarity on the way these "long-outstanding issues" could be sorted out, to the satisfaction of all. They need to be formulated in a "Bullet Point" format with an adequate clarity, based on a broad consensus within the displaced community and then, project them before those who are in a position to answer them. The demand has to emanate from the IDPs; the job can't be left to those who may be in position to meet it, but in the way that suits them. Can anyone among the community dare bring all IDPs on one page so far as the before mentioned is done? This is a moot question whose answer has to be found before passing on Buck to a politician.

It is a tragedy that even after 34 years of wandering in wilderness the IDPs can't zero in on a single workable road map which could lead to their salvation. How long can the displaced community go on lamenting on the lack of numerical strength (a fact) as to catch attention of a potential candidate in the election fray. This maybe a bane but with little bit of common political sense it could be used

as a boon, only if the community realizes its potential as a "Vote Catcher". On their numerical strength the IDPs may not help a candidate to sail through but we have seen it number of times how their plight has been used effectively to garner votes, elsewhere. The community's pitiable condition, exploited on the national TV Screens, has turned a big "Vote Catcher" for some in the mainland. If it sinks in with the community, the situation could be leveraged to its great advantage.

It is time for the community to strategize its stance vis-a-vis the upcoming election. It doesn't pay to put all eggs in one basket. Options must remain open, with making allowance for those who per the ideological predications or other reasons feel inclined towards a particular political dispensation. Each member's right to vote and choice to make must be respected. Having said so, any regimentation to move in a fixed direction is not good politics. This is time when real politics and not a bald emotion is the catch word. Every Kashmiri Pandit has the Nationalism in his DNA. He has inherited it from his forefathers who lived in the most trying times. They held it to the heart and mind no matter the hostile environment. Therefore, it hurts a KP the most when he is off and on reminded of it in a condescending tone.

Tail Piece, with tongue in cheek:
When it comes to the exercising a right of vote, the KP is a pampered Boy for all who are in the fray – (Speaking metaphorically, meaning no disrespect to a girl). Back home, he was "politely asked" by the poll managers of a political party not to bother walking down to a polling station to cast the vote and with feigned respect he would be told, "Pandit Sahib we have already done it for you." Away from home is the refrain "Pandit Ji does not waste your energy to sort out a political party worthy of your vote. We have located it for you please go and cast your vote." No matter the geography, patronizing element remains unchanged.

(The author is a former Principal District & Sessions Judge)



– Surinder Koul



FAROOQ ABDULLAH

A THEATRICAL POLITICIAN

As the Election Commission of India announced the dates for holding an election to the ninety state Legislative Assembly seats from 18th Sept to 1st Oct in three phases, Dr Farooq Abdullah, the leader of the National Conference, got so rejuvenated that he immediately went out to rural areas to awaken his party workers to get ready for the imminent state election. In the first instance in the fit of overjoy to capture power, he declared that the National Conference party would contest the state election independently.

All corruption charges were withdrawn against Dr Farooq Abdullah in the same manner as the Kashmir Conspiracy Case was closed against Shiekh Mohd Abdullah soon after Beig – Parthasarathy talks were concluded. Shiekh Mohd Abdullah replaced Congress Chief Minister, Mir Qasim with the induction of four Ministers, Mohd Afzal Beigh, M.K. Tickoo, D, D Thakur and Sonum Narbu in the newly formed cabinet in Feb 1975

But what was hatched in the backyard, to make Dr Farooq Abdullah reverse his earlier plan and accede to the choice of allying with the Congress party headed by Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi, Leader of the Opposition in the Parliament for the approaching state election, remained unknown. The sharing of the assembly



constituencies was decided with National Conference and Congress fighting for 51 and 32 assembly seats respectively and five assembly segments will have friendly candidates of both parties. Dr Farooq Abdullah has again committed a political mistake by joining hands with the Congress party, this time with Rahul Gandhi whose political survival on borrowed thoughts might prove political doom for him in future. Congress party is no longer of Rajiv Gandhi's time. It has lost its sheen and public grip in the country. Muzzafur Ahmed Shah the nephew of Dr Farooq Abdullah and a close associate of the Gupkar Gang was not

accommodated in the party by Dr Farooq Abdullah. Muzaffur Ahmed Shah sincerely tried to revamp his relationship with Dr Farooq Abdullah and attempted to bridge the gap repeatedly caused by the coup managed by G.M. Shah against Dr Abdullah in 1984. On the contrary, Dr Abdullah lent a hand to Haresh Dev Singh of the JK Panthers party and Mohd Yusuf Tarigami, a CPI(M) leader to accommodate them in two Assembly constituencies where none of the NC or Congress candidates would be given a mandate as a result to his impervious attitude. Muzaffur Ahmed Shah decided to jump into the state election arena under the auspices of his parental party the Anqalabi National Conference party. Muzaffur Ahmed Shah called the party meeting and candidates for the first phase of the election were announced. This political move by Shah is most likely to cut the ratio of the votes of the National Conference in the valley because of his loyalist groups in the Anqalabi National Conference within the National Conference. However, the shortage of funds may avert the full plunge of the participation of the Anqalabi National Conference in the election.

Certain senior party political observers believed Shiekh Mohd Abdullah had a poor opinion about the political understanding of Dr Farooq Abdullah. His flamboyant outlook, past association with the Pakistan-based Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front and non-seriousness were not approved by Shiekh Mohd Abdullah who considered Dr Abdullah unfit to run the state. Shiekh had a softness for Begum Khalida and was interested in announcing her as his successor. But Begum Abdullah prevailed otherwise and Dr Farooq Abdullah was nominated as the successor to Shiekh Mohd Abdullah in 1981.

Getting into a coalition with the Congress party headed by Rajiv Gandhi in Jammu and Kashmir for the 1987 state assembly elections was another error of judgment of Dr Farooq Abdullah. The allegation of rigging the election turned out destructive to the state. It proved a watershed moment in the state when an amalgamated Islamic political group joined

hands under the broader platform of Muslim United Front to contest the election against NC- Congress combine. Muslim United Front was denied political space in the state assembly through the ballot box. The turnover of the electorate was around 75%. Based on the ground feedback from the bureaucrats, the election results did not favour the N.C and Congress alliance in the state. In connivance with the close confident bureaucratic sections, the election outcome was manipulated in favour of the National Conference and Congress elected representatives. It amounted to committing fraud against the Indian Constitutional rights of the electorate of Jammu and Kashmir. With the declaration of election results, steps were taken by the elected government, particularly by the Late Ghulam Mohiuddin Shah, NC, candidate from the Amira Kadal constituency to manage the arrest of Muslim United Front youth volunteers in different police stations in Srinagar. Legal cases were framed against them on flimsy grounds with no substantial charges to convict them under the law of the land. In the loss of hope and despair, the imprisoned youth yelled, "What bullets could not decide, will be decided by bullets?" Soon after the formation of the state Government in 1987 mid-year, the Muslim radical youth came on the streets of Amira Kadal, Court road to vandalize, and loot all liquor and wine shops owned by Kashmiri Hindus in the vicinity of Lal Chowk area with a plea that liquor was impermissible in Islam. Wine shops were targeted in Sopore, Baramulla, and Anantnag by Islamic groups as a step towards Islamisation.

The simmering call to Kashmiri Muslim youth to get ready for exfiltration to Pakistan for arms handling training in the camps opened by their military in cohort with their ISI agency became a virus. It was followed by trials of Kashmir Muslim youth crossing over to Pakistan from the Keran sector, Via Farkiyar top, District Kupwara. Many youths had left their departure notes in the bedrooms to inform parents they had gone across to undergo training for Azadi. They boarded

Kupwara bus services from a stop ahead of the Batamallo bus stand within the proximity of Tatoo Ground, Srinagar. Subversion in the state services and police with radical Islamic ideology had made inroads in most of the administrative and educational verticals of the state by the cadre-based Jamaat- -e-Islami and its multiple frontal organizations. On completion of arms handling training, the trained Kashmiri youth returned to the valley with sacks of arms and ammunition and the locals welcomed them as freedom fighters and were given social respectability and sheltered by inmates. The state Administration and police force were comatose, though the state cabinet headed by Farooq was at the helm of state affairs. One gets shocked, as to why Dr Abdullah was casual and callous to reign in the administration and police forces to bring the situation under control instead of allowing the conditions to drift to the worst. The glaring example of the collapse of the administration run by Dr Farooq Abdullah was the killing of Mohd Yusuf Halwai, NC block president of Kalashpur, Srinagar, Justice Neelkant Ganjoo, Advocate Tika Lal Taploo, state BJP leader, Lassa Kaul, Director Doordarshan, Srinagar, Advocate and columnist Prem Nath Bhatt, S.N.K.Singh, IB officer, Anantnag in broad daylight went on unabated. On the contrary, people assembled around the corpse of the brutally killed innocent citizens to display it as the triumph achieved by the Pakistan-trained Kashmiri terrorists. Terror and fear psychosis were created in the surrounding locality but none dared to come forward to carry the fatally injured victims to the nearby hospital to save their lives. Besides that, the intermittent instances of bullet firing around vintage road crossing, bomb blasts in the vicinity of Srinagar and attacks on A.M.Watali, DIG Srinagar, O.N.Watal, Dy. S.P., Interrogation and other police officers were a continuous affair from 1988 onwards. The lawlessness and administrative wreck were at their nadir in the valley. The state was run by a coalition government of the National Conference Congress from 1987 to 1989 Dec.

Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister of the country during those years. Both had some mutual friendly understanding and they overlooked the mayhem that was going on in the valley. The treacherous action of Dr Farooq Abdullah was that he sneaked away to London and left the people of the state at the mercy of Pakistan-trained terrorists. He betrayed the people's trust and deceived them. On the contrary, his fleeing from the state at the brink of political upheaval led to the mass exodus of the Kashmiri Hindu minority from the valley. Very tactfully Dr Farooq and the valley-based Muslim leadership knitted a false narrative that it was Jagmohan, the Governor who manufactured the exodus of Hindu minorities in 1989-90. Dr Farooq Abdullah should be put in the dock by officially announcing the appointment of the Criminal Investigative Commission to probe into the causes and reasons for the lapses and failures of the state government during his leadership. If the state had failed to control the situation in the valley, why the Indian army stationed in the valley was not brought into action to restore normalcy?

The first phase of Dr Farooq Abdullah as the Chief Minister after the demise of the Late Shiekh Mohd Abdullah in 1982 was in no way exemplary. He was immature and a novice in party politics of the state and his induction as the Chief Minister was a political blunder. Dr Farooq Abdullah was nominated as the party President by the late Shiekh Abdullah in 1981 after he freshly returned from England. Instead of attending to the administrative priorities, he preferred to climb up the traffic police ramp on the road crossing to direct vehicular traffic. Or would come out of the car to put his shoulder behind a loaded cart pushed manually by daily wage earners on the roadside. Dr Farooq had spare time to give a pillion ride to a Bollywood actress on the main roads of Srinagar. Though many presumed it was a public posture. It was perceived as his non-seriousness towards his prime responsibility of holding control of the state that was infested with subversive, anti-national and Jamiat E Islami forces. His indulgence in political waywardness added more problems to the state. Bureaucratic hierarchy took his leadership casually, and

there was a slide in the administrative and policing system in the state. Another grave edacity and stupidity was that the National Conference youth cadre challenged the modesty of Indira Gandhi the Prime Minister of the country when she was lecturing election gathering in Huzari Bagh by pulling down their pants in June 1983 at the behest of Dr. Farooq Abdullah. The disrespect flaunted by Dr Farooq to the Indian Prime Minister by such obscene behaviour was disgusting. He crossed all the limits, despite their deep Shiekh- Nehru-Gandhi family relationship.

More than these gimmicks, Dr Farooq Abdullah learnt to have the audacity to meet Khalistani elements in the valley and even dared to visit the Sangrur side of Punjab, where he was reported to have met the late Jarnail Singh Bhindrunwalla, a Khalistani leader in 1983. In the following months in Srinagar Nirankari Bhawan, Jawahir Nagar, Srinagar was attacked and vandalized by Sikh extremist elements, forcing police to resort to firing to maintain law and order in the Srinagar city.

The casualties caused by police action flared up. The Sikh agitators joined by some Muslim miscreants and subversive elements shouted communal and anti-establishment slogans. They walked towards the Hanuman temple in Amira Kadal, Srinagar, at a stone's throw from Nirankari Bhawan to indulge in desecrating the idol of Lord Hanuman and damaging the temple premises. In 1974, Dr Farooq Abdullah was known to have met the late Amanullah Khan JKLF founder member and his associates Maqbool Bhat and Farooq Hyder and attended their meeting.

The entire Kashmiri Hindu minority was sidelined in appointments, promotions and admissions in professional colleges purposely under the stewardship of Dr Farooq Abdullah in the state. They were ignored and neglected in all affairs of the state. Their ratio in employment in the state service plummeted to a negligible level under a calibrated plan to force them to look to mainland India for their livelihood and service career.

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(Part – III)

– Vijay Kashkari



ASKPC (SDYS) VOICE OF KASHMIRI PANDITS

As decided, the Coordination Committee held a delegate conference on 11 February 1990 at Shiv Mandir, behind Geeta Bhawan, Jammu. Delegates, besides displaced persons of the valley and Hindus from Jammu districts, attended the Conference. The coordination committee, previously formed, was disbanded, and the committee took a new avatar of J&K Sahayta Samiti, Geeta Bhawan Jammu. Shri Vaidya Vishnu Dutt was nominated as President, Shri Subash Gupta as General Secretary, Shri Manohar Lal Vaidya as Treasurer, Prof C L Gupta and Pt A N Vaishnavi as Vice Presidents, Pt HL Chatta and Shri Bhagwat Swarup as Secretaries, Pt H N Bhat as Accountant and I/C office. Shri Satpal Gupta, Pt M L Malla, Pt P N Karnail, Vaidya Hari Ram, Shri Swedish Dera, Pt HL Jad, Shri Jaswant Singh and Shri G L Sharma are the members.

It was followed by a three-day convention on the 13th, 14th and 15th of July, 1990, at Mahajan Hall, Gulab Bhavan, Jammu, by ASKPC. Six hundred delegates and 100 special invitees attended the various sessions of the Convention. On 13 July 1990, about 150 subjects and the working committee met to draft the resolutions. On 14 July 1990, the Convention started with paying homage to martyrs, and 200 were identified and displayed. Shri Swami

Hareswardan Mahraj of Shangri Mutt led the prayer. Pt A N Vaishnavi hoisted the dharma flag. Pt M L Aima, the convener, delivered the keynote address. Justice (Retd), J N Bhat, Dr Balji Nath Pandit, Bramchari Moti Lal, Shri Moti Lal Shastri, Maj Gen (Retd) BN Dhar, Maj Radha Krishen, Pandits A N Vaishnavi, D P Koul, P N Karnail, M L Aima, all from ASKPC, Pt C L Gadoo, President Kashmir Samiti, Delhi and his office bearers Pt Sunil Shakhdar, Dr P L Kantroo, Pt Tikoo, Pt M L Koul General Secretary AIKS, Pt Bijender Kachru, President of Lucknow Sabha, Pt O N Bhat, Vice President, Amritsar, Pt BN Wali, Mumbai and Pt Ganju, Pune, along with their executive members attended the Conference. Delegates on the dais included Advocate K N Raina and Advocate P L Koul. Amongst the special invitees called on the podium were Shri Indresh Kumar, Pracharak RSS, Prof C L Gupta, President BJP J&K and Shri Bhagwat Swarup, General Secretary, BJP J&K. Dr Agnisekher and Pt Shailender Aima conducted the proceeding of the first session. The panellists for the session were Prof T N Shalla, Pt Utpal Koul, Dr Ajay Churungoo, Pt Pushkar Nath Karnail, Pt Hradya Koul Bharti and Pt Amar Malmuhi. Working President ASKPC Pt HL Jad welcomed the delegates.

