

AIKS naad

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Editor's Note

***Dear Readers,
Shivratri Greetings!***

Every Kashmiri Pandit household eagerly waits for this time of the year when their most celebrated and worshipped festival - Herath is observed with religious fervour and spiritual merit. Over the years this festival has united the community across the globe. Be it valley where few hundred families continue to celebrate in their natural surroundings or be the diaspora dispersed across the globe, the enthusiasm and the spirit has continued with same passion. Observance of this festival is very important as our legacy, tradition and rituals get reinforced and that is then transmitted to new generation who are the future of the community. The observance of these festivals brings upon the community cohesion and enrich the esoteric values among devotees which ultimately takes them to the exhilarating journey from external to eternal. Therefore, let us open ourselves so that Param Shiva permeates our heart and mind and makes our worldly sojourn enriching.

By the time this issue of Naad reaches you, the Kumbh Mela of 2025 would have crossed 60 crore visitors. The mela was listed as Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2017, and what makes it significant is the immemorial quest of millions of humans, since centuries to seek liberation and divinity. The holy dip at Triveni Sangam, where there is the confluence of Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati is itself an enriching experience. This year was no different with ascetics, spiritual gurus, saints, kalpavasis and common visitors taking the holy dip to seek liberation from the abyss

of birth and death. Notwithstanding the logistical issues, devotees reached Prayagraj for the holy dip. No other civilisation or country has such people who believe that we all are children of same God and seek divine grace. This concept of liberation is unique to Sanatan Civilisation and that is what keeps it shining example of universal oneness, brotherhood and peaceful coexistence, as every seeker believes that we all are children of Supreme Being and we all have right to live peacefully and achieve divinity among ourselves.

Every year, 21st February is celebrated as International Mother Tongue Day. Kashmiri's too have their own mother tongue – Kashmir language which is used as medium of communication. However, after the exodus from the valley the new generation has not been able to converse in their own mother tongue. This is not a good sign as mother tongue shapes our thinking and helps faster expression of ideas. Moreover, it connects to our ancestry, our traditions, literature and our collective memory. Therefore, it is important that we continue to use Kashmiri language at our homes and encourage our new generation to converse in the same. We have seen children's in other parts of our country are very fluent in many languages including their own mother tongue, be it Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, Punjabi, Bengali, etc. The spoken language at homes is their native mother tongue, this sets as an example for our community as our challenges are multifold. So let us take a vow that we shall speak and write in our Kashmiri language and keep our identity alive.

ਮੁਨੀਲ ਗਿੱਲ ਗਵਰਨਰ



From the *President's* Desk

*Respected All,
Namaskar to whole Community*

Out of many things, AIKS led by its president Ravinder Pandita called on Kiren Rijiju, minister of minorities and Parliamentary affairs in New Delhi. Our delegation discussed and presented him a memorandum seeking minority status and benefits to minorities within state. The minister said that it was irony that Kashmiri Hindus are minorities in state but majority in union which is true with a few states more. He listened to the points raised by AIKS like constituting a minorities commission in J&K, declaring us minorities and referred to SC direction of 2018 in a petition by Ankur Sharma as also Justice Venkatachaliah NHRC report. The minister was apprised of various meetings with NCM in the past also and recommendations also thereof. The issue assumes significance after abrogation of Art 370 and unification of J&K state.

AIKS presented and felicitated Kiren Rijiju with a Sharda shawl and portrait. AIKS also urged for reopening of Sharda Peeth PoK on the lines of Kartarpur. The Minister after hearing the delegation suggested that a larger delegation should meet Hon'ble minister with these political issues and assured AIKS that he will facilitate meeting with Home ministry.

Earlier AIKS team met Vivek Tankha MP and had detailed discussion with MP in New Delhi. AIKS thanked him for raising in Rajya Sabha, the bill titled "KASHMIRI PANDITS (RECOURSE, RESTITUTION, REHABILITATION AND RESETTLEMENT) BILL, 2022" and urged him to raise Parliament question on same lines in coming session.

AIKS also called on Dr. Jitendra Singh MoS PMO on 19th January on eve of 36th Exodus Day and presented him with a

memorandum highlighting short term & long term demands of our community.

AIKS also wrote a fresh representation to Minister of Urban Development GOI Sh. Manohar Lal Khattar for providing suitable accommodation for AIKS office in Delhi-NCR. In the meantime AIKS has secured suitable stop gap accommodation in Samavar Club of KHBS Ltd. that was necessitated because of total damage to record files in Faridabad office. Even the portraits of past Presidents are damaged beyond repair. AIKS intends to operate from new office in Samavar Club, Pamposh Colony, New Delhi.

AIKS has further succeeded in organizing International mother tongue day on 22 Feb in collaboration with IGNCA. It is after a many years gap that Vaakh has been restarted to boost Kashmiri language. The only Kashmiri magazine in Devnagiri script was shelved by previous management. Kashmiri language with devnagiri as co script needs a boost. I personally feel that preservation of culture & heritage is the need of the hour.

AIKS intends to publish Naad monthly as well as Vaakh bi-annually for its readers and we hope that the community at large will contribute towards its subscription. It will be a combo package for Rs. 1500/- per year that includes courier charges too.

I appeal to community for new memberships and donations and look forward to fruitful engagement with all affiliates in coming days.

At the end I convey my hearty greetings to the whole community on the eve of Maha Shivratri.

Er. RAVINDER PANDITA
Tel : 9811143024



Sunil Kaul



General Secretary's Column

During the month under review, President, AIKS, along with some other members called on MoS, PMO Dr Jitendra Singh in New Delhi on Exodus Day and submitted a memorandum on behalf of the community. AIKS also presented a copy of the special issue of our mouthpiece, Naad, featuring important articles dealing with our Exodus. Recalling the horrors of 19 Jan 1990, the office bearers held placards 'We still exist' highlighting the plight of community and the burning issues that still remain unresolved. The delegation also discussed our Writ Petition, AIKS versus the State (OWP No: 477/2016). During the discussion it was pointed out to the Hon'ble Minister that presently there is no Solicitor General currently posted in JKUT. In the meeting various short term & long term issues pertaining to community's welfare were also discussed. The minister hailed how the community withstood the exodus and are trying to settle in various parts of country after exodus. He was apprised the delegation of the Migrants Property Act, including the Distress Sale Act covered under the court case, which

is pending adjudication. We pointed out to him that the community was still facing many hardships and pointed out that 'our rehabilitation back in valley should be prioritised'.

Special issue of Naad commemorating 36th Exodus Day of community reiterated that AIKS, being the apex registered body of Kashmiri Pandits, having affiliates pan-India has to take the lead in this direction. The last apex committee constituted by state Govt. was disbanded in 2014, and ever since, no such apex body has been constituted; neither by State Govt. nor by the Centre. President of AIKS further demanded the filling up of 2 assembly seats reserved for displaced community at an earliest.



A delegation of the AIKS also had a meeting with the Congress MP, Vivek Tankha, wherein it was reiterated that Kashmiri Pandits issues need to be raised in the in the coming winer session of Parliament. AIKS thanked him for raising in Rajya Sabha, the bill titled "KASHMIRI PANDITS (RECOURSE, RESTITUTION, REHABILITATION AND RESETTLEMENT) BILL, 2022", and urged him to raise in Parliament the questions on similar lines in coming session.

AIKS presented and felicitated Vivek Tankha, Kashmiri Origin MP from Madhya Pradesh with a Sharda shawl and portrait. Team AIKS reiterated the demand of KPs for an apex body that was constituted by govt before it was disbanded in 2014. The MP assured the delegation that these issues will be raised in the forthcoming Parliament session.



On 3rd February 2025, AIKS met with Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Minorities affairs and demanded Minority status for Kashmiri Pandits and the establishment of Minority Commission in JKUT.

AIKS discussed and presented him a memorandum seeking minority status and benefits to minorities within the state as accruing to the minorities at the national level. The Minister said that it was irony that Kashmiri Hindus being minorities in the UT but majority in union is similar to the plight of Hindus in a few more states. In this regard, He referred to SC direction of 2018, in a petition filed by Ankur Sharma as also Justice Venkatachaliah's NHRC report. The minister was apprised of various meetings with NCM in the past also and recommendations thereof. "The issue assumes significance after abrogation of Art 370 and reorganisation of J&K state", says Ravinder Pandita, President of AIKS.

The Minister after hearing the delegation suggested that a larger delegation should meet Hon'ble Minister of Home and raise these political issues with him. He assured the AIKS that he will facilitate a meeting with Home Minister.



This month, with help of Captain Rawat, we have cleaned up and indexed almost 80% of files which had been handed over to us by the previous dispensation of AIKS in a most deteriorated condition.

Preparations for 'Mother Tongue' Day (21 February), being observed by AIKS every year, under the professional guidance of the President of CKLLC, Dr. Roop Krishen Bhat, are under way. The International Mother Tongue Day function is being organized in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA) on 22nd Feb, 2025, at Umang Auditorium, 4th Floor, IGNCA, Janpath, New Delhi.



 Upender Ambardar



MOTHER TONGUE

A LIFELINE OF SOCIO-CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC IDENTITY

Our mother tongue Kashmiri, popularly known as Koshur, is the first language to which we are exposed right from our birth. It is the language which is spoken at our home by the family members. It is the emotional pillar that binds and ties us with our nativeness, ethnicity and linguistic singleness. It also acts as the vehicle for the transmission of age-old wisdom and our socio-cultural history. Mother tongue also boosts our dignity, amplifies self-esteem and lays everlasting foundation for a strong indigenous society.

Mother tongue, as per the language experts, enhances the creativity of a child by increasing the critical skills and augments the knowledge retention capacity of a child. It also facilitates a clear expression of one's thoughts and ideas with precession and directness. Additionally, speaking in one's own mother tongue also fosters and cements the familial bonds, social cohesiveness, and the community togetherness. Mother tongue is also the language in which a mother addresses her just delivered child for the first time, while breast feeding and cuddling the little one. Mother tongue, as such, like a mother, enjoys a time-honoured status in every social setup. It is the language in which a mother and a grandmother articulate the cradle songs and lullabies, while putting an infant to sleep. They run as, "Ho ho karyau, audakalay", "Chyun thou rouni manzilis,

कामुग काशुर

*kariyau gorou gorou, laaef chaie makhmalich
Tae malmalich chaie voor", "Louktuoy
mouktoyu tarkho, aech vataan mundchaan
chuko".*

It is again the mother tongue, in which a mother refreshes the mood of a toddler by tickling, while uttering the lyrical words, "Aumtyo kumtyo, khasus ba jaengay, mom daam maengay." It is also in kashmiri language that our elders give us blessings and best of heartfelt wishes. Mother tongue is also used for age old "Henzay Vunvoun" and heritage "Veginachoun" folk songs at the time of wedding and mekhla occasions. They run as, "Shouklum kaerthee hyout vunvuniyae, ruth phel dinai maej Bhavani". "Ditoum dayan, Tae rouchum Nani, mae dedi Kani saedayum", "Haer vaech nachnai, tae saer soun sinz hay, harie

gachi mokhtae haar, su ti soun sundihay". Likewise, folk songs, modern melodies and devotional songs in the form of leelas and bhajans, sung in Kashmiri at the time of Mehndiraat continue to enthrall and invigorate the occasion related gatherings.

Kashmiri language, deeply rooted in the fragrance of the nativeness, boasts of a rich literature in the form of prose, poetry, folk stories, folk songs, proverbs, riddles and love stories. All of them are layered with deep meanings, wisdom full thoughts and values inspiring truths. Our rich poetry is also embellished with beautiful metaphors, imagery, similes and irony etc, which open countless windows to a host of varied expositions and imagined perceptions. The heartwarming folk singing like "*Chakri*" and folk dance of "*Bachikout*", to the accompaniment of popular kashmiri songs, continue to brighten up our wedding and other festive occasions. Also, the famous folk tales of "*Akanandoun*" and "*Heemal Nagrai*", rendered in kashmiri, continue to entrance and captivate us.

Faqeer, Nyama Saeb, Ahmed Batwari etc. can be enjoyed only by those, who are familiar with the mother tongue Kashmiri. Likewise, the engaging and engrossing poetry of Arni Maal, Habakhtoon and Mehjoor can be enjoyed, if we know Kashmiri.

The renowned Trikacharya Swami Ramji Maharaj, the reputed Shaivacharyas Swami Mahtab Kak, Swami Vidhya Dhar, Swami Govind Koul Jalalli and the world renowned Shaivite philosopher Swami Laxman Joo, have also used Kashmiri language as a medium of expression to teach Shaivism related texts and Shaivite philosophy. Additionally, who can deny, the soul soothing upshoot effects, experienced by us, while listening to the famous Kashmiri leelas like, "*Darsun dokh chali, Tribhavan lalie.....*", "*Harmokh ber tael prarai Madano....*", "*Bael Tae madal vena gulab, pamposh dustai....*" and "*Akh chi Tae bayie Bae gunzar ma ba....*". Their mere listening is sufficient to put a listener to a state of ecstasy.

It is only due to our familiarity with the language that, we can have the transformative

Mother Tongue is the emotional pillar that binds and ties us with our nativeness, ethnicity and linguistic singleness.

The Spiritual poetry in Kashmiri, focusing on the realisation of the Absolute Self, has an indestructible mystic charm of its own. It stretches from the philosophical Shaivite thoughts containing Vakhs of Lal Ded to the Supreme truth conveying Shruks of Nund Reshi and Shlokas of Sharika Swaroop Mata Rupa Bhavani. Besides, a knower of Kashmiri, can also experience the spiritual fragrance of the devotional poetry of renowned Saint poets of Swami Parmanand, Sahib Koul, Krishn Joo Razdan, Master Zinda Koul, Pt. Mirza Kak, Lala Laxman, Pt. Govind Koul, Prakash Kurgami, Veshin koul, Anand Ram and Thakur Joo Manwati etc. Additionally, the mystic pearls of poetry, ranging from the renowned poets like Rasool Mir, Mahmood Gami, Ahad Zargar, Rahman Dar, Lala Argami, Soch kral, Wahab khar, Shamas

experience by going through the famous mysticism laden poem of "*Sheshrang*" of Rehman Dar, which runs as "*Aadan yikhna chum laden tai, sar ho vandai padan....*". Our acquaintance with Kashmiri can also make us to enjoy the poetry of Lala Aragami where in one his poems he implores, "*Bata koori vati Kani manz chui dai, Kari pooja, mai mashraav lai.....*". Lastly, it is only in Kashmiri, that we venerate, pray and seek forgiveness and blessings from the Supreme Mother Goddess, at the famous shrines of Hari Parbat, Tulamulla and Jwala Bhagwati.

If so many good things are embedded in my native language, then my mother tongue Kashmiri has a most honoured place for all of us. It is the reason that makes us to say with an elated sense of pride that Kashmiri is my mother tongue!



 Inder K Koul



'KASHMIRI AS MOTHER TONGUE' IS IT IN EXISTENTIAL THREAT?

Gesturing is considered one of the earliest modes of communication in humans, but it is primeval with its limitations while language is the primary means of expression more advanced, more sophisticated with wider application. All languages start with mother tongue unless the neonate lands in an alien land or habitat where the language may be a different one other than which he or she is born in. Kashmiris, like many other races are fortunate enough to having a grammatically well-defined mother tongue, rich in its vocabulary, pronunciation, phrases, proverbs, idioms, tales & fables, literature, poetry and other such elements that really make language a treasure-house for a civilization and its progeny. But unfortunately Kashmiri as mother tongue is at cross roads not knowing how long it would survive as such. "Kashmiriyat" the oft-repeated epithet that should have served as a catalyzing factor to preserving Kashmir's tradition and cultural way of living as well as infusing a spirit of pride among the people of this land to uphold and promote those values of life inherited by them that would enable their society to be called a civilized one, has instead turned out to be only a catchword or slogan to furthering political and sectarian interests of some elements and organizations. 'Kashmiri' the linguistic prodigy of millions of people living within the Valley and outside, is worst hit by a state of apathy apt to be called

'callous indifference'. However, the blame for this diabolical neglect does not lie only on these self-serving people and institutions, but with the society as a whole which, while adopting, m i m i c k i n g , o r adapting to external influences never thinks of doing so at the expense of abandoning cultural and linguistic prototypes that define identity. The collective disregard for the mother-tongue cannot simply be attributed to

modernism, as true modernism does not require the disavowal of one's linguistic roots. Modernism does not equate a language, much less one's mother-tongue, with backwardness or irrelevance; rather it thrives on preserving diversity and embracing traditions alongside progress. There was a time when I thought Kashmir is perhaps the only place or may be one of those few places where speaking one's mother tongue i.e. Kashmiri in the instant case generates a sense of inferiority complex and is thus avoided. One need not have a misgiving that the list of such mother tongue disdaining

**"Unfortunately
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such."**

places might be an exhaustive one. That is not the case and I have found people taking pride speaking in their mother tongue whether at their native place or thousands of miles away. On the contrary one can't do without adding another ominous portent to the situation pointing to the extreme aversion found in younger generation Kashmiris towards their mother tongue. Such youngsters whom untoward circumstances like violent activities of fanatics and religious zealots forced them to migrate outside Kashmir or even those from both Muslim or Hindu communities who moved or are still moving out in search of greener pastures, generally feel it below their dignity to communicate or converse with each other in their mother tongue. Quite recently I was shocked, because using the word 'surprised' would perhaps be too mild an expression to indicate severity of the impact, when I heard two elderly Kashmiri

Languages there were 45,173 words available in Ka'shir Dictionary compiled by the Academy in a period of five years from 1974 to 1979. The language has metamorphosed from Sharda which naturally includes a large number of words from Sanskrit. Sizeable number of words has been adopted over the time from Persian, Arabic, Hindi, Urdu, and English. Some language experts trace the origin of many words to Shina spoken in Gilgit, Baltistan, Skardu areas. The officially recognized script for Kashmiri is Persio-Arabic and Devnagri, the latter one since 1990 after the forced exodus of Kashmiri Pandits. The language has produced a galaxy of literary and poetic luminaries while several others continue serving the mother tongue one way or the other.

Language shapes thought and perception not only of the individual or a community, but of the entire race and it is

"Modernism does not equate a language, much less one's mother-tongue, with backwardness or irrelevance; rather it thrives on preserving diversity and embracing traditions alongside progress."

acquaintances of mine originally belonging to some village in District Ganderbal of Kashmir and born may be 60 or 65 years back, speaking to each other in what I should call Kashmirised or Dogrised Hindustani in Jammu. Was it a show off of 'superiority' culture or simply a purposeless hatred for a language one is born into or brought up in.

There is no language on this earth that doesn't have shortcomings, whether few or many, and Kashmiri is no exception. Despite that it has all those ingredients that conveniently make it qualify to be graded as a well-developed means of communication in a civilized human society. No count of words in Kashmiri language has been made in the recent past, but according to the figures arrived at by the J&K Academy of Art, Culture and

only one's mother tongue that is fully equipped and instrumental to perform this role. So why should Kashmiris feel a sort of complacency or be shy of expressing themselves in voice and word of their mother tongue. They may have some difficulty to write in Kashmiri, unfortunately due to absence of an independent script of its own for which this sweet language has got to take recourse to the scripts of other languages like Persio-Arabic, Devnagri, Urdu or sometimes even to English. But that alone should not be a criterion to deter them from giving their mother tongue love & affection, respect & regards that it deserves. People making it their passion and pursuing that passion will yield the results to their own liking and to the liking of the society.



K N Pandita



CREED OF THEO-FASCISM

The Kargil war of 1999 had unfolded a new dimension of Pakistan's nefarious designs. Ambitious to be recognized as a regional power, Islamabad confirmed that even the possession of Kashmir, if that happens, was neither the only nor the final goal she has set for herself.

The emergence of Theo-fascist forces in Pakistan, and their social and political outreach, was the new phenomenon India has had to reckon with. These forces have ideologically integrated with their counterfoils in the Islamic world including the strong Muslim Diaspora in the West.

Catalysts of Theo-fascist ideology are twofold. One is the cumulative grouse of so-called political and economic exploitation of the Muslims by the Western developed countries after the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire in the early 19th century. The rise of Kemal in Turkey and of Reza Shah in Iran at the beginning of the twentieth century is also considered by the Islamists as a Western conspiracy against Islam. Western democracy is an anathema to Islamic traditionalists.

The second catalyst is the belief in the predominance of Islam over other faiths and the superiority of Islamic civilization over existing civilizations. The youth in Muslim seminaries worldwide are brought up along this scriptural guideline. The concept, they assert, must be translated into practice. Hence, we find general mobilization of the faithful (al dominion) in different Islamic countries under different nomenclature from Ikhwan(s) to Al-Qaeda to Lashkars and Jaish(s).

Religion and state are inseparable in Islamic thought: it is abundantly proved historically and theoretically. Late Ayatollah Khomeini refuted Shah Saud's contention of their separation by stressing that the Ka'ba was the precise place where Muslims from all over the world could discuss their political problems.

