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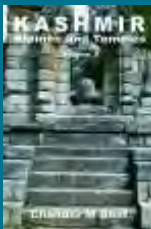
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Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

The political landscape both globally and within our region is undergoing rapid and unpredictable transformation. The return of Donald Trump to the White House and the election of Omar Abdullah as Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory (JKUT) have triggered significant changes in geopolitical dynamics and domestic governance.

The people of Jammu and Kashmir voted for the National Conference (NC) with hopes of improved governance expecting a shift towards development, job creation, quality healthcare, better education, constructive engagement with civil society, and above all, justice and healing for communities that have long lived in exile, particularly the Kashmiri Pandits. However, as the new government crosses key milestones, its performance has not met the expectations set by its electoral promises.

Many observers note that the previous administration under the Lieutenant Governor was seen as relatively transparent, responsive, and results driven. In contrast, the current administration's decision to revive the memories of July 13 commemoration long regarded as a painful chapter by the minority Hindu community has stirred unease and revived divisive historical wounds. Historical records, including an official commission of inquiry, indicate that the violence on that day in 1931 involved premeditated acts of arson and targeted attacks against the Hindu community. While every community has its narratives of struggle, the selective elevation of certain episodes risks disrupting communal harmony. It is worth recalling that the Lieutenant Governor's administration had removed July 13 from the list of official holidays to encourage a forward looking, inclusive approach to history.

Revisiting it now appears politically expedient rather than socially healing.

Political leadership in the Valley must recognize that Jammu and Kashmir has changed. Today's youth are focused on development, opportunities, and dignity not on being dragged back into a cycle of historical grievance and conflict. As peace and normalcy slowly return, there is a need for maturity in governance, not provocations that could reignite old fault lines.

At the international level, the re-election of Donald Trump has once again introduced uncertainty in global diplomacy. His impulsive policy shifts, erratic statements, and transactional foreign approach have created unease among allies and adversaries alike. Most recently, his outreach to Pakistan's military establishment despite its documented links to terrorism raises questions about the direction of U.S. policy in South Asia. The Indian government must assertively engage with Washington to ensure that New Delhi is not equated with Islamabad, especially when it comes to counterterrorism and regional stability.

Trump's ambiguous stance on strategic matters, including his commentary on Operation Sindoor, has not helped. Such remarks risk misinterpretation and damage the shared democratic values between India and the United States. While he may project himself as a peace maker but his friendly mask towards India is falling off. To borrow the words of the great Ghalib:

**"Parda-nasheen umr bhar rehta nahi Ghalib,
Waqt ki raftaar se utarte hain naqab logon ke."**

(Time uncovers all—eventually, every mask falls.)

मनील गैंग राएनक



From the *President's* *Desk*

Respected All

Namaskar to All AIKS family,

As we finished religious tourism and pilgrimage particularly Mela Kheer Bhawani Tulmulla and seeing the rush as usual at Tikker Kupwara, North Kashmir and many spots in South Kashmir, the dawn has set for new hopes for our return & rehabilitation. We are still expecting an Apex committee back again after it was abolished in the year 2014 to take up matters with State government, but at the same time Unity eludes us. We are fighting within, which gives an edge to the govt classifying us as a divided class. The expose of mismanagements in various temples and religious institutions but without a Plan B in place has demeaned the community further. Expose or whistle blowing should always be followed by replacements.

Operation Sindoor has taken heavy toll and religious tourism is being viewed with utmost care particularly annual Amarnath Yatra. One can still see around 35000 Kashmiri pandits in valley during this summer. As Amarnath yatra progresses, the need for Border tourism also has come up. We are expecting a large group of visitors from the international diaspora under a program called ZAAN in coming month. AIKS wants an international diaspora to see what is happening on this issue at ground zero and suggest methodology to show our presence in the valley.

AIKS called on Chief minister Delhi Rekha Gupta along with other prominent KP activists to discuss AMR problems and its solution. Earlier in a detailed meeting the

same day we met Ashish Sood, Home minister in Secretariat and pushed forward the demands especially regarding AMR issue that has been stopped for Kashmiri migrants in Delhi-NCR for more than a year now. The Chief Minister assured our delegation that the same will be deliberated upon in next Cabinet meeting.

The membership drive and subscription towards Naad magazine has speeded up, in the meantime. AIKS is trying for official accommodation of office space and have submitted written requests again to Union Minister M. L. Khattar, Delhi CM as well as UP Chief minister. In near future we will be meeting Cabinet minister Kiren Rijju again as well as Kapil Sharma, Delhi Cabinet minister.

Working in tandem with affiliates & other KP organizations, financial sustenance, having a permanent office in Delhi, reneging on our commitments, use of social media for transparent functioning, our writ petition No: 534 of 2006 pending adjudication in J&K High court and addressing long pending issues.

We want to reinforce the standing of AIKS as politically non-aligned organization. We look forward to hold AGM in near future.

We wish our AIKS extended family a vibrant future.

May Sharda Mata bless us all !!

Er. RAVINDER PANDITA
Tel : 9811143024



Sunil Kaul



General Secretary's Column

I had the privilege of visiting our affiliate, the Kashmiri Pandit Sabha, Amritsar, one of the oldest Kashmiri Pandit institutions in India, founded in 1908.

I was warmly received by the Sabha's EX -President Sanjay Kachru and Mr. D. Moza Sahib, who graciously guided me through the Sabha premises, including the newly constructed block of rooms designed for the benefit of the needy and for community activities.

The Sabha has established a sustainable financial model, supported by revenue from over eight shops and large community halls within the premises. This enables them to serve the community efficiently and preserve their cultural and social heritage.

I was also presented with a detailed history booklet that chronicles the Sabha's remarkable journey over more than a century — a testament to the dedication and resilience of our community.

Institutions like the Kashmiri Pandit Sabha, Amritsar, stand as an inspiration for our younger generations, and as living witnesses to the struggle and determination of the Kashmiri Pandit community to remain



KASHMIRI PANDIT SABHA (Revd 1908)			
AMRITSAR.			
FOUNDER PANDIT KASHMIRA MAL MATOO			
PRESIDENTS OF SABHA			
S.No.	NAME	FROM	TO
1.	PL. MANOHAR LAL KICHLOO	1908	1927
2.	PL. BISHMBER NATH SHIVPURI	1927	1928
3.	PL. SHIV NARAYAN RAINA	1928	1929
4.	PL. DURGA PARSAD RAZDAN	1929	1930
5.	PL. SHIV NARAYAN RAINA	1930	1933
6.	PL. ARJAN NATH MATOO	1933	1935
7.	PL. DR. S.N. RAZDAN	1935	1949
8.	PL. S.N. RAZDAN	1949	1950
9.	PL. NAND LAL BUDDO	1950	INTERM
10.	PL. MANOHAR LAL RAZDAN	1950	1951
11.	PL. S.N. RAZDAN	1951	1971
12.	PL. RATTAN LAL RAZDAN	1971	1975
13.	PL. S.N. JOGI	1975	1982
14.	PL. B.L. CHAKOO	1982	1984
15.	PL. DURGA NATH KOUL	1984	1986
16.	PL. D WARKA NATH KOUL	1986	1992
17.	PL. B.L. CHAKOO	1992	1994
18.	PL. D WARKA NATH KOUL	1994	1996
19.	PL. DURGA NATH KOUL	1996	1998
20.	PL. D. N. BHAT	1998	2002
21.	PL. V.K. MAGZINE	2002	2007
22.	PL. RAJESH RAINA	2007	2012
23.	PL. S.K. DHAR	2012	2013
24.	PL. S.K. DHAR	2013	2015
25.	PL. RAMESH KAUL	2015	2017
26.	PL. RAJESH RAINA	2017	2018
27.	PL. S.K. DHAR	2018	2019
28.	PL. JAGDISH KAUL	2019	2021



united across India through all social and religious occasions.