Pt PK Sapru read the first resolution before the house and put it for discussion. In the first session, three resolutions were set to vote

that included (I) the Government of India to take serious note of exodus and terrorism; (II) the National and International Human Rights Organization to take notice of the violation of human rights of Kashmiri Hindus and (III), a. Hindus and other minorities in the state be ensured right to equality and protection against discrimination based on religion, b. right to participate in the state's political, social and economic development based on equality and not subject to the precedence of the Muslim Majority; c. right to religious and social freedom in the state; d. abolition of the population proportion for employment on a religious basis, e., protection of minorities as reverse minorities, f. restoration of all religious places encroached upon and g. creation of a special Para-military police force amongst the minorities. After discussions, the resolutions were unanimously passed by the voice vote. In the second session, three resolutions were deliberated upon. Resolution IV, the future settlement of Kashmiri Hindus, is paramount as this resolution was later conceptualized as "Homeland Resolution" by Panun Kashmir. The resolution read, "The house unanimously resolves that in case of the political leadership and the system lacks the will to face these hard truths and act in fitness of things, that is abrogate the special status accorded to J&K, change the population composition in the state, the Kashmiri Hindu minority has the legal and the constitutional right to demand the following for the honourable return to their land; a) the scattered Kashmiri Hindu minority should be reorganized in a manner that will create a security zone with concentrated Hindu population in the valley, so as to accommodate 5 lakh Kashmiri Hindus including those who have migrated from Kashmir in the past due to political and economic compulsions and having been deprived to their due share in the affairs of the state specially Kashmir province" b), c), d) and e) of resolution IV pertained to unique constitutional guarantees, special economic provisions, creation of suitable conditions and incentive for the return and licensed arms to be provided. Resolution V passed to Quasi-permanent settlement of KPs

in one place till resolution IV is set in motion. The other parts of resolution V are adequate compensation for losses of yields, financial aid to traders to start new businesses and inventory of properties left behind. Resolution VI was about the disinformation of the Kashmir events.

Sri Indresh Kumar addressed the delegates after resolving the resolutions. He praised the speakers for their stand in the Convention. After that, Pandit A N Vaishnavi and Justice (Retd) J N Bhat delivered their speeches. Pt Vaishnavi asked the community that they might have to shift the agitation to Delhi. Pt M L Aima presented a vote of thanks.

On the concluding day, 15 July 1990, an open session for the public was held on Shiv Mandir premises. Shri Kedar Nath Sahni was the chief speaker. Pt M L Aima conducted the proceedings. The speakers included Pt Sashi Sekher Toshkhani and Pt C L Gadoo. Later, delegates outside Jammu visited migrant camps in Jhiri, Mishriwalla, Muthi, Nagrota, etc.

On 18 July 1990, the ASKPC working committee of 60 members met under the Chairmanship of Justice (Retd) J N Bhat to thank the organizers of the Convention. Prof T N Shalla of KP Sabha, Jammu, Youth Forum and J&K Sahayta Samiti were appreciated by Pt M L Aima for their support.

To protest against the Government of India, ASKPC managed to enrol 2500 displaced persons to proceed to Delhi on 27 December 1990. Pt A N Vaishnavi and Pt Shiban Ji Pandita were in Delhi to receive the protestors. On 29 December 1990, the protestors took a route march from Paharganj to Boat Club; at Boat Club, the CM of Assam, P K Mohanty, S/Sh L K Advani, Madan Lal Khurana and Pt C L Gadoo, President Kashmir Samiti, Delhi addressed the march protest. On 30 December 1990, marchers in a procession went to Mr Rajeev Gandhi's residence in trucks. The complainants sat at Dharna outside his home. Mr Gandhi called a delegation inside his house and communicated about the grim situation in

Kashmir. The Dharna was lifted upon his assurance that he would talk to the Government. Later, the KP leaders went to see then PM Chander Sekher. They sought assurance to investigate solutions to mitigate displaced persons' inhuman conditions.

After two years, on the 25th and 26th of September, 1992, another two-day convention was held by ASKPC under the name of 'SAM-92' at Jammu. The speakers expressed resentment toward the insensitiveness of the governments, particularly the Government of India, for taking more than 32 months to create a particular cell in the Home Ministry. Shri L K Advani addressed the Convention held at Chanderbagha, Canal, Jammu, on the last day of the Convention. The Convention reiterated the resolutions of the 1990 convention. The other solutions voted for were that a) the central Government should issue a white paper on the insurgency in Kashmir, b) the clear-cut policy on Kashmir should be defined, c) the full and meaningful participation in political, economic and social affairs of the state, d) the displaced community is granted minority status, e) one KP is nominated as a member of Human Rights Commission, f) the community is declared as economically deprived, f) the seats in the legislature of state and Parliament is reserved for the community and g) the representation is given to ASKPC in the State Advisory Council and District Advisory Board. The 1990 resolution, the 'Quasi permanent settlement' resolution, was reiterated. In this Convention, the delegates, by raising their hands on the proposal of Pt HL Chatta, Pt A N Vaishnavi, was requested to be President of ASKPC till the return of KPs to the valley.

A petition signed by Pandits A N Vaishnavi, President HL Chatta, Vice President Moti Lal Malla, and two members, dated 14 August 1991, referring to the departure and after-effects of the exodus, was submitted to the Speaker, Lok Sabha, through Shri Madan Lal Khurana for necessary action. A reply to this petition was received on 6 September 1991. The response disappointed the community.

In 1995, when the Maharashtra Government, by statute, granted supernumerary seats to the displaced community in the professional colleges, ASKPC played a significant role.

By and bye, the role of the J&K Sahayta Samitii diminished; the ASKPC came in support of traders, students, fire sufferers, agriculturists, orchardists and employees in asking for a separate autonomous and functional unit of Kashmir University, employment to the employed youth, relaxation of 5 years in age for employment in central government employment, pucca buildings of two rooms for habitats in camps, enhancement of relief, compensation of losses to traders, agriculturists, orchardists and traders, soft loan to traders and the entire period of 'migration' to be treated on duty. These were demands discussed in Convention SAM-92 also. ASKPC attended all the AIKS conferences held in Jaipur, Chandigarh, and Kolkata during this period.

ASKPC, on track with the demands, held various conferences and meetings. The Government accepted a few demands. By the end of the twentieth century, ASKPC revamped the organization, and the President nominated new executives with old and new faces. The new team was Pandits HL Chatta, General Secretary; Radha Krishen Raina, Sr. Vice President; V K Kashkari, Vice President; Smt Indu Kilam, Vice President; Prithvi Nath Raina, Vice President; Madan Lal Kashkari, Treasurer Man Mohan Koul, Secretary, Ramesh Hakim, Bansi Lal Handoo as Secretaries, Amongst the working committee members were Prof B L Zutshi, Prof T N Shalla, Prof A K Munshi, Ram Kishen Wangnoo, Moti Lal Malla, Ram Kishen Bhat, Smt Kirti Kalla and some more. At Durganagar Jammu, ASKPC purchased land for its office. Pt A N Vaishnavi completed the building before he departed from this world. His second dream project was the "*MARTAND*", the organization's official organ.

The other activities during the last one and half decades were to address the problems of relief and other non-relief holders with the

concerned bureaucrats and politicians. A joint forum with AIKPC led by H N Jatoo, PK led by Ashwani Chrungoo and Non-Camp migrant association led by D N Kisoo was formed. This Forum held a few joint programs on 13 July and 19 January. At the request of the Government, a bill to protect Temples and Shrines was submitted to the Government. Amar Balidan Trust's social activities, coordinated by ASKPC, included distributing scholarships, helping the needy conduct marriages, and Yegnopavit.

This Paper will be incomplete if the "MARTAND" is not discussed. The tabloid, later Daily, born in 1931, was a famous voice of Kashmir and Kashmiri Pandits in the valley. Gwashi Lal Koul, popularly called Gwashi Lal Koul BA, conceived it, and its founder Editor-in-Chief was Pt. Kashyap Bandhu. The first printer and Publisher was Pt Maheshwar Nath Braroo. Upon his demise, Pt Jagan Nath Shali took responsibility. The management of press and circulation was entrusted to Pt Shyam Lal Gurtoo. Amongst the famous correspondents was Pt Prithvi Nath Thaploo of Anantnag. The others who were associated with the Paper were Pandits Shambu Nath Ogra, Sat Lal Sadhu, Ramchand Abhai, Prem Nath Pardesi, Master Zinda Koul, Dina Nath Nadim, Brij Mohan Dataria Kaif, Mahjoor Kashmiri, J N Jigyasu, Dina Nath Dilgir, Sham Lal Wali and Tirth Kashmiri. The influential role of the newspaper in highlighting the plight of Muzafarbad refugees earned the wrath of the administration to get the publication suspended for some months. The Paper was stopped for its bold writing by Maharaja and the second time by Sheikh Mohamad Abdullah. In 1967, the Government again stopped the Paper of Time from carrying factual stories.

"The Martand", being an eyesore to the administration, was to be revived several times. There was also an economic crunch,

which resulted in its closure. "The Martand" was restored as an English edition. After some time, the publication was again stopped. In August 1982, the Paper was on the stand. To boost the publication of "The Martand", a development committee was formed, and the notable members were Prof S L Pandit, Prof Gopi Krishen Mujoo, Prof P N Pushp, Pt. Jia Lal Raina and Pt M L Bhat as Editor. Pt. Prem Nath Bhat's articles, "anti-India elements, the Kashmir-time bomb, Kashmiri the next mujahideen target after Afghanistan, Kashmir cell in Pakistan and Kashmir Minority in gas chambers of Secular Laboratory, were the visionary articles published in the *Martand* to warn the community about its future.

In exile, "The Martand" was published briefly in the early nineties. Pt Gadroo of Kashmir University was involved with the Paper. On 17 August 2007 at Abhinav Theatre, Jammu, "The Martand" was re-launched before an audience of more than a thousand people. Pt M K Kaw, President, AIKS was the Chief Guest. The printer and Publisher of the Paper was Pt A N Vaishnavi. Prof T N Shalla was the Editor-in-Chief, V K Kashkari (author of this Paper), Executive Editor, and Pradeep Koul Khodhali, Associate editor. The advisory constituted Dr Rajesh Bhat, Avtar Bhat and Prof B L Zutshi. The resident editor in Delhi was Kundan Kashmiri, and the business executive was HL Chatta. Pt S K Khaibri later edited the Paper. Unavoidable circumstances and an economic crunch forced its stoppage again. From the beginning, *Martand* has faced financial difficulties.

ASKPC (SDYS), a frontal organization of Kashmiri Pandits, is losing its sheen in exile for several reasons. The main reason is that the scattered community and the youth who would nurture the organization are busy getting themselves settled outside Jammu.

Readers' Comment

Namaskar to the Editorial Board, of course to Dr Raina and his teammates of NAAD in elucidating both culture and faith. My hand folded Naman to AIKS team! Chariveti Chraiveti! Yeh hi to mantra hai Apna – T N Razdan



– Ashok Bhan



TRIBUTES TO MARTYR Maj Sushil Aima

Scores of Kashmiris and exiled Pandits paid rich tributes to the illustrious son of Kashmir and martyr Major Sushil Aima, at his memorial in his name at Major Sushil Aima Road Gurugram-Haryana, for his supreme sacrifice of life in defence of and protection of the “motherland and the Dharma of Bharat Mata.”

Among others Ashok Bhan, noted Supreme Court Senior Lawyer and a prominent Kashmiri leader, Kashmir peace lovers (KPL) coordinator, Ajay Pandita, Dr Anil Vaisnavi President Gurgoan Kashmiri Association, All India Kashmiri Samaj Vice President Rohit Dhar and academicians, civil society activists, artists and veterans paid glowing tributes to Major Aima.

It was On 01 Aug 1999, night, when Major Sushil was making preparations for his departure for Delhi next morning, his unit was given a task to blunt a possible attack by a large group of Pakistani terrorists and foreign mercenaries assembled on a nearby hill. The credible intelligence confirmed that this group had plans to attack a village in the vicinity in Poonch district, largely inhabited by members of one particular community.

Maj Sushil assessed situation and planned an operation. Under his leadership the army unit 17 RR -cordoned off the area and launched an all-out attack. Maj Sushil and



*Major Sushil Aima
(15-07-1966 to 01-08-1999)*

his troops engaged in a fierce encounter that lasted for over seven hours, and ended up with a hand-to-hand fight, with heavy losses on the intruders. Two terrorists fell to the bullets of Major Sushil, but in the later stage of the encounter, he was fatally wounded when a

bullet hit him in his left temple. However, in a rare display of raw courage, holding the revolver in his left hand, Maj Sushil shot dead the third terrorist who had fired the fatal shot at him. Then he provided cover to a colleague, who had been grievously injured in a grenade blast and helped him crawl to safety.

It took five militants to pin him down after a 15-minute hand-to-hand close quarter combat in which he managed to kill three militants. In this operation, Major Aima and his commandos killed a total of five hard core Pak militants and recovered four AK rifles, five bags full of IED and explosives with a large quantity of ammunition. Thus, Maj Sushil at the age 32, with a promising future ahead of him, was martyred, defending his motherland and country's constitutional dharma. Major Aima fought valiantly till his last breath against the Pakistani intruders and joined the select ranks of the martyrs of the great Indian army. When the body of the deceased hero was brought to his house at Palam Vihar in Delhi, thousands of people had gathered there to be with the bereaved family in its hour of grief. They stood there, men and women, in silent sorrow. Not many had seen or known the young army officer, but here was India, paying its homage, to a martyred son of India. Born on July 15, 1966 Maj Sushil Aima in an illustrious family of Srinagar, settled in Gurgaon (Haryana). In mid-eighties, young Sushil Aima, a 12th class student, sought admission to the National Defence Academy, he did not inform his parents or any other member of the family fearing that nobody in his family would approve it. But after he was selected in 1985, Maj Sushil reluctantly went to his father and gave him the news, expecting that the answer would be a firm 'No'. But that did not happen. His father, Shri Makhanlal Aima, an insurance officer, did not get angry but was rather surprised.

Maj Sushil was a computer buff who would spend hours together in front of his TV monitor toying with latest software programs. As per his Commanding Officer, "Maj Sushil Aima was six feet 5 inches tall and could scare a militant to death by his mere presence,". He

was the son of the soil and had a burning desire to get rid of every single intruder/terrorist from his motherland". He personified the Army dictum of 'Eye for the militants and heart for the innocents.'

Major Sushil belongs to Aima family from Srinagar. His uncle, late Shri Mohanlal Aima, was among the moving spirits of the post-1947 revival of Kashmiri music. He lifted the Kashmiri "chhakri" from its plebeian moorings and gave it popularity and respectability among the Kashmiris. Through the medium of a newly established radio station in Srinagar, he was instrumental in bringing out the "sufiana" music from the "diwankhanas" of the elite and taking it to the homes of common people. Shri Omkar Aima, another uncle of Maj Sushil, was a stage personality before he moved on to Bombay films, starting with the lead role in first-ever Kashmiri feature film, 'Mainzraat'.

Major Sushil Aima was commissioned into the Corps of Air Defence Artillery (later named Army Air Defence) in 1988, and as the years rolled by, he transformed into a committed soldier. In his brief career, he earned the praise of his superiors for his bravery, initiative and leadership qualities, especially, during his stint in Doda district in Jammu and Kashmir, one of the worst militancy-affected areas. On 01 Aug 1994, he got married to Ms Archana and the couple had a daughter Ridhi and a son Siddharth. In 1997, he was promoted to the rank of Major and later he was deputed to serve with 17 RR battalion deployed in J & K for counter-insurgency operations.

Maj Sushil Aima was given the nation's second highest peacetime gallantry award, "Kirti Chakra" for his exceptional courage, leadership and supreme sacrifice. Maj Sushil Aima is survived by his wife Smt Archana Aima, daughter Ridhi, son Siddharth.

"Salute to the martyrdom of all those who made the supreme sacrifices of their lives in protecting the innocent citizens and in blunting the nefarious designs of enemy to harm and bleed our motherland" was the united one voice tribute of the participants.



– Rohit Tikoo



Lassa Kaul

A Legacy of Courage and Sacrifice

Between 1988 and 1990, Kashmir faced a dark era of terrorism that claimed many innocent lives. Notable figures such as **Tika Lal Taploo, Justice Neel Kanth Ganjoo, Satish Tikoo, Sarvanand Kaul Premi and his son, Girija Tikoo, Sarla Bhat, Prana Ganjoo, K.L. Ganjoo**, and others were tragically murdered. Lassa Kaul was also a victim of this radicalism, his life cut short, adding to the many shattered dreams caused by terror.