Pakistan has not only permitted but also encouraged the setting up of thousands of Islamic seminaries called madrasas for disseminating Theo-fascist teachings among the youth. The concepts mentioned above are taught, together with a fair sprinkling of the use of muscle power and the promised reward for martyrdom. This regularly replenishes the cadres of Islamic religious militias deployed for jihad in different parts of the world.

Pakistan is a vastly organised Theo-fascist society wearing alternatively the mask of democracy, martial law administration or theocratic dispensation. She is a moderate Islamic democracy to the Americans, a staunch Sunni-Wahhabi pro-monarchy theocracy to the Saudis, a progressive, liberal and scientific Muslim state to the Central Asians, the only sympathetic fraternity to the Indian Muslims, and the milk and honey-flowing cherished haven (Jannat-i hoor o qesoor) for the Kashmiri Muslims.

Democracy and secularism -- by which India swears--- both are anathema to Pakistani rulers. Democracy, if real, means devolution of power to the people, and secularism, if real, means equality for all religions. The latter is the antithesis of the two-nation theory or the very basis of Pakistan's creation: the former is to her

vastly landed aristocracy what a red rag is to the bull. Therefore, in the eyes of her ruling cadres, the greatest threat to Pakistan's existence, integrity and sovereignty, emanates from a menacing source lying in her immediate neighbourhood – India, precisely in what India teaches and follows.

Pakistan's priority lies in weakening and destabilising India, breaking her democratic and secular structure to insulate her against the contagion called secularism, pluralism and democracy. Kashmir, projected by India as its model, had to bear the brunt. The axe fell on the Pandits. Once in Brussels, Amanullah Khan, the founder of the Kashmir Liberation Front asked me in feigned ignorance, "What happened to you the Kashmiri Pandits?" "Whatever you wanted" was my cryptic answer.

Removal of an elected government, imprisonment of an elected Prime Minister, and framing of charges against him — the latest being his so-called RAW connections — are all measures to succeed the fundamental perceptions described above. Kashmir is a minor screw in the big machine of Pak's agenda of subversion.

To maintain an anti-democracy and anti-pluralistic rhythm, Pakistan is obliged to give a long leash to the Theo-fascists within and outside the country. The superintelligence outfit called the ISI is championing the campaign. Considering the fine sensitivity and importance of its mission, it is but natural that ISI becomes extraordinarily powerful, nay a state within a state. To exercise that power, it needs funds, which, however, flow uninterruptedly and massively from the state exchequer, no doubt at the cost of education, health and welfare of the masses of people. Pakistan army is that country's mega commercial magnate.

The ISI has devised its methods of generating funds by promoting narcotics and drug trafficking in NWFP and the region bordering on Afghanistan. The presence of millions of Afghan refugees in that province helped institutionalise narcotic trade, sucking in cadres of the Pakistani army, sections of bureaucracy and civilian administrative

apparatus and Mafiosi with international connections. Terrorist supremos like Osama found an empire to sit at its top.

ISI's achievement in Kashmir is the ethnic cleansing of its religious minority and fundamentalism of its Muslim society. The disintegration of India, has spread tentacles among the vulnerable sections of Indian Muslims as well. The Pakistani deep state has re-enacted the traditional policy of the Sultans of medieval Kashmir who pursued for nearly five centuries of their reign over Kashmir the one-point agenda of destroying the temples and shrines of Kashmiri Hindus and forcibly converting the Hindus to the faith of the prophet.

The story of India's North Eastern states, where separatism and secessionism are brewing fast, is also linked to ISI machinations. To deepen her perfidy, ISI has created bases around India to coordinate subversion by her agents. Thus, Dhaka and Kathmandu in the east, Qatar, Sharjah and Muscat in the west form the ring of these subversives.

In Kashmir, apart from the known pro-Pak militant outfits and the Hurriyat Conference, there is a committed section of state bureaucracy, political organizations including the ruling party, and moles within the administrative structure fully empathizing with separatists, secessionists and militants. The Kashmiri Muslim Diaspora in Saudi Arabia, Emirates, UK, the US, Canada and Australia is zealously contributing its moral and monetary support to the cause. It has become easily vulnerable to Pakistani lobbying.

Having projected Kashmiri Muslims as the victimised people, the ISI is using them fatally for the destabilisation of the Indian State. This is the reason why in ninety per cent of cases of bomb blasts, shootouts, RDX plantings, kidnappings, hijackings, ransom seeking etc. in different parts of India, mostly Kashmiri youth are involved. This is how under Pakistan's instigation, these young people are misled, arrested or killed. The more that happens, the more the Kashmiri

Muslims get alienated from India. This amply serves the purpose of Pakistan.

International connections of Theo-fascists are too well known to beggar any description. Islamists of various nationalities, Pakistanis, Afghans, Chechens, Sudanese, Lebanese, British Muslims and others have been fighting in Kashmir; some have been arrested. They believe firmly that they are fighting a jihad against the *kafirs*. The statements of the Jamaat-e-Islami chief in Pakistan instil in them the spirit of jihad and martyrdom because they are told that India (and also Russia and the US) is an enemy.

In the aftermath of Kargil's incursion, Pakistan and its ISI accelerated the intensity of militancy in Kashmir as well as the subversion in other parts of India. The hijacking of IC 814 and the high drama at Kandahar, the headquarters of the Taliban, the extremist wing of the contemporary Islamists, are clear indications of what the Theo-fascists are up to.

It should not go unsaid that Pakistan is wielding strong influence in the OIC. She sponsored most of the anti-India resolutions on Kashmir passed by this organisation. After Islamabad's successful plan of destroying Afghanistan by thrusting on her a fratricidal war, in the process of getting rid of a perpetual menace, she desired to establish her political and military depth westward. After effecting ethno-religious cleansing in Kashmir, and making deep inroads into Kashmiri Muslim polity through subversion, bribes and Islamization agenda, Pakistan has also found political and military depth eastward. Her veiled threats of using the nuclear option against the "enemy" (meaning India) are in place -- the latest coming from the Chief Executive himself. Pakistan has been able to prejudice the world opinion on Kashmir. Internationalising of Kashmir has ultimately been achieved whether through the eruption of Kargil fighting or as a result of conducting nuclear tests and then focusing on Kashmir as the flash point in the subcontinent.

Against this, the Indian government has not come up to the mark. India is groping for

an effective way of curbing the menace. She is bogged down with tiresome debates in the parliament and the assemblies. She is responding to the situation through a pedagogue's manual for democratic dispensation. Her handling of the subversion case has aroused mixed responses. She is dangerously trying to minimize the subversion inside Kashmir, and elsewhere in the country. Is it that their vision of a futuristic India is blurred by vote bank politics? Is there none among the political and intellectual stalwarts who can stand up and alert the masses of India to the impending danger of Theo-fascism? Let us not forget that even in the country that has stolen a march over others in fomenting Theo-fascist tendencies, millions of people would like to live in peace with others. What are we doing to strengthen those elements? The current crisis cannot be mitigated just by verbatim recitation of the mantras of democracy and secularism. Practical aspects of these postulates cannot be left to coffee house theorizing tactics but by stressing and taking concrete action in this direction, precisely in what India teaches and follows.

Herath Shivratri Greetings



**May Param Shiva bring peace, prosperity
and good health to all our Baradari
Members. Team Naad**

Letter to the editor

Dear Editor-in-Chief

I am deeply grateful for NAAD, the esteemed journal dedicated to Kashmir and the Kashmiri Pandit community. Your tireless efforts as editor have resulted in a publication that not only showcases the community's resilience but also preserves its culture, language, and heritage.

The current special issue is a testament to your dedication, highlighting critical issues such as displacement, cultural preservation, and the future of the community in the face of forced exodus. Your commitment to amplifying the voices and concerns of Kashmiri Pandits is truly commendable.

Please accept my heartfelt appreciation for your efforts. I wish you continued success in advocating for the community's causes and shedding light on the pressing issues that affect them.

Thank you once again for this thought-provoking and timely publication.

*Sincerely,
Virendra Bangroo*

Dear Editor-in-Chief

I am writing to express my heartfelt appreciation for the special issue of NAAD published on January 19th, which highlighted the plight of Kashmiri Pandits. The lead article by Dr. Ramesh Tamiri, "Thirty-five years of exile," was particularly poignant, as it shed light on the struggles of our community over the years.

I also commend Dr. Rahul Magazine's thought-provoking article, "Night of trampled faith," which resonated deeply with me. Furthermore, Dr. K N Pandita's insightful piece on the decimation of Kashmiri Pandits after India declared itself a secular democracy was a stark reminder of our community's struggles.

Col TejTikoo's article which traces the reasons of our ethnic cleansing is eye opener.

Dr Rattan Lal Bhat in his article brought forth the etymology of Kashmir and exposed the falsification of history by vested historians.

Articles of young people like Urvashi Jalali, Sanchi Bhat and poems of Virender Bangroo and Vimarshi Koul are worth praising. This shows how the editor is nurturing the young people and encouraging them to write.

The entire issue was a testament to the editor's efforts. I applaud the editor for taking concrete steps for publishing a well-researched and impactful issue after many years.

I also request community people to come forward and subscribe the journal.

*Yours sincerely,
L K Bhat.
Jammu.*



Girdari Bhan



KASHMIR EXODUS OF 1989-90

Reflections from the United Kingdom

The memory of our Herculean but futile efforts to tell our story - the true narrative about the tragedy that had befallen the Hindus of Kashmir Valley to the British media.



As I look back on the winter of 1989-90 and the first few years thereafter, what comes immediately to my mind? Telephone calls from family, relatives and friends, as they fled from their homes and the Valley to escape brutal persecution, violence and loss of life. Telephone messages reporting the Hindu community fleeing from the Valley, of their desperate search to find refuge in Jammu city, and then Jammu Province.

(The reason for the perpetrators was clearly political – to carve out a separate territory independent of India, violence unleashed on the hapless and completely innocent Hindus of Kashmir.)

Memories of my visits to the camps, countless campsites in which you saw Hindus of Kashmir Valley now in tattered tents - in Purkhu, Patoli, Udampur, Nagrota, Batal Balian and many more (a little later in Delhi), wherein the destitute and despondent brothers

and sisters and the children of our community had sought shelter of listening to their tales of horror.

A British politician (mentioned below) also flits through the files of my memory.

The memory of our Herculean but futile efforts to tell our story - the true narrative about the tragedy that had befallen the Hindus of Kashmir Valley to the British media.

Beyond those memories I dwell on the massive human tragedy that had been inflicted on the Hindus of the Valley, and the false narrative craftily put together by their perpetrators, and immediately released to the national and international media – that Hindus were safe in Kashmir, that no exodus had taken place, and that any Hindus who had moved out of the Valley had done so at the say-so of the then Governor Jagmohan. These 'refugees' were henceforth referred to as 'migrants', presumably economic migrants. The official numbers were slowly going up day by day, depending on who had gone to register their names, but the numbers always remaining lower than the actual figures. In retrospect the total numbers are debatable, but definitely in excess of half a million, and likely to be nearer to three quarters of one million.

I recall the deafness, blindness and muteness of the Media both Indian and international, in particular its distorted reporting, basing their reports coming from Kashmir Valley. I remember with dismay their refusal to be drawn to find out what had actually happened and what was actually happening in the Valley. They had relied solely on the narrative and reports of the perpetrators of the Holocaust to which I referred above.

I remember the dishonesty and gross incompetency of the Indian politicians. I remember the role, indeed the non-role, of the international politicians, in recognising, and publicly acknowledging and denouncing the

violence inflicted on Hindus in Kashmir and the exodus that had been forced upon them. I now am perplexed how the same politicians and journalists spent their time reporting on several similar events in later years, elsewhere in the world, events that were of a minor magnitude.

I also remember my observation at my re-visits: that these same destitute people (those that survived the harsh life in those tattered tent) had set up little shop-fronts to sell a few simple items and take the first steps to stand on their feet, small tents allocated for their residence now part-used as mini-shops, education classes they were holding for the

education of their children – in open areas, under the scorching sunshine. I recall seeing the preparations for weddings of the youth, the bricks-constructed *vuru* to cook food for the guests (*baratis*). These early signs of their resilience did indeed bear fruit over three decades - many youngsters have excelled, through hard work, to reach lofty positions, all demonstrating the resilience of a people who could not be

vanquished, or eliminated.

The reader will note that I have not said anything about the Muslim population of the Valley. A substantial number of them, arguably the vast majority, had colluded with the terrorists who had been trained, armed, and financed by the Pakistani government. They remained silent on this aspect. They would also not admit to the manner, indirect and direct, in which they had contributed to the humiliation, persecution, violence, torture and murder of innocent Hindus, and the rape and gang-rape of Hindu women. These countless incidents coupled with the inability and/or refusal of the then Indian Government to provide them protection, had forced the Hindus to flee from the Valley to save their lives, and protect the honour of their womenfolk.

I recall the deafness, blindness and muteness of the Media both Indian and international, in particular its distorted reporting, basing their reports coming from Kashmir Valley.

To rub salt into the wound, almost immediately, in the wake of this Exodus, a false narrative was built and promoted on the national and international scene that Hindus had left Kashmir on their own accord. It was further narrated that they had done so on the advice of the then Governor Jagmohan. Not one of the Muslims of the Valley had the honesty and the courage then to counter this - who would leave their homes and hearths to travel hundreds of miles to face a bleak outlook in refugee camps, and live as beggars, in tattered tents, subject to the vagaries of the weather, and victims of animal and human predators? (I am aware that a handful of Muslims, mostly youngsters have in recent times come forward to acknowledge the wrong that had been done to the Hindus.

Very soon after their Holocaust and the Exodus, an organisation titled Human Rights of the People of Kashmir came into being here in the United Kingdom. Surprisingly it was being promoted in a very respectable medical journal here, with some prominent members its supporters. A senior politician, an ex-MP, later a member of the House of Lords, was its Patron. Taken in by the anti-India narrative presented to him, he became quite critical and

Human Rights? Of the perpetrators?

In a short time, following the Hindus' Exodus from the Valley, the anti-Hindu narrative had been vigorously presented to the Western media and the politicians. The media was reporting on the horrors inflicted on the 'innocent Muslims' of Kashmir by the security forces, but not a word about Hindus. What was happening according to the journalists, was a rebellion/ uprising by the people, termed separatists, later called insurgents and militants. The word terrorism came into effect only after the World Trade Centre had been destroyed followed by the London Bombings. Even then, the admission that Kashmir was suffering at the hands of terrorists came about very slowly and grudgingly.

What about us, Hindus of Kashmir?

We failed in what we could have done, in taking enough precautions to defend ourselves. But that was not easy at all. We hadn't foreseen what was going to happen.

1. Our leaders then and later tried valiantly to put on record the historical events to which I have alluded, but these statements went unseen and/or unheard in quarters that could have acted to prevent the genocide of Kashmiri Hindus and stepped

The media was reporting on the horrors inflicted on the 'innocent Muslims' of Kashmir by the security forces, but not a word about Hindus.

was refused entry to India. When this refusal was years later, revoked, he visited Kashmir twice. On the second visit, he was persuaded by Kashmiri Hindus to visit their 'migrant' camps in Jammu. Although he was advised by Muslim hosts in Kashmir not to do so, he did visit the camps. Later, he admitted to me in writing that his knowledge of the Kashmir issue had been incomplete until this visit, and that he would not have made the statements earlier had he been in possession of all the facts. What business did the medics take a political stand, based solely on the narrative that had been fed to them? Taking a stand for

in later to offer humanitarian help to Hindus in their hour of misery and destitution.

2. Outside of India we tried, the best we could, but to no avail. I admit, we were not up to it. We had no training about how to engage with the media, and no resources to pursue this activity. We learnt on the job, but that took too long.
3. The media in Britain would only report on/publish information supplied by the terrorist groups and their supporters in Kashmir. When the reports had been proven to be false, that would not be

published. The reports referred to the State as 'Kashmir', not Jammu & Kashmir (J&K).

That J&K State had legally acceded to, and become a part of, India was never properly acknowledged. On one occasion, even the BBC held a long discussion on whether J&K had acceded to India, and if so where was the Document of Accession - the Document of Accession of Kashmir with India was signed as stipulated in the British Instrument of the Partition of India. It had been co-signed by Britain's last Governor General in India, Lord Louis Mountbatten! And here was (apparently) ignorant BBC accepting the Pakistani assertion that this document never existed, that this accession had never taken place!

Not a word about the plight of the Kashmiri Hindus. They didn't seem to exist.

We simply could not understand why this was so.

1. Now, looking back, with several decades of experience, we can see the incompetence and fallibility of the Western Media. The Western Media generally reports only on what is of interest or concern to their own countries. Some will take up international issues where their interests are locked, be that trade, oil and / or other resources, presence of their own communities abroad, of issues based on religion – Christianity or Islam, or based on other factors relevant to them. Their claim to be fair and factual is largely fallacious. Their reports on events, although presented in a glib manner, are anything but comprehensive or factual. They lose no time in reporting 'bad news' about India, true or imaginary, while there is little or no mention of events 'good or notable' about India. And, in particular, news reports on Hindu issues are either not reported or reported in a distorted or misleading manner.
2. Sadly, what little competence the then Governance in India had, was markedly corroded by this misreporting on the

Kashmir issue. Towards the end of the twentieth century, India was economically and militarily much weaker and the Western nations and the Islamic Bloc found it easy to lean heavily on India to effectively and largely weaken its position on Kashmir. This resulted in the prolongation of the "Kashmir Problem", with Kashmiri Hindus having to stay on in exile and in misery.

Abrogation of Article 370:

The Article 370 in the Indian Constitution, that had given a special status on a *temporary basis* to the State of Jammu & Kashmir, was abrogated in 2019. The Article had been inserted into the Constitution in, what is now known to be, a surreptitious and scurrilous manner. Conversely, in 2019, its abrogation was done in an entirely legal manner, and the State is henceforth subject, like other States, to national laws, the Judiciary and to the Constitution of India. The J&K State has become, thenceforth, responsible for ensuring equal status for *all* citizens, and for ensuring for all citizens their right to life and to property.

What Next:

a) Kashmiri Hindus:

Abrogation of Article 370 is momentous and historical both in the short term, and even more so, in the longer term has not paved the way, yet, for the safe return and rehabilitation of the Hindu community, who have now been in exile for nearly 35 years. Lots of noble words are spoken by politicians and well-meaning people forecasting reversal of the Hindus' holocaust, but the Hindus of Kashmir, people who had inhabited Kashmir for thousands of years, remain where they are.

We, Hindus of Kashmir, must learn to be self-reliant both in terms of individuals and families but also as a nation (of Kashmiri Hindus) and become committed to do anything and everything possible to tackle our issues; we also must become part of Hindus community in India and outside wherever we be.

b) Hindus of the J&K State Outside the Valley:

These Hindus feel that, right from the Independence of India in 1947, they have been politically and economically marginalised.

Recently promises have been made that this wrong will be righted. Time will tell.

c) Kashmiri Muslims:

Except notably for a small number of individuals, a genuine soul-searching amongst the Muslims in Kashmir has not happened.

Until there is recognition and acknowledgement of how they, through their silence and inaction, let things happen - how the non-extremists let the terrorists do what they did, and until a genuine apology is issued, a long-term peace cannot be envisaged, and the words 'Kashmiriyat' and 'Hindu-Muslim brotherhood' will continue to sound hollow.

d) Our Language and Culture:

In an article titled "Kashmiri Pandit Reformation and the Global Diaspora: What are the Challenges facing Kashmiri Hindus at

Present?" "that I wrote almost twenty years ago for the journal of the Bengali KPs, I stated that our long-term challenge will remain to hold on to our koshyur language and culture, and to hold on to the rites and rituals that we have practiced over thousands of years in the Valley. As we continue to be in exile, for many of us isolated from the rest of the community, these rites and rituals will remain under potential and increasing threat and there is the real prospect that our grandchildren may not speak koshyur. I know there are groups within the community who are teaching the children born outside Kashmir to speak, and write, in koshyur. All credit to them. But such efforts should be expanded, and more importantly, supported by the community

It is the responsibility of all of us, esp. the parents, to take care – speak in koshyur with each other, esp. when the little children are in the hearing distance. I am impressed by the observation of other communities – Bengalis, Tamils, Marathis, Punjabis, Kannads, Malayalees, etc.: Even having been abroad for decades, all their children speak fluently in their respective mother-tongues. We need to emulate them.

NAAD CONGRATULATES DR RATAN PARIMOO JI

Congratulations to Dr Ratan Parimoo, a renowned art historian and painter, on receiving the Padma Shree Award. Dr Parimoo, from Jammu & Kashmir, is a celebrated teacher, academician, and writer.

He has authored 14 books, participated in numerous lectures and exhibitions, and his work has taken him to countries like London, Paris, and Australia.

Once again, congratulations to Dr Ratan Parimoo, a maestro of abstract art and a reputed art educator.