It is noteworthy that AIKS held its Annual General Meeting in Amritsar in 2015, further strengthening our bond with this historic Sabha.

AIKS Participation in JKVM event on 13th July 1931: Remembering the Carnage of Kashmiri Hindus

AIKS team attended a JKVM (Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch) event remembering the tragic events of 13th July 1931; a dark chapter in the history of Kashmiri Hindus.

For the Kashmiri Hindu (Pandit) community, this day marks the beginning of organized communal violence against them in Kashmir. Many Pandit families were targeted during the rioting that followed, their homes and properties looted, gutted, and plundered.

This event is seen as the onset of marginalization and persecution of Kashmiri Hindus in the erstwhile Jammu & Kashmir State.

We must remember 13th July 1931, not as a day of martyrdom — as some political narratives falsely claim — but as a Black Day for Kashmiri Hindus. On this day, Islamist mobs attacked, looted, killed, and traumatized innocent members of our community, while the administration failed to protect them effectively.



Over the decades, Kashmiri politicians have perpetuated misleading narratives, glorifying the attackers as martyrs while ignoring the pain and suffering of the Kashmiri Hindus.

AIKS reaffirms its commitment to highlight the truth, preserve the memory of these atrocities, and stand steadfast against the distortion of history.

These experiences — visiting inspiring institutions like the Kashmiri Pandit Sabha in Amritsar and participating in programs that honour our history and resilience — reaffirm our dedication to preserving the heritage, unity, and dignity of the Kashmiri Pandit community.

We remain committed to supporting such initiatives and to ensuring that the sacrifices and struggles of our forebears are never forgotten.





Kashmiri Pandits Delegation Meets CM Delhi Smt. Rekha Gupta and Cabinet Minister Ashish Sood

A delegation of Kashmiri pandits met CM of Delhi Rekha Gupta and Minister for Home, Power & Urban Development Ashish Sood in their office in New Delhi On 15th July 2025. The meeting focused on problems related to Kashmiri pandits regarding AMR, Cash assistance that has been stopped for more than a year because of certain anomalies. The group comprised of Ravinder Pandita President AIKS (All India Kashmiri Samaj), Padam shri Ramesh Bamzai of KECSS, Sanjay Ganjoo of JKVM, Ashwani Chrungoo and Monika Pandita BJP leaders, Ashish Zutshi and Ramesh Tikoo Activist.

The Chief minister assured the delegation that the issue will be resolved and asked the Divisional commissioner Delhi and other officers to put the case in next cabinet meeting.

Earlier Ravinder Pandita of Save Sharda committee greeted CM Rekha Gupta and Ashish Sood with Sharda shawls and invited them to Sharda Temple Teetwal on the eve of annual Sharda Divas falling on 31st August 2025 next month.

This was the first such official meeting of Kashmiri Pandits with new chief minister after coming to power a few months ago.

**- Ravinder Pandita
President AIKS**





Col. Tej K Tikoo



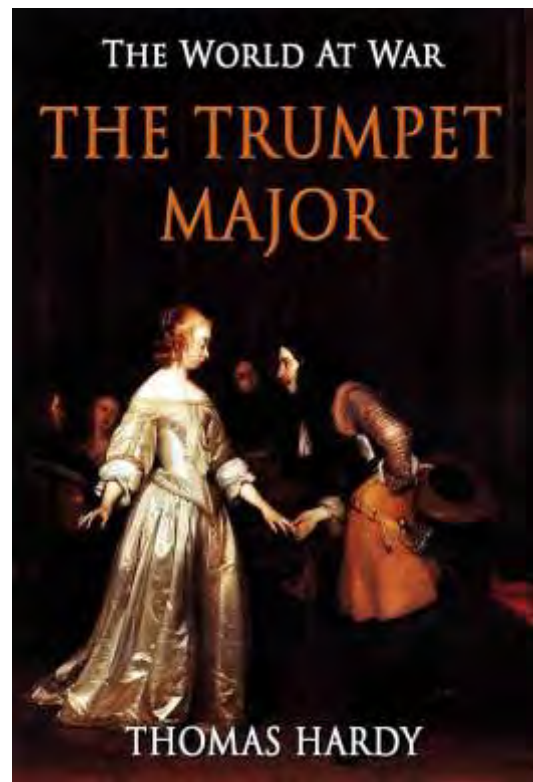
TRUMP (ET) MAJOR OF A DIFFERENT KIND

THIS ARTICLE IS, HOWEVER, ABOUT A TRUMP (ET) MAJOR OF A DIFFERENT KIND; IMPETUOUS, QUICK TO REACT, INSTINCTIVE AND ONE WHO SEEMS TO HAVE UNDERSTOOD THE DYNAMICS OF THE MEDIA IN ALL ITS AVATARS

'Trumpet Major' is one of Thomas Hardy's less tragic novels; it is light-hearted and comic, combining romantic entanglement with social commentary and local/geographical environment. John Loveday, the main character (The Trumpet Major) is quiet, emotionally very balanced and mature. He is deeply in love with Anne Garland, but being in a love triangle, never forces his feelings on her. He is truly a soldier and a gentleman, embodying duty, honour, and restraint.

This article is, however, about a Trump (et) Major of a different kind; impetuous, quick to react, instinctive and one who seems to have understood the dynamics of the media in all its avatars. Over time, he has built a solid and loyal fan following, which forms the core of his MAGA (Make America Great Again) base. In his first term as the President of the U.S., Trump came to Washington DC as an outsider, something similar to our own Narendra Modi, who too was new to New Delhi and felt like an outsider among the Lutyens' power-brokers. In his first term, Trump had entered the White House by defeating the entrenched democratic nominee, Hillary Clinton, wife of the former President, Bill Clinton. In his second term his entry was largely helped by the shemozzle in which the Democratic party found itself. He is, perhaps, only the second POTUS to have served two terms with a break in-between.

In his first term Trump could not implement his plans, either because the entrenched system did not let him, or he himself was not so clear about what he wanted,



or his core team did not let him. However, in his first term itself his mercurial temperament and tentativeness were clearly visible in the manner he fired his cabinet members with such frequency that even his own supporters were left dumb founded. Between 2017–2021, he fired the FBI Director, Secretary of State, Attorney General, four White House Chiefs of Staff, his Chief Strategist, three National Security

Advisor, Secretary of Health and Human Services, EPA Administrator, Secretaries of Interior and Labour, Secretary of Defence and many others, not once, but many over; some were fired, while others left on their own, having developed serious differences with their boss. Consequently, with such disruption, Trump could not implement his agenda as those, who were at the cutting edge of implementing his plans, were not on the same page. Trump's first tenure as POTUS polarised the Americans as never before. He acted authoritarian, repeating many statements which had been proven to be untrue. In fact, he believed and wanted the people to believe his own narrative rather than objective truths. Not having been anywhere close to being a politician, Trump usually did not care for institutions, established norms, or even the facts. He appeared arrogant, misogynist and used divisive language. His spontaneous decisions and off the cuff remarks created huge uncertainty.

The disruption caused was so huge that Trump lost the next election. He, however, refused to accept the verdict and resorted to tantrums, which reflected poorly on the President of America. His MAGA supporters stormed the Capitol Hill much like as seen in banana republics. The Democrats and even some of his own supporters called it an insurrection, a new low for the world's most powerful country. For people round the world, for whom America could do no wrong, it was a big disappointment and a matter of great concern too. The Americans of the old school were horrified. Members of the Congress blamed Trump and his MAGA supporters for the insurrection. Many of the rioters were charged and put behind bars. Charges were also filed against Trump, but nothing came of these. The numerous cases registered against

Trump in various courts, just fizzled out as Americans grew increasingly dissatisfied with the Biden administration, which had replaced Trump. By the time the next elections were due (Nov 2024), it had become increasingly clear that Biden, because of his poor health, was not in control of the administration. With Trump's core support base firmly behind him and the Democratic party asking Biden to leave mid-stream, Trump's victory became certain.