Lassa Kaul's Impact and Tragic Death

In the troubled history of Kashmir, Lassa Kaul stands out as a figure of strength and dedication. He was a key figure who opposed the insurgency, using his position and beliefs to make a difference. Kaul worked for both Doordarshan Srinagar and All India Radio during a time when Kashmir was on the brink of chaos. His life was tragically ended by those who feared his influence.



On February 13, 1990, Srinagar suffered a major loss when Lassa Kaul, the Director of Doordarshan Srinagar, was killed by JKLF terrorists. Loved and respected in the community, his murder shocked the city. His daughter, Sanjila Kaul, recalled that on that night, Lassa's parents were anxiously waiting for him when they heard gunshots. His mother, overwhelmed with grief, collapsed and was deeply affected by her son's death. Lassa was shot dead outside their home in Bemina, Srinagar, by terrorists from the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF).

A Life of Professional Dedication

Lassa Kaul's career in broadcasting was driven by a commitment to serving his community. As the Director of Doordarshan Srinagar and having worked for All India Radio, Kaul's efforts coincided with one of Kashmir's most challenging periods. Despite the violence and unrest, Kaul remained a beacon of integrity and professionalism. Known for his steadfast adherence to broadcasting ethics and refusal to bow to political pressures, Kaul's leadership was marked by innovation and dedication to transparency.

Lassa Kaul launched public grievance programs that exposed corruption, showcasing his belief in the media's power to hold the powerful accountable. These programs, which were crucial in a time of political and social upheaval, made him both respected and targeted. His work demonstrated a commitment to using media for positive change, despite the personal risks involved.

A Community Pillar and the Belief Surrounding His Death

Lassa Kaul was not just a professional but a beloved community member. His daughter described him as warm, charming, and genuinely interested in others. His bravery was evident during a bomb scare at All India Radio, where he prioritised the safety of others by personally inspecting the threat. This act of courage highlighted his dedication to both his personal and professional responsibilities.

Suspensions linger about the

circumstances surrounding Kaul's assassination, with allegations that some colleagues may have deliberately aided his killers. The theory, though unsubstantiated, suggests a possible inside job where information about Kaul's routine was deliberately shared with terrorists. This disturbing possibility underscores the need for a comprehensive investigation into the murder. Given the known tactics of terrorist organizations, employing sleeper cells to target specific individuals, the question of how the assailants obtained such precise details about Kaul's movements remains unanswered and is the subject of investigation.

The Lassa Kaul Award and Its Discontinuation

The government honoured Lassa Kaul by establishing the "**Lassa Kaul Award for National Integration**," an annual award given for the best program on All India Radio that promotes national unity. This special award was part of the Akashvani Annual Awards ceremony, which was last held in 2019 under the leadership of Shri Prakash Javadekar, the Union Minister of Information & Broadcasting.

Efforts to discontinue the Lassa Kaul Award began even before 2020. However, during Fayyaz Sheheryar's tenure as Director General of All India Radio, he firmly opposed any moves to abolish the award. His strong stance ensured that the award continued throughout his time in office. Unfortunately, after Sheheryar retired in December 2019, the Akashvani Annual Award Ceremony was abruptly stopped for reasons that remain unclear.

The abandonment of the Lassa Kaul Award raises troubling questions about the priorities of India's public broadcasting system. At a time when the nation is grappling with issues of national integration and combating extremism, the decision to discontinue an award that celebrated these very values seems counterproductive and shortsighted.

This decision reflects a broader trend of historical amnesia, where the sacrifices of individuals like Lassa Kaul are conveniently forgotten in the rush to move forward. This forgetting not only dishonours the memory of those who gave their lives for the nation but also deprives younger generations of role models and inspiration.

As we reflect on Lassa Kaul's legacy thirty-four years after his martyrdom, it is clear that his story remains relevant and inspiring. His commitment to truth, his courage in the face of danger, and his unwavering belief in the power of media to effect positive change are qualities that are sorely needed in today's world.

FAQs on Lassa Kaul :

A Legacy of Courage and Sacrifice

Q1: Who was Lassa Kaul? Lassa Kaul was the Director of Doordarshan Srinagar and a prominent figure in the broadcasting community of Kashmir. He worked for both Doordarshan Srinagar and All India Radio during a turbulent period in Kashmir's history.

Q2: What happened to Lassa Kaul? Lassa Kaul was assassinated on February 13, 1990, by terrorists from the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF). His murder was part of a wave of violence that swept through Kashmir between 1988 and 1990.

Q3: Why is Lassa Kaul's death significant? Lassa Kaul's death is significant because he was a strong voice against insurgency and used his position in the media to promote truth and integrity. His assassination shocked the community and highlighted the dangers faced by those who opposed terrorism in Kashmir.

Q4: What contributions did Lassa Kaul make to broadcasting? Lassa Kaul was known for his integrity and professionalism in broadcasting. He introduced public grievance programs that exposed corruption and held the powerful accountable. His dedication to transparency and innovation made him a respected figure in the media.

Q5: What is the controversy surrounding Lassa Kaul's death? There is a belief that some of Lassa Kaul's colleagues may have been involved in his assassination by sharing information about his movements with terrorists. This theory remains unconfirmed but adds a layer of complexity to the tragedy.

Q6: What was the Lassa Kaul Award? The Lassa Kaul Award for National Integration was established by the government to honour his legacy. It was given annually for the best program on All India Radio that promoted national unity. The award was last given in 2019.

Q7: Why was the Lassa Kaul Award discontinued? Efforts to discontinue the Lassa Kaul Award began even before 2020. Fayyaz Sheheryar, the then Director General of All India Radio, opposed these moves. However, after his retirement in December 2019, the Akashvani Annual Award Ceremony, which included the Lassa Kaul Award, was stopped for unclear reasons.

Q8: How is Lassa Kaul remembered today? Lassa Kaul is remembered as a brave and dedicated professional who stood against terrorism and promoted truth through the media. His legacy of courage, integrity, and the belief in the media's power for positive change remains relevant and inspiring.

Q9: How did Lassa Kaul's family react to his death? Lassa Kaul's family was deeply affected by his death. His daughter, Sanjila Kaul, recalled that his parents were anxiously waiting for him when they heard the gunshots that took his life. His mother was overwhelmed with grief and never fully recovered from the shock.

Q10: Why is it important to remember Lassa Kaul's legacy? Remembering Lassa Kaul's legacy is important because it honours his sacrifices and serves as a source of inspiration. His story of courage and dedication to truth is a powerful reminder of the impact that individuals can have in the fight against terror and for the promotion of national unity.



– Sanjay Pandita



Krishna Janmashtami

A Call for Divine Intervention in a Troubled World.....

As we look around the world today, the pervasive agony, pain, and suffering that touch nearly every corner of the globe are impossible to ignore. Wars have ravaged nations, leaving behind trails of destruction, death, and despair. The nuclear threat looms large, a terrifying reminder of humanity's capacity for self-destruction. Atrocities against women continue unabated, and the battle for supremacy in various forms persists. In the face of overwhelming inhumanity, corruption, and deceit, it's natural

for the common person to feel helpless, even desperate, for some form of divine intervention.

The Bhagavad Gita, one of the most revered scriptures in Hindu philosophy, speaks directly to this despair. It is in the Gita that Lord Krishna assures Arjuna, and through him, the entire world, of the divine promise: "Yada yada hi dharmasya glanir bhavati bhārata, abhyutthanam adharmasya tadatmanam srijamyaham." (Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 4, Verse 7) – "Whenever there is a

decline in righteousness and an increase in unrighteousness, O Arjuna, at that time I manifest myself on earth."

This assurance from the Gita has resonated through the ages, offering solace to countless generations. It tells us that when the burden of sin and iniquity becomes unbearable, God himself incarnates to restore order, to protect the virtuous, and to destroy the wicked. In the current state of the world, where polarization, radicalization, and moral decay are rampant, the question arises: Do we need an Avatar like Krishna to save humanity from itself?

In contemporary times, we witness not only the physical wars between nations but also wars of ideology, culture, and faith. The rise of radicalization and polarization has sown deep divisions within societies, turning neighbour against neighbour and community against community. The modern-day conflicts are not just about territorial boundaries; they are battles for the supremacy of thought, belief, and way of life. The common man, caught in this crossfire, often finds himself powerless, unable to turn to those entrusted with the responsibility of protecting human dignity and life.

The atrocities against women are another profound scar on the conscience of humanity. Despite advancements in education, technology, and human rights, women continue to be victims of heinous crimes across the globe. From sexual violence in conflict zones to systemic discrimination and inequality in supposedly peaceful societies, the battle for women's rights remains far from won. The hypocrisy of a society that celebrates motherhood and femininity while simultaneously oppressing women is stark and painful.

Corruption, deceit, and moral decay have become so entrenched in societal structures that they are often seen as the norm rather than the exception. The very institutions meant to safeguard justice, fairness, and equality are often mired in scandal and wrongdoing. In such a world, where can a common person turn for help?

When those in power, those who are supposed to uphold and protect the sanctity of human life, fail to do so, the yearning for divine intervention becomes even more intense.

The concept of an Avatar, as mentioned in the Gita, is not just a theological idea but a profound philosophical truth that has guided humanity through its darkest times. Krishna's role in the Mahabharata was not just that of a divine guide but also of a moral compass in a world that had lost its way. His teachings to Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra were not just about the immediate war but about the larger battle between good and evil, right and wrong, dharma and adharma.

Krishna's intervention was necessary because the world had reached a tipping point, where adharma had become so pervasive that it threatened the very existence of dharma. His incarnation was a response to the collective cry of humanity, a cry for justice, for truth, and for the restoration of balance.

Today, as we celebrate Janmashtami, the birth of Lord Krishna, we are reminded of this eternal promise. But what does this celebration mean in contemporary times? Is it merely a ritualistic remembrance of a historical event, or does it carry a deeper significance for the world we live in today?

Janmashtami is not just a festival; it is a call to reflect on the values that Krishna stood for. In a world where polarization and radicalization have created deep chasms, Krishna's message of unity, love, and compassion is more relevant than ever. His life was a testament to the power of righteousness, not as an abstract concept but as a practical guide to living in harmony with oneself and others.

Krishna's teachings in the Gita emphasize the importance of action (karma) guided by wisdom (jnana) and devotion (bhakti). In today's world, where inaction in the face of injustice often contributes to the spread of evil, Krishna's call to "rise and fight" against adharma is a powerful reminder of our moral responsibilities.

The significance of Janmashtami in contemporary times also lies in its emphasis on

the role of the individual in the larger cosmic order. Krishna's teachings encourage us to look within, to recognize the divine potential in ourselves, and to act in ways that contribute to the greater good. This is particularly relevant today, where the challenges we face often seem insurmountable. The call for an Avatar is, in a sense, a call for each one of us to embody the values that Krishna exemplified – to be avatars of righteousness in our own lives.

In the present-day world, we are grappling with issues that seem to push humanity to the brink. Climate change, for instance, threatens the very survival of our planet. Natural disasters, often exacerbated by human actions, are becoming more frequent and severe. These are not just environmental issues but moral ones, as they reflect our collective disregard for the balance of nature and our responsibility toward future generations. The call for an Avatar can also be seen as a call for a profound shift in our relationship with the environment, where we embrace sustainability, respect for nature, and a recognition of our interconnectedness with all life.

Economic inequality is another pressing issue of our times. The gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen, creating societies where a few have immense wealth while many struggle to meet basic needs. This disparity breeds resentment, social unrest, and a sense of injustice that can tear at the fabric of communities. Krishna's teachings on detachment from material wealth and the pursuit of higher spiritual goals offer a pathway to addressing these imbalances. His message is a reminder that true wealth lies not in accumulation but in sharing, in ensuring that the well-being of all is prioritized over the greed of a few.

Furthermore, the modern world's obsession with technology and progress has led to a spiritual void, where people are increasingly disconnected from their inner selves and from each other. The relentless pursuit of success, power, and pleasure often leaves individuals feeling empty, anxious, and unfulfilled. In such a world, Krishna's

teachings on the importance of inner peace, self-realization, and devotion to a higher purpose are more relevant than ever. The need for an Avatar is, in this context, a need for a return to spirituality, to a way of life that values inner growth as much as, if not more than, external achievements.

The challenges of our time are immense, and the world often seems to be on the edge of chaos. But just as Krishna's birth during the darkest hour of Dwapara Yuga brought hope and redemption, so too can the message of Janmashtami bring light to our troubled world. The celebration of Krishna's birth is not just a commemoration of the past but a beacon of hope for the future. It is a reminder that no matter how dire the circumstances, divine intervention, in whatever form it may take, is always possible.

As we contemplate the relevance of Janmashtami in today's world, we are called to reflect on the deeper meanings of Krishna's life and teachings. We are reminded that the divine is not distant but present in every moment, in every action, and within every one of us. The call for an Avatar is not just a call for divine descent but a call for each of us to rise to our highest potential, to be instruments of peace, justice, and righteousness in our own lives.

In conclusion, the need for divine intervention, for an Avatar like Krishna, is a reflection of the deep yearning for a world that is just, compassionate, and harmonious. Janmashtami is a celebration of this hope, a reminder that even in the darkest times, the light of the divine can shine through. As we honor the birth of Krishna, let us also honor the divine within ourselves, and in doing so, let us work together to create a world that reflects the values of dharma, love, and unity. The teachings of the Gita guide us, not just in understanding our responsibilities but in empowering us to act upon them, to be the change we wish to see in the world, and to fulfill the eternal promise of divine intervention in our own lives.

*The writer can be reached at
sanjaypanditasp@gmail.com*



- Urmila Pandita



BARAMULLA

A SPIRITUAL ABODE

Heading towards 'Monarco Arcade' in Westmead NSW, I felt the gusty wind thrilling my inner self and reminding me of my native place i.e. Baramulla (old town) which was acclaimed for its green verdure, hard windy climate and a shroud of hillocks presenting the place as a spiritual platter. The winds used to be so hard that Brijnath's roof would land in Tara chand's courtyard. The challenge now was the break feel more and more a distant memory. I remembered the famous couplet of a renowned poet, '*Ajnabi shehar mein ajnabi raaste meri tanhai pai muskurate rahay*' In order to retain all 'good feels' that came with this day mare brought to fore' permanent space and connection with my lost land amid this busyness of life. I tried to nurture some beautiful memories that were lurking in my subconscious mind. This provoked me to pen down the context.

Baramulla, with its uniquely designed architecture by 'Mother Nature' has, all-natural boons in its vicinity. Virgin mountains, small hillocks, springs, river, rocks and what not. Rumblings through memory lanes encompassed in my mind move me to tears. As per historical version Baramulla was popularly known as 'Varahmulkshetra' or 'Varahkshetra' in ancient times. Some historians hold that it was a suburb of Huviskapura (Ushkura). Since the place was associated with 'Adivaraha'-Lord

Vishnu incarnated as boar, it was considered very sacred place. Local Hindus used to immerse 'Asthi,' in meandering Vitasta at Koti Teertham bank. It was considered as sanctum sanctorum leading towards liberation. Popularly known as 'Varahmula' or 'Varmul' after dialectical distortion with the passage of time, the name is derived from two Sanskrit words, Varah (Boar) and Mula (root/ origin), thereby substantiating incarnation of Varahavatara in that area.

It is said that the township was planned by Raja Bhimsena as an economic hub, major urban settlement and a trade centre, before the area witnessed extensive damage during invasion by Kabaili raiders in 1947. Baramulla suffered heavy losses of lives and property of Hindus, Sikhs and Christians. In October every Hindu family observes shraadh of heap of dear ones. One baraat was massacred in Venkura. Beautiful lasses consumed poison avoiding being a prey to cruel tribesmen. They could not be cremated, instead immersed in holy waters of Vitasta. The wounds of sufferings are deep, which bleed often and have further deepened after exodus of 1990. While narrating the catastrophe that befell on soft targets in his book 'Smiles from Kashmir', the author. A reputed journo Mr. K. L. Shridarani exclaimed out of anguish 'One day India will raise a monument over the lost virginity of Baramulla.' The town was a parochial business route running besides river Vitasta towards

Kishenganga. Its importance as a gateway of an economic corridor traversing through Muzaffarabad, Murree-Rawalpindi was well established. Being business hub, the town was economically and socially developed with substantially higher education level, standard of living and employment opportunities culminating into hospitality and generosity amongst the local population.