Ashok Bhan



KASHMIR'S HOLOCAUST DAY

Black 19th. January, 1990

This 19, day of January every year is in memory of the Kashmiri victims of the Holocaust which culminated on 19th January 1990 and thereafter continued with the selective killings of Native Kashmiris till date: is the day on which all of us must reassert our commitment to HUMAN RIGHTS.

We must also go beyond remembrance, and make sure that new generations know this ugly brutal chapter of history. We must apply the lessons of the Holocaust to today's world. And we must do our utmost to ensure that all peoples may enjoy the protection and rights for which the Constitution of India and UN Charter on Human Rights jurisprudence stands.

United Nation's resolutions, rejects any denial of the Holocaust as an event and condemns all manifestations of religious intolerance, incitement, harassment or killings and violence against persons or communities based on ethnic origin or religious belief. It calls all the nation states to dismantle the state and non-State perpetrators of the terror/holocaust.

19th January 1990 is the darkest day in the history of Kashmir. The aborigines population and the minority Kashmiri Pandit community was driven out and exited at gun-point from Kashmir Valley. They became refugees in their own Country and sought refuge in Jammu, Delhi and various other places. They left their homes and hearths behind which now stand destroyed, sold for peanuts in distress and mostly were forcibly occupied by the armed insurgents.

I am a Kashmiri and the proud member of the Kashmiri Pandit community which is a



ethnic minority of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir and now a Union Territory, till today there is no end to the selective killings of Kashmiris and other citizens who choose/wish to live in Kashmir.

Kashmir today is without Kashmiri Pandits. A religious minority, with its more than 5,000 plus years of evidenced history and roots linked with Kashmir Under a concerted plan of ethnic cleansing, forcibly hounded out enmasse from their natural habitat. Kashmiri Pandits are the aborigines natives with more than five thousand years of roots engraved in the soil of the Valley. Kashmir is a part of India. The idea of India in Kashmir is in perpetual peril. Kashmir's plural ethos, composite culture and heritage lay shattered and completely destroyed by the radicals and terrorists, materially, morally and politically helped by Pakistan.

To avenge their defeats at the hands of India, Pakistan embarked on sponsoring terrorism in Kashmir. It is a matter of common knowledge that, for the last thirty five years, the people of Kashmir, particularly

Kashmiri Pandits and Hindus of the Doda district in Jammu, in particular, are killed and remain under constant threat from the Pakistani-sponsored militants. They lured and tempted the uneducated youth to take arms against their own native fellow Kashmiris with whom they had lived for centuries in peace and tranquillity.

The armed insurgency is orchestrated, supervised, controlled and directed from across the border, sophisticated weapons are smuggled into Kashmir by the Pakistan army, their ISI agency and lethal weapons are pumped into the Valley and elsewhere in the Jammu region. These arms are not only meant for fighting the Indian security forces but are used for killing the innocent people. It is one of the the most barbaric, inhuman and dangerous venture which is launched against innocent Kashmiris consisting of Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and other communities by Pakistan with the active participation of the locally recruited militants.

The Kashmiri Pandit community and the mainstream Muslims were the prime targets of the armed terrorists. Terror reined hundreds of Kashmiris were brutally killed, the State Government collapsed, the Indian State was in a state of mess because of opportunistic collusion government at Centre And; finally in January 1990 the minority Kashmiri Pandit community was driven out at gun-point from the Valley. They became refugees in their own homeland and sought refuge in Jammu, Delhi and various other places.

The Pakistan and the Kashmiri terrorists have a direct responsibility for the disaster which the armed insurgents have heaped on the Kashmiri people. Shockingly it all was inflicted in the name of religion. The wholesale massacre of the Kashmiri population innocent and unarmed was termed by a narrative as 'Holy War'.

This KP community as it is called was reduced to minuscule minority by cultural aggressions in the past and, therefore, in 1947, according to census figures, the population of this community was 15%, in

1981 5%, in 1991 .01% and In today time of enlightenment a big 99.9% of this community population has been forced to flee Kashmir and live as refugees in their own Country.

These five hundred thousand Kashmiri Pandits live in abysmal/appalling conditions, 'as refugees', in camps in Jammu and Delhi. This mass exodus of 1990 was followed by sustained terror, rapes, murder, loot and kidnappings. About 1,500 Kashmiri Pandits, including women and children, and even infants were brutally killed, about 250 religious shrines were burnt down and fifty thousands agricultural families deprived of their lands, twenty thousand business establishments looted and devastated, more than thirty thousands of houses reduced to ashes and 90% of the houses looted and about twenty thousands vacant houses and other properties left behind have been forcibly occupied. As a result of this carefully drawn-out strategy and plan of ethno-religious cleansing of Kashmin Pandits by the armed insurgents, this community is today scattered, devastated and disintegrated.

Pakistanis engaged in trans-border terrorism and indulged in international crimes characterized as gross human rights violations and akin to Genocide. The mercenaries, after wearing Army uniforms, indulged in killings masquerading as army personnel to unleash hatred against the security forces who are engaged in safeguarding the lives and property of the people.

The aborigine Kashmiri Pandits were forced to flee the Kashmir valley as a result of a concerted plan of ethnic cleansing with the strategy of "killing one and scaring a thousand" by JKLF terrorists and Islamist insurgents during late 1989 and 1990 onwards. Living in the Valley for more than 5,000 years, the entire population of 5-6 lakh Hindus was exiled by inflicting death, destruction, loot, grabbing of leftover immovable properties, agricultural land and orchards etc, by the settlers/JKLF and other native terrorists.

The brutal murders of Kashmiri Hindus started over 35 years ago on 14 September 1989 when a prominent KP and BJP leader, Pt Tika

Lal Taploo, a lawyer of the Srinagar Bar was murdered. He fell victim to the JKLF terrorists' bullets just outside his home in downtown Srinagar. His killing set off a series of target killings of KP leaders by the trigger-happy terrorists who used to celebrate counting the heads killed. This dance of death continued to the extent that a killer terrorist confessed on local TV channels that he had killed KPs in double digits and had lost the exact count.

Retired District and Session Judge Pt Neelkanth Ganjoo was killed on 4 November 1989 in Hari Singh High Street Market. Ganjoo had presided over the trial of JKLF founder Maqbool Bhat in the murder of police inspector Amar Chand in 1966. In August 1968, he sentenced Bhat to death. This sentence was upheld by the Supreme Court in 1982. Bhat's execution was carried out in Tihar jail.

On 30 April 1990 at village Shali, in the Kokernag area of district Anantnag, three armed militants kidnapped a renowned freedom fighter, teacher and scholar, Pt Sarwanand Koul. Sensing something amiss, his younger son Virendra Koul requested the gunmen that he be allowed to accompany his father. He joined his father, but two days later two dead bodies were found hanging with their limbs broken, hairs uprooted, and portions of their skin slit open and burnt. The dead poet and teacher was the 67-year-old Kashmiri Hindu Pandit Sarwanand Koul "Premi" and his youthful son Pandit Virendra Koul.

Late Pt Sarwanand Koul Premi was so popular that Jammu and Kashmir government last year decided to introduce the Urdu version of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita and the Kashmiri version of Ramayana authored by the late Premi in all educational institutions of Jammu and Kashmir State for the benefit of the students.

Another renowned son of the soil and a senior lawyer of Anantnag bar, Pt Prem Nath Bhat was killed. Director Doordarshan, Pt Lassa Koul, Special Director Food Supply department, A.K. Raina, Satish Tikoo, Ms Sarla (was sawed by a blade), Ms Ganjoo of Sopore, officials of Intelligence Bureau and

hundreds of members of the KP community were brutally murdered to get rid of the entire KP community from the soil of Kashmir.

The terrorists mercilessly killed Chuni Lal Shalla, Inspector Jammu and Kashmir Police (CID) of Seer Jagir, Sopore while he was travelling in a bus from Kupwara to Sopore. "By March 1990 most of the Pandits had left valley to save their lives and honour."

There are hundreds of similar stories of gruesome killings, torture, intimidation, loot and plunder of properties of Kashmiri Hindus by the terrorists and their local sympathisers.

After individual killings, the mass massacre of Hindus started, which frightened the leftover families living in different parts of Kashmir. The massacres in Sangrampora, Wandhama, Chatisingpora, and Nadimarg alone consumed more than 60 innocent lives of Kashmiri Hindus and Sikhs, who included infants, children, young, elderly and also women.

The Sangrampora massacre claimed seven Kashmiri Pandit Hindu villagers in Sangrampora village of Budgam district on 21 March 1997 by Islamic terrorists. This was the first series of massacres which selectively targeted minorities in Jammu and Kashmir. The victims were lined up and the Islamic terrorists shot and killed seven people.

The Wandhama killings of 1998 claimed 23 Kashmiri Pandit Hindus in the town of Wandhama on 25 January 1998. The victims included four children, nine women and 10 men. The attackers also demolished a Hindu temple and a house. The then Prime Minister of India, Inder Kumar Gujral joined the mourners in Kashmir's Wandhama village on 28 January. The Prime Minister was anguished and expressed heartfelt condolences. He was accompanied by then Governor General, K.V. Krishna Rao.

The Nadimarg massacre claimed 24 Hindu Kashmiri Pandits in the village of Nadimarg in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir by terrorists on 23 March 2003. The selective killings of Kashmiri Pandits continue even today.

The communalism had manifested

viciously from 1947 onwards but was confined to discrimination against the members of religious minority at the administrative levels and in educational and professional institutions. The murder and massacre became an order, starting with the murder of police inspector Amar Chand of Nadhal, Bandipora, in 1966 by JKLF terrorists and its so called founder Maqbool Bhat, who was tried for the inspector's murder.

In August 1968, Maqbool Bhat was sentenced to death. The sentence was upheld by the Supreme Court in 1982. Bhat's execution was carried out in Tihar jail, thereafter after having availed all the mercy remedies under the Constitutional process.

1986 became a turning point in the vicious communal campaign against the KP community. In February 1986, the communal settlers incited the Kashmiri Muslims by a virulent propaganda that "Islam khatrey mein hey (Islam is in danger)". As a result, Kashmiri Pandits were targeted by the Muslims. Many incidents were reported in various areas where Kashmiri Hindus' properties and temples were damaged and destroyed. The worst hit areas were mainly in South Kashmir and Sopore. In Vanpoh, Lukbhavan, Anantnag, Salar and Fatehpur, Muslim mobs plundered or destroyed the properties and temples of Hindus.

During the Anantnag riot in February 1986, although no Hindu was killed, many houses and other properties belonging to Hindus were looted, burnt or damaged. The incumbent state government was dismissed.

On 12 March 1986, Governor's Rule was imposed. The political narrative unfolded on deadly communal lines and was portrayed as a conflict between "Hindu" New Delhi (Central Government)—and its efforts to impose its will in the state—and "Muslim" Kashmir, represented by political Islamists and clerics.

The Islamists had organised under a banner named Muslim United Front, with a manifesto to work for Islamic unity and against political interference from the Centre,

and contested the 1987 state elections, in which they lost again. However, the 1987 elections were widely believed to be unfairly conducted, so as to bring the secular parties (NC and INC) in Kashmir at the forefront, and this caused the trigger point to insurgency in Kashmir. The Kashmiri militants killed anyone who openly expressed pro-India policies. Kashmiri Pandits were targeted specifically because they were seen as presenting Indian presence in Kashmir because of their faith and pronounced patriotism.

Though the insurgency had been launched by JKLF, groups rose over the next few months advocating for the establishment of Nizam-e-Mustafa (Rule of Muhammad). The Islamist groups proclaimed the Islamicisation of socio-political and economic set-up, merger with Pakistan, unification of ummah and establishment of an Islamic Caliphate. Liquidation of Central government officials, Pandits, liberal and nationalist intellectuals, social and cultural activists was described as necessary to rid the valley of un-Islamic elements.

Pakistan's strategy of continuing a low-intensity war with India has the following components, (i) intensification of terrorist activities in a wide area extending from J&K to other parts ii) strengthening the strategic alliance between Kashmiri militants and international terrorist groups; (iii) focusing on coordinated attacks by the militant outfits on the security forces in J&K and elsewhere (iv) using the neighbouring countries to the north and east of India for executing terrorist activities in India and (v) Unleashing false propaganda against India. Through revamping the clandestine TV channels run by ISI, other media networks. Pakistan and ISI agency has a direct hand in infiltrating Afghans and other mercenaries into J&K State and in creating militant outfits that have been declared as a terrorist outfit by UN and USA. ISI has spread its tentacles in communally sensitive areas of UP, Bihar and Assam for creating a nexus between various Pan-Islamic outfits. Indo-Pak border vulnerability to drug trafficking is being used by ISI. The menace of drug trafficking

along the Indo-Pak border has assumed alarming proportions.

The concerns voiced by international community through the UN Human Rights Commission, the U.N. General Assembly, the National Human Rights Commission of India, to which the complaints have already been made of the violations of human rights of the Kashmiri people, have not brought about any peace in Kashmir; instead the pattern of militancy has changed. The United States has taken tough measures to deal with international terrorism. The Indian nation-state has zero tolerance policy on terrorism and dealing sternly with terrorists to ensure the full enjoyment of the human rights by the citizens.

The countries from where the terrorists receive support and material and moral back-up are put on notice, that if they do not stop arming, training and supporting the trans-border terrorism and bring the perpetrators of human rights violations to book, such country shall be declared as a 'Terrorist State' by the international community and severe sanctions and censures shall be applied, then only the menace of terrorism can be effectively eliminated and perpetrators of massive and gross violations of human rights can be punished.

Parliament enacted an Act in 1993 to provide for constitution of a National Human Rights Commission, State Human Rights Commissions in the states and Human Rights Courts for better protection of human rights and for all matters connected therewith and incidental thereto, which is called; the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. This Act applies to whole of India. The Kashmiri Pandits have brought their massive violations of human rights to the notice of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) way back in 1995-1996, through a detailed petition/memorandum filed by the representative organizations of Kashmiri Pandits.

After hearing the parties to the petitions full commission NHRC gave a detailed verdict and described the Killings inflicted on Kashmiri Pandits "akin to Genocide".

The security situation along the Indo-Pak

border continues to be very alarming. The tensions and killings in various parts of the State are a continuing phenomenon. The LG administration and Central governments are primary engaged in combating the security-related problems. Kashmiri Pandit problems have, however, received no serious considerations, except that it finds place in BJP election manifesto and a generic time to time statements by top leaders that reversal of KP exile is on cards and their (Kashmir) Pandits) problem is a priority item on the Central Govt.'s policy agenda.

Today Kashmiri society is on historical cross-roads. Its peaceful ethos, its liberal Islam, its culture of Sufi saints, its Kashmiriyat and its image as a strong citadel of co-existence and pluralistic society lay shattered and devastated by the decade's old violence by terrorists and mercenaries. The threat of foisting an alien way of life on Kashmiris by pan-Islamic fanatics is very grave. The Kashmiri society, which is predominantly Muslim, are in introspective mode their choice towards the pluralistic, peaceful democratic and modern way of life was reflected by participation assembly elections. They have to seriously introspect the happenings and violence of the past thirty five years and decide about the future socio-political dispensation under which they have to live.

The ethno-religious minority of Kashmiri Pandits which has the original indigenous roots in history linked with Kashmir, have inalienable right of life in that land. Nobody can wish away their rights in the land. If the democratic way of life has to exist and function genuinely in Kashmir, all the violence and terrorism has to end. The violence perpetrated from across the border by Pakistan, ISI operators and other groups has to come to an end. There is a need to enlarge the political space in Kashmir to encompass the views which have not yet been heard, or have not yet participated, for setting up the trend towards a greater tolerant and pluralistic process. Kashmiris have voted and are deciding their matters through peaceful

and democratic process – we all must nurture and develop such processes which can put an overall end to the death and destruction phenomenon unleashed by violence in the beautiful vale of Kashmir.

Any process for lasting solutions in whichever form is incomplete without the presence, participation and physical involvement of the Kashmiri Pandit community in the Kashmir affairs.

Pakistan has to keep off Kashmir, stop trans-border terrorism on the peaceful people. Kashmiris are determined to pick up once again the peaceful, pluralistic and democratic way of life.

“Enough is enough. ”In Kashmir, much blood has been shed by now, so let us all together weave and revive the ethos of

Kashmir once again for the full enjoyment of human rights, development and collectively strive to Build Kashmir back to its pride and glory as a cradle of civilisation and create a robust economy along with the visit and aspirational India.

Kashmiri Pandits as a Community is longing and determined to return home sooner than later to live and enjoy right to peaceful and secured life, liberty, Political empowerment and spiritual & cultural space. The Silver line is in Kashmir a warm majority societal welcome is awaiting them as claimed by all the politicians, the clergy religious leadership and above all the civil society

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Cartoon by- Anil Nakhasi





Ranjna Raina



MANU SMRITI

Manu's portrayal in the Manusmriti serves not only as a historical or mythological figure but also as a philosophical and legal archetype for the structuring of ancient Indian society. However, interpretations and the relevance of his laws have varied greatly over time, with modern critiques focusing on aspects like caste discrimination and gender inequality embedded within the text. The Manusmriti is often criticized for its reinforcement of the caste system, which many political groups, with historical roots in secularism and social reform, oppose. The text prescribes social duties and behaviors based on the rigid caste hierarchy, which contradicts the egalitarian principles that these parties and groups traditionally championed.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a pivotal figure in Indian politics and the principal architect of the Indian Constitution, was a vehement critic of the Manusmriti. He famously burned copies of the text in 1927 as a protest against caste discrimination. The caste system, as traditionally practiced, created rigid social hierarchies where individuals were born into a caste (varna) with specific duties and rights, often leading to discrimination against lower castes, particularly the "untouchables" or Dalits. Critics argue that this system inherently promotes inequality, denying individuals the right to social mobility based on merit or choice. A key figure in the critique and reform of the caste system, Ambedkar argued for its abolition, seeing it as fundamentally

incompatible with democracy and social justice. His work influenced the Indian Constitution's provisions against caste discrimination. Efforts to educate about the evils of caste, legal protections like the Scheduled Castes and Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, and reservation policies aim to counteract caste-based discrimination.

Some argue for a reinterpretation of Hindu texts to emphasize unity and equality, challenging traditional caste narratives. Changing deeply ingrained cultural practices and beliefs is challenging. Even with legal and educational efforts, caste discrimination persists in various forms.

Caste politics can sometimes reinforce rather than dismantle caste identities for political gain. Addressing caste often means tackling broader economic issues, which requires comprehensive policy changes. Thus critique of the caste system is vast, touching on ethical, social, economic, and political dimensions, advocating for a society where caste does not determine one's life chances or dignity. However, the path to such a society is complex and fraught with cultural, political, and economic challenges.

Caste-like systems exist in various forms around the world, where social stratification is based on birth, occupation, or perceived status, often leading to discrimination and social inequalities. Here are some examples. Although not officially recognized, the Burakumin in Japan are a social group historically associated with

occupations considered "impure" like leatherwork, meat handling, or executioners. Despite legal equality, discrimination persists in employment, marriage, and housing, with social stigma passed down through generations. Racial Caste System in the United States is loosely not a "caste" in the traditional sense, the legacy of slavery and Jim Crow laws created a socio-economic caste-like system based on race, particularly affecting African Americans. Even post-civil rights, systemic racism and structural disadvantages continue to mirror caste-like effects, with disparities in education, employment, and incarceration rates. West Africa has Caste-based Professions in countries like Senegal, Mali, and The Gambia, there exist caste-like professions where roles like griots (praise singers and historians) are inherited. Social mobility is limited, and there's a stigma attached to certain professions, affecting social status and marriage prospects. In Yemen, Akhdam, which means "servants," are a marginalized group, traditionally associated with cleaning and menial jobs. They face severe discrimination, living in poverty, with limited access to education and healthcare. In Korea, Paekjeong, similar to the Burakumin, the Paekjeong were involved in occupations deemed defiling, like butchery or leatherwork. While the system is less overt now, social stigma remains, and there's a cultural memory of hierarchy based on historical roles. In Tibet, before the 1950s Chinese reforms, a feudal system existed where serfs were bound to land owned by monasteries or nobles, with a social hierarchy based on one's role in society. Though the serf system was abolished, social distinctions based on historical roles can still influence social standing. Roma in Europe, often referred to as Gypsies, face widespread discrimination across Europe, where they are frequently relegated to the lowest socio-economic strata due to historical and cultural prejudices. They experience high unemployment, poor housing, and educational disparities, which can be seen as a

form of social caste. In Mauritius and Fiji, caste system was imported by Indian indentured laborers. While not as rigid as in India, social distinctions based on caste continue in these societies, affecting marriage, social status, and sometimes economic opportunities.

The common themes that inherit these systems are like Inheritance of Status, like the Indian caste system, many of these systems involve status being passed down through generations, groups are historically linked to specific, often undesirable, occupations with social stigma attached to belonging to certain groups, leading to discrimination. Legal reforms might exist to address discrimination, but cultural practices and biases can persist. These systems illustrate how social stratification can take on caste-like characteristics globally, where social mobility is constrained by birth, leading to ongoing social justice issues. However, each system also has unique cultural, historical, and political contexts influencing its evolution and current state.