In his current second term, Trump has disrupted all established norms of international relations. One of his first announcements, impacting America's allies, friends and foes alike, was the levying of reciprocal tariffs on various countries with which America has trade relations.

Even in his first term, Trump had not been satisfied with the huge trade deficit that America has been having for decades. He felt and rightly so, that whereas the tariffs America was levying on the imports from various countries, including India, was very low, at the same time, these very countries were levying huge tariffs on the products they imported from America. This made American goods in these countries prohibitively costly, leading to increased trade deficit. Trump

announced tariff rates of 25 to 50 % on most of its imports, disturbing the supply chains badly. For India, the question of reducing tariffs in American imports, particularly on Agricultural produce, will have a huge adverse impact on our economy, which is rural/agriculture based.

The U.S. is also keen on India, being one of the biggest importers of military hardware, buying from U.S. rather than from Russia or France or anywhere else. For India, it is not just dumping one shop and patronizing another. It is a matter of National Security and Sovereign autonomy.

Unilateral increase of tariffs has also further contributed to the worsening of the U.S. relations with China. In fact, China has termed

Trump's first tenure as POTUS polarised the Americans as never before. He acted authoritarian, repeating many statements which had been proven to be untrue.

this U.S. act as “pressure tactics against China.” Such steep and sudden increase of tariffs by Trump has turned the norms of international trade upside down, causing disruption, uncertainty and distrust. It may be mentioned that the combined balance of trade deficit of the U.S. in 2024 was \$ 918 bn. Out of this, China, Canada, Brazil, EU and Mexico alone account to \$839.70 bn @91.25%. But Trump has levied tariffs on all irrespective of the balance of trade surplus/deficit.

Trump's propensity to indulge in off the cuff remarks without weighing their impact, too has disrupted, in fact, worsened relations between the U.S. and its longtime strategic allies. On many occasions, Trump asked Canada to join America as its 51st state and referred to the Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, as Governor Trudeau. Trudeau and his Liberal Party protested vehemently and used Trump's indiscretion to humiliate Canada, to its advantage in the coming elections. Prior to Trump's indiscreet statements, it was widely believed that Liberal Party was losing its public support due to various policy decisions taken by Trudeau's government. But, after his resignation, his party used the American threat to its integrity, to galvanize the Canadians. Liberal Party consequently won the election that it was expected to lose.

Right since Trump's first term, he has been threatening his NATO allies with cutting down on the U.S. commitment to the alliance partners if the latter did not increase their defence budget. Trump's threat worked as the NATO Alliance partners have lately increased their defence budget considerably, particularly in view of the unending war between Russia and Ukraine. More importantly, a large amount of this money will flow into America to ---- its military-industrial complex; as most of the modern, state of the art armament is available only in America. NATO allies would rather buy from America than from China or Russia. Could that have been the motive for Trump threatening his NATO allies to 'take care of their own security'? It is a moot point.

Trump's other actions in the international-

relation domain too have confused the world. It deployed its long-range B-52 spirit bombers to destroy the Iranian nuclear facilities at Isfahan, Fordow, and Natanz. In a widely watched statement he had declared that 'America has obliterated Iranian nuclear sites.' However, his own intelligence and military authorities disputed that claim. The very next day itself, he extended an olive branch to Iran, even before any impartial assessment of the target damage could take place. As a matter of fact, Iran reiterated its resolve to produce a nuclear bomb, come what may, and more importantly, its top cleric issued a fatwah to avenge the American and Israeli attack on Iran by targeting both Trump and Netanyahu. Trump also berated its most steadfast ally in West Asia, Israel, for not complying with his announcement of ceasefire, though it is a different matter, that it was Iran which first broke the agreement.

Post the twelve days of Iran-Israel confrontation, there appears to be little scope of Iran backing off. Many experts believe that Iran was able to take out 440 kgs of enriched uranium from its nuclear sites, before these were hit by the bunker buster or GBU-57 (MOPs) bombs. That much for Trump's impetuous and knee jerk reaction to most serious issues of international relations.

Before Trump became the President, he had repeated ad nauseum that he would be able to end both, Israel-Hamas war as also Russo-Ukrainian war. In fact, about the latter he had stated on many occasions that he will end the war in 24 hrs to one week. Despite his public rebuke of Ukrainian President Zelensky, Trump has been unable to end the war in Europe. In fact, if anything, the war has become more intense, resulting in the loss of over 2000 lives every day on both sides. Similarly, in Gaza too Trump has failed to end the war, which will soon complete two years in end Oct 2025. His proposal to re-locate all of Gaza population elsewhere was met with derision and outright rejection by nearly all Arab states, including Hamas itself. Wonder, how did Trump expect Hamas to accept a proposal which goes against the very grain of

their philosophy, viz; to reclaim the land that Israel calls its own and Hamas fights for. Perhaps, only Trump could come up with this kind of proposal.

The three-day intense conflict between India and Pakistan also saw the highly unpredictable nature of President Trump, while dealing with international issues of great significance. Prior to this conflict, India had, for over a decade invested heavily in improving its relations with the U.S.: buying big ticket U.S. military equipment, becoming member of Quad, etc. Many meetings between President Trump and Prime Minister Modi, had led to a belief that the two have established a good rapport and goodwill between the two nations is now a strategic relationship. Therefore, American reaction to Pahalgam terror attack and its aftermath came as a shock to most Indians. Trump, without ever having been asked by India to mediate between the two countries, announced to the world that he had, through his intervention, brought the two-day war to an end. To most Indians it came as a bolt from the blue as India has had a long-standing policy of treating our relations with Pakistan as a

purely bi-lateral matter. Trump's announcement, repeated many times later, caused huge embarrassment to the government in New Delhi, which subsequently clarified at various levels that it was Pakistan's DGMO who had requested for a ceasefire, which India accepted. Trump did not stop at that, he subsequently invited the Pakistan's strong man, the Army Chief, largely seen as the perpetrator of Pahalgam terror attack, for a luncheon meeting in the White House, where Trump said, "I love Pakistan." Prior to that he had equated India and Pakistan by saying, "both Pakistan and India are great countries". A country, which Trump in his first term had called "Heaven for

terrorists," and further elaborated, "The United States has foolishly given Pakistan more than 33 bn \$ aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies and deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools. They give safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan, with little help. No more!" The same country now became 'great' and was 'loved by America'!

Who actually proved to be deceitful? Media channels have reported that the turnaround in Trump's stand vis a vis Pakistan is the result of deal between Pakistan's top brass and Trump's son and others involving the crypto currency market that Pakistan wants to make as the biggest in Asia. Some reports also mention that Pakistan has offered its rich reserves of minerals and rare earths in Baluchistan to America. Pakistan's letter to the

Many meetings between President Trump and Prime Minister Modi, had led to a belief that the two have established a good rapport and goodwill between the two nations is now a strategic relationship.

Nobel Committee recommending Trump for a Nobel Prize (for peace!) was part of the same process of kowtowing to Trump's well known transactional approach as also his oft repeated desire to be bestowed with a Nobel prize.