As per primitive practice of 'Seena-ba-seena' (verbal communication from one person to other), as also substantiated by 'Shajarainasal' (lineage-family tree), gathering dust due to exodus, it is said that two brothers i.e. Pandit Gangaram and Telakhram were deputed as administrators from Lahore. They made old Baramulla town as their abode. In the outskirts of the town, within the vicinity of Hindu Crematorium stood two gigantic Banyan trees embodying the glory of past. These trees were popularly known as 'Gangramni boni' or 'Gangaram's Banyan trees'. Their descendants were known as Pandit clan. A renowned saint namely Krishna Pandit was born out this lineage. He was spiritually elevated soul. During winters, he would go for Sandhyopasana and morning chores to Ganganore a nearby sacred place, a lion used to walk ahead of the saint clearing the snow clad road. This clan of Pandits was later on nicknamed as Kuchroo dynasty as well. As recorded by some shallow knowledge researchers, the nickname has been inferred to be based on human private part which is baseless and misnomer. In order to put records straight, Mirza Pandit, who was grandson of the Saint happened to be forest officer. In official capacity he used to travel far and wide. Once Pandit Saheb was traveling through the forest during cold winter. He saw a bitch along with newly born pups shivering with cold. He was moved and as an act of humanity he rescued these pups and saved them from doom. He brought them to his home. Thereafter, people started pointing to the family as 'the family having pups' (in Kashmiri language as 'honi kuchhar'). With the passage of time the word 'honi' (dog) got dwindled and only 'Kuchhur' remained. Most of the descendants

of Pandit Gangaram write their surname as Kuchroo and Kachroo but they are actually from Pandit clan.

Baramulla is spiritually sacred place ornate with unique heritage of scenic spots of archaeological interest. The bird's eye view of these spots is given in following context. Ganganore -Situated in outskirts of old town of Baramulla lies a beautiful cave spring with artistically shaped rock walls. A house is also erected on the entrance of the cave spring which used to be abode of ascetics and their disciples who would perform spiritual practices at this place. The water of the spring is purest one. All Hindus of the area used to visit the place for taking holy dip here. Ganganore is situated in the foothills of another shrine of Gosain Teng. This historical place is famous as Koti Teertham or Kooti Teerth in Kashmiri language. The name indicates that temple arena is 'Pilgrimage site of highest stature'. It is said that performing Puja at this place equals pilgrimage of one crore religious places or Teerthas. The religious novices would initiate their travel to Sharda (a famous seat of learning presently in POK) from this place. They would proceed to 'Kani Maji' another religious place that lies beyond Gantamulla. This place was thronged by pilgrims on Indra Dwadishi. Kani Maji' imprint of hoofs of cow on the sacred stones, that were preserved till exodus -presently no knowledge is available about the fate these assets of heritage have met with.

Koti Teertham -On the opposite side of Ganganore, across the road, on the banks of river Vitasta, a temple stands with its virgin grace and grandeur. A huge Shivling recalls glory of past. Outside the temple, carved stone 'Shilalekhs' speak volumes about sanctity of the Temple. Presently the vagary of adverse time has cast a spell on these heritage riches. The river bank has a stone masonry pucca ghat. The beauty of this Teerth Sthal is shrouded in peace and tranquility. Holy river Vitasta meandering midst heart of the town sets soothing ambience, full of grace and grandeur. The place displays the richness of our heritage.



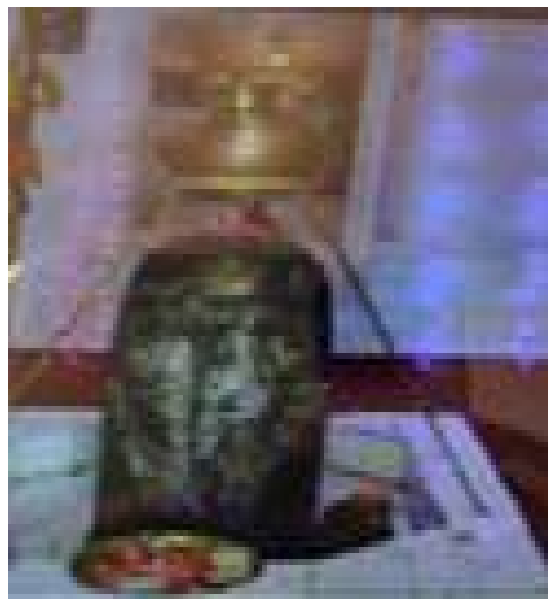
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Shilalekh

Bhairav Bal-The spiritual importance of Baramulla does not end here. In the mountainous range near old town lies Bhairav Bal which is considered as seat of Vaitaal Bhairav. On Vaitaal shashti Hindus of the town would throng the area with specific offerings. **Devibal**-On the opposite side, across the river Jehlum stands Devibal, in its grace and grandeur. This is a Sidhha seat for worship. A grand Central Spring, with crystal clear blue waters is a feast to eyes. The source of water is unknown and a mystery. It wells up

automatically. This water flows to two other springs lying towards the riverside. Devotees take holy dip in these springs. In the central spring 'Mata Shailputri' is seated in its grace and glory showering grace on her devotees.

Gosain Teng -While going up from Bhairav Bal a steep rocky and difficult terrain leads atop opening into a scenic spiritual ambience with its virgin grandeur. A three storied house would serve as shelter to several sadhus who would come for spiritual practices in solitude. These sadhus and caretakers would rare cows and maintain the shrine. Now the structures are in dilapidated condition. Centre of attraction were seven springs which stood in grace. At such height the existence of these springs is no less than a wonder. In cold water devotees would enjoy holy dip. These springs were named after Ramavtar era e.g. Ram Kund, Sita Kund etc. This holy place is renowned as Gosain Teng which means 'mountain of Sadhus. It is so because the place was thronged always by ascetics and sadhus. During childhood, we would dig a little and find there remains of semi burnt rice and barley along with samidha. Our elders would say that Lord Rama had visited the site during 'Vanvasa' and had performed 'Havan' and the remains of offerings lay embedded in the soil.



Devibal

Devibal-On the opposite side, across the river Jehlum stands Devibal, in its grace and grandeur. This is a Sidhha seat for worship. A grand Central Spring, with crystal clear blue waters is a feast to eyes. The source of water is unknown and a mystery. It wells up automatically. This water flows to two other springs lying towards the riverside. Devotees take holy dip in these springs. In the central spring 'Mata Shailputri' is seated in its grace and glory showering grace on her devotees.

Shivling at Koti Teerth

Raghunath Mandir -Another place of spiritual importance in the town is a beautiful 'Raghunath Mandir ', situated in heart of Baramulla town. There is rich library for devotees who are in quest of spiritual knowledge. Prior to exodus Sanatan Dharma Sabha Baramulla used to conduct religious activities, debating contests, annual bhandaras etc. here. Annual Janmashtami procession would start from Koti Teerth which would culminate in this Ram Mandir.

Bowlies-There are virgin water bowlies,

source of pure water situated on upper side of Sangri. People used to visit the place as picnic spot. There are shrines of Aalpeer, Jaanbaaz Saheb, Syed Sahib where all sections of local population paid their obeisance.

A grand Chattipadshahi is situated adjacent to Koti Teerth. This Gurudwara was established after sixth Guru-Guru Hargobind Singh Ji visited the place. No longer could I forget brave hearts. A memorial has been erected at the gateway of Baramulla town where it speaks volumes about supreme sacrifice of lives laid by arms men. The memorial is famous as 'Col. Roy's tomb'. Besides, a park situated in heart of the town has been named after Field Marshal K M Cariappa, the first Indian Commander in Chief. It is famous as Cariappa Park.

Now, it is a dream to revisit these places and relive the most cherished moments of past. These are the repercussions of exodus. Suddenly, John Keats muses in my memory,

*'O lift me as wave, leaf or wind,
I bleed, I fall upon the thorns of life'*

Calendar of Month

Poornima (Pitra Paksha Starts)	18 th September 2024
Shishti (Sahiba Satam)	23 rd September 2024
Aashtami (Krishna Paksha)	25 th September 2024
Ekadashi (Krishna Paksha)	28 th September 2024
Amavasya (Pitra-Maavas)	02 nd October 2024
Okdoh (Navratra Starts)	03 rd October 2024
Durga Ashtami (Shukla Paksha)	11 th October 2024
Maha Navami & Dussehra	12 th October 2024
Ekadashi (Shukla Paksha)	14 th October 2024
Poornima (Sankranti)	17 th October 2024

Note

Pitra Paksha starts on 18th September 2024 ends on 02nd October 2024

Panchak starts on 13th October 2024 ends on 17th October 2024

Ashwin (Krishna Paksha) from 19th September 2024 to 02nd October 2024

Ashwin (Shukla Paksha) from 03rd October 2024 to 17th October 2024



– H L Kak



DASHAAR

Kashmir's Rare but Forgotten Maha Kumbh!

Shadipur Kashmir *Dashaar*, often likened to the revered *Purna Kumbh Mela*, used to be a unique and ancient festival celebrated by Kashmiri Pandits. Unlike the regularly scheduled Kumbh Melas, the timing of Kashmir's *Dashaar* depends on ten specific astronomical and astrological configurations, occurring roughly every 10, 12, 36 or 75 years. Due to these ten celestial combinations, the festival is named "*Dashaar*," meaning ten combinations on a single day! This uncertainty in timing has led to the festival entering Kashmiri folklore as "*Dahi Veher Dashaar*," literally meaning once in a Blue Moon. The festival is celebrated at the confluence of the Jhelum (Vitasta) and Sindh rivers in Shadipur, present Ganderbal district of Kashmir.

Historical Insights

During his post-doctoral research at the Jammu and Kashmir Department of Archives and Archaeology at Jammu, this Author stumbled upon a significant file titled "*Dashaar Mela at Shadipur-1941*". The festival was last celebrated on June 14, 2016, after a 75-year hiatus, with the previous celebration on June 4, 1941. Historical records upon the perusal of this delicate file revealed that over 100,000 pilgrims had attended the 1941 *Dashaar*, far exceeding the

expected 40,000. An earlier celebration in 1911 saw a cholera outbreak affecting thousands of pilgrims.

Celestial Significance

The festival is celebrated every time in June (Jyeshtha) under specific astrological conditions: a Tuesday or Wednesday with the Moon in Virgo and the Sun in Taurus during Ananda Yog. The confluence of the Jhelum and Sindh rivers, known as Prayag Chinari, is considered sacred, akin to the confluence of the Ganges and Yamuna at Prayag in Allahabad. Kashmiri Pandits regard the Sindh stream as the sacred Ganga and Vitasta as another name for the river Yamuna, supported by verses 305-307 in the *Nilmata Purana*.

The 1941 and 1911 Dashaar

The preserved file, accessed by this Author, mentions that the 1941 festival, falling on June 4, 1941, corresponding to 22nd Jyeshtha, 1998 Vikram Samvat, was declared a public holiday in the entire districts of Baramulla, Anantnag, and Muzaffarabad. The Maharaja's government had allocated Rs 200 for rescue boats and ropes, kept Rs 500 for unforeseen expenses, and deployed 100 Maharaja Guards and Medical Officers from Sumbal and Ganderbal. Over one-lakh pilgrims had participated, far exceeding expectations. This was based on the report of Deputy Chief



Security General, who had estimated only 40,000 devotees.

In 1911, the festival faced a terrible cholera outbreak, requiring treatment for 3,063 pilgrims. A 16-year-old Kashmiri Pandit boy, whose identity was not revealed, had lost his life when a boat overturned.

The 2016 Celebration

Passing the Heritage Baton to the Young.... An elderly Kashmiri Pandit with her daughter during 2016 *Dashaar* festival.

In 2016, the festival celebrated after 75 years, saw elaborate arrangements, including

transport, security, and sanitation. Local Muslim residents provided essential supplies and boat services. The Chinar Tree, which was photographed by Fred Bremner in 1905, was in 2016 also surrounded by water on all sides. One had to come to this Chinar tree in a boat and go up some steps to have a commanding view of the confluence. The site, with its Shiva Lingam, has been a place of worship for centuries. Kashmiri Pandits who were incidentally already in Kashmir for Mela Kheer Bhawani of 2016, also participated in the Dashaar festival that year.

APPEAL FOR ARTICLES!

NAAD is a monthly community magazine of All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) with circulation across the globe. The monolingual publication is in English. It needs support from its readership scholars by way of articles that relate to the Kashmiri community and also to the country. Please come forward and send your articles. In order to give space to maximum number of writers, we request to make each article of 3 to 4 pages in Times New Roman with Font size – 12.

Please send your articles on hqaiks@gmail.com.



- Rajeshwar Dhar



SHIVA-SHAIVISM

SHIVARATRI - IV

(Cont'd from Part III of NAAD, June 24 Edition)

There are several schools of modern Shaiva thought, ranging from Pluralistic Realism to Absolute Monism - The concept of Advaita Vedanta emphasizes Monism, wherein, the ultimate reality is seen as a single, undifferentiated consciousness, whereas, Pluralism recognizes and accepts the co existence of different religions and belief systems. Shaivism, along with the organized worship in the Bharata Continent of God Shiva with Vaishnavism and Shaktism, is one of the three principal forms of modern Hindu Religion. Shaivism includes diverse movements as the highly Philosophical Shaiva-Siddhanta, the socially distinctive Lingayats, ascetics such as the Dashnami Sannyasins and innumerable folk variants. Shaiva-Siddhanta, recognises Three Principles: Pati-Shiva the Lord, Pashu-The Individual, Soul and Pasha-The Bonds that confine the Soul to Earthly Existence. The goal set for the soul is to get rid of its bonds and gain Shivatva (the nature of Shiva). The paths leading to that goal are Charya (external acts of worship), Kriya (acts of intimate service to God), Yoga (meditation) and Gynana (knowledge). Shaivism, like some of the other forms of Hindu Religion, spread to South East Asia, including Java, Bali and and East Asian Countries.

Shaivism and its Core Philosophy

Followers of Shaivism, called 'Shaivas' revere Shiva as the Supreme being. Shaivas believe that Shiva is all in all in life, the Creator, Preserver, Destroyer, Revealer and concealer of all that is in life. He is not only the creator in Shaivism, but he is also the creation that results from him, he is everything and everywhere. God having manifested the worlds through His dynamic energy, He remains in the back ground, as a knower of the past, the present and the future, watching the events unfold themselves and letting things go by. For the mortals, He is there, yet He is not there. He is with us and yet He is not with us. He is the same and yet He is different. He hides Himself behind a thick veil of ignorance, beyond the senses, the mind and the objective world. He wilfully lets Prakriti or Shakti do her work. He is the master of the worlds and yet He obeys His own laws for the sake of good order.



faraway places such as the Mediterranean, Africa, Central Asia and Europe. According to some the name Shiva is of Dravidian origin, derived from the word Chivan or Shivan meaning Red Colour. Shambhu, another name of Lord Shiva, also said to have been of Dravidian origin, derived from the word Chembu, or Chempu or Sembu, meaning Copper or Red Metal. According to some the phallic symbol of Shiva is of Austric origin and so is the name linga.



When we study the ancient Celtic gods like Norse Odin and the Celtic Cernunnos, we cannot miss some similarities between them and Shiva. Some scholars also find parallels between the Tantric practices of Shaivism and the magical-religious practices of Shamanism of the Mexican, American Indian, Inuit and Australian aboriginal people. It is possible that the similarities might be due to the fact that the religious beliefs of ancient cultures emerged mainly from the fertility rites and the Father God and Mother God Traditions of Prehistoric Times.

According to some scholars, Shaktism, Samkhya, Yoga and Tantricism were not new concepts that developed in the post Vedic India, but very ancient traditions which were subsequently revived and integrated into the religious life of the subcontinent. Some of these beliefs and practices of Shaivism gradually found their way into Brahmanism and Buddhism. Many magical rituals, fertility rites and left-hand techniques and practices of

Shaktism and Tantricism aimed to cultivate detachment and gain control over the senses and the mind, were incorporated with some variations into Brahmanism and subsequently into Vajrayana Buddhism. The mentally unsettling and provocative imagery of Tantricism found its way into Vajrayana Buddhism.

During the Vedic period Shiva was worshipped mostly by non Vedic tribes, such as the Sibis who lived on the fringes of the Vedic society and were hardly understood by Vedic people. The Mahabharata mentions the name of Pasupathas, one of the most ancient and secretive sects of Shaivism. Kapalikas and Kalamukhas were other prominent sects of Shaivism in ancient India. Followers of the Ajivika sect were also probably worshippers of Lord Shiva.