The relationship between Manu Smriti and the caste system is complex and often debated. Manu Smriti is one of several dharmashastras (texts on law and ethics) that aim to codify or prescribe social norms that were already in practice to some extent in ancient India. The text reflects and reinforces a social order where individuals are born into a caste (varna) with specific duties. While Manu Smriti is often highlighted, the caste system's roots are older and more widespread, with references in the Vedas and other ancient Indian texts. The Rigveda, for instance, mentions the Purusha Sukta, which allegorically describes the origin of the four varnas from the cosmic being Purusha. Critics argue that attributing the entire caste system to Manu Smriti might be an oversimplification. The text is one part of a larger cultural, religious, and social framework that evolved over millennia. The actual practice of caste might have been more fluid in some historical periods than what's prescribed in texts like Manu Smriti. Over time, interpretations have varied, with some communities following the

text more rigidly than others. In modern times, Manu Smriti has been used both to justify caste hierarchies by some traditionalists and critiqued by reformers as the embodiment of social injustice. This has led to a polarized view where the text is sometimes held solely responsible for the caste system's perpetuation. Scholars point out that the text does outline a caste-based society but also includes elements of social mobility (like through education or exceptional merit), which are less discussed. There are also passages that suggest a more egalitarian approach in certain contexts. The caste system evolved through interaction with local customs, other religious influences, and socio-economic changes, not just from one text. Figures like Dr. B.R. Ambedkar has critiqued Manu Smriti, but they also recognize that the caste system's endurance is due to a complex interplay of social, economic, and political factors beyond any single text.

While Manu Smriti does prescribe and reinforce certain aspects of the caste system, saying it is solely or wrongly attributed to the caste system might not fully capture the intricate relationship between text, practice, and cultural evolution. The text is a significant part of the discourse on caste but not the singular cause or definition. Its role should be understood within the broader context of Indian social history, where both the text's content and its interpretations have played roles in shaping and being shaped by societal norms.

(A Kashmiri Genocide, Exodus and Exile Survivor)

PROLOGUE

Mahatma Gandhi did not leave behind many lines specifically praising the Manu Smriti; rather, his commentary often highlighted the contradictions within it and the need for a critical approach. However, he did provide some thoughts on the text which can be seen as reflective of his nuanced view on ancient scriptures. "I hold Manusmriti as part of Shastras. But that does not mean that I swear by every verse that is printed in the book described as Manusmriti. There are so many contradictions in the printed volume that, if you accept one part, you are bound to reject those parts that are wholly inconsistent with it." This quote from Gandhi

illustrates his perspective on the text, emphasizing a selective approach to its teachings, valuing those that align with truth and non-violence while rejecting others. Gandhi also argued for a contextual understanding of ancient texts, suggesting that one must read the entire text to understand its teachings and then accept only those parts consistent with "truth and ahimsa (non-injury or non-violence to others)." This approach reflects his broader philosophy of interpreting religious and cultural texts through the lens of ethics and morality rather than dogmatic adherence. While these are not lines of praise or beauty in the traditional sense, they represent Gandhi's thoughtful engagement with the Manu Smriti, advocating for a selective and ethical interpretation of its teachings. His perspective was one of extracting the spiritual and moral essence from ancient texts while acknowledging their human-made contradictions and limitations. The Manu Smriti, despite its controversial aspects, does contain elements that some scholars and proponents argue have positive or constructive contributions to society, culture, and ethics. The text provides detailed guidance on dharma (duty, righteousness), offering a comprehensive moral and ethical framework for personal and societal conduct. It emphasizes virtues like truthfulness, non-violence, self-control, and charity. Manu Smriti outlines the four stages of life - Brahmacharya (student life), Grihastha (householder), Vanaprastha (retirement), and Sannyasa (renunciation), promoting a balanced life where each stage has specific duties contributing to personal growth and societal welfare. The varna system, as described, was intended by some interpretations to create a functional division of labor where each group performs roles beneficial to society, aiming for social harmony and stability. There are provisions for the protection of women and children, specifying duties of husbands towards their wives, and outlining inheritance rights, which, while patriarchal by modern standards, had elements of legal protection in the ancient context. The text places a high value on education, particularly for those in the Brahmin varna, but also encourages learning for others. It discusses the importance of teachers (gurus) and students, fostering a culture of learning and respect for knowledge. Manu Smriti includes detailed laws and procedures for justice, including the role of judges, the nature of evidence, and penalties for crimes, aiming to

maintain order and fairness in society. It provides guidelines for kings and rulers on governance, taxation, and the welfare of subjects, some of which reflect principles of good governance. The text preserves and outlines many Vedic rituals, ceremonies, and cultural practices, providing a historical record of ancient Indian social and religious life, which has cultural significance. There are encouragements for charity, helping the poor, and practices like feeding the hungry or giving refuge to the destitute, reflecting a humanitarian ethos. Some modern scholars advocate for a contextual reading of Manu Smriti, suggesting that when understood within the historical, social, and philosophical context of ancient India, certain prescriptions can be seen as

attempts to organize society in a way that was deemed progressive for its time. The research of the author with every verse of Manu Smriti will prove the above lines.

- *Spiritual Growth: There are teachings aimed at personal spiritual growth, like the emphasis on meditation, self-discipline, and the pursuit of knowledge, which resonate with broader spiritual aims even outside the Hindu tradition.*

It's important to note that while these positive aspects exist, they are often critiqued for being intertwined with or overshadowed by the text's support for a rigid caste system, gender inequalities, and other discriminatory practices. The positive elements must be considered alongside these criticisms for a balanced understanding.

NAAD CONGRATULATES

A Chandigarh Kashmiri boy Sanchit Raina, Ex St. Johnian has brought laurels to the Kashmiri community as well as city by competing & completing his defense training after 3 yrs. rigorous training at National Defense Academy (NDA) Pune and one year training at Indian Military Academy (IMA) amongst 459 cadets. The passing out parade was held on 14th December 2024 at IMA Dehradun under the reviewing officer the Chief of Army Staff Nepal. Sanchit Raina competed gloriously SSB through UPSC in first attempt and was selected for NDA in the year 2020-21. It will not be out of the way to mention that it is first generation of Raina's to be in Indian Army.

Sanchit Raina has always excelled in studies also throughout its academic journey. Prior to getting selected in Defence area he was also selected for admission in PEC (Punjab Engineering College) Chandigarh but preferred to opt something out of box which is really breathtaking. In addition to this he is also keen football player, so was called by his superiors to join his duty to play football for his regiment.

The Gentleman Cadet Sanchit Raina has been commissioned permanently in Indian Army as Lieutenant to serve the country to enable its countrymen to live safely. The proud parents Mrs Rainoo Dhar & Mr. Rakesh Raina are very happy on success of their son who has been bestowed with such a big national responsibility.

This is really proud for Kashmiri community to opt for such challenging career and should be an encouragement to youngsters to think out of box and opt for wide spectrum of professions to make life colorful and result oriented.





SECRET OF HAR RATRI

After the dissolution of the earlier creation, when there was nothing but the primordial matter. Then, Lord Shiva did the Tāṇḍava Dance to start the vibration of life and he played his Damaru whose sound reverberated the whole world and also pervaded all with the seeds of knowledge. This day is known as Shiv Chaturdashi of the Maag month and is comprising of three days popularly known as the दहम काह and वाह The marriage of Shiv ji and Parvati ji also was held on this day . Strict fast is observed during the shiv chaturdashi period which happened in the Maagh month .

But the five nights of Har ratri fall in the month of Falgun and on these nights this knowledge was revealed to those who had very pure heart. The Lord is said to reveal his nature to his devotees on this day. Thus all the devotees withdraw their minds from all worldly activities and worship and meditate upon the Lord. The Ishan Samhita says that Lord Shiva first manifested on this day as the Jyotirlinga, a large column of light, to bless the sages who worshiped him. In Shiva temples, this is represented by a form known as Lingod bhava . During the new beginning of our universe. Sri Brahma ji appeared and found himself sitting on a lotus. Ignorant of any other form of life /existence. He started meditating for years and years , curious to know the source of his existence he found that the lotus has emerged from the navel of Sri Vishnu ji .Brahma ji took the Vishnu ji as his father but Vishnu ji said that he is not the father and



actually some body else is father . Then the Brahma jo claimed, 'I created the world. I must be God.'" Vishnu retorted, "That you seek validation means you cannot be God," Then who is God?" Brahma demanded to know. During this argument there appeared a vast & endless luminescent column of energy between them which had pierced the three worlds looking to be at the pillar of the world, originating deep in the netherworlds, cracking the surface of the earth and splitting the roof of the sky Astounded, Brahma and Vishnu decided to determine the source and extent of this brilliant pillar of light.

Vishnu became a boar and burrowed deep into the netherworlds. Brahma in form of goose flew as far up as the heavens reach.

But even after thousands of years they could not find the bottom or the top of this column of light. When they finally give up and returned to their starting place. Vishnu gave up and came with dull face. 'Couldn't find!' he told to the proudly Brahma.

Brahma, who himself couldn't find the edge, decided to lie. He said 'I did so I won, I

am the ultimate God. Then the Pillar opened up and came out the mighty Shiva, the lord of the lords. Timeless, Infinite, Formless, the Swachand Bhairav, The first Yogi.

Acharya Utpaladeva of 9th century CE in his devotional treatise namely "Shivastotravali" as under-

विश्वैकरूपविश्वात्म विश्वसर्गादिकारणम् ।

परप्रकाशवपुषं स्तुमः स्वच्छन्दभैरवम् ॥

viśvaikarūpaviśvātma viśvasargādiviśvaika
-rupa-viśvātma viśva-sargādi kāraṇam paraprakāśa
-vapuṣaṁ stumaḥ svacchanda-bhairavam

We bow at the feet of that Svachchandātha with five heads (Īśāna, Tapuruṣa, Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, and Aghora, these five mouths); we bow our heads before that Svachchandātha, who is viśvaika rupa, who is one with this whole universe, who is universal, viśvātma, who is the embodiment of the universe, viśva sargādi kāraṇam, who creates the universe, who protects the universe, who destroys the universe, who reveals the universe, and who conceals the universe with His five acts (creation, protection, destruction, concealing, and revealing).

The Har ratri popularly known as Heirat is not a Fast (Vrat). It is utsav i.e celebration of emergence of shiv revealing himself in form as luminous pillar (Agni Stambh अग्नि स्तम्भ Because it has no Pranali like Shiv Linga) and also in form .This fire Piller being limitless could not be even measured by the prime gods. That is why this luminous Pillar is known as Sonie Potul (Shunya Putla/ Sathanu Putli) the pillar having unlimited Depths & Heights. Neither of them succeeded and was hence obliged to accept the greatness of Siva who had manifested as that pillar of light with five heads.

1. **Ishana:** Associated with Srishti Shakti (Power of Creation)
2. **Tatpuruṣa:** Associated with Thoridhana Shakti (Power of Concealment)
3. **Aghora:** Associated with Samhara Shakti (Power of Dissolution)
4. **Vamadeva:** Associated with Stithi Shakti (Power of Sustenance)

5. **Sadjyota:** Associated with Anugraha Shakti (Power of Blessing)

Sharika swaroopa mata Roopa Bhawani has described these five aspects of shiv in the following Vakh

यिवान् पान तं जेवान् पान रिवान् पान त् निवान् दख

नाना प्रकार गिन्दान् पानं रिन्दान् पानं तं हेवान् पथ्

five heads of shiv represents- Srishti, Sithiti, Samhar, Anugreh & Laya these five aspects are the panch ratri of our sivratri festival

So until the emergence of this अग्नि स्तम्भ no body knew the saakar form of Param Shiva .It is only the Kashmir Brahmins through their Gotra Rishies who could know the emergence of Swachand Bhairav .

यत्र सोऽस्तमयमेति विवस्वान् । चन्द्रमः प्रभृतिभिः सह सर्वैः ।।
कापि सा विजये शिवरात्रिः । स्व प्रभा प्रसर भास्वर रूपा ।।

When the Sun, the Moon and all other stars set at the same time, there arises the radiant night of Shiva spreading a splendour of its own] the Shivaratri — C-B- Blaully

The mother goddess with her sons known as Vatuk Bhairava (Vatuk & Ram (Vishvakshen) along with other Yognies performs the Yaagh (yagya) for celebrating the emergence of Swachand Bhairava & the Linga.

After the emergence of Swachand Bhairava. The Mahadev meditated upon his supreme power Mahamaya and saw that the goddess of his creation, along with many goddesses (yoginis), was engaged in producing various kinds of substances useful for human life. He in the form of Swachand Bhairava had assumed the form of a free स्वच्छन्द Bhairav with five faces, eighteen arms and fifteen eyes. Seeing this form, the yoginis got frightened. Then the supreme power Mahamaya, in anger, looked at a water pot (कशमीरी नोट्ट), from which came out Vatku Bhairav with weapons. Mahamaya, knowing that Vatku Raj was in busy with Mahadeva, looked at an another water pot (गड्डे), out of it one more Gana (राम) was born. Out of these (वटुक) was fiery in nature and (राम या रमण) satvic in nature. All these Ganas were ready to attack Swachchandananath Shiva, but Shiva

disappeared . Then all the people came near Paramshakti. Devi gave a boon to Vatuk and Ram that:-

यस्मान्मद्युष्टि संभूतो, वटुकरूपः प्रतापवान् ।
तस्मात्त्वं वटुको नाम पुत्र लोके भावेष्यसि ।।
कामप्रदाता सर्वेशां, पालको वै भविष्यसि ।
कामायं पूजनान्तित्यं, गणः सार्धं च पुत्रकः ।।
पूजयेद्यो महेशानं, देवीपुत्रं च वालकम् ।
फाल्गुणासितकामायौ, सर्वसिद्धिवाप्नुयात्.. ।।

Meaning:- Since, you have been born in the form of pot वटु (ब्रह्मचारी celibate), hence your name will be Vatuk. You will fulfill the desires of the one who worships you with all the virtues on the day of Trayodashi. Whoever worships you on Phalgun Krishna Paksha Trayodashi will attain all the Siddhis. Saying this, Bhagwati said to Ram (Raman): O son, you are born from my auspicious sight, your form is divine, the mind becomes happy on seeing you, your name will be "Ram" because Yogis enjoy your divine radiance, you will receive worship after Vatuk, Vatuk and you are the lord of all my virtues, you are the one who follows my orders, all the calamities will be removed by your worship, and all kinds of Siddhis will be attained. After giving this boon, Bhagwati said to the Yoginis that all the things that you have made should be given to these Ganas, by the order of Bhagwati they did the same. On this day, during Pradosh Kaal, Lord Mahadev appeared in a terrifying flame. Seeing this, all the Ganas got scared and came to the shelter of Vatuk and Raman. Vatuk and Raman assured the Ganas and to see the beginning and end of this Jyotriling, Vatuk went up and Raman went down, but no one could find the beginning or the end. The Yoginis got absorbed in Param Shakti and Param Shakti got absorbed in this flame. Vatku, Raman or Ram became calm and fell near that flame like a tree and started praising it. This day was Falgun

- Krishna Paksha - Triyodashi. On this day, Shiva appeared in the form of flame and started calming down after midnight. Due to the appearance of Jwala Linga in the evening, many people considered the evening as the time for worship, but many people did not

consider that time as the time for worship due to the fear of Mahadev's flames in the evening, and considered midnight as the time because the fiery form of Mahadev started to calm down at that time. Due to this reason sometimes two Shivratri is celebrated.

The seekers are requested not to abandon any tradition without reason and try to know and understand their clan customs and experiences because the basis of these traditions is very deep and strong which can only be in the interest of the seeker.

The festival of Har-ratri (हैय्रत) is among the oldest festivals of kashmir. The festival is also known as Bairav yaag भैरव याग or Bhairava Utsav भैरव उत्सव In Tantra literature, (which guide the pre vedic rituals of Kashmiri Pandits).

Bhairava is the word used for Supreme Reality. Its synonym is Parama Siva. Bhairava means the terrible one who destroys the ego.

The preparations for celebrations starts from the **1st day** of dark fortnight (फाल्गुन कृष्ण पक्ष) The cronology of the days is as under :-

The Fortnight of Hayrath

महा माथङ्गी मतीत्यैव सम्भारान कल्पयेद्बुध ।
द्वितीयस्यां मत्स्यभाषडान्, पूरयेन्निम्बुनागरै ।।
सर्शपोत्थैर्महातैले मर्जयेत्साधकोत्तमः ।
तृतीयस्यां महं भाषान् मुदगाश्च काचसन्निभान् ।
शुचौ देशं तथाभ्युक्ष्य, पुचिना वारिणापि च ।
चतुर्थ्यां पेशयेच्चापि, निषामरिचसंयुतान् ।।
समुहूर्ते सुनक्षत्रे, पंचम्यामथवा नरः ।
कटा हारोहणं कुर्यान्नस्कृत्य च भैरवम् ।।
शष्ट्यां व सप्तम्यां वापि, वाटकान् बर्बरास्तथा ।
मस्स्यांश्च घृतपूरांश्च, षतच्छिदांश्च लोपिका ।।
कुर्यान्महोत्सवर्थं तु भैरवस्य विधानतः ।
अष्टम्यां च नवम्यां च गृहं समार्जयेच्छुभैः ।
नवम्यां वा दशम्यां वा गृहं संषुद्धय चानयेत् ।
एकादश्यां मत्स्यभक्ष्या पूजनीया गणा भुवि ।।
मीन भक्ष्यान् गणान् पूज्य, प्रसादं गृहत्वे न दे ।
ते वै विघ्न समुदघूता, निरयं यान्ति दाख्यम् ।।
द्विजदश्यां चैव संकल्पं कुर्यात्क्षेत्रेषूपजने ।
अद्यः फाल्गुन द्वादश्यां, क्षेत्रेषान् पूजयाम्यहम् ।।
महा भैरव यागार्थं निर्विघ्नं कुरु भैरव ।
त्रयोदश्यां निराहारो, रात्रौ भैरव पूजनम् ।।

From the **1st day** (प्रतिपदा) known as **Hur Ukdoh** (हुर ओकदोह) Hora means part of time it is 20 days of 40 days .one should start collecting the things meant for the main Puja and should start cleaning the utensils and home. The householders must also start washing and cleaning the pulses etc. On the **4th** (चतुर्थी) and **5th** (पंचमी) one must clean the spices. 6th (षष्ठी) and 7th (सप्तमी) are celebrated as the days to offer the food in form of big sized bread (लूची, चोच) To some of the Bhairvas (भैरव) who will protect us in the coming days.

On 8th (होरा अष्टमी) we visit local temples and social congregations to stay overnight and to recite the holy verses in praise of **Jagadamba** (जगदम्बा) From this day our womenfolk visit their parents (मालयुन) do some shopping on the 9th for the Bhairav yaag and on the 10th are obliged by the tradition to return back to their In-Laws. This day is known as **Dyar Dhaham**. The **11th** day (गाढ काह) is the day when we propitiate a group of 11 Bhairavs who represent the Kashmir from different places. It had been in our custom to offer them food (as per family traditions). These Bhairava's are as follows.

1. हेरुकाय, 2. त्रिपुरान्तकाय, 3. वेतालाय, 4. अग्निजिह्वाय, 5. करालाय, 6. कामाख्याय, 7. एकपदाय, 8. भीमरूपिणे, 9. तरकाक्ष्याय, 10. हाटकेष्वराय, 11. राजराजेश्वराय These are in charge of certain areas. From **12th** (द्वादशी) we keep some same walnuts (According to tradition) in a pot (known as vagur वागुर) .It is said that before proceeding further we invoke the Goddess mahamaya so that all are invited for the main puja on the **13th** or the **14th** of the dark fortnight. This festival is not a momentary one and spreads for 5 Ratris as follows:

कालरात्रि, हररात्रि, शिवरात्रि तथैव च ।
राणि रात्रि, महारात्रि पंचरात्रि प्रकीर्तिता ।।

Puja of Vatuk starts from **12th** upto **1st** day of Bright fortnight or from **11th** to Amavasya depending upon the finer lunar aspects.

If Har-ratri (हैरत) happens to be on 12th

(द्वादशी) Day, then one should celebrate the 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th and Amavasya as these five day While, if the Har-ratri falls on the 13th day then one must celebrate 12th, 13th, 14th, Amavasya and 1st day of Bright fortnight of Falgun Month as these five day (पंचरात्रि)

These five days are as under:-

The next day of Har-ratri is known as a (shiv Chaturdashi) .On the day of shiv Chaturdashi Kashmiri Pandits greet all each other and for witnessing the cosmic expansion of Lord Shiva, Mahamaya and the progeny (देवीपुत्र वटुक) on the previous night.