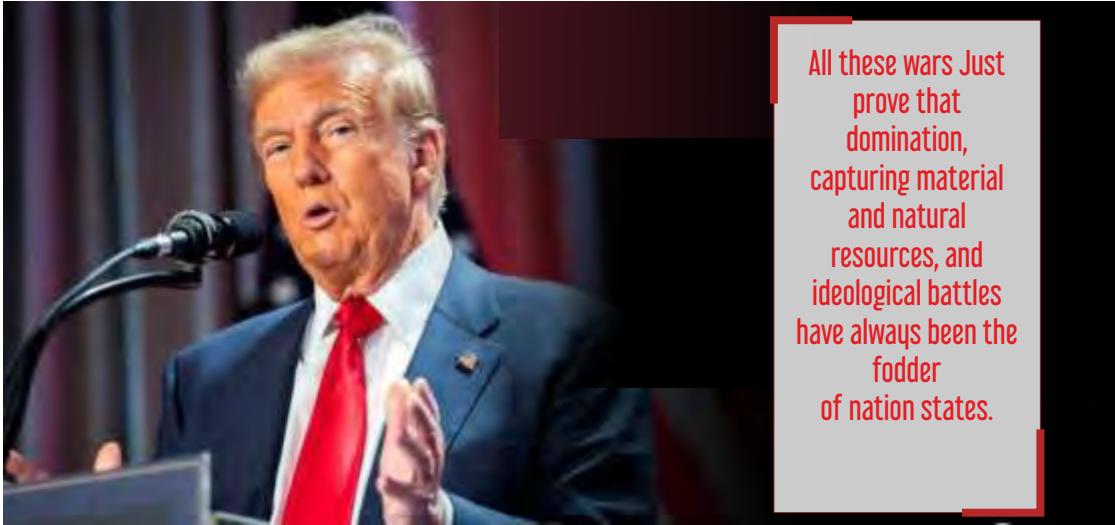
Trump's flip-flop on his dealings with foreign countries and entities long considered and treated as America's enemies, is best illustrated by his shaking hands with Ahmad

Al Sharar who, till recently, was a top Al Qaeda leader in Syria, carrying millions of dollars reward on his head, till he broke up with it. Similarly, two former Jihadist operatives, Ismael Royer and Sheikh Hamza Yousuf, co-founder of Zaytuna College, with alleged links with proscribed Jihadists, were appointed by Trump to the White House Advisory Board of Lay Leaders.

Nothing illustrates Trump's transactional nature of his relationships more succinctly than his fall out with his close friend, Elon Musk, who spent nearly 300 million \$ on Trump's campaigns during the last U.S. Presidential election. Hope the world survives the Trump era.



Dr. K N Pandita



All these wars Just
prove that
domination,
capturing material
and natural
resources, and
ideological battles
have always been the
fodder
of nation states.

The Flip-Flop of Trump's India Policy

Looking at international diplomacy from the perspective of a friend or foe reflects sheer naivety. National interests are supreme not relations.

The question hotly debated today after the four-day armed clash between India and Pakistan is this: Is President Donald Trump a friend or an adversary of India?

This question springs from two situations related to the Pahalgam carnage of 22 April. The first is the background of Trump-Pakistan relations, and the second is Trump's visit to India while a cessation of hostilities between India and Pakistan was on the agenda for 9-10 May 2025.

Trump Hoax

Indian officials and political circles were agog when Trump announced his cabinet soon after taking the oath of office. At least four

important departments were given in the charge of secretaries who are of Indian origin. The Director of the intelligence service was nominated to be the lady who professed Hinduism as her religion.

From day one, Trump began to beat the drum of ending wars that were sapping economic sources. He said he would put an end to armed clashes around the globe within weeks. In particular, he made a mention of Ukrainian and Hamas fighting.

More than five months have elapsed since he had assumed office. The situation today is that the Ukrainian war is where it was and Moscow says it plans an intensive military action in Ukraine. Europe has rejected Trump's initial threat to Zelensky and assured him of full support to keep Russia at bay.

Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel refused to stop military action in Gaza spilling water over the hopes of returning normalcy to the Middle East. In his Iranian policy, he began with carrying the stick and carrot but ultimately acquiesced to hold talks with Iran on nuclear issues. Iranians do not take him seriously and the world knows Washington will be moving back to its shell in the matter of disallowing Iran the edge in producing the nuclear bomb.

Then happened the Pahalgam carnage. In his first public reaction, Trump condemned the killing of civilians and even conceded that India had a right to react. But within hours, the deep state moved briskly to gag his mouth. He made a U-turn. He did not speak a single word about terrorism but casually said the fighting should stop.

CIA-ISI Camaraderie

The decades-old camaraderie between the world's two most vicious intelligence agencies (CIA and ISI) is as old a story as the birth of Pakistan in 1947. Their joint covert effort in boosting Afghan Mujahedeen's role of resistance to the Soviet incursion of Afghanistan has been graphically told by a retired CIA senior officer. Kashmir has been very much in their scheme of things.

Trump's utterances that he is against wars is a white lie. He continues the classical foreign policy of the US of supporting terrorist supremos against democratic governance. In Syria, he welcomed the ouster of Assad and has shaken hands with the new incumbent whose links with al-Qaeda are known to all. Recently he invited Pakistan's army chief for an exclusive lunch at the White House thereby lending covert support to dozens of terrorist organizations in Pakistan, half a dozen of which are designated either by the UN or the US. This makes clear to us that the White House is the den of international terrorism.

The Economic Times of 5 May 2025 published an interesting story which when compared with Trump's policy towards India in the course of the India-Pak clash, exposes

his double standards as well as his discriminative policy. Here is the story:

"Pakistan has renewed its counterterrorism cooperation with the U.S. following the arrest of Mohammad Sharifullah, responsible for a 2021 attack on U.S. troops at Kabul airport. The arrest was praised by U.S. President Donald Trump, who emphasized the strong partnership in securing regional stability.

Trump announced the extradition of Abbey Gate bombing terrorist, and thanked Pakistan for assistance". The paper did not say anything about the widespread rumour that Trump had ordered payment of 397 million dollars to Pakistan by way of a gift for helping the arrest of a wanted terrorist.

"Pakistan trumpeted its renewal of counterterrorism cooperation with Washington after the arrest of Mohammad Sharifullah, whom it blames for a 2021 attack on U.S. troops at Kabul airport, in a military operation along the border with Afghanistan," commented the *Economic Times*.

Hours after U.S. President Donald Trump thanked Pakistan for the arrest during a speech to Congress, adding that Sharifullah was on his way to the United States to face justice, reported the *Hindustan Times* of Mar 06, 2025

FBI Director, Kash Patel said later Sharifullah was in U.S. custody, in a post on X alongside a picture of agents standing in front of the plane that he was meant to arrive on.

"We will continue to partner closely with the United States in securing regional peace and stability," Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said in a statement hours after Trump's speech.

Pakistan had launched an operation along its Afghan border to capture Sharifullah, whom Shahbaz described as an Afghan national and top commander for the militant group Islamic State Khorasan (ISIS-K). This shows that Trump will do anything to liquidate terrorists working against the interests of the US and will promote them covertly or close its eyes when they operate against a foreign country.

"We thank U.S. President Donald Trump for acknowledging and appreciating Pakistan's role and support in counterterrorism efforts,"

Sharif added in another statement. However, Afghanistan's Taliban government did not respond to a request for comment.

Perennially shifting ties between Islamabad and Washington had been soured by concerns about Pakistan's alleged support of Afghanistan's Taliban rulers.

Although Pakistan denies such support, its links with Washington have frayed, while arch-rival India has gained greater influence.

A Pakistani security official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Sharifullah's arrest was part of wide-ranging joint counterterrorism efforts.

"Excellent cooperation has been established between Pakistan and President Trump's new government," the official added.

In a statement, the U.S. Justice Department said it had caught Sharifullah with the help of the CIA and FBI agencies, without naming Pakistan.