Early Recorded History of Shaivism during Megasthenese, Panini and Gautama

Megasthenese noted the worship of Shiva in his book Indica. He thought that the deity whom Indians worshipped was Dionysus, a Greek God who had some affinity with Shiva. From Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, we understand that images of Shiva were in use probably for religious worship. In the Ashtadhyayi of Panini we have references to Shiva Bhagats, an ancient Shaiva cult. Gautama, the author of Nyaya Sutras and Kanada, the founder of the Vaisheshika School of philosophy which proposed Atomic Theory were, according to Haribhadra, followers of Lord Shiva.



Dionysus, Greek God who had some affinity with Shiva



Images of Pashupatha Shaivism

Shaivism in Pre Christian Era

A great devotee of Shiva named Lakulisa lived some time during the early or Pre-Christian era. He played an important role in the revival of Shaivism under the name of Pashupatha (the way of the animal). Not much is known about the details of his life and works. He probably belonged to the Kalamukha Sect before he established the Pashupatha Shaivism. He opposed Jainism, Buddhism and the Ajivika Sects for their conflicting stand points. Believed by his followers to be a manifestation of Shiva himself, Lakulisa revived the ancient practices of Hath Yoga and Tantricism and probably reintroduced the practice of human and animal sacrifices. The revival of Shaivism that began during his period was subsequently continued by the Bharashivas and the Vakatakas.

The Satavahanas ruled a vast territory in the south for over 400 years in the post Mauryan Era. They patronized Vedic Religion and worshipped many Gods including Shiva and Skanda. They worshipped Shiva under such popular names as Shiva, Mahadeva, Bhava and Bhutapala. They also worshipped his Vehicle Nandi and his Son Skanda both as individual Deities and in association with Shiva. Some of the foreign Dynasties who established their rule in the Indian subcontinent such as The Sakas, The Pallavas and The Kushanas often turned to Shaivism. The Kushanas worshipped many native and foreign deities including Shiva and Skanda. Kadhaphises II was a follower of Shiva. His successor Kanishka was a worshipper of Shiva and Skanda. In the later part of his life, he converted to Buddhism.



*The Satavahanas at Srisailam, Telengana,
Sri Mallikarjuna Swamy*



*Shiva Linga worshipped by Kushan devotees,
circa 2nd century AD*

The Bharashivas ruled parts of central and northern India from about 2nd Century AD. They were also known in history as the Nagas. The Bharashivas re-established Hindu traditions. They were great devotees of Lord Shiva, a tradition that was continued later by Vakatakas and the Guptas. They played a very significant role in the revival of Hindu Religion at a time when the Indian subcontinent was facing a series of foreign invasions and Buddhism was on the rise. According to scholars, Hindu Religion would not have been what it is today but for the patronage of Bharashivas in the north and the Satavahanas in the south during a critical period when it was facing challenges from several directions. It is said that the Huna king Mihirakula was also a follower of Shiva.

Prominence of Shaivism in Gupta Period

Shaivism rose to prominence during the Gupta period. The Guptas were mainly followers of Vishnu, but inscriptions belonging to their period show that they also



Shiva on Carved Panel during Gupta Period

worshipped Lord Shiva, Skanda and Parvati. They erected temples in their honour. Ganesha was popular deity, but probably not as popular as Skanda. The inscriptions of the Gupta period bear many epithets of Shiva and Parvati and suggests to the extent of their popularity. The Gupta rule also witnessed the composition of many Hindu sacred texts and new developments in Hindu art and architecture. Ujjain rose to prominence as an important Shaivite Centre. Many sacred texts of Shaivism were composed during this period, which included Agamas, Tantras and Puranas connected with Lord Shiva and the



Vishwanatha Temple built by Candelas in Khajuraho in 10th Century

Mother Goddess. Famous Sanskrit Scholars Kalidasa, Vishnusharma and Bharavi, astronomers Aryabhata, Varahamihira and Brahmagupta and the Buddhist philosopher Vasubandhu lived during this period. They contributed to the development of astronomy, medicine and Sanskrit literature. Kalidasa was a worshipper of Kali-Mother Goddess. He excelled in Sanskrit drama.

*Rajeshwar Dhar is Business Management Advisor
Writes for Socio-Eco-Politico & Indic Sustainability.*

*Approach @9999989621,
rajeshwardhar@rediffmail.com*



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TODAY IT IS SOMEONE ELSE, TOMORROW IT CAN BE ME



– Rohit Kachroo



MY FIRST SALARY AND A LESSON IN COMPASSION

Receiving my first salary was a moment of immense pride and excitement. For many of us, it wasn't just about earning money, but about what we could do with it—treating family, celebrating with friends, dining out, shopping and much more. I was no different, eagerly awaiting the day I could indulge at least a few of those small pleasures with my first salary.

On that special day, I was thrilled to receive my salary in cash, as my bank account setup wasn't yet complete. My friends and colleagues were expecting a treat, but I promised them it would have to wait until the weekend. Instead, I took a DTC bus from my office to Lodhi Road, planning to visit the Saibaba temple to express my gratitude, being the devotee of Saibaba.

After my prayers, I took an auto-rickshaw back to my Society Complex in Patparganj where I spent alone a couple of years after my first job. The journey felt unusually long, as if the streets themselves were stretching with my excitement. When I finally arrived, I paid the driver and walked towards the entrance of my society complex. At the main entrance gate, Mahesh, the usually cheerful security guard, greeted me. He typically did so with a warm smile and his usual question, (Namaskar Sir, kya din tha aaj) Hello Sir, how was your day today? But today, his usual brightness was missing. His face and voice were filled with concern. I asked him what was wrong, and he

shared that his young daughter, just six years old, needed urgent surgery for an abrupt serious medical issue. The cost of the surgery was more than my entire salary, and Mahesh was struggling with whether to leave his job to be with his family.

He needed a significant amount to start the surgery immediately and without it, his daughter's condition would deteriorate. When I found myself grappling with the choice between giving him a portion of my salary or the entirety of my first salary, I ultimately decided to give him the whole amount. Although Mahesh insisted, he couldn't repay me and would not return to Delhi even, I felt it was the right thing to do.

In that moment, I realized that while money can be earned again, opportunities to help others in their time of need are rare and precious. If we don't act when we have the chance, we might miss the opportunity to make a real difference in someone's life.

This experience taught me a valuable lesson: the true worth of our earnings is not just in what we keep for ourselves, but in how we use them to support others when they really need it the most. We should see ourselves as fortunate when we have the means to help and seize every opportunity to do so. Helping others in their time of real need not only enriches their lives but also enhances our own, turning our success into a chance to uplift those around us.

PRESS RELEASE - KASHIR SABHA, AMBALA

Kashir Sabha Ambala celebrated Janamashtami festival today with traditional gaiety and fervour, at Kashmir Bhavan, Sarsehri. All Biradari members participated with their families, who enjoyed the union and Kashmiri Bhajans and Aarti performed by Pandit ji.

The programme commenced at 05.00 P.M and concluded with Prasad Vitran at 07.00 P.M. The Sabha is thankful to all members in general and Sh.B.L.Watal (New Delhi) in particular, who support the Sabha in all efforts to keep alive the Kashmiri Culture and traditions.

- Rajinder Kaw
General Secretary, Kashir Sabha Ambala



PRESS RELEASE

YKUNTH MANDLI ASHRAM CELEBRATES RUDRA ABHISHEK OF PARTHISHWAR WITH KASHMIRI RITUALS

Ykunth Mandli Ashram is proud to announce the celebration of the Rudra- Abhishek of Parthishwar, marking a significant revival of Kashmiri Pandit culture in the Delhi-NCR region after a long hiatus due to displacement. This auspicious event took place on Sunday, August 18, 2024, at Lallechwari Vatika, Sector 21-D, Faridabad, and was attended by over 300 devotees from Delhi and the surrounding areas.

The ceremony commenced with Swami Mahesh Ji, who crafted a Shiva Parthishwar and family along with Nandi with clay, embodying the traditional artistry of the Kashmiri Pandit community. The Abhishek and Pooja of the Parthishwar were performed by Shrimaan M. K. Talashi and Shri Pyare Lal Raina, who chanted sacred Shiv Mantras, enhancing the spiritual atmosphere of the gathering.

Musical offerings were made by Shri M. K. Pandita, Shri Dilip Langoo and Shri Sanjay Pandita, who sang Shiv Bhajans and Shiv Stotras, further enriching the cultural experience of the event. Shiv Tandav Stotram was also performed during the Parthishwar Puja, which created a powerful spiritual atmosphere. The rhythmic chanting of the hymn filled the air with divine vibrations, elevating the consciousness of the devotees present.

Ykunth Mandli Ashram extends heartfelt gratitude to all community members who participated both online and offline, contributing to the success of this significant cultural revival after 34 years in Delhi-NCR. This event not only celebrated our rich heritage but also fostered a sense of unity and belonging among the Kashmiri Pandits in the region.



SHRI HRIDAY NATH JATTU

- A TRIBUTE



- Rajinder Premi

Some are born with God given extra ordinary abilities, creative acumen and talent, who by virtue of such sublime qualities give the world new direction. Those people work & behave as ordinary citizens but their intellect and sensibilities make them towering, to carve out a niche for themselves and make an everlasting impact, thus leaving behind a great legacy. Mr. H N Jattu was one such legendary soul.

Shri Jattu was born on 20th October 1936, at Ganpatyar Srinagar, Kashmir, did his matriculation from local High School, but later on established his own business in his locality Ganpatyar. Jattu was a born Kashmiri Pandit leader, who lived a mixed life. Joined Indian Army for a brief stint. He was also the President of famous Ganesh Mandir Committee (Ganpatyar).

Mr. Jattu was the founder President of the All India Kashmiri Pandit conference AIKPC. His leadership was marked by bold decisions. His General Secretary of the AIKPC Shri Ashok Qazi was martyred by the terrorists, in response/ re-action to Mr. Jattu's questions to those subversive elements. Soon after this dastard killing, Jattu was also forced to leave Kashmir. When Jattu landed in Jammu, he gave a call for 2nd migration from Jammu to Delhi called "Delhi-Chalo".

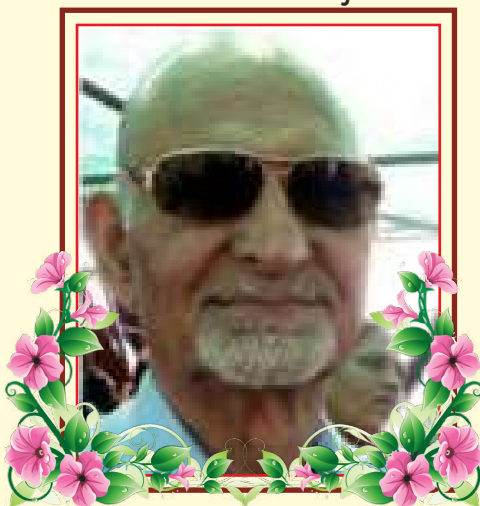
In Delhi, during this period Delhi administration was under the process of allotting camps to KP migrants stationed in Delhi. Jattu took shelter in Ali-Ganj (Lodhi Road) camp. He started business in Readymade garments in Yousuf-Sarai Migrants Market, where many KPs were allotted Tehbazari-sites by MCD/NDMC under Delhi administration. Although he stayed in Delhi, but was not cut off from his cadres in Jammu.

During his stay in Delhi, Jattu was given a due place in AIKS and was made Sr. Vice President by Sh. J N Kaul and Sh. M K Kaw also. He attended AIKS meetings and all regional conferences held at Jammu, Chandigarh, Mumbai, Kolkata and Bangalore and also at other places, advocating fiercely the cause of displaced community. He would always be a member of any delegation, which met Central Govt. voicing the hardships of the exiled community. He was also a member of AIKS delegation, which met Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, Home Minister Sh. Shivraj Patil and others under Sh. M K Kaw's Stewardship.

I have known Jattu sahib since 1992 when we met in Jammu during a meeting in Jambulochan Hall. This was my first meeting with him and other front-line leaders. I had heard about Mr. H N Jattu first time in 1967 when he had taken active part during KP agitation in Permeshwari-case.

When AIKS under Sh. M K Kaw officially decided to file a writ petition in Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in 2006, he nominated me as the No 1 petitioner and Mr. Jattu as No 2. He was persuaded and finally he agreed to my argument on this issue with the condition of including Mr. M K Kaw himself as one of the petitioners.

Jattu sahib passed away at his residence at Green Field, Faridabad on 03-09-2024 morning after a brief illness. With his passing away an era came to an end.



(20-10-1936 to 03-09-2024)



– Sanjay Pandita.

KASHMIR...Shrines and Temples"

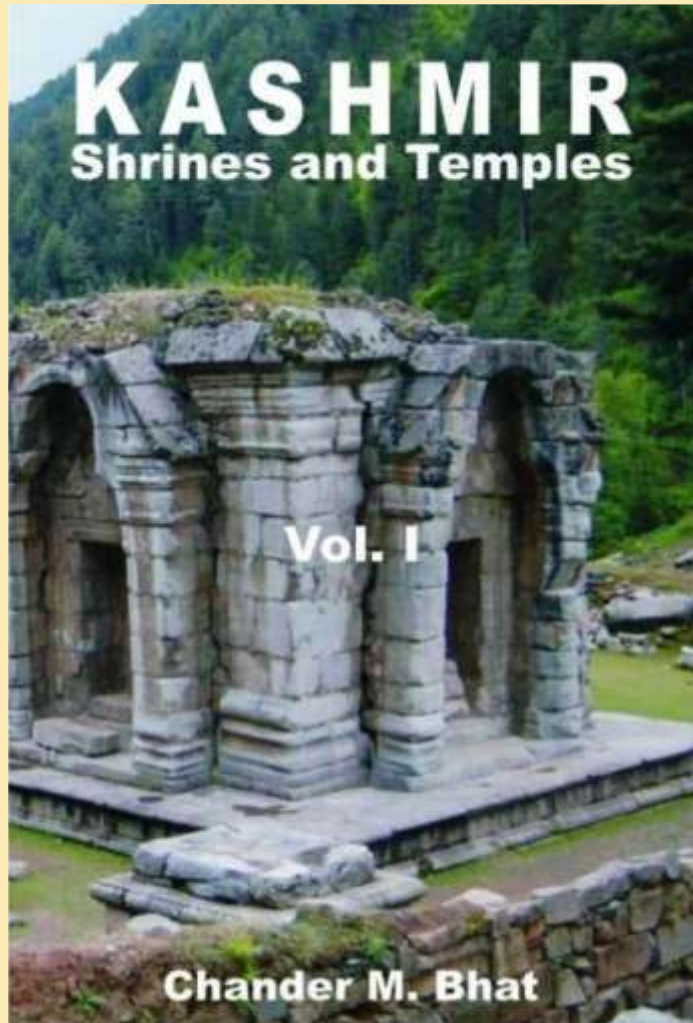
By Chander. M. Bhat.

Chander M. Bhat's "KASHMIR... Shrines and Temples" is much more than a book—it is a labour of love, an epic journey into the heart of Kashmir's spiritual heritage. This meticulously researched tome offers readers an unparalleled glimpse into the sacred sites scattered across this storied land. With over two decades of rigorous fieldwork and scholarly dedication, Bhat has crafted a work that stands as a definitive guide and an enduring tribute to the region's rich religious legacy.

The magnitude of Bhat's undertaking cannot be overstated. Embarking on this project in the early 1990s, at a time when Kashmir was gripped by militancy and upheaval, Bhat's journey was fraught with danger. The volatile political landscape presented significant obstacles, from local resistance to outright hostility. Yet, driven by a profound reverence for Kashmir's cultural legacy, Bhat pressed on, navigating rugged terrains and braving numerous perils to document each shrine and temple with the utmost precision.

Bhat's dedication to this project is evident in the exhaustive detail he provides. Each site is not only described in terms of its historical and cultural significance but also meticulously catalogued with precise coordinates, distances from district headquarters, and current conditions. This level of detail is indicative of Bhat's commitment to preserving the heritage of these sacred places for future generations.