On this **shiva Chaturdashi** day (13th or 14th) we visit the near and dear ones to share this Joy of being the part of this Bhairava Yaag. We give **Herath Kharach** (हैरत खर्च) or gifts to all for celebrations at the Community level.

On the last day in the late evening we give a ceremonial send off to Vatuk Dev and family (**These is an important tradition attached with this ritual know as Dub-Dub i.e knocking the door**) and start distributing the prasad (Bread and walnuts) among the people around and far away from us.

This all has to be stopped before the 8th day of Bright fortnight known as **Teel**

- Aastami (तील् अष्टमी) The festival continues till Tila Ashtami when the Devas & Pitras, who had come to attend the ceremony are bade farewell by way of keeping 10 No. of Earten Lamps out side home in the evening
- The day also marks the end of winter, and is celebrated by burning kangris and singing the chorus of 'ja- tu-tu'.

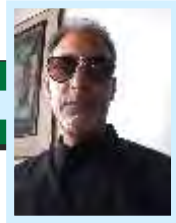
Some 100 yrs back this festival was celebrated for 40 days which got reduced to 15 days with the passage of time and the onslaughts on Kashmiri Pandits.

Note :- We are obliged by the custom to eat only that food which we offer to our deities. That is why in olden times Kashmir Pandits were not taking the egg, onion, Chicken etc. As their food. (Herath Mubarak to all)

Satisar Foundation



Ravinder Gurtoo



FROM LOLAB TO JAGTI

Based on True Events

(With names and locations thoughtfully altered to protect the privacy of those involved)

The chirping of birds and the gentle rustle of leaves in the serene Lolab Valley had been a part of Sanjay Kaul's life for as long as he could remember. The valley was his sanctuary, his muse, and his home. A place where the snow-capped mountains kissed the skies and where the scent of pine trees mixed with the aroma of saffron from nearby fields. For generations, his family had lived in the village of Kalaroos, where they owned a modest home surrounded by orchards of apples and walnuts.

But the paradise he called home was slowly becoming a nightmare. The once harmonious co-existence between communities was eroding under the shadow of militancy and political unrest in Kashmir during the late 1980s. Sanjay, a teacher in a government school, tried to shield his family, his wife Meera and their two children, nine-year-old Rohit and six-year-old Tara from the growing turbulence. However, whispers of threats, vandalized temples, and the disappearance of friends and neighbours signaled that the storm was nearing.

The Night That Changed Everything...

It was a cold January night in 1990 when the Kauls' lives were irreversibly altered. Sanjay had just returned from the local temple, where he had lit a diya, praying for peace. Meera was cooking dinner, and the children were playing by the hearth. Suddenly, a knock at the door shattered the quiet.

A neighbour, a Muslim friend named Bashir, stood outside, his face pale with fear. "Sanjay Bhai, they're coming for you. You must leave tonight," he whispered, his voice trembling.

Sanjay's heart sank. He had heard of Pandit families being forced out, but he had hoped their small, tightly-knit village would be spared. "What about you, Bashir?" he asked.

"They've given me no choice but to stay silent," Bashir replied, his eyes welling up. "Please, go before it's too late."

Sanjay knew he couldn't risk waiting. He packed a few essentials, some clothes, a family photo, and a copy of the Bhagavad Gita. Meera grabbed a small sack of dry rations while Rohit clutched his cricket bat, refusing to leave it behind. Little Tara, sensing the tension, clung to her mother.

As they stepped out into the biting cold, Sanjay took one last look at his home, the walnut tree under which he had spent countless afternoons, and the snow-draped peaks that had been his lifelong companions. Tears welled up in his eyes, but he wiped them away. He had to stay strong for his family.

The journey from Lolab to Jammu was harrowing. Along with dozens of other families, the Kauls travelled by foot and bus, braving the bitter winter. They carried nothing but their faith and a flickering hope of returning someday. At every checkpoint, they

were scrutinized, humiliated, and often turned away.

Rohit, shivering under a thin shawl, asked, "Baba, when will we go back home?"

"Soon, beta," Sanjay replied, though he wasn't sure if that was a promise or a prayer.

Days turned into weeks as they made their way to Jammu, where refugee camps had been set up. These camps, however, were far from welcoming. The Kauls were assigned a cramped, makeshift tent that barely shielded them from the elements. Water was scarce, and food was rationed. Sanjay, once a respected teacher, now stood in long lines for basic necessities.

Meera tried to maintain a semblance of normalcy for the children, cooking whatever meager supplies they received. Tara often cried at night, missing her dolls and the warmth of their old home. Rohit, meanwhile, grew quieter with each passing day.

After years of living in temporary camps, the government announced the construction of Jagti Township, a housing

project to instill hope in his children. "Beta, we left because our lives were more important than the land. But one day, we'll go back," he would say, though the words felt hollow.

The Struggles and Triumphs

Over time....the Kauls adapted to their new reality. Tara excelled in her studies and dreamt of becoming a doctor. Rohit, despite his frustrations, found solace in cricket and eventually made it to the district team.

Sanjay and Meera immersed themselves in the small but vibrant community of Jagti, which celebrated festivals like Shivratri with fervour, keeping their culture alive despite the distance from their homeland. The township became a microcosm of their lost world, a place where they could share stories, sing old songs, and remember Lolab without fear.

Three decades later, Sanjay, now in his sixties, sat on the window of their apartment in Jagti, gazing at the setting sun. The valley was a distant memory, but the pain of exile remained fresh.

But the paradise he called home was slowly becoming a nightmare. The once harmonious co-existence between communities was eroding under the shadow of militancy and political unrest in Kashmir during the late 1980s.

project for displaced Kashmiri Pandits. The Kauls were among the first families to move there. Though the concrete apartment blocks lacked the charm of Lolab's wooden homes, they at least offered stability.

Sanjay managed to secure a teaching position at a local school, though the salary was a fraction of what he once earned. Meera started stitching clothes to supplement their income. The children enrolled in nearby schools, but adjusting wasn't easy. They faced discrimination and isolation, often being labeled as "refugees."

Rohit, now a teenager, resented their new life. "Baba, why didn't we fight back? Why did we leave?" he would ask, anger simmering in his voice.

Sanjay had no answers. He, too, grappled with guilt and helplessness. But he

Tara, now a doctor, worked in a nearby hospital, serving the same community that had supported her family through their darkest days. Rohit, who had become a journalist, often wrote about the plight of Kashmiri Pandits, determined to keep their story alive.

"Do you think we'll ever go back?" Meera asked one evening, as they sipped tea.

"I don't know," Sanjay replied, his voice heavy. "But even if we don't, our children will carry the essence of Lolab in their hearts. That's how we keep our home alive."

As the first stars appeared in the sky, Sanjay closed his eyes and pictured the walnut tree in his backyard, the snow-capped peaks, and the laughter of his children in the valley. Though he was far from Lolab, it lived within him, a testament to resilience, hope, and the indomitable spirit of a displaced lot.



Dr. Mahesh Kaul



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The Sentinel of Modern India

The national spirit of the inhabitants has always emerged from the cultural spiritual core. This core has been the nucleus of this ancient civilization. What holds the nation together inspite of the invasions and vandalisation from outsiders and the colonizers? What has kept the land of Bharata alive when every external thrust was designed to subjugate the masses and crush the nation in every possible sphere? Swami Vivekananda, the wandering monk who ignited the flame of Indian nationalism through the Universal religion of Vedanta, answered all these questions and chalked out the plan of action for the future of the Indian nation.

He provided solutions to the problems of modern India in an introductory article written for the Bengali fortnightly Udbhodhana, which was published on 14th of January, 1889. He wrote with pride that Of that ancient Indian race upon , which the rays of civilization first dawned deep thoughtfulness first revealed itself in full glory, there are still found hundreds of thousands of its children, born of its mind-the inheritors of its thoughts and sentiments -ready to claim them.”

Swami Vivekananda revealed the power of Indian thought that still flows in the soul and the mind of its people, acting as glue binding the Indian nation with the cohesive force of spiritualism. And he was not bothered whether it flowed in the veins of the nation in 'a distinct or in some subtle way'. This flow of Indian thought, he credited to universal ancient inheritance.



Elaborating on the predominant power structure and the political situation Swami Vivekananda ponders over the inherent structure of the Indian national life and says: “Once in far remote antiquity, Indian philosophy, coming in contact with Greek energy, led to the rise of the Persian, The Roman, and other great nations.

After the invasion of Alexander the Great, these two great waterfalls colliding with each other, deluged nearly half of the globe with spiritual tides, such as Christianity. Again, a similar commingling, resulting in the improvement and prosperity of Arabia, laid the foundation of the modern European civilization. And perhaps in our own day, such a time for the conjunction of these two gigantic forces has presented itself again. This time their centre is India”. Further explaining the nature of the Indian consciousness and its uniqueness, he said

“The air of India pre-eminently conduces to quietness, the nature of the Yavana is the constant expression of power; profound meditation characterizes the one, the indomitable spirit of dexterous activity, the other; one's motto is “renunciation”, the other's “enjoyment”. One's whole energy is directed inwards, the other's outwards; one's whole learning consists of knowledge of the Self or the Subject, the other's, in the knowledge of the not-self or the object (perishable creation); one loves Moksha (spiritual freedom), the other loves political independence; one is unmindful of gaining prosperity in this world, the other sets his whole heart on making a heaven of this world; one, aspiring after eternal bliss, is indifferent to all the ephemeral pleasures of this life, and the other doubting the existence of eternal bliss, or knowing it to be far away, directs his whole energy to the attainment of earthly pleasures as much as possible.” Swami Vivekananda's analysis of the Indian existence, consciousness and the spiritual core enables one to understand the foundation of the Indian nation. With the conviction of the Vedantist he boldly asks to assimilate spiritual calmness of the practical yogis to hold firm the roots of Indian civilization amid all external turbulence, which is in fact all illusion and not the reality. The reality being the inner sense of introspection of the Vedantist. Reflecting on the wrong interpretations on the caste system in India, he says has great implications on the Indian national life in terms of religion and politics. He was quick to give his perspective for the future and wellbeing of modern India. He said “what should we have is what we have not, perhaps what our forefathers even had not – that which the Yavanas had; that, impelled by the life- vibration of which, is issuing forth in rapid succession from the great dynamo Europe, the electric flow of that tremendous power vivifying the whole world. We want that energy, that love of independence, that spirit of self-reliance , that immovable fortitude, that dexterity in action , that bond of unity of purpose , that thirst for improvement... , we

want that expansive vision infinitely projected forward ;and we want -that intense spirit of activity(Rajas) which will flow through our every vein from head to toe.”

This was his immediate remedy to the degeneration being caused to the national life. But he thought beyond the present scenario. He was concerned about the future of modern India- its development in all spheres-religious, social, political and economic. Swami Vivekananda said,” the quality of rajas is apt to die down as soon as it comes up, like a fire of palm leave. The presence of Sattva and the Nitya or eternal reality is almost in a state of juxtaposition- Sattva is nearly Nitya. Whereas the nation in which the quality of Rajas predominates is not so long lived, a nation with a preponderance of Sattva is immortal. History is a witness to this fact.”

To be specific about India he said, “In India, the quality of Rajas is almost absent; the same is the case with Sattva in the West. It is certain, therefore, that the real life of the Western world depends upon the influx, from India, of the current of Sattva or transcendentalism; and it is also certain that unless we empower and submerge our Tamas by the opposite tide of Rajas, we shall never gain any worldly good or welfare in this life; and it is also equally certain that we shall meet many formidable obstacles in the path of realisation of those noble aspirations and ideals connected with our after-life.”

To sum up, it is appropriate to quote from the Swami Vivekananda's poem 'To the Awakened India', the wandering monk says “And tells the world-awake, arise, and dream no more! This is the land of dreams, where Karma Weaves unthreaded garlands with our thoughts Of flowers sweet or noxious, and none Has root or stem, being born in naught, which The softest breath of Truth drives back to Primal nothingness. Be bold, and face the truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease, or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams, which are External Love and Service Free.”

*(The author writes on National security,
Indian Philosophy,
Tantrik Trika Shaiv Darshan of Kashmir,
Heritage & Cultural Tourism)*



Lenin Kumar Bhat



THE LAST EMBRACE

The Walnut Tree of My Childhood

I still vividly remember the walnut tree I planted in our family's vegetable garden, behind our house when I was in the second or third grade. It had sprouted from a fallen walnut, a humble gift from our neighbour Pandit Kish Bhat's tree which stood proudly on the other side of the fence of our vegetable garden known as 'Khah Vear'.

The tiny sapling, barely noticeable among the wild greens, caught my father's eye one morning. With a gentle smile, he suggested we transplant it to a more open space behind our house, where it would have room to grow.

This second vegetable garden, was not just a patch of land - it was a world unto itself. Here, my family cultivated fresh vegetables and vibrant marigold flowers, whose golden petals danced gently in the soft, whispery breeze of Kashmir.

The idea of nurturing a tree from its very birth filled me with excitement. As a child, I was overjoyed to have planted my first tree, and for days, I dutifully watered it, watching in fascination as it took roots in its new home.

As I grew, the walnut tree grew with me, its branches stretching towards the sky, as if embracing the world beyond. Not far from it stood a magnificent willow grove (वीरवार), its slender branches whispering secrets to the wind. The rustling of leaves was like a soft lullaby, providing the gentle background melody of my childhood.

The tree stood tall, about fifteen meters away from a gentle stream that flowed behind



our house. Its soft gurgling was a constant, soothing companion, its waters carrying with them the reflections of a world that was still serene and whole. Along the boundary of the willow grove, paddy and mustard fields stretched as far as the eye could see. When spring arrived, the air was filled with the sweet fragrance of blooming mustard flowers, their yellow waves dancing with the breeze, reaching the walnut tree, as if whispering tales of changing seasons.

Then came autumn, and with it, the rhythmic song of the cicadas (दछ-ए-पौमपुर), nature's miniature maestros. They perched on the sturdy trunk of the walnut tree, their symphony resonating through the crisp air, evoking an indescribable nostalgia...a blend of childhood wonder and the unspoken anticipation of winter.

Years passed, and one fine season, the tree bore its first fruit. The sight of the green walnuts (नील डून्य) hanging from its branches filled me with pride. It had truly become a part of our lives. Every year, on Zarem Satam, a special Kashmiri Pandit festival, we would gather around the tree and pluck the unripe walnuts. With knives in hand, we would carefully split them into halves and extract the sweet, milky kernel hidden inside (डून करून). It was a ritual we cherished.

When the walnuts ripened, the crows would swoop down on the tree, their keen eyes scanning for the best pickings. They would pluck a walnut, fly away triumphantly, but sometimes, mid flight, the walnut would slip from their beaks and fall into our hands.

In those innocent days, we truly believed that the crows were deliberately throwing walnuts for us! And so, we would sit beneath the tree and playfully call out:

"कावा डूना त्रावख ना
तालव टनगापियेन!"

To our delight, there were times when the crow seemed to oblige, dropping a walnut from above. The joy of cracking it open and tasting its fresh kernel was simply unmatched.

By October, it was time to harvest the walnuts. After harvesting the walnuts we would peel their green husks, wash them, and let them dry under the autumn sun. Once ready, they were stored in a large sack tied to a wooden truss in the attic (Brear Kani). Every now and then, we would take out a handful...sometimes to snack on, other times to prepare walnut chutney (डून्य चेटनि), a delicacy we all loved. These walnuts were big, oval shaped, and Kagzi (thin-shelled), making them easy to crack.

As I grew older, the walnut tree stood as a silent witness to the significant moments in my life. When the time came for my and my brother's weddings, the very space near the tree became a bustling hub of festivity. Our family, friends, and guests gathered beneath its shade, preparing for the grand feast, their laughter filling the air. The tree, standing tall and wise, seemed to bless our union, its branches swaying gently as if in silent approval.

With marriage came a new chapter... fatherhood. Our children, Ashu, Priya, Anu, and Chinku, soon made the walnut tree their own. My father, with his loving hands, hung a swing from one of its strongest branches. As our little ones swung high, their infectious laughter echoed through the air, their tiny feet fluttering against the leaves. Their joy was as limitless as the sky, their smiles as radiant as the Sun.

But life, as I would come to learn, is not always kind. In 1990, a storm of violence swept through the Kashmir Valley, shattering our peaceful existence overnight. The sounds of gunfire, bombs, and explosives replaced the songs of birds and rustling leaves. Fear gripped our hearts as we received threats, warning us to leave our ancestral home, our land, our heritage.

Then came that fateful day...February 3, 1990. It was 4 p.m., and the golden rays of the afternoon Sun cast long shadows on the ground, as if mourning the sorrow in my heart. I walked towards my walnut tree, knowing this would be our final meeting. My hands trembled as I reached out to touch its rugged trunk, feeling the warmth of its bark beneath my palms. Tears welled up in my eyes as I wrapped my arms around it, hugging it tightly...one last time.

With a heavy heart, I whispered my goodbye.

As I turned to leave, I stole one final glance, my eyes lingering on the tree until it blurred into the distance. It stood there, unwavering, its branches reaching out as if calling me back. But I had to go. And so, I walked away, carrying its memory, its presence, within me.

Thirty five years have passed since that agonizing departure. Life moved forward, but a part of me remains beneath that walnut tree, rooted in the soil of my childhood.

The tree may still stand, or perhaps it has been lost to time. But in my heart, it remains alive, its shade still comforting, its leaves still whispering the stories of my youth. The laughter, the festivals, the stolen walnuts, the farewell...it all lives on, forever etched in my soul.

And whenever I close my eyes, I can still hear the echoes of our childhood chant...

"कावा डूना त्रावख ना!"



SHADIPORE

Kashmir's Own Prayag

MA Stein, who translated Rajtarangini into English in 1892 CE writes, "Kashmir is a country where there is not a place as large as a grain of seasam without a Tirtha (Shrine)". All Sanatan sacred texts, starting Rigveda and the Mahabharat mention the sacred land of Kashmir and its geography, including its rivers, lakes, and mountains. River Vitasta, Kashmir's lifeline is considered an incarnation of Devi Parvati. We also have a very interesting saying: *Yaani Tirthani Bharat Varshe Taani Tirthai Kashmir Mandale, Yaani Tirthani Kashmir Mandale and Taani Tirthani Vitastaayaam*, loosely translated as "Whichever the Tirthas are in the Bharata Varsha, are all found in Kashmir. Whichever Tirthas are in Kashmir, all find their abode in the Vitasta River.

In ancient and mediaeval Kashmir, Vitasta River was treated as sacred as the Ganga. We have numerous references from Nilmat Puran, Vitasta Mahamatya and several other texts about the holiness associated not just with River Vitasta but also its direct-indirect tributaries including Hiranya (today's Erin), Rambhara, Doodhganga Bringi, Arapal, Romshi, Madhumati, Sandran, besides the three major ones Sind (Syandh), Vishav, and Lidder. Nilamata Purana describes the sacredness of every lake, every river, and every stream of Kashmir. It also describes the 'punya' one gains by taking a bath in not only these

rivers, streams, and lakes but more importantly, on the confluence of these rivers and rivulets. Of the lot, the confluence(sangam) of Vitasta at Shadipore, about 21 km downstream from Srinagar on the Srinagar-Bandipora Road stands out as the most prominent and important Sangam in Kashmir. It has often been described as the **Prayag of Kashmir**; just as in Prayagraj we have the Rivers Yamuna and the mystical River Saraswati joining Maa Ganga, so in Shadipore do we have a river called Sind (colloquially Syendh) joining River Vitesta as it traverses onwards to join Lake



A broad outline of River Vitasta (Jhelum), starting from Verinag in South and flowing North – North-East across Kashmir Valley. Major Tributaries Lidder (Khanabal), Vishav (Sangam) and Sind (Syndh) at Shadipore are shown

Mahapadma (modern name, Wular). Nilmat Puran identifies Syndh with Ganga and Vitesta as Yamuna. Syndh is not to be confused with the mighty INDUS, also known as Sind – it is a relatively small river originating from inner Himalayas somewhere near Drass, flowing past Sonamarg and Kangan to join VITASTA at **Shadipora** near the town of **SUMBAL**, Distt Ganderbal.

Kashmiri Pandits believe that Vitasta at Shadipore is full of holy waters brought from all the major lakes, mountains and springs of Kashmir including Naraan Naag, Gangabal, Kounsernag and Shesh Nag. **LIDDER** brings water of **SHESHNAAG Lake** from Pehalgam side and joins Vitasta at **Khannabal**. The origin of **VESH OV** is **KOUNSERNAAG Lake** in the Pir Panjal Range. **VESH OV** passes through Aharabal, Shopian, Khudwani and Arwani before joining Vitasta at **Bijbihara** (Sangam). The **SINDH** River brings waters of Panjtari from the holy Amar Nath cave, and then adds to it the water from the holy shrine of **Kheer Bhawani** brought by **Tulamula Nallah**. **Tulamula Nallah** joins the **SINDH** River a little above **SHADIPORE**. The water of Kreink Nadi, (mentioned in Neelmat Purana and Rajtarangini as Kanak Vahini) which flows to the south of the temple complex of Naran Naag is formed by two tributaries flowing out from two lakes below Harmukh - **NUNDKOL** (Kalodka in Neelmat Purana and Rajtarangini) and **GANGBAL** (Uttarmanasa in Neelmat Purana and

Rajtarangini). **KREINK NADI** joins Syndh river near **KANGAN** in Kashmir. Finally, Syndh also merges with Vitasta at Shadipora. Once one understands this blending of Holy waters of all the lakes and springs of Kashmir at **SHADIPORE**, one realizes the sanctity and importance of this **TIRTHA**. The maps shown in the write up help trace out the path of River Vitesta as it moves towards Wular, showing locations where each of its tributaries join Vitasta.