Islamabad is making use of concerns about regional security and counterterrorism "to engage with Trump, who otherwise has no interest in Pakistan", said defence analyst Ayesha Siddiq.

"For now (the arrest) is just to signal to the

United States that Pakistan is there and can be relied upon as a partner," she added.

The 2021 bombing at Kabul airport killed at least 170 Afghans and 13 U.S. troops as they sought to help both Americans and Afghans flee in the chaotic aftermath of the Taliban takeover.

The attack was claimed by ISIS-K, the Afghan branch of the Islamic State group.

The U.S. Justice Department has charged Sharifullah with "providing and conspiring to provide material support and resources" to the group.

The nature of the relationship which Islamabad under the stewardship of Shahbaz Sharif has been building covertly with the Trump administration should untie the enigma of why Trump invited the army commander of Pakistan for lunch in the White House. Trump's two sons are partners in Pakistan's billions of dollars worth of crypto trade transactions also. And now the rumours are rife that Trump doesn't like Zardari the President of Pakistan. That means Trump wants to manage the sub-continent through Generals and proxies. All that we can say is "India, mind the game."

Cartoon by- Anil Nakhasi





 Maj Gen Harsha Kakar (Retd)



More Muscle Needed to Tackle Multiple Threats



China and Pakistan are aware that any terrorist incident with high casualties in Kashmir would invite a military backlash.

The Indian army deputy chief, Lt Gen Rahul R Singh, mentioned what had been known all along but not presented in the manner it should have. He stated, while addressing an event organized by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry that India was battling two, if not three, adversaries during Operation Sindoor. He added that Pakistan was the front face with China and Turkey providing vital support from the background. The CDS did try and do damage control by mentioning 'How much of State support (from China) is very difficult to define,' however it is well known.

China historically hesitates to enter into a conflict unless it is 100% certain of victory.

It is aware that a long-drawn conflict as in Ukraine, tactical defeat or even a stalemate would break the carefully built myth of the 'invincible' PLA as also threaten authority of its ruling dispensation. Their national public fears body bags. Hence, Beijing continues threatening Taiwan, unwilling to risk an operation, preferring hybrid warfare.

Powerful nations like China exploit proxies to push their agenda. Indian capability and infrastructure development was aimed at countering the Chinese. This had to change as India was narrowing the tactical and infrastructure gap. The best manner was to make India look westwards, splitting resources and funds. China also needed its military

products to be tested in controlled military operations. Which better guinea pigs than Pakistan.

China and Pakistan are aware that any terrorist incident with high casualties in Kashmir would invite a military backlash. This is essential for the survival of the Modi government, which had been broadcasting a policy of 'Ghar mein ghus kar maareng.''

For Pakistan, dependent on China for financial survival and military hardware, options are few. It is duty bound to do Beijing's bidding. Added is its army losing control over the nation alongside increased casualties to freedom movements in its western provinces of Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. What better than a threat from India to bring unity within.

Since Operation Sindoor, Imran Khan is missing from media coverage, losing fabricated cases, while Asim Munir tightens his grip on the country. Their perception management played up victory in Operation Sindoor with emphasis on Indian losses, hiding their own.

Turkey, whose drones were successfully employed by Azerbaijan against Armenia were hopeful of a similar performance against India. Failure of their famed Bayraktar TB2 drones is an immense setback to their export plans. With India likely to offer Long-Range Land Attack Cruise Missiles to its major rival, Greece, concerns within Turkey are rising. They consider it as Indian revenge for their support to Pakistan.

China provided Pak with all backup support, technical, intelligence, as also real-time inputs from their satellites. This did impact Indian plans, but failure of their military hardware, including aircraft, missiles and air defence radars was a major setback. More importantly, multiple nations have obtained technical data of failed Chinese missiles from India.

Strategic losses to Pakistan, which compelled them to seek a ceasefire, would take time to recoup. Even if China provides them at a discount, it will still be costly for a cash-strapped nation. It would need to re-think its

India is amongst few nations facing threats from multiple directions. National security needs to be given priority. The China-Pak axis is a reality and will be an increasing threat in the future. Only military power alongside national and political will keep adversaries at bay.

future plans on pushing terrorism in Kashmir, at least for now.

It is now clear that peace with China is just an illusion. Talks are only a façade and Beijing will remain our perpetual adversary. China's anti-India policy is also evident on the economic field by it restricting exports of critical minerals, finished products as also withdrawing its engineers from global manufacturing organizations. India can never let its guard down and consider all agreements reached with China with a pinch of salt. Beijing is also expanding its reach in the neighbourhood.

Another factor is that Pakistan, which was considered a lesser evil due to its depleting economy and being globally sidelined, will remain an irritant, funded, armed and exploited by China. It has gained confidence due to China and Turkish support and would at some time in the future, post recouping its losses, reconsider another major terrorist strike. A combination of Pakistan and China, alongside a changing Bangladesh is a security concern for India.

This means India must invest in its military upgradation and capability development, not just against the northern adversary but also western. For this, apart from increased budgetary allocation, it needs to push its domestic industry to deliver products as per schedule. The current shortfalls in airpower cannot continue for ages.

India has rightly ordered an audit of Chinese parts in domestic military products and must pursue the same with vigour. Investment in R and D must be enhanced. Air defence has proved to be an essential pre-

requisite in national defence. It needs to be upgraded with emerging threats.

Simultaneously, New Delhi must change its policies towards countering terrorist strikes immediately, rather than giving the adversary two weeks to prepare, deploy and organize its defences as it did with Operation Sindoor. This means that theatre commands, which would be responsible for responding militarily, must be raised and tasked suitably. The Western Theatre Command should have multiple offensive options ready and rehearsed to be implemented with minimum time delay, post politico-military approval.

There is also a need to enhance civil-military fusion at state levels to counter any actions planned by Pakistan on similar lines as Operation Spider Web launched by Ukraine against Russia, targeting strategic assets deep within the country, alongside operations on the borders. There are Pak

sleeper cells within India which could be activated alongside military operations. The armed forces may not be available to assist the civil administration when the border scenario is tense. States must possess resources as also intelligence to counter such actions.

India needs to revisit its neighbourhood first policy. It cannot let its neighbours shift gears towards China. With Bangladesh slowly drifting away, others cannot be permitted to follow suit. China, lacking the will to act militarily, will exploit Indian neighbours to enhance tensions within the country.

India is amongst few nations facing threats from multiple directions. National security needs to be given priority. The China-Pak axis is a reality and will be an increasing threat in the future. Only military power alongside national and political will keep adversaries at bay. Enhancing defence capabilities is now more essential than ever.

KSS CELEBRATES GURU PURNIMA WITH DEVOTION AND TRADITION

Kashmiri Sahayak Samiti (KSS) celebrated Guru Purnima with traditional religious fervor on 10th July 2025 at Sai Baba Mandir, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu. The event witnessed a large gathering of devotees who performed the sacred Guru Pooja, chanting mantras and offering prayers for universal peace and prosperity.

The temple resonated with Kashmiri shlokas and bhajans, evoking deep emotions among members of the Kashmiri Pandit community, many of whom observed the festival away from their ancestral homeland.

Dr. Daleep Pandita, General Secretary of KSS, thanked the devotees for their enthusiastic participation and concluded the spiritual gathering with the distribution of traditional Suji Halwa prashad.



*Report by Dr. Daleep Pandita
General Secretary (KSS, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu)*



 Surinder koul



LEGAL ACTIVISM AND THE POLITICS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

COn an estimated 40,000 Rohingyas are currently residing across India in regions such as Jammu, Hyderabad, Assam, the Northeast states, Delhi, and Mewat. Many others have reportedly assimilated into smaller towns, remaining unaccounted for. Their migration stems from a series of military crackdowns in Myanmar, beginning in 1992, which triggered waves of refugees fleeing ethnic persecution and cleansing. Most initially took refuge in Bangladesh, but over the years, smaller groups began crossing into Indian territories via the porous borders of West Bengal, Assam, and the Northeast.