KASHMIR...Shrines and Temples" is a luminous tapestry, woven with the golden threads of history, culture, and spirituality. Comprising 493 pages, it unfolds like an ancient manuscript, meticulously structured into five distinct sections. Each section is a chapter in the grand epic of Kashmir's spiritual heritage, inviting readers on a journey through the region's sacred landscape.



The first section, Ancient Temples, is akin to the roots of a mighty tree, delving into the history of twenty temples that have stood the test of time. These temples are the silent sentinels of an era long past, whispering tales of devotion and resilience. They are the foundation upon which the spiritual edifice of Kashmir is built, offering a glimpse into the architectural and cultural grandeur of ancient times.

Devi Shrines, the second section, is like a garden in full bloom, vibrant with the colours and fragrances of twenty-two shrines dedicated to the divine feminine. These shrines are sanctuaries of grace and power, reflecting the reverence for the goddess in her myriad forms. Each shrine is a petal in the flower of Kashmir's spiritual garden, contributing to the rich tapestry of its religious traditions.

The third section, Shrines and Temples Linked to Lord Shiva, is the heartbeat of this spiritual journey. Seventeen temples dedicated to the Lord of Transformation stand as testaments to the profound connection between Kashmir and the divine. These temples are the pulse of the region's spirituality, resonating with the chants and prayers of devotees who seek the blessings of Shiva, the eternal yogi.

In Spring Shrines, the fourth section, we find the lifeblood of Kashmir's sacred geography. Twenty-six shrines built around natural springs symbolize the confluence of nature and spirituality. These springs, like veins in the earth, nourish the land and its people, offering both physical sustenance and spiritual rejuvenation. They are the living waters that flow through the heart of Kashmir's spiritual narrative.

The final section, Various Other Sacred Sites, is the horizon of this expansive journey. Nine temples scattered across the region represent the diverse and far-reaching essence of Kashmir's spiritual heritage. These sacred sites are the stars in the night sky, each one shining with its unique light, contributing to the cosmic mosaic of Kashmir's religious traditions.

The first volume of "KASHMIR...Shrines and Temples" details over ninety-four temples, offering an in-depth look at their ancient history, geographical context, and current state. Bhat's descriptions are enriched by his engagement with ancient documents and meticulously maintained revenue records, which provide additional layers of authenticity and historical depth. This scholarly rigor is further complemented by insights from esteemed historians and scholars, whose contributions add valuable perspectives and enhance the overall narrative.

In this luminous tapestry, every thread, every knot, and every hue tells a story. Together, they create a picture of a land where the sacred and the mundane are intertwined, where the past and the present coexist in harmony. "KASHMIR...Shrines and Temples" is not just a book; it is a journey through the soul of Kashmir, an exploration of its spiritual heart, and a celebration of its enduring heritage.

The foreword by Prof. Rattan Lal Hangloo sets the tone for the book, emphasizing the spiritual and historical significance of Kashmir's sacred spaces. Hangloo's words lend scholarly weight to Bhat's work, underscoring its importance in the broader context of Kashmir's cultural legacy. The endorsement of such a distinguished scholar not only enhances the book's credibility but also situates it within the larger discourse on Kashmir's religious and cultural history.

Bhat's engagement with ancient documents and revenue records is another notable aspect of his work. These invaluable resources provide a glimpse into the rich tapestry of Kashmir's history and cultural heritage. Bhat's meticulous analysis of these documents lends authenticity to his narrative and ensures that his work is grounded in historical fact. This scholarly rigor is further complemented by insights from esteemed historians and scholars, whose contributions add valuable perspectives and enhance the overall narrative.

The depth and detail of Bhat's exploration are truly remarkable. His descriptions of each

temple and shrine are comprehensive and meticulously researched. From the ancient temples dedicated to Lord Shiva to the numerous Devi shrines, Bhat provides readers with a rich tapestry of Kashmir's spiritual landscape. His narrative is further illuminated by his personal observations and experiences, which add a unique and engaging dimension to the text.

Bhat's ability to weave historical context, geographical details, and personal anecdotes into his descriptions makes for a compelling and informative read. His attention to detail and dedication to accuracy ensure that each entry is not only informative but also engaging and accessible to readers. This meticulous approach allows readers to gain a deeper understanding of the significance of each site and its place within the broader context of Kashmir's religious heritage.

"KASHMIR...Shrines and Temples" is not merely a catalogue of sacred sites; it is a tribute to the rich spiritual heritage of Kashmir. Bhat's work serves as a testament to the enduring significance of these sacred spaces and their central role in the religious and cultural life of the region. His meticulous documentation ensures that the heritage of these sites is preserved for future generations, offering a valuable resource for scholars, historians, and anyone interested in the spiritual history of Kashmir.

Bhat's passion for his subject matter is evident throughout the text. His deep reverence for Kashmir's cultural legacy and his unwavering commitment to preserving it shine through in every page. This passion, coupled with his scholarly rigor and meticulous attention to detail, makes "KASHMIR...Shrines and Temples" a truly remarkable achievement.

Bhat's engagement with ancient documents and revenue records is presented with scholarly precision. However, his writing remains accessible, as he explains the relevance and significance of these sources in clear, straightforward language. This balance between scholarly rigor and readability is one of the book's strengths.

In summary, Chander M. Bhat's use of descriptive richness, historical context, structured organization, engagement with primary sources, personal reflections, cultural sensitivity, poetic elements, and visual clarity creates a multifaceted and engaging narrative. His style enhances the book's scholarly value while making it accessible and compelling for a broad audience. "KASHMIR...Shrines and Temples" is a masterful blend of academic rigor and personal passion, offering a profound exploration of Kashmir's spiritual heritage.

As Bhat continues his work on the second volume, readers can look forward to even more detailed explorations of Kashmir's sacred sites. His dedication to this project promises further insights and discoveries, contributing to a deeper understanding of the region's profound spiritual legacy. The anticipation for the next volume is a testament to the significance of Bhat's work and the impact it has already had on readers and scholars alike.

"KASHMIR...Shrines and Temples" by Chander M. Bhat is a monumental work that stands as both an academic achievement and a heartfelt tribute to the spiritual heritage of Kashmir. Bhat's dedication, meticulous research, and personal commitment have resulted in a work that is both a scholarly resource and a deeply personal exploration of Kashmir's sacred spaces. This book is an essential read for anyone interested in the rich cultural and religious history of Kashmir, offering a comprehensive and deeply engaging exploration of its spiritual heritage.

Bhat's ability to navigate the challenges of documenting these sites, coupled with his scholarly rigor and personal passion, makes "KASHMIR...Shrines and Temples" a truly exceptional work. His detailed and nuanced descriptions provide readers with a rich and immersive experience, allowing them to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of Kashmir's spiritual landscape. This book is a valuable contribution to the field of religious and cultural studies and stands as a testament to the enduring significance of Kashmir's sacred spaces.



- Ashok Ogra

PAKISTAN'S INVASION ON J&K (1947-48): UNTOLD STORIES OF VICTIMS

By Dr Ramesh Tamiri

Untold Stories of 1947 Pakistan Tribal Raid That Send Shivers Down the Spine

In August, 1947, when, after three hundred years in India, the British finally left, the subcontinent was partitioned into Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan. Immediately, there began one of the greatest migrations in human history, as millions of Muslims trekked to West and East Pakistan (the latter now known as Bangladesh) while millions of Hindus and Sikhs headed in the opposite direction. Many hundreds of thousands never made it.

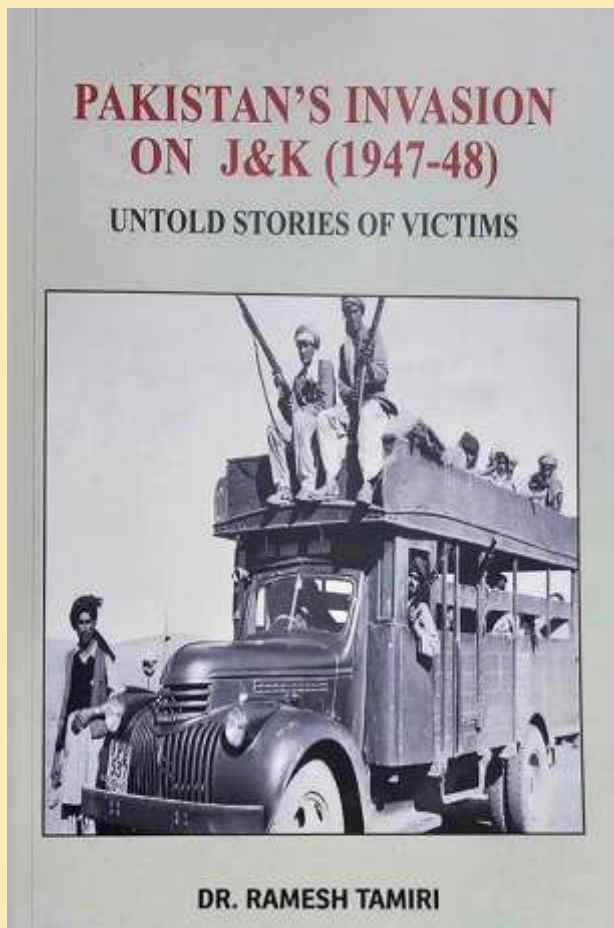
There are many first-hand accounts by people who actually saw the partition. There are many secondary accounts too in the form of books, letters, journals, etc. It is through these books and accounts that the partition is still living in our memories.

However, in this larger calamity that seized the sub-continent, the atrocities committed by Pakistan invaders in Jammu & Kashmir in 1947-48, has somehow not received the attention it deserves. Remember, 38,000 Hindus and Sikhs lost their lives in the worst holocaust perpetrated by Pakistan army. The official machinery and other 'researchers' have focused on how invaders attacked Christian Mission Hospital in Baramulla, where seven people were killed.

It is here that Dr. Ramesh Tamiri who by training is an ophthalmologist but by temperament and knowledge a student of history has explored and examined that yesteryear era for the first time in such great detail. This is indeed the first explosive story to come out on the 1947 invasion; a stunning piece of history.

In his monumentally impressive book 'Pakistan's Invasion on J&K (1947-48): Untold Stories of Victims' Ramesh describes it all: Nazi-style invasion launched by Pakistan to grab the J&K state. In telling details he describes the reign of terror and ethnic cleansing let loose by the Pakistani invaders against the minorities – Hindus and Sikhs – living in the areas that fell to the aggressor. He compares the horrendous atrocities committed against minorities with those seen at Auschwitz.

The author turns his attention to a crucial question: why were these atrocities carried out?



Long before the invasion, Jinnah and other leaders had depicted Kashmir as a princely state that ultimately belonged to Pakistan. Their territorial ambitions were further inflamed during the violence that accompanied the partition in 1947.

We are all aware that the delay in signing the instrument of accession encouraged the Pakistan army to launch the attack. But Ramesh armed with historical evidence, argues against blaming Hari Singh and dubs it as a ‘fake narrative.’

However, after the Instrument of Accession was signed (the Maharaja had just 9000 soldiers at his disposal), Indian troops landed in Kashmir and pushed back the invaders. But a large part of the territory went under the illegal occupation of Pakistan.

Quoting Bal Raj Madhok, the author reveals a conspiracy by Pakistan plan to kill the Maharaja either on the day of Dussehra at Batmaloo on October 24, 1947 or earlier during his tour of border areas in Jammu.

Ramesh writes that a sizeable chunk of the invasion force was Pashtun tribesmen of the NWFP, but, copying the Nazis, the whole aggression was sponsored, directed, and controlled by the Pakistan government. Regular Pakistani soldiers and officers, paramilitary forces of the NWFP, senior bureaucrats, and British army officers and governors, were associated with the conspiracy and conduct of this aggression.

Ramesh writes: “the invading force was led by Major Khurshid Anwar and Khan Rahim Dad Salar. The invaders were joined by the deserters from state forces. The latter provided the strategic details they needed. They too joined in the looting and arson.”

A tense and gripping narration which hums with killings, rapes and escapes leaves a lasting impression. It is laced with authentic poignant stories; tales of common people. These tales are interlinked with the larger politics that was behind the raid.

According to the author the first account of what happened in Muzaffarabad was published by the Publicity Division of the GOI in 1961. It was the memoir of Krishna Mehta. It revolves around her own story and how she and her family faced those horrible days. Another account was on Mirpur by educationist Amar Devi. Around the same time, accounts of Rajouri by Pishori Lal Jhinjotia and Skardu by S. Kumar Mahajan were also published. The latter two accounts as primary sources are quite valuable for Rajouri and Skardu. There are small studies on Kotli and Poonch too. Anoop Singh Sodhi and Prof. Himat Singh have worked on how the Sikh community in Kashmir faced Pakistani aggression, but this is mostly documentation. None of these works cover Kashmiri Hindus.

Ramesh turns his attention to Kashmiri Hindus and Sikhs who used to live in more than 350 villages in Kashmir that came under the occupation of Pakistani invaders. Over 128 Kashmiri Hindus were killed in numerous massacres and in selective killings at different places. Hundreds were repatriated by the International Red Cross after 2–3 years. Thousands were displaced from their habitats and had to face worse humiliations.

He narrates similar touching scenes from Muzaffarabad: “The Sikh community bore the brunt of the attack because they were identified easily. Prominent citizens – Chet Ram, Faqir Chand, and pleader Bodh Raj- were taken to the Krishanganga River and shot dead... Over sixty people, who had been locked up in the hospital ward, were killed.”

In an emotional and pricking account, Ramesh turns his attention to the carnage that took place in the town of Rajouri on November 11, 1947 speaks of the horrors committed against the minority communities: “Over 20,000 people were present in the Tehsil grounds. They decided to go for honour killing to save the dignity of their women and escape the brutality of the attackers. At sunset, women and men started ending their lives by swallowing poison. In all around 1700 women ended their lives.”

This book covers Muzaffarabad, Jammu region-Kotli, Mirpur, Rajouri, Budhal, and Chassana, Baltistan-Skardu, Khaplu, Shigar, Drass, Leh, Gilgit-Gilgit, Astore, Bunji and Chilas. In a chilling account, the author narrates the brutal killing of J.L. Warikoo who was working as a teacher in Skardu region. He was hit by his own peon with an axe on the head and died on the spot. There were those who put their own lives in danger to rescue refugee girls from being raped and killed. Dr. K.N. Tiku comes for a special praise in the book for rescuing many young girls abducted by the invaders. The cataloguing of personal details of such individuals – Bishamber Nath Sapru, Ramchand Koul, Govind Ram, Gopi Nath Ganjoo, Rdha Krishan Bhat and many others - has allowed new escape stories to come to light to be told for the very first time.

In the chapter ‘Nationalist Resistance Saved Ladakh in 1948’, the author credits Young Men’s Buddhist Association for mobilizing the people who took arms to defend themselves against the aggression. D. P. Dhar who was looking after the defence of the frontier, got sanction from the state government for raising National Guard Force at Leh. The author demystifies some of the myths about ‘Kashmiriyat’ when it reveals how locals in some areas supported the barbarous invaders. However, there were some rare examples of solidarity and reciprocal support. Maqbool Sherwani’s suggestion to non-Muslims to stay on in Baramulla tremendously affected Hindus badly and there was Danse Macabre, but his advice to Pandits in Sopore to flee saved them. Similarly, for her bravery, Mata Ganga Kaur in Attina has become part of folklore, and a memorial for her has been built at Attina.

The author does not shy away from mentioning the names of those Muslims who fought valiantly to save Hindus/ Sikhs: Master Abdul Aziz and Munshi Ferozuddin in Muzaffarabad, Abdul Aziz Thekedar in Mirpur, Mir Zaman in Shardi and Haji Mohammad Khan in Budhai.

Well-written and carefully researched it is no surprise that it took 23 years for the author to collect all the relevant material to make for a compelling reading.

The good thing is that the book goes beyond documentation. Rather than taking up the repeated narrative, it has something fresh to offer. The facts presented resonate with the audience, making it relatable and memorable. The author deserves praise for the manner he has managed to weave together hard facts with rigorous research and narrate it in stories with passion and intensity- evoking emotional connections. The author does not spare the government of India for failing to act on the information it had of Pakistan’s plan to invade Kashmir. In the first week of October 1947, the Deputy Commissioner of Dera Ismail Khan, Devan Shiv Charan Lal, had submitted an official report revealing this information.