Kashmiri Pandits call Shadipore **PRAYAG** and traditionally have been consigning the ashes of their departed ones at Shadipore. Since traveling to either Haridwar or to Prayag was tough, Kashmiri Pandits found it more convenient to perform the 'Asthi Visarjan' at the Shadipore Sangam. Incidentally, there was one more spot where Asthi-Visarjan was performed in Kashmir -the alpine Lake Gangabal, located at the foot of Mount Harmukh, in Distt Ganderbal, Kashmir. On Bhadrapada Shukla Paksh Ashtami, called Ganga Ashtami, a yatra would culminate at the Lake and people would perform the rituals associated with 'asthi visarjan'. The journey to Gangabal is a tough hike; people in good old days would walk all the way since hardly any facilities used to be available!

In the middle of Sangam at Shadipore, where the river Vitasta and the river Sind meet, there is a small island built in solid masonry. In the centre of the platform on the island, is an old Chinar (Boonye in Kashmiri) tree. The details of the Chinar tree, are mentioned in ancient texts of Kashmir. At the base of trunk of the Chinar tree, a Shivling and several stone idols are placed in open, worshipped by the devotees. A legend popular among Kashmiri Pandits is that the Chinar tree has been there from ancient times, but has neither grown with time nor decayed. In Kashmiri, we have a tradition of calling an ever-green person as 'Prayagetch Boony' (the Chinar of Prayag)! The Hindus of the adjoining villages believe that the island rises with the rise in the level of water, whenever there are floods and the rivers are swollen.



Tracing the path of Vitasta (Jhelum) and its tributaries across Kashmir Valley



Prayag Chinar at Shadipur, Kashmir



Shivlingam in open under the Boonye (Chinar)

Images are courtesy Mrs Santosh Raina Jammu, who visited Shadipore in Aug 2024



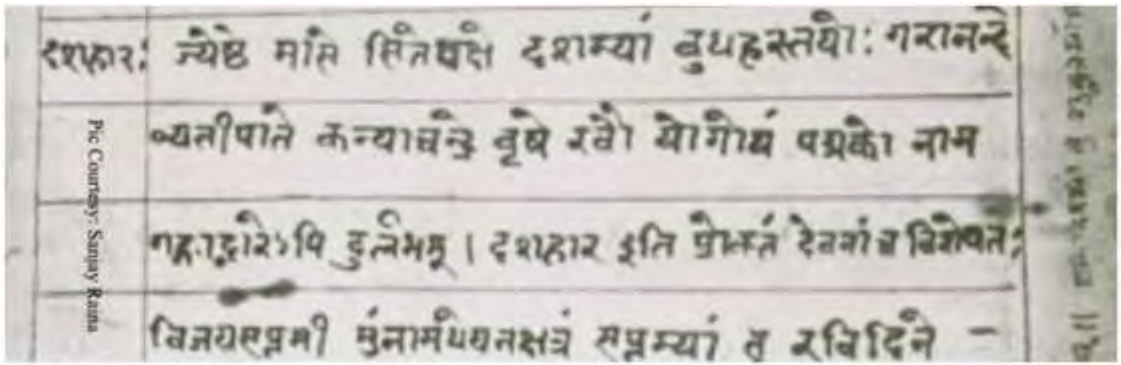
Prayag Chinar at Shadipore, in 1905



Devotees traveling by boat to the Island at Sangam

Three remaining images are Courtesy: The Kashmir Rechords Publication

Shadipore Prayag is associated with another important socio-religious *one day* event known as 'Dashaar' – a rare astrological cum astronomical event, something akin to the Kumbh Mela that occurs with regular periodicity at four sacred places in India. *Dashaar's* occurrence depends on a rare and specific celestial alignment involving ten celestial bodies, giving the festival its name— “Dash” (ten) and “Haar” (alignment). The timing is unpredictable, with gaps ranging from 10 to 75 years, making *Dashaar* a rare and mystical event in Kashmiri tradition. The configuration includes a Tuesday or Wednesday in Jyeshtha (June), Moon in Virgo, the Sun in Taurus and the presence of Ananda Yog. The festival is documented in sacred texts like the *Dharma Sindhu* and the *Dashaar Nirnay*, with detailed astrological calculations determining its timing.



Pre-independence J&K Govt records mention that the Dashaar event was celebrated in 1911 and on June 4, 1941 (corresponding to 22nd Jyeshtha, 1998 Vikram Samvat), when Maharaja Hari Singh ruled the state. The event is said to have seen a footfall of over 1Lac devotees, including the Maharaja who had made adequate arrangements for the Dashaar. After a gap of 75 years, Kashmiri Pandits again celebrated Dashaar on June 14, 2016 with excellent footfall. Experts suggest that future *Dashaar* may occur in 2026, 2028, 2052 or 2091, adhering to the minimum gap of 10, 12, 36 or 75 years that is prerequisite for the celestial alignments.

Shadipore used to be the Base Camp for travel to Tul-Mul (Ksheer Bhawani Asthapan) before roads and bus connectivity improved in Kashmir! Families would travel on the Vitasta River by a lower category version of a Houseboat, called Doonga in Kashmiri, land at Shadipore, walk up to Tul-Mul Asthapan, camp there for 2-3 days and then take the return Doonga ride to the ghat of Vitasta wherefrom they would have started. My late parents would often narrate the stories of the Doonga trip they took to Tul-Mul in 1954, soon after their marriage! Kashmir's premium school, CMS Tyndale Biscoe Memorial School used to conduct a very interesting annual 'Wular Adventure' for its senior students (only Dal-Cross students qualified). This school had its own boats for student activities that were housed at Dal Gate Boat House. Students would board the school boats from a spot called Aabi-Guzar on Jhelum and row down to Shadipore from

where they would board doongas and travel to Wular Lake. My uncle Pt TK Munshi participated in one such adventure, probably in 1962 or in 1963. An interesting anecdote he recalls is that the British Principal of the school, Mr John Mead Ray (colloquially called "Raye Sahab" by the junior staff) almost drowned in the Wular Lake while attempting to change boats. This trip was later discontinued following floods in Kashmir!

Shadipore is also associated with the rediscovery of Tul-Mul shrine itself. Legend has it that the Goddess Herself appeared in a dream to a pious Brahmin— Pt Krishan Taploo of Bohri Kadal, Srinagar and asked him to offer Puja to Ksheer Bhawani in the swamps of Tula Mula. He was told to travel up to Shadipore by boat wherefrom a snake would guide him to his destination. The pious Brahmin followed instructions and demarcated the location with large poles, since the area was marshy. Once the waters receded, the Holy Naag was rediscovered. The event is said to have occurred in **Sapta Rishi Samvat 4041(965 AD)**. It is believed that the discovery of the holy spring was made on **Ashadha Saptami**, the 7th day of the bright fortnight of the fourth month of Kashmiri Calendar, Ashadha.

Shadipore thus is a sacred spot for Kashmiri Pandits. It stands witness to our glorious past and our sacred socio-religious traditions. We owe a debt to our forefathers for preserving our Tiraths, our holy spots and, our festivals! Hopefully, in foreseeable future, we KPs shall return to Kashmir to uphold what is rightfully ours!

sanjeevmunshi@hotmail.com



Rajan Nakhasi



BRIJ KISHORI

An Institution Within

Proud Rainawarian, Brij Kishori fondly called as Jijee was born on the First day of Hindu calendar – Navreh to Smt. Sham Rani and Sh. Janki Nath Nakhasi as their second child. Jijee was always a bright child both at home as well as school. She would also help her mother at home.

Death snatched her from us a few days back. But then this is the law of Nature. We all know that death is a golden gate through which everyone has to pass. So did she pass through it to reach her new abode in the heaven.

Do you know you will die one day? Oh, I bless you with a long life, but anyway, you will die one day. We cannot be sure about other things in life, but this one thing is guaranteed in your life, you will go straight to your grave and this is the biggest Truth of life. (Sadhguru in his book – Death an inside story).

The truth of the most High (The Master) is beyond any doubt or suspicion. The truth remains that there is a Master who has created this Universe which has the earth and the Galaxy inside it. The Earth as we know has much more than we know hidden inside its womb. The riches, wealth, the water and much more which are the requirements of the mankind.

The human being was crafted and created by the Master and who has been given a mind and a heart, which helps him to think and be emotional. The creativity, learning and teaching comes from the human mind. It can



think positive and negative at the same time. It has the power to create. All the powers to the human beings have been bestowed by the Master.

We believe in Karma and it says – the sum of a person's good or bad actions in this and previous state of existence are viewed as affecting the future. It is said that, as we sow, so, shall we reap. In this life we see good and bad. It is the outcome of the deeds and actions we do in our daily lives. We need to be cautious before we do anything. (Rajan Nakhasi in his book – Voice of the Vision).

During her youth, one day, when Jijee was returning from University, where she was

studying, a Malang (a kind of recluse, who lives a life away from other people and society and is considered one with God) named Moeme Takke or Takke moth offered her a piece of bread which he was about to eat. She was afraid to take it from him. Most of the Rainawarians might know him. On the interference and pursuance of a local shopkeeper(Naebe Bakhoor), she accepted the bread and rushed home. She might have told the whole story to her mother and siblings, but none understood. In the evening when Babuji (her father) returned home, she told him about the incident. He was a divine soul and could understand everything. He told her that something good was to happen very soon.

The next day, three letters addressed to her were delivered at our residence. Surprisingly, all three letters were the appointment orders from three different government departments. After the discussions at home about all the three departments, she joined AG's Office located in Srinagar.

She excelled in her professional life also. She was the first unmarried girl to qualify her departmental examination to be promoted to the senior rank, where she always worked with dignity and pride. She helped everyone who came to her for some or the other work.

She was always attracted towards the stage and theatre and to work in theatre was her passion and she pursued it. For a long time she was a part of Rang Manch theatre. She was also an auditioned actor in Radio Kashmir, Srinagar. She was in fact was the only female artist to have reached A+ category. Her voice was so melodious that it can hardly be forgotten especially by those who have heard her on radio. Everyone in the theatre, radio or the television called her "DIDI".

Those days in Rainawari, we at home were glued around the radio set in the evening for the drama to start on radio. We would enjoy every drama on radio especially if she would be a part of. It was necessary to hear the name of the artists in the end because her name would be announced.

A little before the migration, she played the role of "Benetaeth" in the tele serial "Imandaar" on television. Rev, Pran Kishore ji, Bashir Dada Sb and Ayash Arif ji were also a part of the show. She was a versatile actor. Her voice was melodious. She even excelled in this field also.

Her confidence was always high and it has paid her well in life. Whatever she did in life, she did it with utmost confidence. Respected Pran Kishore ji in his book has termed Brij Kishori as A tigress of an actor.

She was sober and friendly by nature. She behaved differently with different age groups. With the children she behaved like them and with her age groups, she was a friend and with the older she was their dearest. This wasn't only with the outside world, but she was the same with her relations also. She like other siblings was taught how to take care of curricular at home. She had golden hands and cooked delicious. She had command over the language. Whenever I wrote anything, I would send it to her. She would send it back after due corrections.

At home, she was a disciplinarian. Since I was the youngest in the family, so I was the most affected. After she got married to Dr. Upinder Kr. Zutshi in 1975, whenever she visited us in Rainawari, I again was the most affected. With the passage of time, things changed to some extent. With my other siblings, I would speak freely but with her I always hesitated.

Our relationship changed completely after migration. We all got busy in our everyday problems. We would hardly get time to meet each other. Meetings would happen very rare.

She was very active on the social front. After her retirement, she kept herself busy with the social activities. She took to teaching the slum children free of cost. Instead she would spend out of her pocket to take care of their small needs. She kept herself attached to theatre till her last.

Her theatre group DABB organized a play called "Tchete bhete luthh baab". They did shows in NCR and many parts of India.

Before the publication of my first book, I had the chance to be with her for some days as we together edited the book before finally sending it for publication. She was more than happy for me especially after the second book was launched. She always filled the vacant place of my mother. She will always remain my mother like sister.

From the moment she left her body, everyone who knew her across globe, has been talking high about her, and she deserves it as karma is paying her back. The best part of one self is that when people write golden words for the deceased. It shows the love and respect by the people for her.

I still can't believe that she is no more with us. May she remain there where she is forever with the God, amongst angels, showering her blessings upon all of us.

I would conclude with the following:

I cried when you passed away, I still cry today.

To lose you was a bitter wrench, the pain cut to my core.

I cried until my tears ran out and then I cried some more.

Although I loved you dearly, I couldn't make you stay.

Your golden heart stopped beating, and hardworking hands at rest.

God broke my heart to prove to me that He only takes the best.

I know I can't be with you now and you can't be with me.

But safe inside my heart you will stay,
That is where you will always be.

Love you, Jijee.

To define you, I would actually need a book to write, but this is a tribute to you from your son like brother. God bless your soul.

Besides me- you will always missed by Jia, Sheetu, Anubhav and Upinder, by lali, Kaki, Rama and Inder and all the children whom you loved. You will also be missed by the Theatre fraternity and your friends and all those who somehow knew you.

Rest in peace.

Mother, Ever since you departed us, drifting far away,
Seeking your blessings every single day.
But the wound you left, it's still so raw,
A pain that time cannot withdraw.

Your absence lingers in every space,
A hollow pang, an empty place.
The laughter, the warmth, the love you gave,
All lost to the silence, so hard to brave.

Each day we carry the weight of this grief,
Searching for comfort, finding no relief.
In the echoes of memories, we still find you near,
But the ache in our hearts is crystal clear.

You took the rough with the smooth,
With courage and laughter whole life through,
Till the last breath you hoped to recover,
But God wanted a pious soul with Him for ever.

Yet, without your physical presence, we try to stand tall,
Holding your wisdom, your love through it all.
Mother, forever in our hearts you'll remain,
In every tear, in our smile, in pleasure and in pain.

Mother - A Tribute



Urmila Pandita Kaul





Sushil Vakil



KAMLAISH KAUL VAKIL A STALWART IN JOURNALISM

Kamlaish Kaul Vakil stands as a towering figure in the annals of Indian journalism, embodying a rich legacy of dedication to truth and fearless reporting. Born into a family deeply entrenched in the journalistic tradition, Kamlaish inherited a passion for media and communication that has shaped his extraordinary career.

Hailing from a lineage of accomplished journalists, Kamlaish Kaul Vakil was born and raised in an environment steeped in the ethos of serving the masses through journalism. His grandfather, Pt. ShambooNath Kaul Vakil, pioneered this legacy in 1932 by launching an Urdu newspaper. This initiative was carried forward by Kamlaish's father, Pt. PushkarNath Kaul Vakil, and uncle until 1990, creating a foundation that instilled journalistic values in the family.

Under his parents' stewardship, the family launched the Samachar Post, the only English daily published in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, until the unfortunate forced migration in 1990. Their entrepreneurial spirit was evident when they imported the Apple Desktop Publishing System in 1987, positioning them among the first in India and one of the early adopters in Asia.

Kamlaish's journey in journalism began in 1970 when he took on the role of a reporter immediately after completing his matriculation. Despite his young age, he adeptly balanced his education with the rigors



of reporting, attending press conferences, covering armed forces stationed in Jammu and Kashmir, and later reporting on the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly and Council.

Throughout his illustrious career, Kamlaish has covered some of the most critical moments in Jammu and Kashmir's history, including the tenure of prominent leaders such as Mr. Mir Qasim, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, Farooq Abdullah, and others. His comprehensive reporting during multiple

governor's rule periods in the region showcased his commitment to truth and impartiality.

Kamlaish has had the privilege of working alongside legendary figures in journalism, including Mr. Om Prakash Saraf (ToI), Mr.VedBhasin (Kashmir Times), and Mr.NandLalWatal (Khidmat), among others. His interactions and collaborations with such stalwarts honed his skills and reinforced his resolve to uphold the principles of journalism.

The political turmoil of 1990 forced Kamlaish and his family to relocate to Delhi. Demonstrating resilience, they re-launched Samachar Post, an English daily, and introduced new publications such as the Bharti Vakil (Hindi daily) and Kashur Gazette (an English weekly for Kashmiri communities in India and abroad). These publications continue to serve as vital platforms for dialogue and information dissemination.

Kamlaish's contributions have earned him widespread recognition. He has been accredited to the Press Information Bureau (PIB) of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the Rajya Sabha Press Gallery, and the Central Hall of Parliament, where he has been a fixture for over 25 years. His

coverage extends across almost all major political parties and ministries, highlighting his versatility as a journalist.

Kamlaish Kaul Vakil's newspapers have nurtured dozens of journalists who have gone on to make significant contributions in media and other fields. Among them are notable names like Ashok Ogra, Gulam Nabi Ratanpuri, Late SujatBukhari, and many others who attribute their foundational training to Kamlaish's publications.

Today, Kamlaish Kaul Vakil continues to be a guiding light in Indian journalism. He has attended numerous national and international conferences, staying at the forefront of media evolution. His relentless commitment to covering critical political and social issues underscores his unwavering dedication to his profession.

Kamlaish Kaul Vakil's life and career epitomize the spirit of fearless journalism. From his early days in Srinagar to his continued efforts in Delhi, he has consistently championed the cause of truth, justice, and public service through his writings. As a stalwart in journalism, his legacy inspires generations to uphold the values of integrity and commitment in media.

Calendar of Month

Hure' Okdoh	13 th February 2025
Hure' Ashtami (Krishna Paksha)	21 st February 2025
Ekadashi (Krishna Paksha)	24 th February 2025
Maha Shivratri (Dwadashi)	25 th February 2025
DoonyeAmavasya	27 th February 2025
Satam (Teel Atham)	06 th March 2025
Ashtami (ShuklaPaksha)	07 th March 2025
Ekadashi (ShuklaPaksha)	11 th March 2025
Vhaturdashi (Thaal Bharun)	13 th March 2025
Poornima (Sankranti) (Holi)	14 th March 2025

Note

Panchak starts on 26th February 2025 ends on 03rd March 2025

Phalgun (Krishna Paksha) from 13th February to 27th February 2025

Phalgun(ShuklaPaksha) from 28th February to 14th March 2025



–Col Tej K Tikoo, Ph.D. (Retd)

THE CHRONICLES OF KASHMIR AMARNATH VAISHNAVI: A BIOGRAPHY

“The Chronicles of Kashmir – Biography of a Leader-Amarnath Vaishnavi,” is a roughly 370-pages paper back authored by Bal Krishen Sanyasi, nephew of Amarnath Vaishnavi, and edited by his grand niece, Rohini Vaishnavi. The book is published by Sabre & Quill.

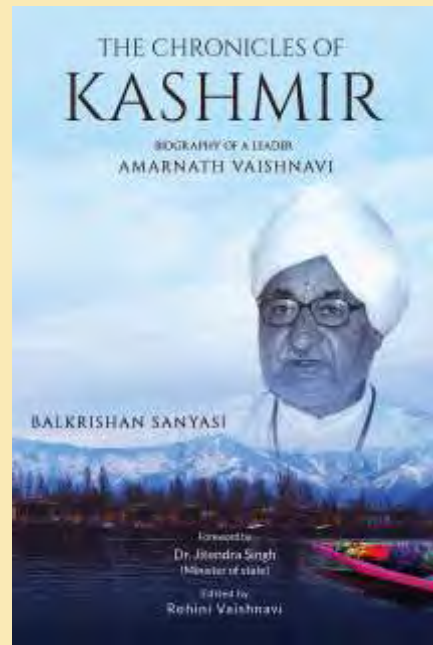
The life story of Sh. Amarnath Vaishnavi makes a fascinating reading right from the time his name appears first in the book as a young teacher and a Pracharak of RSS. The book covers some important milestones of this well-known community stalwart that traverses a wide swathe of experiences - nearly all devoted to the service of the nation and his own community. Going through difficult situations that life presented him with, Sh. Amarnath Ji carried himself with quiet dignity and poise. He would always have a cheerful visage and his public appearances would fill his listeners with hope, optimism and inspiration.