As the presence of Rohingya refugees grew—often concentrated in slums and informal settlements—concerns mounted among local populations. In Jammu, for instance, protests erupted over what residents described as the "illegal occupation" of roadside land by Rohingya settlers. Alarmed by the demographic implications and potential security risks, the Central Government in 2017 directed states to initiate deportation proceedings against all illegal immigrants, including Rohingyas.

This move sparked legal challenges. Three Rohingya refugees filed a petition in the Supreme Court, prompting the Central Government to submit an affidavit detailing the number of Rohingyas in the country and



citing economic burden and national security as grounds for deportation. High-profile lawyers, including Kapil Sibal, appeared to represent the Rohingya petitioners, opposing the government's deportation policy. Sibal also challenged Assam's use of a 1950 law aimed at identifying and deporting illegal immigrants—a law the Supreme Court had previously upheld.

Assam's Chief Minister, in turn, defended the policy, highlighting the region's long-standing struggles with illegal immigration from neighbouring countries. He emphasised the need to prevent demographic erosion and preserve the state's integrity. Critics argue that interventions by prominent lawyers have hindered state efforts to manage border security and demographic pressures.

Opposition to deportation efforts has also come from within legislative and legal circles. Congress MP and senior lawyer Abhishek Manu Singhvi objected to the 2025 Immigration and Foreigners Bill, which treats all undocumented foreigners as potential security threats. Singhvi condemned the bill as overly harsh and discriminatory, warning that it casts suspicion on refugees and migrants under the guise of safeguarding national integrity.

Meanwhile, NGOs like the Rohingya Human Rights Initiative—supported by legal

activists such as Colin Gonsalves and Prashant Bhushan—filed petitions challenging the legality of deporting Rohingyas to Myanmar, citing continued threats to their safety. These petitions also demanded the right of Rohingya children to attend Indian schools without discrimination. The Supreme Court responded by instructing Delhi authorities to allow Rohingya children holding UNHCR cards to enrol in public schools.

Colin Gonsalves, associated with the Human Rights Law Network, has links to international organisations such as George Soros's Open Society Foundation. Similarly, Ashwani Kumar, a former Union Law Minister and human rights advocate, condemned the deportation policy at a 2018 symposium hosted by the National Law School. He argued that such actions violated Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, which guarantees the right to life and personal liberty. Kumar urged the Indian Parliament to legislate protections for Rohingyas in line with international humanitarian norms.

Legal figures like Sanjay Hegde and Kavita Srivastava of the People's Union for Civil Liberties echoed these concerns. Hegde asserted that deporting individuals without a receiving state is unlawful, while Srivastava condemned the practice as a breach of constitutional and international principles.

Other senior advocates, including Fali S. Nariman, have pushed for granting Rohingyas long-term visas, employment rights, and access to education. Nariman told the Supreme Court that the government's blanket deportation order lacked both compassion and rationality. The West Bengal Commission for Protecting Child Rights also filed a writ petition opposing the deportation of Rohingya children, describing the policy as inhumane.

Despite their legal acumen, critics argue that these lawyers knowingly defend individuals whose undocumented presence poses legal, demographic, and security challenges. The increasing population density, law and order concerns, and

administrative strain cannot be ignored in a country already grappling with socioeconomic pressures.

Opponents of this legal activism argue that figures like Sibal, Bhushan, and others often take positions that seem against national interest. While they recognise that financial motives may not be their driving force, critics claim their actions enable disruptions under the guise of human rights. They challenge the consistency of such advocacy, especially the silence on the plight of Kashmiri Hindus in the 1989-1990s, when the Kashmir Valley was under a blanket sway of Kashmiri Pakistan-trained terrorists.

During that period, thousands of Kashmiri Hindus faced brutal violence. Men were executed, women were raped and mutilated, homes were torched, and temples vandalized. Yet, these same legal advocates—so vocal in support of the Rohingyas—remained largely absent from the public discourse on the rights of Kashmiri Hindus. Their selective silence, critics argue, betrays a skewed approach to justice and raises questions about underlying motives.

The legal opposition to policies like the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) is similarly contentious. While these measures aim to manage illegal immigration and preserve the demographic fabric of India, they are frequently challenged on humanitarian grounds. Critics worry that such opposition—however well-argued—may inadvertently prioritise foreign nationals over national security and the rights of Indian citizens.

The broader debate, therefore, goes beyond the legality of deportation or the moral imperatives of human rights. It touches upon the balance between compassion and national interest, between constitutional obligations and demographic realities. As India grapples with these complex issues, the question remains: what we call whose presence challenges the country's sovereignty while invoking its humanitarian conscience, are they messing with it?



TALES AND LEGENDS OF ARAGAM, BANDIPORE

The legends, fables, oral history accounts, tales of supernatural spirits, heresy stories and stories of tutelary forest spirits etc. are deeply rooted in the traditional historical and cultural opinions of a place or a region. They are passed on to the posterity mostly orally and form a connecting link between the past and the present times. They sometimes become narratives of a particular place and its people. They may possess elements of divinity and supernaturalism, though they may not be evidenced by documentary and supporting facts. They usually have an element of mystery and may possess a legendary pull and fascination for the native people.

In a plain speak, they can be said to be based on diverse emotional offshoots and legacy of centuries of faith and belief.

Aragam is an obscure picturesque village nestled in the lushness of the green foliage, being located about 50 kms from Srinagar on Srinagar-Bandiopore route. Now a part of the newly carved-out Bandiopore district, it is at a distance of five kms. from Bandiopore town and about twenty-five kms. from Sopore. Aragam mainly comprises of plain lands and is surrounded by wooded mountains on three sides, locally known as Animbar, Fakhnar and Lungmarg forests. The village derives its name from a



Late Sh. Ved Lal Tikko of Aragam Village

riverlet which flows through the village. Adjacent to the lung Marg forests is a vast stretch of imposing grazing ground called 'Ziasun'-which is a lively ambience of pastoral life. The surrounding mountains support majestic pine and Deodar forests, while as wild walnuts, chinar, willow and

popular trees can be spotted everywhere in the village lands. Paddy constitutes the main staple crop of the village though isolated pockets also support maize and oil seeds.

Aragam also has substantial stretches of orchards bearing apple, pears, cherry, walnuts, and almond fruit trees. The village has about 2,000 households, out of which about ten were Kashmiri Pandit families; the rest being Muslims. All the Kashmiri Pandit families prior to their forced migration in 1990 were agriculturists and orchardists with livestock forming an additional source of income. Aragam has a high literacy rate with most of the Pandit families serving in Government departments.

The family of late **Sh. Tika Lal Tikoo**, who was a head munshi in the forest department during Maharaja Hari Singh's time is a well-known family of the village. He had three sons, namely **Sh. Dwarika Nath Tikoo** (agriculturist), **Sh. Manmohan Tikoo**, an ex-serviceman of the J&K light infantry and **Sh. Chaman Lal Tikoo**, who retired from the BSF. The family of **Sh. Divram Tikoo** (agriculturist) likewise had three sons, namely **Sh. Rattan Lal Tikoo** (M.A, M.Ed.) being first position holder in M.Ed.) who served in the state education department, **Sh. Girdhari Lal Tikoo** (a retired employee from the J&K Secretariat) and **Sh. Kanya Lal Tikoo** (M.Sc. Physics) a senior Lecturer in the State Education Department. Another Pandit family was that of **Sh. Gulab Ram Raina** (agriculturist), who had two sons namely **Sh. Somnath Raina** (a retired police inspector) and **Sh. Manmohan Raina**, who worked in the Block Development Office. The remaining Pandit families were those of **Sh. Shambho Nath Nehru**, **Sh. Madhusudhan Nehru** and **Sh. Shyam Lal Nehru**, all of them being real brothers. Their children **Sh. Bushan Lal**

Nehru and **Sh. Ashok Nehru** served in the state departments. In contrast to the Tikoo families, the Nehrus are not original residents of the village. They are said to have migrated to Aragam village about two centuries back from Naroo village in tehsil Kishtwar of Doda district. The village Aragam has been a witness to three plunders locally known as 'Baem Loot', 'Pathan Loot' and 'Qabali Loot'. The 'Baem' were ferocious war tribe men of the frontier areas, who are said to have resorted to loot and plunder hundreds of years back.