However, Ramesh shies away from engaging in interpretation except providing conclusions in brief towards the end. An excerpt: “Pakistan had decided to annex J&K by force as early as May or June 1947. Though a parallel track was kept to engage the National Conference leadership and the Maharaja simultaneously, its main focus was on the annexation of J&K by force.... British military officers were kept in the loop. In fact, the ‘Operation Gulmarg’ circular was signed by General Frank Messervy, Chief of Staff of Pakistan Army...”

The book is rich in rare pictures of victims, survivors and witnesses with extensive endnotes and useful selected bibliography. That is what makes the book a must read for all those who want to fully understand what happened during that dark October month of 1947. Will one deny that the brutality of the soldiers towards essentially the civilians in J&K remains one of the greatest horrors of the free India? There is an unwavering honest testimony; a slice of history that we will all do well never to forget. Thus, one should read it, for sure! It is one to stay with you long after you have finished reading.

(Ashok Ogra is working as Advisor with reputed Apeejay Education, New Delhi. Views expressed are personal.)



– H.L.Kak



KAILASH MEHRA SADHU

MALIKA-E-GHAZAL

Kailash Mehra Sadhu, born in 1950 in a Dogra family at, Nainital, is a celebrated Kashmiri singer known for her enchanting ghazals and songs that have touched the hearts of many. Her mellifluous voice and her contribution to the world of music have earned her the well-deserved title of "Malika-e-Ghazal."

Kailash Mehra Sadhu embarked on her musical journey with a thirst for knowledge and a passion for melody. She pursued her education diligently, earning master's degrees from Panjab University, Chandigarh, and the prestigious Prayag Sangeet Samiti in Allahabad, with a specialization in vocal music. Her academic achievements laid a strong foundation for her future in the world of music.

In 1979, Kailash Mehra Sadhu assumed the role of a music lecturer at the Women's College in Anantnag. Her commitment to teaching and sharing her musical expertise with the younger generation demonstrated her dedication to the art of music.

Kailash Mehra Sadhu's versatility as a vocalist is truly remarkable. She has lent her soulful voice to a wide array of languages, including Kashmiri, Urdu, Gujarati, Sanskrit, Punjabi, Hindi, Persian, Bhaderwahi, Pahari, and Kannad. Her ability to seamlessly traverse various linguistic and cultural landscapes showcases her musical prowess.

Kailash Mehra Sadhu's musical talents



shone through in various music competitions organized by the state cultural academy. Her enchanting stage performances resonated in cities across India, from Patna and Lucknow to Calcutta, Madras, Trivandrum, Hyderabad, Bangalore, and Delhi. Her captivating live performances left an indelible mark on music enthusiasts.

Kailash Mehra Sadhu's exceptional contributions to the world of music have not gone unnoticed. In 1993, she was bestowed with the prestigious title of "Malika-e-Ghazal" by the Jammu Vikas Sanstha. The Sadiq Memorial Committee recognized her talent by awarding her the Mehboob Awami Funkara in 1981, and she was crowned the

best singer by the Sri Bhat Smarak Samiti in 1980.

Even during the turbulent times of the Kashmir conflict, Kailash Mehra Sadhu's devotion to music remained unwavering. She continued to make meaningful contributions to the world of music. She lent her melodious voice to the album 'Poozai Posh,' a collaborative effort with fellow Kashmiri singer Vijay Malla. This album, featuring sacred bhajans and hymns native to Kashmir, served as a beacon to preserve Kashmir's 5000-year-old culture, history, and sanctity, resonating deeply with the Kashmiri diaspora worldwide.

Before the onset of the Kashmir conflict, Kailash Mehra Sadhu was already a respected singer, renowned for her soul-stirring bhajans and hymns. However, her collaboration with

the Kashmiri Overseas Association of the USA catapulted her hymns to new heights of popularity, especially among the Kashmiri Pandit community, which had faced forced displacement during the conflict. Her musical endeavours became an important vehicle for preserving and celebrating the rich cultural heritage of Kashmir.

Kailash Mehra Sadhu's melodious journey has not only left an indelible mark on the world of music but has also played a crucial role in keeping the cultural legacy of Kashmir alive. Her unwavering commitment to her craft and her ability to bridge cultural divides through her music make her a true gem of the Kashmiri music scene. Kailash Mehra Sadhu, the "Malika-e-Ghazal," continues to inspire and enchant listeners with her timeless melodies.



Shehjar Caterers

Shehjar House, Plot No. 2048, Gali No. 5, Kashmiri Block, Jain Nagar, Karala, Delhi - 110081

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ONLINE ESSAY CONTEST 2024-25

Team Essay is pleased to announce - The 4th Online Essay Contest For Kashmiri Displaced as well as Nondisplaced Children From Across The Globe.

Topics for Essay Writing:

Great Men and Women from Kashmiri Community: These shall include Kashmiri Pandit personalities who have attained prominence in the fields of: Academia, Poets and Authors, Spirituality and Social Reform, Politics and Public Administration, Sports, Theatre, Art and Music.

Note: Period to be covered: From the Ancient Hindu history of Kashmir to current era. However, preference has to be given to people who have left this world. Please refer Annexure 1 for an indicative list.

Socio-Religious and Cultural Festivals of Kashmiri Pandits: Herath-Shivratri, Zarmesatam, Navreh, Jyethe-aathem, Shravene-Punim, Kaw Punim, Gadde Batte', Kyetche-Mavas

Note: Festival names are suggestive. Candidates are free to include any other festival not mentioned here.

Prominent Historical Places Associated with Kashmiri Pandits: TulMul –Ksheer Bhawani, Zyeethyaer, Hari Parvat – Chakrishwar Complex, Shankaracharya Hill and Temple, Martand and Mattan Sun Temple Complex, Thajvour, Sharada Mata Temple, Tithwal, Bhadrakali, Vitcharnaag, Gangabal, Reshi-Peer.

Note: Place names are suggestive. Candidates are free to include any other spot not mentioned here.

My Mohalla-Village in Kashmir: To create a connect

Note: The idea is to help create a connect with Kashmir by arousing interest in his/her native place.

Necessity of learning Self-defence Sports from an Early age:

Rules and Regulations

Essay Length :

For children from Class 4 th to 6 th	:	300-500 words
For children between Class 7 th to 9 th	:	500-700 words

Note: Essays written in Kashmiri (Devnagari Script) shall be awarded TWO (02) marks extra to encourage usage of Kashmiri language & one mark (01) grace for hand drawn drawing of the chosen topic.

Other Rules and Regulations

- ❖ Contest is primarily designed for 'Online Mode'. Organizers may however consider conducting the contest in Offline or ON THE SPOT mode in certain pockets of Kashmir Valley (Vessu, Sheikhpura colonies etc.).
- ❖ Offline participants shall have a separate winner list (1-3 Positions plus three consolation Prizes).
- ❖ A contestant shall be allowed to participate both in 'Online' and 'Offline' Mode.
- ❖ No Cash Awards shall be awarded to winners.
- ❖ Organizers prefer to award books, sports material and scientific equipment to the winners!
- ❖ Contestants shall need to register their names on the below mentioned link for participation.
- ❖ Research based, knowledge adding essays are expected to fetch more marks.
- ❖ Decision of "Team Essay" shall be final and binding on all participants!

Important Dates (Probable):

❖ Announcement of Contest	:	August 15, 2024
❖ Last Date for Registration	:	December 31, 2024
❖ Last Date for Submission of Essay (Online)	:	April 30, 2025
❖ Declaration of Results	:	July 07, 2025
❖ Prize Distribution Function	:	July 30, 2025

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSehgLqzEvjIM2J7YMj6ufMt14pcJjos5UQBtKbCHKFnNdB3NA/viewform?pli=1>

(TEAM ESSAY)



- Virender Rawal



Vyeth celebrates Independence Day as “MOLIL TCHI”

Vyeth, today on 15th August 2024 celebrated Independence Day entitled “MOLIL TCHI” means the PRECIOUS MOMENT with full enthusiasm and excitement at Sanskriti Bhawan, Jammu. The event was dedicated to women in the arts, with a talented lineup of female poets, singers, artists and performers sharing their creativity. The programme started with lighting of the traditional lamp accompanied by Sarvasati Vandana recited by the students of Pt.Shivpuri Kala Niketan.

Dr.Kailash Mehra Sadhoo, an eminent singer graced the occasion as the chief guest and Mrs. Parneeta Kapoor an eminent poet and Mrs. Bharti Zaroo a well-known actor graced the event as guests of honor. The whole programme was bifurcated in two segments. First half of the programme was fully enjoyed by the audience through multilingual poetry recited by well known poets from various regions. The poets who mesmerized the audience with their poems were:

Bimla Aima Misri, Naseem Akhtar, Kusum Dhar, Sunita Goja, Parneeta Kapoor, Girja Raina and Anita Gupta. The devotional and patriotic songs sung by Jyoti Raina Bhat, Jyotika Raina, Abhimanyu and Sanjay Sharma thrilled the audience with their incredible voice and talent. The galaxy of academicians, entrepreneurs and art lovers attended the programme. The programme concluded with distribution of participation certificates to all the participants including Anil Wali, Muskan



Koul and Rudrika Jyotishi students of department of mass communication Gandhi Memorial College, Jammu A memento and certificate was honored to Jeeta Koul pandita for winning in a special contest on Face Book page of Prof. Virender Rawal.

The whole event was managed by Kusum Dhar and Naina Saproo Trisal as programme coordinators. Stage was efficiently managed by Pradeep Pandita, Ramesh Marhatha and Dr.Ramesh Nirrash. The event was captured successfully by Kamal Krishan Ganju, Anil Wali and Nikhil Raina.

The event was meticulously conducted by Kusum Dhar.



KPs in Election Fight from Valley

Over a dozen Kashmiri Pandits have filed nominations to contest for the UT J & K Legislative Assembly. Srinagar's Habba Kadal assembly constituency has turned into an electoral battlefield for the displaced Kashmiri Pandits. Six KPs have filed their nomination from the assembly segment, which goes to polls, along with 26 other constituencies in the second phase of elections on September 25. Five have filed under recognised political parties, while two have filed as Independents.

Assembly Elections for Kashmiri Migrants Published

The Jammu and Kashmir Election Department has published the draft electoral roll extracts of Kashmiri Migrants. Additionally, it has mapped the 19 Special Polling Stations in Jammu to the camps and zones individually, ensuring that every zone. For more details, the electors can visit the website (ceo.jk.gov.in) of the Chief Electoral Officer, Jammu and Kashmir UT.

The details of 19 Special Polling Stations for Jammu are available on the website www.jkmigrantrelief.nic.in, at all Zonal offices, and at the office of the Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner (Migrants), J&K. Also, the Zonal Officers/Camp Commandants/BLOs have been designated as nodal officers for these 19 Special Polling Stations.

The ECI has also decided to do away with the cumbersome procedure of filling Form-M for the displaced people from Kashmir valley who are residing in Jammu and Udhampur in Assembly Election even as for the migrants living outside Jammu and Udhampur who will continue to submit Form-M have been authorized to self-attest the certificate appended with Form-M, thus removing the hassle of getting this certificate attested by the Gazetted Officer.

Moreover, the continuation of the postal ballot facility through Form 12C ensures that all migrants, regardless of their residence, can vote by postal ballot.

Navdal Chouram celebrated with religious fervour, gaiety

On August 24 2024, on the completion of Shree Amarnath Yatra, Navdal Chouram was celebrated with religious fervour and gaiety at Navdal Tral in South Kashmir. Many devotees drawn from different parts of Kashmir Valley and Jammu participated.

Navdal is an ancient Hindu shrine in Kashmir from times timeworn. The description of the shrine is found in many religious scriptures. Nine springs existed at this sacred religious shrine, and devotees used to take holy dips in them on the occasion of the Navdal Yatra before the mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley. The Shivs lingam existing in one of the springs, the devotees would perform Rudra Abhishek on the occasion. For many years, the rituals could not be accomplished due to the terrorism in the valley. The yatra and rituals started recently under the auspices of the Navdal Tirath Committee, a Temples and Shrines Prabandhak Committee subsidiary, Tral Awantipora.

Amarnath Vaishnavi Remembered on his 99th birth anniversary

Glowing tributes were paid to Pt Amarnath Vaishnavi on his 99th birth anniversary at a function organised by Amarnath Vaishnavi Foundation in Jammu.

Born on August 24, 1925, Pandit Vaishnavi was declared the father of the Kashmiri Pandit community on his eightieth birthday who dedicated his entire life in The programme was chaired by Arvind Karwani, the Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner; Dr Raj Nehru, Vice Chancellor of Sri

Vishwakarma Skill University, was the guest of honour, with Dr P.N. Trisal, a renowned scholar, as the special guest. Col. (retd) Tej Tikoo, a well-known author, presented a paper during the prestigious Amarnath Vaishnavi Memorial Lecture.

During the event, the Amarnath Vaishnavi Foundation awarded scholarships to 18 Kashmiri migrants.

PM Package employees, SPOs brought under the ambit of the J&K Rehabilitation Assistance Scheme

The government has brought the persons appointed under the provisions of Jammu and Kashmir Migrants Special Drive Recruitment Rules, 2009 (PM Package employees) and Special Police Officers (SPOs) under the ambit of Jammu.

These provisions have been made in the J&K Rehabilitation Assistance Scheme through amendments carried out in exercising the powers conferred by Article 309 of the Constitution of India. The General Administration Department has notified the amendments.

In the Explanation to Clause 2 (application of the scheme), it is mentioned that for this scheme, persons who have been appointed under the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Migrants (Special Drive) Recruitment Rules, 2009, shall also be included in the definition of Government employee.

J&KL High Court Directs Div. Commissioner to Take over Mgmt.

The Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh high court has directed the Srinagar divisional commissioner (DC) to immediately take over the management of Raghunath Temple in Barzulla and its properties, including its 159-kanal land.

The division bench of justices Sanjeev Kumar and MA Choudhary ordered that the Div Com may manage the temple and its properties either by himself or through a committee of revenue officers and other departments. Earlier, the court issued similar

orders about temples in the Anantnag and Ganderbal districts.

The court's order said the properties shall remain in the temple's name under the management of the district administration, and no change in revenue records shall be permitted.

"The DC or the committee appointed by him as aforesaid, as the case may be, shall demarcate the entire land belonging to the temple and fix boundaries for its proper identification. It shall also take requisite steps for removal of encroachments, if any, in accordance with law," the order read.

The court further said no mutation should be attested in the name of any mahant or his disciple, and the properties shall remain in the name of the temple under the management of district administration, which shall be reflected in the revenue records.

The bench was hearing a writ petition from four siblings: Hamida Banoo, Mian Abdul Qayoom, Mian Rafiq Ahmad, Mian Mohammad Yousuf, and others.

One of the petitioners, Mian Qayoom, is the former president of the J&K High Court Bar Association. He is currently in jail in a murder case.

The Mian family and other residents of Barzulla had challenged DC Kashmir's 2021 decision to hand over the entire 159 kanal of land to the Raghunath temple and claimed they, too, have rights on the land.

The Mian family's claim is related to only a piece of land measuring six kanal and ten marlas. They said in their petition that their grandfather, Mian Mohammad Sultan, had been in possession of the land in the 1950s, and later, possession was transferred to their father, Mian Abdul Rahim.

In 2021, the DC passed directions for handing over the entire land to the temple management.

The court said the entire issue needs to be adjudicated by a competent court. The Mian family and others who have had the temple property cannot be termed rank encroachers and must be given an adequate hearing before any action.

"It is, thus, high time that the government steps in and takes charge of the temple properties so that these are saved from further encroachments and appropriate action is initiated to free them from encroachments, if any, taken place on such properties," the order said. DC Kashmir had conveyed to the court that miscreants damaged the temple during the 1990s. Then, constructions were erected by many people, including members of the Mian family, by taking advantage of the situation in Kashmir.

In an order dated July 9 in a series of petitions and applications relating to temple properties in J&K and their management, the HC decided on the petition regarding the

management of Shri Raghu Nath Mandir and Nagbal Gautam Nag Temple, Anantnag, saying the properties "vest in the Deity" and, therefore, are required to be managed effectively and peacefully.

The order followed another judgement by Justice Sanjeev Kumar, who allowed a petition by members of the Kashmiri Pandit community and directed the district magistrate of north Kashmir Ganderbal district to preserve, protect, and maintain two Hindu religious shrines, namely Asthapan Devraj Bharav situated in Nuner and Vidhushe shrine.