Starting as a pracharak of the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh, Amarnath Ji, besides working in the valley and Jammu, also galvanized the people of Ladakh and later Punjab, where he was sent on a posting, perhaps, to keep

him away from the Valley. Many of our community members today may not even know that the road to the Aug 5, 2019, neutralization of Art 370 & 35A, has not been a bed of roses, but has been made possible by the sweat and blood of many committed nationalists like Amarnath Vaishnavi. Starting with the breaking of the permit system by the founder of Jan Sangh (the predecessor of BJP), Sh. Shyama Prasad Mukerjee to enter Kashmir, his eventual death in suspicious circumstances while under arrest in Kashmir, the Praja Parishad movement that galvanized the Jammu region against the anti-national majoritarian politics of Sheikh Mohd Abdullah and the subsequent removal of the permit system and arrest of Sheikh Mohd Abdullah, were all result of huge sacrifices made by the people of Jammu region in which Amarnath Vaishnavi played a significant role. In fact, he was one of the few Kashmiri Pandits involved in organizing the people of Jammu and its suburbs to protest against many decisions taken by Sheikh Mohamad Abdullah and his administration which were essentially anti-Indian and pandered to the majoritarian sentiment.

The book makes it abundantly clear that with every passing day it was becoming clear as day light that the continued presence of Kashmiri Pandits in Kashmir was becoming increasingly untenable. Sh. Amarnath Vaishnavi, having worked at grass root level throughout the length and breadth of different regions of the state, understood this and accordingly, made herculean efforts to not only warn his community of the impending danger but also made many attempts to caution the state and national leadership about it. Whenever opportunity arose, he organized public protests against the rising Muslim majoritarian sentiment which had pronounced communal overtones, fanned by Sheikh Abdullah himself.

The book contains a detailed account of the 1967-Parmeshwari Handoo agitation, in which Sh. Vaishnavi Ji emerged as a leader of the community in his own right. Those of us who took part in the agitation would clearly recall the slogan that Sh. Vashnavi Ji made immortal, before he started his speech – ‘Jai Kara – Har Har Mahadev’. In fact, the slogan got so deeply identified with him that he was known by the endearing name ‘Jai Kara’. The book contains several anecdotes of that period- some of them not known to many till now.



He recalls his meeting with the former Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi and the conversation his delegation had with her during this period. He also expressed his deep sense of resentment and disappointment on how Mrs. Gandhi reacted to their demand and what she said in reply to their requests. What he says does not reflect well on the former formidable P.M., particularly

in relation to the state of the microscopic in a predominantly Muslim majority area. In fact, what she told the delegation, as quoted by Amarnath Vaishnavi Ji, nearly reflected Nehru's views on Kashmiri Pandits.

Though Sh. Amarnath Vaishnavi was involved with his community's issues for many decades, it was only in 1987 that he took over as the President of the "All State Kashmiri Pandit Conference (ASKPC)". This prestigious organization, which had some prominent Kashmiri Pandits helming it on various occasions, came into being in 1931 as "All State Kashmiri Pandit Conference-Sanatan Dharma Yuvak Sabha". Prior to that its earlier avatar was "Dharma Sabha" under the legendary Hargopal Koul, which came into being in the first quarter of the last century, as the community witnessed with trepidation the rise of Muslim majoritarianism in Kashmir. After Hargopal Koul's death in 1925, Dharma Sabha lost its sheen and was replaced by ASKPC. Some of the community's outstanding personalities later headed this organization before Amarnath Vaishnavi took over its mantle.

Amarnath Vaishnavi's life story makes it abundantly clear that he was among the foremost Sangh Parivar Leaders in North India – From Golwalkar to Balraj Madhok and from Advani to Vajpayee, Amarnath Ji rubbed shoulders with top leaders of the Sangh Parivar.

There are instances in the book which show the high esteem in which Sh. Amarnath Ji was held by the leaders of the BJP and the RSS. Out of the blue, while attending a function or a public meeting, ministers and those holding high positions in the organization, would bow to touch his feet because he had initiated them into the RSS during his days as a Pracharak.

It remains without saying that in any other state, an organizational man of Amarnath Vaishnavi's credentials, would have risen high in the party or in the government, particularly when BJP started tasting political power in many states and subsequently, at the centre. But, being a Kashmiri Pandit, he had no constituency to call his own. Like many Kashmiri Pandits who had contributed immensely to public life, this was a cross that Amarnath Ji had to bear

The book contains many conversations of Amarnath Ji, quoted Verbatim. These quotes reflect his deep insight into the political developments of the state. These also describe the dynamics and inter-play of political forces that influenced both the state politics as also the Delhi-Kashmir political equation. His reminiscences of the conversations he held with many leaders convey the

political inclinations of those who shaped the state's destiny over the many decades.

His relentless efforts during mass movement of "Shree Amarnath Shrine Sangharsh Samiti," contributed in a big way in galvanizing people against the lies spread by Mufti regime to appease his vote bank and Jammati supporters in Kashmir.

The last three decades of Amarnath Ji's life were entirely devoted to ensuring the wellbeing of the displaced members of his community in 1989-90. The book records in detail the relentless efforts put in by him during and after the exodus of our community in 1989-90; Sh. Amanath Vaishnavi organized the young volunteers under ASKPC to render succor to the displaced people in Jammu. No effort was too great for him to render assistance to the hounded out Pandits who poured into Jammu and other places with barely what they wore, having lost everything to the Jihadi violence in Kashmir that resulted in their ethnic cleansing from Kashmir. Vaishnavi Ji and his dedicated team of workers poured their heart and soul into registering the refugees, providing them shelter, first in Geeta Bhavan and later in hastily created camps, establishing camp schools and providing the fleeing refugees with the bare minimum wherewithal for immediate survival.

He met nearly all the important people in and outside the govt to make them aware of the degree of barbarity faced by a peaceful community and impress upon them the pathetic conditions they were living in various camps in Jammu and other places. Later, he fought many political battles to have the displaced community rehabilitated in Kashmir. It was while rendering this yeoman's service he breathed his last, having worked for the community literally till the last breath.

The book ends with many well-known KP-activists, prominent writers, intellectuals, artists and political figures, academicians, etc., paying tributes to Amarnath Vaishnavi after he passed away on July 1, 2012. Most touching is the one written by Sh. R L Shant Sahab.



- Dr. Ramesh Tamiri

MORE THAN STORIES – BETWEEN THE LINES

Author of the Book : **Veena Pandita Koul**
 Publisher : **ADHYAN BOOKS**
 Reviewed by : **Dr. Ramesh Tamiri**

Creative writing is an effective medium of expression for relating one's experiences of normal times and during upheavals. Kashmiri Hindus as a community have many experiences to relate to on how they lived life as second-class citizens before 1990 and as victims of genocidal cleansing after 1989. Every literate person has a writer in him, but not everyone can turn into a writer. It needs a spark to bring out the writer in a person. The author of *More Than Stories—Between the Lines*, Veena Bhat Pandita, credits Prof. Tej Raina, a much-learned person, with lighting that spark in her. This slim book is not a memoir in the conventional sense. It is a recall of interesting experiences that the author had before and after 1990. The stories in the book are honest statements with no pretensions to either cover up the harsh realities or exaggerate them. That lends authenticity to the book.



The stories in the book fall into four categories:

- I. 1. A Tale of Humanity Amidst Chaos. 2. A Bond Beyond Boundaries. 3. A Journey of Silent Support
- II. 1. Second Chance. 2. When Apologies Come Late
- III. 1. Unspoken Generosity 2. Through the Gates of Courage 3. Kindred Spirits
- IV. 1. Memories that Remain 2. Family Bonds

In the story *A Tale of Humanity Amidst Chaos*, the author recalls the courageous role played by an old man with whom she had just a nodding acquaintance. The old man saved her from two terrorists. He tells them, "I will not allow any untoward to happen here, or you will have to kill me first." The terrorists yield.

In the story *A Bond Beyond Boundaries*, journalist Izhar responds to a story the author wrote in a Jammu newspaper. The response leads to a regular interaction, where the journalist recalls the good days he spent in the company of his Pandit classmates and does not hesitate to state that Mr. Munshi Sir was his favourite teacher. Incidentally, Sunny Pandita, his classmate, was a house surgeon in our department in GMC, Jammu, when I was doing my postgraduate studies. His father is a close friend of mine. Teacher Mr. Satish Munshi was my classmate at SP College. What is interesting is that when the journalist and the author meet for the first time in Srinagar, the circumstances leading to ethnic cleansing do come under discussion. He accepts that ethnic cleansing was, of course, the consequence of targeted killings and wants the good old days to return when the two communities lived acceptably. Yet he hesitates to state that there existed a real threat. He passes it as FEAR. He highlights the few killings of Kashmiri Hindus working in the judiciary, police, or intelligence agencies as if to suggest that Kashmiri Hindus were killed because of their position in the state setup and not because of their community affiliation. This is a gross misstatement of facts. Lastly, rather than admitting that Pakistani agencies and their local collaborators conspired to force ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus, the journalist invents the myth of a panic button pushed by Pandit leaders. He also cleverly tries to underplay the genocide by counterposing the killings of Muslims by terrorists. Killings of the members of the Muslim community by the terrorists do not deny the reality of genocide against Kashmiri Hindus but point to the three different dimensions of the terrorist movement- communal, secessionist, and criminal. The genocide of Kashmiri Hindus was because of the communal dimension.

The third story in this section recalls how the author's guide comes from Srinagar to Jammu to help her submit the M.Phil thesis.

One can't but appreciate the role of the old man who saves the author's life, the journalist who genuinely yearns for the return of the good old days when Kashmir was home to both Muslims and Hindus and the university professor who comes to Jammu to ensure that the author is awarded an M.Phil. degree. The role of these three Kashmiris who defy the diktat to keep alive the little flames of tolerance and compassion is laudable.

The author while acknowledging the role of these three Muslim gentlemen, does not fudge the ground realities or absolve the majority community of their role in 1989-90. She says, "The Muslims in the valley, in general, were helpless or at least seemed to be helpless, unable to stop the tragedy that was unfolding before their eyes. The age-old coexistence, the harmony that had defined Kashmir for generations, was shattered." Elsewhere, she comments, "Thousands of Kashmiri Muslims took to the streets, caught up in what they believed was a liberation struggle, but the reality was far more chaotic and confusing. Targeted killings of innocent civilians became an almost daily occurrence. The institutions meant to protect were crumbling, leaving us vulnerable and afraid." The author's close relative, who served in the Food and Supplies department, was gunned down in his office.

There is enough evidence in the public domain that indicates: 1. There was a conspiracy by entrepreneurs of cross-border terrorism to subject Kashmiri Hindus to genocidal cleansing through selective killings of innocent members in the early years and later massacres. 2. Sections of the majority community socialised with forces of destabilisation at least in 1989-90. How could you expect the same sections to take a stand against the killings and genocidal cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus? 3. With conspiracy in full swing and the unleashing of selective killing taking place with impunity, the collapse of the security apparatus was the last straw that Kashmiri Hindus needed to convince themselves that there was indeed a serious threat to their continued stay in the valley.

Before we come to the exceptionalism of these three Muslim gentlemen, it is necessary to reflect on the interrelationship between the two communities in peaceful and troubled times. The relationship between the two religious communities in Kashmir was quite complex. Prejudices between the two communities are natural in a plural society. So long as these prejudices don't upgrade to communal hostility, these are acceptable. Kashmiris—Hindus and Muslims, followed their respective way of life—different cuisines, different customs, and different worldviews. Kashmiri Hindus lived in separate and composite localities. Interdependence in daily life and as neighbour helped shape a framework of relations where mutual friendliness was a necessity. Kashmiris gave it a colloquial expression of LIHAZDARI. The communal campaign of the Muslim Conference in 1931, the politics of Muslim majoritarianism pursued by the National Conference, the opportunistic communalism of the PDP, and the secessionist-fundamentalist communalism of Jamaat Islami strongly impacted inter-communal relationships. It injected politics of hatred and hostility against the minority community of Kashmiri Hindus. In normal times and at an individual level, members of the majority community still displayed, in some measure, LIHAZDARI, but gradually this was being neutralised. In troubled times, for instance during the Pakistani invasion of J&K in 1947-48, the hostility came out in the open. It assumed a violent form in 1989-90.

The role of the old Muslim gentleman who saved the author's life can be understood in simple terms of humanism. Reaching out of the journalist to the author is simply a nostalgia for the eras where at least some sections appreciated the contributions of Kashmiri Hindus to the society. Similarly, the role of the professor-guide can be explained to his professional integrity.

The stories connected to Jammu years—*Unspoken Generosity*, *Through the Gates of Courage*, and *Kindred Spirits*—are soul-stirring stories that relate to our experiences too. In *Unspoken Generosity*, the author recalls how individuals 'transcend circumstances and challenges' to help others in distress. *Through the Gates of Courage* is an extraordinary story of courage of the author's colleague, Prof. Neelu Gupta. She not only displayed determination of a high order but also demonstrated leadership qualities in handling an ugly situation and facilitated the joining of the author as the new principal of a degree college. Similar is the story of Prof. Anuradha in *Kindred Spirits*, who strongly supports the author against the unsympathetic attitude of her principal.

The other stories in the book are reflection on values that we must uphold to make relationships sweeter.

The book is reasonably priced at Rs. 299 and easily available at Amazon India.



–Chander M. Bhat

SONTUK PARTAV BY PANDIT GANGADHAR BHAR 'DEHATI'

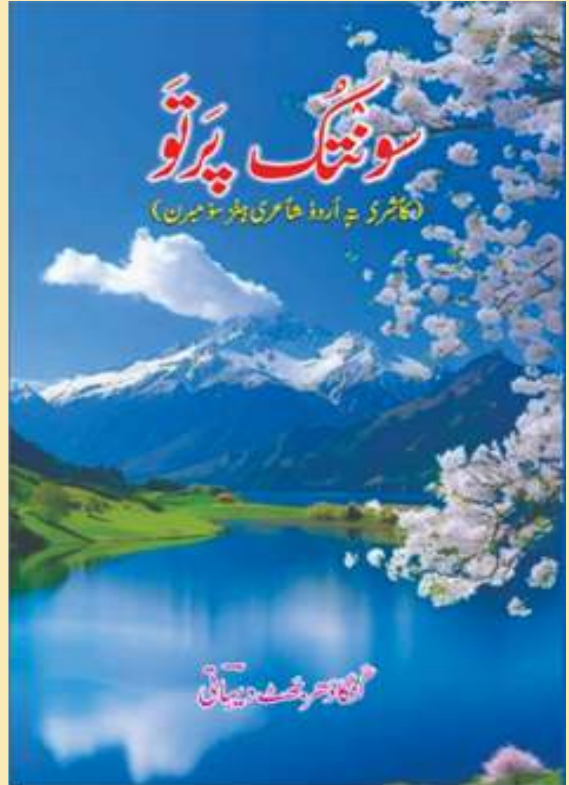
In the vast and rich landscape of Kashmiri and Urdu literature, *Sontuk Partav* stands as a beacon of poetic brilliance, offering a rare and exquisite blend of two distinct yet harmonious linguistic traditions. Written by the late Pandit Gangadhar Bhar 'Dehati,' a poet of immense sensitivity and depth, this book is a labor of love, not only in its content but also in its creation and publication by the poet's son, who has undertaken the noble task of preserving and sharing his father's literary legacy.

Pandit Ganga Dhar Bhat, pen name 'Dehati,' born in 1917 in Murran, South Kashmir, was a poet, writer, and educator whose works in Kashmiri and Urdu reflect deep cultural and emotional insight. Starting as a journalist for the Urdu daily *Desh* under Kashyap Bandhu, he later became editor of *Dehati Duniya*, promoting rural reform. After political shifts led to the journal's closure, he returned to teaching at Mehjoor Memorial School, Pulwama continuing to write and mentor. An associate of literary icons like Mehjoor and Dina Nath Nadim, Dehati participated in mushairas and enriched Kashmir's literary scene. Despite his significant contributions, much of his work remained unpublished. He passed away in 1978, leaving behind a legacy saved by his son, Pandit Kuldeep Kumar Bhat, who seeks to preserve and celebrate his father's literary contributions.

Ibid book with 186 pages of poetry divided into two parts, Kashmiri and Urdu, *Sontuk Partav* is priced at an accessible Rs. 500, making it a valuable addition to the libraries of poetry lovers and cultural enthusiasts alike.

Pandit Gangadhar Bhar 'Dehati' was a poet whose words carried the weight of a soul deeply attuned to life's fleeting beauty and its enduring truths. His poetry reflects a heart that was both tender and resilient, navigating the complex interplay of love, loss, nature, spirituality, and cultural identity. Known for his eloquence and profound emotional insight, Dehati's work transcends the ordinary, weaving a tapestry of sentiments that resonate universally while remaining deeply rooted in the Kashmiri ethos.

Although the poet is no longer with us, *Sontuk Partav* serves as a testament to his enduring spirit and creative genius. The effort by his son to compile and publish this anthology adds a poignant layer of filial devotion, making the book not just a collection of poems but also a tribute to a father's legacy.



The book is thoughtfully divided into two sections: Kashmiri poetry and Urdu poetry, each showcasing the poet's mastery over the respective languages. This division allows readers to appreciate the unique cultural and linguistic nuances of each tradition while recognizing the common thread of human emotion that binds them together.

The Kashmiri section of *Sontuk Partav* immerses readers in the natural beauty and cultural richness of the poet's homeland. Dehati's verses celebrate the valley's Chinars, rivers, and mountains, transforming them into metaphors for life's ephemeral nature. The poet captures the simplicity and profundity of Kashmiri life, often evoking a sense of nostalgia for a time and place that feels both distant and intimately familiar.

Themes of love and longing are intertwined with reflections on nature, spirituality, and identity. The poet's Kashmiri verses are imbued with the warmth of his cultural roots, serving as a bridge between the past and the present. His words are a gentle reminder of the enduring beauty of Kashmiri heritage.

In contrast, the Urdu section of *Sontuk Partav* reveals the poet's versatility and his ability to engage with universal themes through a refined and lyrical medium. Dehati's Urdu poetry delves deeper into philosophical musings, exploring the intricacies of divine love, the pain of separation, and the eternal quest for truth.

With a distinct Sufi undertone, his Urdu verses elevate the personal to the universal, offering insights into the human condition that transcend cultural and linguistic boundaries. The ghazals and nazms in this section highlight the poet's command over form and meter, blending tradition with originality in a manner that is both elegant and impactful.

What sets *Sontuk Partav* apart is its profound emotional resonance. Every poem is a window into the poet's soul, revealing a man who felt deeply and expressed those feelings with remarkable clarity and grace. Dehati's ability to articulate subtle emotions...joy, sorrow, hope, despair, and everything in between...makes his poetry both relatable and transformative.

The Kashmiri poems exude a sense of belonging and rootedness, while the Urdu poems invite introspection and a broader perspective on life's mysteries. Together, they create a balanced emotional landscape, offering readers both comfort and challenge.

The poet's reflections on mortality and the impermanence of life are particularly poignant, given the posthumous nature of this publication. These themes take on an added layer of meaning, as readers are reminded of the poet's physical absence even as his words bring him vividly to life.

This act of preservation is especially significant in the context of Kashmiri literature, where the voices of many poets and writers have been lost to history. The son's efforts serve as an inspiring example of how familial bonds can extend into the realm of cultural and literary heritage, creating a bridge between generations.

The book is a gift not only to the memory of the poet but also to readers who may find in its pages a reflection of their own thoughts, feelings, and experiences. It is a reminder that poetry, at its best, is both deeply personal and universally accessible.

For lovers of Kashmiri and Urdu poetry, this book is a treasure trove of beauty and wisdom. For those new to these traditions, it serves as a gentle introduction to their richness and depth. Above all, *Sontuk Partav* is a testament to the enduring power of poetry to connect us to our roots, to each other, and to the eternal truths that define our shared humanity.

Through the heartfelt efforts of the poet's son, the world now has access to a literary gem that might otherwise have remained hidden. This act of love ensures that Pandit Gangadhar Bhar 'Dehati's' voice will continue to echo in the hearts of readers, reminding us all of the timeless magic of poetry.

AFFILIATES' NEWS

KASHMIRI PANCHAKSHARI HAVAN AT AHMEDABAD

The Kashmiri Panchakshari Havan was held at Kashmir Bhawan, Bopal, Ahmedabad, on January 18–19, 2025, organized by Koshur Samachar Ahmedabad & Gandhinagar. Guided by Shri Leeladhar Kaul from Jammu, the 18-hour-long Maha Yagna reflected the deep spiritual traditions of Kashmiri Shaivism.

Chanting the Panchakshari Mantra ("Na Ma Shi Va Ya"), devotees invoked Lord Shiva, fostering meditation, purification, and divine consciousness. The havan concluded with Poorna Ahuti, aarti, and prasad distribution, symbolizing completion and blessings.

The overwhelming participation highlighted the community's deep-rooted



devotion and commitment to preserving heritage. This sacred gathering not only strengthened cultural ties but also left a lasting spiritual impact, inspiring future generations.