During the Qabali tribal raid in 1947, the Kashmiri Pandits of Aragam could save their

skin as they fled to the adjacent mountains. But in the nearby Bandipore Kharpora town, nine members of a Kashmiri Pandit family of **Sh. Sansar Chand Sadhu** (Choudhari) were brutally murdered by the tribal men. They were lined-up in a row and subjected to a hail of bullets. Late **Sansarchand** nicknamed as **Chowdhari** was a well-known trader of his time, whose business interests extended upto Gilgit. He used to trade in 'Kishmish', dates, hazzle and cashew-nuts business and in return would send Kashmiri spices to the frontier province.

As per the village lore of Aragam, about two and a half centuries back, a Kashmiri Pandit namely **Sh. Gash Ram** lived here and was endowed with spiritual powers. Besides being a known agriculturist, he had about nine hundred livestock. He had acrimonious relations with **Akal Bhat**, who in order to settle scores with him invited the professional tribal plunderers called 'Baem' to Aragam village.

To escape from the wrath, **Gash Ram** packed off his two daughters and two sons to the neighbouring place, while the remaining two sons along with their entire livestock took shelter in the Lung Marg forests. They hid themselves in the mountain cave, which even



The villagers believed that late Sh. Tika Lal would often be spotted in the village cremation ground (Razbal) in his astral form in the company of Sagar Raz Bhairav and his associates



today is now as Gash Ram's hut. Gash Ram was caught and as punishment he was suspended from a tree by means of his skull hair-luft (Chaog).

Astonishingly, he survived the near-death ordeal. Later-on he was handed-over to a executioner for being killed. He bribed him by giving an appreciable part of his cattle and in the bargain got a lease of life. Sh. Gash Ram had five sons--Sahaj Ram, Prakash Ram, Raja Ram, Siraj Ram and Balram. Among them late Sh. Raja Ram and Sh Sahaj Ram had saintly disposition and possessed exceptional spiritual powers. Both of them were ardent devotees of **Sagar Raz Bhairav, the presiding deity of the village Aragam.**

As per the village lore, both the brothers would enter into divine communion with Sagar Raz Bhairav. To ensure wrinkle free smoothness of the turban cloth, both Raj Ram and Sahaj Ram would hold it in their hands till Sagar Raz Bhairav tied turban on their head. On special occasions, they would keep offerings of food in a thali for Sagar Raz Bhairav. The thali would immediately vanish from sight and it had to be collected afterwards from the adjacent cremation ground obviously after Sagar Raz Bhairav had accepted the offering. The village cremation ground (Razbal) was about a hundred yards away from their residence. Adjacent to it was a piece of land where Raz-Kath the sacrificial religious offering of sheep was performed in honour of the presiding deity of the village. This piece of land is even now known as 'Rajun', signifying the ownership of it to the saint Raj Ram Tikoo. An attempt made some time back by a native Mohammad Tilwani to cultivate it made him bedridden for a couple of months.

It was seen as an expression of displeasure and annoyance shown by Sagar Raz Bhairav. The latter regarded as the presiding deity of the villages of Aragam, Garoora, Brar, Chittibandi, Gund, Dechan, Tanraypora and vast area extending right upto the Wular Lake.

The **Late Tika Lal Tikoo**, a direct descendant of the said family was also a man of spiritual pursuits. Being a great devotee of the

village Bhairav himself, he had immense faith and reverence for him. He was said to converse with the Bhairav in his dreamful state during night as strange and unintelligible discourse could be heard near his room. The villagers believed that late Sh. Tika Lal would often be spotted in the village cremation ground (Razbal) in his astral form in the company of Sagar Raz Bhairav and his associates. It came to light when a Muslim lady inadvertently stepped inside the village cremation ground in search of her lost cow. She was bewildered to spot late Sh. Tika Lal sitting in the company of persons supporting white cloaks (pheran) and white turbans.

Due to his spiritual powers, late Sh. Tika Lal was quite popular in the village Aragam and its neighbourhood as a spiritual healer for he could successfully cure persons afflicted with various ailments like infectious boils, jaundice, headache, high fever and those possessed by evil spirits. Once a neighbour, Mr. Ghulam Rasool Bhat's daughter Shama got possessed by an evil spirit. She was taken to a local Muslim priest for cure. After having failed to drive-off the evil spirit, the Peer suggested Shama to be taken to Tika Lal for cure. On hearing his name, the civil spirit is said to have communicated not to bother Sh. Tika Lal as he would leave Shama's body provided her father promised to make an offering of turmeric rice at the 'Razbal'. Sh. Tika Lal departed from this world in July 1990. The Pandit community of Aragam also became the victims of the militants' furry in 1990, when the wife of Sh. Kanya Lal Tikoo namely, Mrs. Girja Tikoo (Babli) was killed by the militants. She was a laboratory assistant at Govt. High School, Trehgam. (Kupwara). At the height of the militancy, she was abducted and subsequently killed when she had gone to collect her salary at Trehgam.

On her way back, she had to make a night halt at Tikker village in the house of her childhood female friend. Tikker was also incidentally her parental village. She was kidnapped by her friend's militant turned kins. She was taken to an adjacent electric saw-mill and mercilessly cut into two halves

upto her chest by the electric-saw and her dead body was later-on thrown near a bridge in Tikker. This brutal slaying sent a chilling message to the Pandit families of Aragam and the adjoining villages, who were left with no alternative but to migrate from their ancestral homes in order to save their honour and skin.

The village Aragam has an ancient temple by the side of a holy spring, which has a Shivling and a stone idol of the Goddess Parvati. The village temple complex has plenty of willow and popular trees. Another village holy spring called 'Brari Maji Hund Nag' has one kanal of land attached to it, which abounds in majestic chinar trees. The villagers irrespective of their caste and creed would offer the milk of their first delivered cow to the holy spring out of reverence for it.

About four kms away from the village Aragam is a hillock known by the name of **Shank Paul**. A hermit of the same name is said to have done hard penance here hundreds of years back. It had a few pious springs in it's vicinity, some of which have now dried-up. The village lore says that any unholy misdeed committed in the area would result in instant rainfall in earlier times.

A well-known Muslim saint and Sofi

poet, Lala Sahib Aragami was a native of Aragam village. He lived upto the year 1984. In one of his Kashmiri couplets, the poet eulogises the virtues of a Kashmiri Pandit,

"Tan darith.....Tah zahnar".

In another Kashmiri verse, the said poet exhorts a Kashmiri Pandit girl to have unrestrained devotion for her God as her favourite deity i.e. enshrined in the stone idol itself,

"Bata Koori Vate Kanie Manj Chuai Dai, Karee Pooja, Yinai Mushravak Lai."

Likewise, being a devotee of the Goddess Parvati, he expresses his reverence for the Goddess in the following lines,

"Haran Doh Gaie Praran Yaeti Parvati Lo, Sonihaer Paad Yaepaar Trav Lotie Parvati Lo".