*Source: Agencies
Editing: Vijay Kashkari*

KASHMIRI SEWAK SAMAJ FARIDABAD CELEBRATED BIRTHDAY OF MATA LALLESHWARI



Kashmiri Sewak Samaj Faridabad celebrated a week long program on the occasion of Birthday of Mata Lalleshwari (11th September). The week long program started at Sharika Bhawan Sector 17 Faridabad on 8th September 2024 and concluded on Sunday, 15th September 2024, with a grand celebration in front of the Mata Lalleshwari statue, the only premises of its kind, at Hari Parbhat Village Anangpur Faridabad. On this grand occasion, the community stalwarts like Dr. Raj Nehru, Sh. Utpal Kaul and others also participated and Ms. Sushma Kalla, Sh. Sanjeev Raina Gautam, Sh. Sanjay Pandita and others enthralled the audience with Lal Wakhs and other musical presentations.

Overview of CAT 2024

Common Admission Test (CAT) is the most well-liked entrance exam for an MBA in India. CAT is conducted by the Indian Institutes of Management (IIM). The Institutes are located in Ahmedabad, Amritsar, Bangalore, Bodh Gaya, Calcutta, Indore, Jammu, Kashipur, Kozhikode, Lucknow, Mumbai, Nagpur, Raipur, Ranchi, Rohtak, Sambalpur, Shillong, Sirmaur, Tiruchirappalli, Udaipur, and Visakhapatnam. CAT score is used by all the 20 IIMs (Indian Institute of Management)) and over 1200 other management institutes across the country for admission to MBA. The list of non-IIM member institutions registered to avail of the CAT 2024 scores is provided at www.iimcat.ac.in. IIMs have no role in the selection process of non-IIM institutions. Over two lakh students appear for the exam each year.

Candidate's CAT 2024 scorecards will be made accessible on the CAT website. Candidates may also be intimated individually by SMS. The CAT results will likely be declared by the second week of January 2025. The CAT 2024 score is valid only until December 31, 2025, and will be accessible on the website. After that, no queries related to the issuance of CAT 2024 scorecards will be entertained.

CAT was launched in 1950 and graduated as an online entrance test in 2009, which was 3 hours. The registration process for CAT 2024 ended on September 13, 2024. The candidates can download the admit cards from November 05, 2024, until November 24, 2024. The Admission Test 2024 (CAT 2024) will be held on Sunday, November 24, 2024, in three sessions, and the exam will be 120 minutes.

Three different Test Forms shall be administered in three Test Sessions. To ensure fairness and equity in comparing the candidates' performances across different test sessions, the candidates' scores shall be subjected to normalisation. The Normalisation

process shall adjust for location and scale differences of score distributions across different forms. After normalisation across different forms, the scores shall be further normalised across different sections. The Scaled Scores obtained by this process shall be converted into percentiles for shortlisting purposes.

For reporting purposes, Scaled Scores for each section (Section I: Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension (VARC), Section II: Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning (DILR), and Section III: Quantitative Ability (QA)) and Total along with the Percentiles shall be published.

The normalisation process is an established practice for comparing candidate scores across multiple test forms. It is similar to those adopted in other large educational selection tests conducted in India, such as the Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE).

IIMs shortlist candidates for the interview stage based on their criteria, which may be independent of each other. The process may include the Writing Ability Test (WAT), Group Discussion (GD) and Personal Interviews (PI). Performance in the CAT 2024 examination is an important component in the admission process. IIMs may additionally use other factors such as the candidates' previous academic performance, relevant work experience, gender and academic diversity, and other similar inputs in shortlisting and ranking candidates at various stages of the admission process. The processes, academic cut-offs and the weights allocated to the evaluation parameters may vary across IIMs. For more information, refer to the admissions policies of individual IIMs on their respective websites.

10 MBA Colleges

Accepting 60-70 Percentile in CAT

A high percentile score in the Common Admission Test (generally considered above the 95 percentile) is the gateway to the prestigious

Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and other top business schools in India. These institutions are renowned for their academic rigour, placements, alumni network, and brand value. Securing a seat in such an institute significantly enhances your career prospects. For many students, the CAT may not have opened the door they hoped for, but it doesn't dim their brilliance.

A high percentile score in the Common Admission Test (generally considered above the 95 percentile) is the gateway to the prestigious Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and other top business schools in India. These institutions are renowned for their academic rigour, placements, alumni network, and brand value. Securing a seat in such an institute significantly enhances your career prospects.

1. Sanskar Educational Group Ghaziabad
2. Sanskar Educational Group Ghaziabad
3. Lotus Business School Pune
4. Pune Institute of Business Management (PIBM) Pune
5. Eastern Institute for Integrated Learning in Management Kolkata
6. International Institute of Business Studies Noida
7. IIKM Business School Calicut
8. International Institute of Business Studies Bengaluru
9. Presidency College Bengaluru
10. Bengal Institute of Business Studies (BIBS) Kolkata

Symbiosis National Aptitude Test (SNAP) 2024

Symbiosis International (Deemed University) is a multi-disciplinary university offering its students and faculty a vibrant learning ecosystem designed around its multicultural and innovative ethos. Symbiosis was established in 1971. Symbiosis Pune is ranked 59th in the overall category, 32nd in the university category, and 17th in the management category by the NIRF 2023.

A candidate aspiring to join a Master of Business Administration (MBA) programme offered by any Institute of SIU has to appear for the common, mandatory Symbiosis National

Aptitude (SNAP) Computer Based Test (CBT), which will be conducted at 80Test Centres. A candidate can appear for up to three tests for SNAP 2024. If a candidate appears for more than one test, the higher score will be considered for the final percentile calculation, and there will be no normalization. The SNAP Test 2024 score will be valid only for admission to SIU's selected programmes for 2025-26.

The Management Institutes and programmes are:

- 1. Symbiosis Institute of Business Management (SIBM, Pune)**
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Innovation & Entrepreneurship)
- 2. Symbiosis Institute of Computer Studies & Research (SICSR)**
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Information Technology)
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Digital Transformation)
- 3. Symbiosis Centre for Management & Human Resource Development (SCMHRD)**
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Infrastructure Development & Management)
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Business Analytics)
- 4. Symbiosis Institute of International Business (SIIB)**
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (International Business)
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Agri-Business)
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Energy & Environment)
- 5. Symbiosis Institute of Digital & Telecom Management (SIDTM), formerly Symbiosis Institute of Telecom Management**
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Digital & Telecom Management)
- 6. Symbiosis Institute of Management Studies (SIMS)**
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration

7. **Symbiosis Institute of Media & Communication, Pune (SIMC)**
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Communication Management)
8. **Symbiosis Institute of Operations Management, Nashik (SIOM)**
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Operations Management),
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Agri Operations Management)
9. **Symbiosis Centre for Information Technology (SCIT)**
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Information Technology Business Management)
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Data Science & Data Analytics)
10. **Symbiosis Institute of Health Sciences (SIHS)**
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Hospital & Healthcare Management)
11. **Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Bengaluru (SIBM, Bengaluru)**
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Business Analytics)
12. **Symbiosis School of Banking & Finance (SSBF), formerly Symbiosis School of Banking Management**
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Banking & Finance)
13. **Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Hyderabad (SIBM, Hyderabad)**
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration
14. **Symbiosis School of Sports Sciences (SSSS)**
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Sports Management)
15. **Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Nagpur (SIBM, Nagpur)**
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration (Food & Agri-Business Management)
16. **Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Noida (SIBM, Noida)**
 - ❖ Master of Business Administration

17. **Symbiosis School of Culinary Arts and Nutritional Sciences (SSCANS)**

- ❖ Master of Business Administration (Food Technology and Food Enterprise Management)

Eligibility

Eligibility to apply is a Graduate from any recognised University/ Institution of National Importance with a minimum of 50% marks or equivalent grade. Eligibility for the specialised MBA programmes can be found in the information brochure. The University admits candidates under Supernumerary Quota of two seats per programme to Kashmiri Migrants and Kashmiri Pandits/ Kashmiri Hindu Families (Non-Migrants) living in Kashmir valley. A candidate applying under Kashmiri Migrants & Kashmiri Pandits / Kashmiri Hindu Families (Non-Migrants) living in Kashmiri Valley) are mandatorily required to submit relevant documents issued by the competent authority.

Important Dates

- ❖ Registration closes on November 22, 2024 (Friday)
- ❖ Payment closes on November 22, 2024 (Friday)

Admit Card Live on (www.snaptest.org)

- ❖ December 02, 2024 (Monday) for SNAP Test 01
- ❖ December 09, 2024 (Monday) for SNAP Test 02
- ❖ December 15, 2024 (Sunday) for SNAP Test 03

SNAP Computer Base Test (CBT) 2024

- ❖ SNAP Test 1 - December 08, 2024 (Sunday)
- ❖ SNAP Test 2 - December 15, 2024 (Sunday)
- ❖ SNAP Test 3 - December 21, 2024 (Saturday)

Announcement of Result

- ❖ January 08, 2025 (Wednesday)
The timing of the tests will be communicated to the candidates via their Admit Card. Visit the website <https://www.snaptest.org/entrance-exam> for the details

Schools can't force Younger Students to use Textbooks other than those Prescribed by NCERT, SCERT: Delhi Education Department

The Delhi government's education department

has directed the heads of all recognised private schools that they cannot force children of elementary classes to use textbooks other than those prescribed by NCERT and SCERT.

The Delhi government's directive came in a circular to ensure the implementation of Section 29 of the Right to Education Act, 2009, which mandates the curriculum and evaluation procedures for elementary education be laid down by an academic authority specified by the government.

IIT Mandi Launches

a Five-Year Integrated MBA Programme

Indian Institute of Technology Mandi has introduced a five-year Integrated MBA (BBA Analytics (Honors) and MBA (DS & AI) programme. The School of Management offers this programme to equip students with a comprehensive understanding of management and skills in analytics, data science, mathematics and statistics through a carefully curated curriculum. The integrated MBA also includes relevant courses from other areas, such as humanities and communication, to ensure the holistic development of its graduates. The program begins with foundational management, analytics, mathematics and statistics, communication and personality development courses. After completing the foundation courses, students will take advanced and specialized courses that will equip them with the skills required to apply technology across the functional areas of management.

After successful completion of the full 5-years of integrated MBA programme, the students shall be awarded two separate degrees, i.e. BBA Analytics (Honors) (under the IMBA) and MBADS&AI (under the IMBA).

Aligned with the New Education Policy, the IMBA program also offers the following exit options to the students. After successfully completing three years, upon exit, the candidate would be awarded a BBA Analytics degree. After four years, the candidate would be awarded a BBA Analytics (Honors) degree.

Reliance Foundation Undergraduate Scholarships

Reliance Foundation is committed to

strengthening young people's access to higher education in India. Every year, the Reliance Foundation Undergraduate Scholarships support 5,000 meritorious students based on a merit-cum-means criteria for their undergraduate college education.

Students with a household income of under Rs. 15 lakh who are enrolled in the first year (academic year 2024-25) of their undergraduate studies pursuing any subject stream can apply. The programme will also aim to encourage applications by girls and specially-abled students.

Selected scholars will receive a scholarship of up to 2 lakhs throughout their degree programme. In addition to the scholarship grant, the Reliance Foundation Undergraduate Scholarships will allow scholars to be part of a vibrant alumni network and an enabling support system that will create a long-term impact on their lives and career trajectories.

The total scholarship amount available throughout the degree programme will be up to Rs/INR 2 Lakhs.

The scholarship will go beyond financial support, with students automatically gaining networking opportunities through a strong alumni network.

- ✓ Applications for the 2024-25 scholarships are now open.
- ✓ Students will start the application process by clicking on the below link:

<https://reliancefoundation.org/reliance-foundation-scholarships-2024-25>

- ✓ The online Aptitude test is mandatory for all applicants.
- ✓ The test will be 60 minutes and contain 60 Multiple Choice Questions.
- ✓ Test components include verbal, analytical, logical, and numerical ability.
- ✓ Applications will be evaluated using a combination of aptitude test scores and academic and personal information.
- ✓ All candidates will be evaluated based on merit cum means.
- ✓ The deadline for applications is October 06 2024.

Feedback: vijaykashkari@gmail.com



AIKS
Matrimonial Service



Looking for suitable match for our son Vaibou Munshi born on 16/01/1987, Educational qualification BMS (Mumbai University) Annual income in 7 figures. Working as manager FAR East region Emerties Leaving Solution (Mumbai) Kashmir Address: Malik Bagh Zaindar Mohalla Habba Kadal, Srinagar KMR. Present Address: 19/1A, JMC- 22, Munshi Shack, Anuradha Puram, Barani Muthi, Jammu - 181205. Interested may contact on Mobile no - 9419195317, 7006144793, 9419878796



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



Looking for a suitable match for our son working in Deloitte Bangalore as a Software Engineer. Qualification: B.Tech from PDEU Gandhinagar Gujarat in ICT (information and communication Technology). Born on 14 NOV 1997 at 09:26 AM, Height -6 Feet. Appearance: Handsome, FAMILY originally from Fathe Kadal (Vakils) Srinagar. Family well settled in Ahmedabad, Father - CEO in Pvt organisation. MOTHER - Associate Professor in Pvt University Please contact: 9924700377



Suitable alliance invited for my son (B.E, M.B.A), born 28th May 1995, 5'9". Working as DATA ANALYST at LOWE'S COMPANI, Inc., Bengaluru, Karnataka Interested may contact: Ramesh Pandita, Anand Nagar, Jammu, Email-Id: arianramesh99@gmail.com, or Mobile no. 9419189513.



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



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

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



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



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

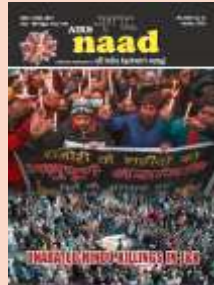
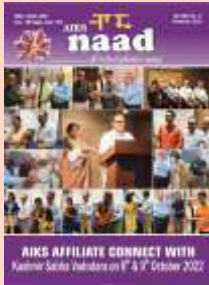


Seeking a suitable alliance for my Son. DOB-17/09/1993, Height- 5.11 ft, Qualification- BE in Computer Science & MBA Finance (Mumbai University). Occupation: Sr. Manager in Kotak Mahindra Bank, Mumbai. Earlier he was working as Relationship Manager in HDFC Bank. Family Details - Father: Sh. Predemen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



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September 14, 2024

BALIDHAN DIWAS, 2024

Press Release : Balidhan Diwas on 14.09.2024 at BK Ganjoo Memorial Park, Kali Bari Marg, BSNL Colony, near Gole Dhakhana.

Organisers : Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch, All India Kashmiri Samaj and Global Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora.

Dear Sir,

Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch, All India Kashmiri Samaj and Global Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora observed "Balidhan Diwas, as a tribute by the community in exile to the Martyrs who laid their lives to preserve the sovereignty of the nation. Sh. Ajay Pandita Ji coordinated the event and made the welcome address also. Mrs Renu Kak was the moderator.

Sh. Ajay Pandita Ji, Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch in his welcome address paid tributes to The Martyrs of the community, the Jammu Kashmir Police force, The CRPF, The BSF and the armed forces guarding the nation. Speaking on the occasion he demanded the active participation of the community members in the decision making on Kashmir issues. This year the programme was conceived and executed by Youth team JKVM. Musical Tributes were given by the community youngsters.

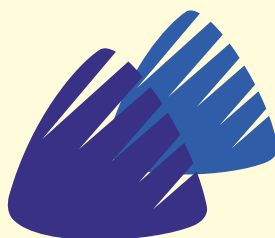
Sh. Rajinder Premi Ji and Smt. Vijay Tingloo ji recited soulful poems. Remembering the sacrifice of Martyrs he urged the community to remember the cause for which they laid down their lives.

The event was presided by the chief Guest Sh. Ashwani Upadhyay Ji, advocate and spokesperson BJP. He emphasised the need to do away with the old laws and create uniform law for all citizens of India.

The programme culminated with the Sammohik floral Shradhajali by the community to the Martyrs and candle lit. While presenting the vote of thanks Smt. Renu Kak Ji expressed gratitude to the community for coming together to pay floral tributes to the Martyrs. – Satish Bhat, General Secretary



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