NAAD CONGRATULATES Dr. O. N. Kaul on Lifetime Achievement Award 2025

Naad extends heartfelt congratulations to Dr. O. N. Kaul, President of KP Sabha, Gwalior, for being honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award 2025 by the Nursing Home Owners Association Conference. This prestigious recognition celebrates his selfless services and unwavering dedication to the community.



Book Launch Commemorating Late Shri Omkar Nath Shabnam's 80th Birth Anniversary

Ghaziabad, January 12, 2025 — The Kashmiri Writers Group and the family of Shri Omkar Nath Shabnam honored the celebrated poet on his 80th birth anniversary with the launch of his autobiography *Myein Kath : Wachi Pyatha Vaishali Taam* and poetry collection *Haraf Katstam RudimToti Baqi*, published by Triple Zed Publications, J&K.

The event, hosted by Smt. Sunita Raina Pandit, saw distinguished speakers, including Dr. Roop Krishen Bhat, Dr. Gauri Shankar Raina, Mr. Deepak Budki, and Mr. Hamid Siraj, highlighting Shabnam Ji's literary legacy. Dr. Bhat acknowledged the crucial role of Mr. Susheel Shabnam Bhat in compiling

and publishing his father's works.

Musical tributes included Ms. Vanshika Bhat rendering Shabnam Ji's ghazals, while scholarly discussions by Dr. Gauri Shankar Raina and Mr. Avtar Krishen Pandita (via video link) explored his writings. An open mic session allowed literary figures like Prof. Meem Hye Zaffar and Smt. Veena Lidhoo to share insights.

Mr. Deepak Budki, in his presidential speech, praised Shabnam Ji's contributions, and Mr. Susheel Shabnam Bhat expressed gratitude to attendees for honoring his father's enduring literary legacy.



HOLY WATER FROM SHARDA PEETH (POK) IMMERSSED AT PRAYAGRAJKUMBH

Save Sharda Committee Kashmir Regd. immersed Holy water of Sharda Peeth PoK and Kishenganga river water Teetwal LoC at Trivenisangam Prayagraj Kumbh. The holy water that the committee President Ravinder Pandita got from civil society of PoK last year which was used in Pran Pratishtha of Ram Mandir Ayodhya also was taken in a special Kalash by Manjunath Sharma, Sharda follower to Kumbh in Prayagraj for immersion. Prior to immersion, the Kalash containing holy water was blessed by Jyotirmath Shankracharya Swami Avuktamukteshwaranand Ji.

It was for the first time in history that PoK sharda peeth kund water was immersed at Prayagraj holy sangam.





RRC (J) Review Development in Jammu Migrant Camps

Rehabilitation Commissioner (M) J&K Dr Arvind Karwani presided over a meeting on 8 February 2024 to review developmental works in the Jammu Camps. Others who joined the meeting included Deputy Commissioner (Relief) Vijay Kumar Sharma, Assistant Commissioner (Relief) Dr Deepak Kumar, Chief Accounts Officer Shiwani Bhan, Assistant Commissioner (Relief) Kailash Devi, Assistant Commissioner (Relief) Sanjeev Kumar, Executive Engineer PW(R&B) Department Jammu Sunil Thusoo, and concerned officials of the PW(R&B) Department and Relief Organization.

The Executive Engineer PW(R&B) Department, apprised about the progress of works going on in the migrant camps viz Migrant Camp Jagti, Migrant Camp Nagrota, Migrant Camp Muthi&Buta Nagar and Migrant Camp Purkhoo.

The meeting decided to constitute a work monitoring committee headed by the camp commandant concerned, with representatives from the residents, to prioritize the repair/renovation works. "The works will be taken up in the order of priority fixed by this committee.

The Executive Engineer assured timely completion of ongoing work and close supervision of the work's quality.

KP Sabha Appreciates J&K CM to Repair Temples in Kashmir

The Kashmiri Pandit Sabha Jammu, in a meeting held under the chairmanship of K KKhosla, President, has appreciated the decision taken by the Omar Abdullah Government to carry out repairs and restoration work of heritage temples situated in the four districts of South Kashmir,

namely Anantnag, Kulgam, Pulwama and Shopian.

"Most of these temples have undergone extensive damage during the past three decades due to widespread terrorism that prevailed in the valley. The decision to conduct this important repair work is a commendable step and indicates the noble and magnanimous intentions of the Government towards the minority Kashmiri Pandit community," he said.

Lamenting that the delay in this regard has proven disastrous for the distinct ethnic culture and identity of the Pandits, which must be preserved at all costs, K KKhosla said that this could be guaranteed only once the community is resettled back in the valley with honour, dignity, and a complete sense of security.

"While the Chief Minister is having pre-budget consultations with all stakeholders, including legislators and DDCs, for making provisions in the forthcoming state budget, in the absence of any representative belonging to the community who could have raised our issues, we request the UT Government to make provisions for the displaced community in anticipation of a robust return and rehabilitation policy which is required to be finalized immediately," he said.

Credits: DE

BJP Committed to Dignified Return of KPs

Sat Sharma, BJP State President of Jammu and Kashmir, said the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is fully committed to the dignified return of the Kashmiri Pandit (KP) community to their homeland during an event at the party office in Trikuta Nagar recently.

He championed the cause of the displaced community and worked to protect their rights and dignity.

Sharma highlighted that the efforts of the Narendra Modi-led Government have

significantly reduced terrorist and separatist activities in the region.

He added that he would ensure socio-economic growth and foster hope and confidence among the Kashmiri Pandit community, facilitating their return to their native land.

He further assured that the BJP has consistently raised the issues faced by the displaced Kashmiri Pandits and is committed to finding lasting solutions.

He was speaking with the new BJP Kashmir Displaced District (KDD) team led by Rajeev Pandita.

AMEAK Team and Newly Selected Candidates Meet Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of J&K

A delegation of newly selected candidates under the Hon'ble Prime Minister's Development Package, led by Sanjay Koul, President of the All Minority Employees Association of Kashmir (AMEAK), met the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of J&K at Raj Bhawan, Jammu, to express gratitude for operationalising waiting lists that facilitated their selection.

The delegation included Assistant Compilers, Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS), and AMEAK members. They appreciated the LG's efforts in providing employment opportunities, which have brought relief and hope to many.

Mr. Sanjay Koul, on behalf of the delegation, thanked the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor for his proactive governance and commitment to minority welfare. The LG reaffirmed the administration's commitment to inclusivity, development, and employee welfare, assuring continued support for a conducive working environment.

Kashmiri Hindu Officers Shine in Republic Day Parade / Ankur Pandita Honored by Kupwara Administration

A profound sense of pride resonates within the Kashmiri Hindu community as young officers from the Excise and Taxation Department, led by Sub-Inspector Shubam Bhan, participated

in this year's Republic Day Parade. Their presence in the prestigious event reflects their dedication and commitment to public service.

In another moment of recognition, Mr. Ankur Pandita was honored with an appreciation letter from the District Administration of Kupwara for his hard work and dedication in his department. This acknowledgment highlights his exemplary service and commitment to excellence, setting a remarkable example of professionalism and dedication to the community.

The All Minority Employees Association Kashmir (AMEAK) extended heartfelt congratulations to both officers, lauding their achievements as a source of inspiration for the community. Their perseverance and dedication stand as a testament to their unwavering service.

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MARTYR'S OF JIHAD IN KASHMIR

List for January and February

Team Naad pays homage to the martyrs who were brutally killed by jihadists in Kashmir, leading to the ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Pandits from their homeland. NAAD shall continue to honor these innocent victims of Islamic fundamentalism on a monthly basis.

The list below is not comprehensive. We request community members, along with friends and relatives of the victims, to share additional details of the martyrs so that we can compile a complete record and pay tribute to them.

S No.	Martyr's Name	Location	Killing Date
1	M L Bhan	Khonomoh Srinagar	15-01-1990
2	P K Kotru	Srinagar	19-01-1990
3	Satish Kr. Tickoo	KarfaliMohalla Srinagar	22-01-1990
4	Omkar NathWali	----	02-01-1991
5	Baldev Raj Dutta	----	19-01-1991
6	Pradeep Kumar Bhat	----	28-01-1994
7	Akshay Kumar	----	25-01-1998
8	BadriNath	----	25-01-1998
9	Jyoti	----	25-01-1998
10	Kashi Nath	----	25-01-1998
11	Meenakshi	----	25-01-1998
12	MotiLal Bhat	----	25-01-1998
13	Rakesh Kumar	----	25-01-1998
14	Sanjay Kr. Bhat	----	25-01-1998
15	Sarika	----	25-01-1998
16	SarlaKumari	----	25-01-1998
17	SeemaKumari	----	25-01-1998
18	Smt. Choti	----	25-01-1998
19	Smt. Dulari	----	25-01-1998
20	Smt. Neeru Ji	----	25-01-1998
21	Sudarshan	----	25-01-1998
22	Vijay Kumar	----	25-01-1998
23	Vikas Kumar	----	25-01-1998
24	Vinod Kumar	----	25-01-1998
25	Ramesh Kumar Thusoo	Trehgam, Kupwara	01-02-1990
26	Satish Kumar Tikoo	KarfaliMohalla Srinagar	02-02-1990
27	Tej Krishen Razdan	Gawakadal Srinagar	12-02-1990
28	Tej Krishen	----	12-02-1990
29	Rattan Lal	Srinagar	13-02-1990
30	Lassa Koul	Bemina, Srinagar	13-02-1990
31	Anil Bhan	Kanikadal, Srinagar	16-02-1990
32	Ashok Qazi	Tankipora, Srinagar	23-02-1990
33	Moti Singh	Kathua	27-02-1990
34	Naveen Saproo	Habbakadal, Srinagar	27-02-1990
35	P L Fotedar	Bijebhara, Anantnag	28-02-1990
36	Ashok Kumar	----	04-02-2000
37	Unshoo	----	04-02-2000
38	Veer Ji	----	04-02-2000

Admission Guide to B.E./BTech in 2025

Engineering is the most sought-after programme by students seeking admission to the B.E (Bachelor of Engineering)/ B.Tech.(Bachelor of Technology). It is a 4-year full-time undergraduate course and is offered in over a dozen disciplines such as Agricultural Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Mechanical engineering, civil engineering, Geotechnical Engineering, Computer Science Engineering, Aeronautical Engineering, Biotech Engineering, Aerospace Engineering, Architectural Engineering, Food Engineering, Nanotechnology Engineering, Automotive Engineering, Structural Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Electronics Engineering, Biomedical Engineering, Mechatronics Engineering, and Robotics Engineering. Computer Science, Civil, Mechanical, Electronics, and Information Technology are the popular courses amongst the students. Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning (AI/ML), Data Science and Big Data Analytics, Cybersecurity and Ethical Hacking, Internet of Things, Robotics and Automation, Blockchain Technology, Environmental Engineering, Aerospace Engineering, and Energy Engineering are the new engineering programmes.

Before a student chooses a programme, the following tips should be considered. Research different programs and identify areas that align with your passions and career aspirations. Start building relevant skills early by taking online courses, participating in hackathons, or engaging in personal projects. While new programmes are exciting, a strong foundation in core engineering principles remains essential. You can build relationships with professionals in your chosen field to gain valuable insights and potential internship opportunities. The engineering landscape constantly evolves, so read industry publications and attend workshops.

National, state, and institutional entrance exams are required to secure admission to top colleges. The top engineering entrance examinations that candidates undertake each year include:

JEE Main:

The JEE-Main entrance exam is conducted for admission to the National Institutes of Technology (NITs), Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs), and some other colleges designated as "centrally funded technical institutes" (CFTIs). The examination is conducted by NTA (National Testing Agency) in two sessions. The first session exam was held on January 22, 23, 24, 28 and 29, 2025 (Paper 1), and January 30, 2025 (Paper 2). The second session of JEE Main 2025 will be held from April 1 to 8, 2025. So that you know, candidates can appear in one or both sessions as they prefer.

JEE Advanced:

A national entrance examination called JEE Advanced is required for BTech admissions to IITs. Candidates must first be JEE Main qualifiers to take the JEE Advanced exam. The schedule of the examination has been declared. Registration will start on April 23 and end on May 5 2025. The examination will be held on May 18 2025.

CET, Karnataka:

The Karnataka Examinations Authority, Government of Karnataka, conducts the examination. The registration deadline was February 18 2025.

BITSAT (Birla Institute of Technology and Science Admission Test):

The campuses of BITS are situated in Pilani, Goa, Hyderabad, and Dubai. The admission process opens in January and closes in March, with the exam conducted in May.

VITEEE

(VIT Engineering Entrance Examination):

Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT), with campuses in Vellore, Chennai, Bhopal, and Amaravati, offers undergraduate engineering programs across various specializations, including Computer Science, Electronics, Mechanical, and Civil Engineering. The application forms are usually available from November to March, and the exam is conducted in April.

SRMJEEE (SRM Joint Entrance Examination)

SRM Institute of Science and Technology campuses are in Kattankulathur, Ramapuram, and Vadapalani. Courses offered: SRMJEEE offers a range of undergraduate engineering programs, including Computer Science, Electronics, and Mechanical Engineering. The admission process is from October to March, with the exam held in April.

COMEDK UGET

COMEDK UGET is for undergraduate engineering programs across various disciplines. The application process generally opens in January and closes in April, with the exam conducted in May.

AP EAMCET (Andhra Pradesh Engineering, Agriculture, and Medical Common Entrance Test)

The AP EAMCET examination is conducted to facilitate entry into undergraduate programmes in engineering, agriculture, and medical fields across different colleges and universities in Andhra Pradesh. AP EAMCET 2024 was Conducted by JNT University Kakinada, Kakinada, on behalf of Andhra Pradesh State Council for Higher Education (APSCHE) TS EAMCET (Telangana State Engineering, Agriculture, and Medical Common Entrance Test). Registration for 2025 is expected from May 12 to 18, 2025. The application form will be available from March 12 to April 15, 2025.

WBJEE (West

Bengal Joint Entrance Examination)

WBJEEB will conduct OMR based Common Entrance Examination (WBJEE-2025) for admission into Undergraduate Courses in Engineering & Technology, Pharmacy and Architecture of different Universities, Government Colleges as well as Self Financing Engineering & Technological Institutes in the State of West Bengal for the academic session 2025-26. Online Registration started in January 2025; the last date is February 23, 2025. The date of the examination is April 27 2025.

KIITEE 2025

Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT), is a deemed to be university situated in Bhubaneswar, Odisha for the professional studies. KIIT is ranked in the cohort of 601-800 in the Times Higher Education World University Ranking 2024'. Its Computer Science Engineering ranks in the cohort of 301-400, and its overall Engineering ranking is 401-500 worldwide. The last date to Apply for admission online (1st Phase) is April 8 2025

MHT CET (Maharashtra Common Entrance Test)

MHT CET is the competitive test for various engineering and agriculture colleges in Maharashtra, including prominent institutions like VJTI, COEP, etc. It is conducted for undergraduate engineering, pharmacy, and agriculture programs. The application process starts in January and closes in March, with the exam conducted in May.

While JEE remains a significant pathway for engineering aspirants in India, these alternative entrance exams provide excellent opportunities for students to pursue their engineering dreams. Each exam has its unique structure, eligibility criteria, and application process, catering to diverse interests and career aspirations. As students consider their options, thorough research and preparation will be essential in securing a spot in these esteemed institutions.

Candidates must have completed their 10+2 with a minimum of 45% in Physics, Mathematics, and any of the following: Chemistry, Biology, Biotechnology, or Computer Science.

The application process generally opens in January and closes in April, with the exam conducted in May.

National Testing Agency (NTA) Question Paper Pattern NEET 2025

NTA, which has been conducting the NEET 2025 since 2019 on behalf of the National Medical Commission, has notified that the pattern of question paper and examination duration for NEET (UG) 2025 will revert to COVID-19 format. The Director Examination NAT issues the public notification.

There will be no section B. There will be 180 compulsory questions, 45 of which will be asked from Physics and Chemistry and 90 from Biology. All the questions have to be attempted in three hours. There will be no optional questions, introduced in COVID-19, and time will not be extended.

Candidates wishing to appear in NEET (UG) 2025 may refer to the detailed Information Bulletin for NEET UG 2025, which will be available on the website (www.neet.nta.nic.in) when the application form is launched.

Admission Alerts

Examination	Admission to	End date of Registration	Date of Exam.	Website
TANCET 2025	M.C.A M.B.A	21.02.2025	22.03.2025	tancet.annauniv.edu
BITSAT-2025	All the available courses	18-04-2025	Refer the website	www.bitsadmission.com
GGSIPU	All the available courses	31-03-2025	Refer the website	https://ipu.admissions.nic.in
NCHM JEE-2025	B.Sc. Hospitality & Hotel Administration	15.02.2025	27.04.2025	https://exams.nta.ac.in/NCHM/
GAT-B2025	PG Bio-Technology	03.03.2025	20.04.2025	https://exams.nta.ac.in/DBT//www.nta.ac.in

Maharashtra govt launches Atal portal for professional CET Cell courses & Career Guidance

Maharashtra's Higher and Technical Education Department has introduced CET—ATAL (Assessment, Tests and Learning) to help candidates seeking admission to various professional courses in the state. The portal will provide mock tests and psychometric tests to students to help them choose the right career and prepare for success in the entrance tests.

There is no age bar for appearing or registering for the tests. Anyone who intends to achieve self-improvement is eligible to apply. As mentioned on the official website, the selection process includes a committee that can either accept or reject the student's application.

Supreme Court allows course dropouts to register for JEE Advanced 2025

The Supreme Court, on January 10, ordered the Joint Admission Board (JAB) to permit students who dropped their college courses between November 5 and November 18, 2024, to register for the JEE Advanced 2025 examination.

Under this notice, JAB has amended its checklist and released a new information brochure on the official website of

JEE Advanced jeeadv.ac.in. Applicants who received the November 5 notification need to submit a certain number of documents to complete their registration process.

Feedback: vijaykashkari@gmail.com



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Seeking Suitable Alliance for my Daughter, DoB-21.02.1996, ToB - 10.40 AM, Place of Birth – Jammu, Height - 5'4" (165 cm), Prof. Qualification - MBBS from Manipal College of Medical Science, Pursuing DNB Anesthesiology at Medanta Hospital. Family Background: - Father running own Business M/s Imperial Pack Masterz (www.ipmasterz.com), Mother in a Government service, Sister MBBS Graduate. Valley address-Rainawari, Srinagar, Kashmir, Home address - Jasola Vihar, New Delhi. Preference-Co-profession/ Civil Servant, Mobile / WhatsApp Number – 9818879945 Email Id- vakilrajinder@gmail.com/ vakil@ipmasterz.com



Seeking Alliance for my Son Date of birth:-19-12-1990, Time of birth:-9.25 pm, Place of birth:- Jammu, Height:-5'10", Qualification:- B.tech(EEE) from MDU Rohtak. Job Discription:-Marketing Director VaYu (Vivekanadayoga university), Work from home/ anywhere. Previously worked as Marketing Manager, Sewa International (USA) Delhi. Permanent address (Valley) Proper Budgam-Town. Present Address:-Durganagar Jammu, Email:-Chandkishankoul@gmail.com, MobileNo:-8899511408, Whatsapp:-8717071706



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



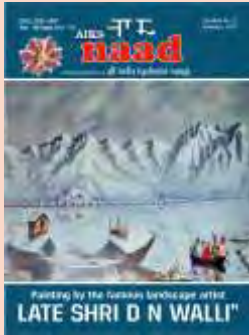
Suitable alliance invited for my son (B.E, M.B.A), born 28th May 1995, 5'9". Working as DATA ANALYST at LOWE'S COMPANY, Inc., Bengaluru, Karnataka Interested may contact: Ramesh Pandita, Anand Nagar, Jammu, Email-Id: arianramesh99@gmail.com, or Mobile no. 9419189513.



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1. All Cheques/DDs favouring All India Kashmiri Samaj to be sent at H. No. 308 (LGF), Sector 35, Ashoka Enclave Part -III, Faridabad, Haryana - 121 003
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A/c Name : All India Kashmiri Samaj IFSC Code : PUNB0015100 MICR Code : 110024094

Note : After making the payment through Internet the subscriber must send intimation to AIKS on
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OF ALL INDIA KASHMIRI SAMAJ AND SUBSCRIBE TO NAAD MONTHLY JOURNAL

Application Form for Patron/Life Member
All India Kashmiri Samaj (REGD.)

H. No. 308 (LGF), Sector 35, Ashoka Enclave Part -III, Faridabad, Haryana - 121 003
Telephone : 0129-4061043 Web : www.aiks.org E-mail : hqaiks@gmail.com

Application No. :

Date :

The President

All India Kashmir Samaj

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

Dear Sir,

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

Name (In full) :

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

Address :

.....

.....

..... **Pin :**

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

Mobile : **Email :**

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

With best wishes
Yours Sincerely

Signature

A cheque of Rs. 10,000/- for Patron Member and Rs. 5,000/- for Life Member favouring All India Kashmiri Samaj is enclosed here with.

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

Amount : **Date :**

AIKS Receipt No. :



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