The Isht Devi of Tikoo families of Aragam is Tripur Sundri and her birthday called 'Tikchoram' is celebrated on Magh Shukla Paksh Chiturtheri by offering turmeric mixed rice and goat's liver (Tahar-Charbvan) to the family deity. The Kashmiri Pandits of Aragam and the adjoining villages used to celebrate all the religious festivals with the usual religious fervour prior to their forced migration from Kashmir.



A View of Aragam Village



Dr. C K Garqali



Verinag is considered the source of the Vitasta River, the lifeline of the Kashmir valley also known as the river Jehlum.

VERINAG

THE SOURCE OF VITASTA

Verina, the Holy Spring of Verinag located in Anantnag District is a natural spring enhancing the sacred geography of Kashmir. Surrounded by magnificent mountains, it is known for its crystal blue water and lush greenery. Situated at the bottom of a steep hillside, covered with evergreen forest, it receives its pristine waters from a source on the mountain top. The place has been scared to Kashmiri Pundits for millenniums.

The place thrived once with Gurukuls and Vedic Pathshalas. Famous female saint of Kashmir Mata Mathra Devi was born in Verinag and also attained Samadhi at this sacred geography.

Verinag is considered the source of the Vitasta River, the lifeline of the Kashmir valley also known as the river Jehlum. The word Jehlum is also derived from the Sanskrit (Jalhim) the snow water.

The origin of Vitasta is full of myth and history. According to legend Goddess Uma was requested to grant gift of water to Kashmir Valley. She herself wanted to rise like a spring from Verina. When she found that Lord Shiva was already present there, she went back and arose from Vythevatur (Vitastatra), a spring about a mile to the northwest of Verinag. The water of Vythevatur pours into Verinag.

Verinag was originally, called Virahnag. The word *Virah* in Sanskrit means 'separation' and 'nag' is a spring. Since Goddess Uma had to be away from Shiva and experience separation, the place came to be known as *Virahnag*, 'the spring of separation' and later corrupted to Verinag.

At Vythevatur, Shiva is believed to have invoked Goddess Uma to take the form of a river by striking his trident. He also gave her the name of Vitasta. At this place, the waters of the several springs amalgamate and are collectively called, 'Sapta Rishis'. The place of their confluence is known as '*Sangam*', where people take holy baths during religious festivals.

The birth of the river is celebrated annually with a fair on the thirteenth day of the bright fortnight of the month of Bhadrapada of the Hindu calendar. The river is worshipped at Vythevatur and Verinag as well as on all its sacred *ghats* throughout the valley, in the same manner as the Ganges is worshipped in the North and Kaveri is worshipped in the South.

Verinag is considered the abode of Nil Nag, the son of Kashyapa Rishi, the king of all nagas and the head of all spring deities of Kashmir. In Nilmat Puran, the spring of Verinag is mentioned as Nil Nag and Nil Kund. He is also considered the father of the river Vitasta. River. The Vitasta River which is born out of it is also known as Nilja, the daughter of Nil Nag.

The spring was originally an irregular and shapeless pond where water oozed from different places and spread around forming a little marsh. The Mughal emperors starting from Akbar were fascinated by the beauty of the spring and its surroundings and contributed in enhancing its surroundings.

The biographer of Emperor Akbar, Abul Fazal mentions in '*Ain-E-Akbari*', the visit of Akbar to Verinag spring, the source of river Bihat (another name for Vitasta). He also mentions the existence of a temple made of stone near the spring. In fact, even today we see a Shivalinga in one of the arches and a small shrine inside the garden containing

idols of Hindu deities.

Emperor Jehangir, whose artistic taste for polishing the beauty of nature is well known, was determined to improve it after seeing it. He built the octagonal tank of sculptured stones around the spring to collect the water therein, surrounded with colonnades and twenty-four arches. It is said that he brought stone carvers from Iran to do the job. The Emperor Jehangir in his autobiography mentions that,

"The source of the Bihat is a spring in Kashmir called the *Vīr-nāg*; in the language of India a snake is *vīr-nāg*. Clearly, there had been a large snake at that place. I went twice to the spring in my father's lifetime; it is 20 *kos* from the city of Kashmir. It is an octagonal reservoir about 20 yards by 20. Near it are the remains of a place of worship for recluses; cells cut out of the rock and numerous caves. The water is exceedingly pure. Although I could not guess its depth, a grain of poppy seed is visible until it touches the bottom. There were many fish to be seen in it".

"After my accession, I ordered them to build the sides of the spring round with stone, and they made a garden around it with a canal; and built halls and houses around it, and made a place such that travellers over the world can point out few like it".

The construction date of the tank and the garden is inscribed as 1029 Hijri or 1620 CE, on a stone slab built into the southern wall of the spring in the Persian language. It translates as follows:

"The king of seven kingdoms, the administrator of justice, the father of victory, Nur-ud-din, Jahangir son of Akbar, the martyr king, halted at this spring of God's grace in the 15th year of his reign. This construction was made by order of His Majesty. By Jahangir, son of King Akbar. This construction was raised to the skies. The architect of intelligence got its date ---'May the mansion last forever together with the spring 'Vernag' (1029 Hijri)"

It is said that Jehangir wanted to be buried in Verinag. When he died in 1627, his wife Nur Jehan ignored his wishes and buried him at Shahdara Bagh near Lahore now in Pakistan. Seven years later, Jahangir's son Shah Jehan,

who was also a lover of natural beauty, constructed cascades and aqueducts in straight lines through and around the fine garden to enhance its beauty. He also built hot and cold baths to the east of the garden. Another stone slab on the western wall inscribed in Persian language translates as follows:

“Haidar, by order of Shah Jahan, the paramount lord of his age---
God be praised---made the cascade and aqueduct flow.
This aqueduct reminds one of the aqueducts of paradise.

By this cascade Kashmir attained glory.

The unseen Angel declared the date of aqueduct: -

'The aqueduct has issued from the heavenly spring' (1037 Hijri).”

Garden Design

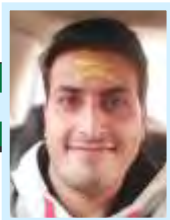
The design of the Verinag garden is an adaptation of the traditional Persian *Charbagh* (four-garden) style. The *Charbagh* takes its inspiration from the Quranic description of

heaven as having four rivers of wine, honey, milk and water. The traditional *Charbagh* is uniformly shaped, with a water source in its centre and four radiating streams which divide the garden into four parts. The garden is rectangular in shape, measuring 460 meters by 110 meters. From the entrances, a walkway takes the visitor towards the octagonal pool, which is approached through a colonnade.

The spring is 54 feet deep and is always calm on the surface. It never dries and never overflows. Going around the pool is like circumambulating a temple. The water collected in the octagonal pool flows down a 300-yard canal into the river Vitasta.

Starting from Verinag, as Vitasta traverses through Kashmir and finally merges with Krishna Ganga at Jehlum village now in POK. Hindus of Kashmir built *tirthas*, pilgrim centres, places of worship and Buddhists built viharas all along the banks of Vitasta making the entire valley of Kashmir a sacred geography.

Calendar of Month	Naag Panchami	29 th July 2025
	Kumar Shashti	30 th July 2025
	Ashtami (Shukla Paksha)	01 st August 2025
	Ekadashi (Shukla Paksha)	05 th August 2025
	Poornima (Raksha Bandhan)	09 th August 2025
	Sankat Nivaran Chaturthi	12 th August 2025
	Chandan Shashti	14 th August 2025
	Janam Satam (Janam Ashtami Vrat)	15 th August 2025
	Krishna Janam Ashtami (Krishna Paksha)	16 th August 2025
	Ekadashi (Krishna Paksha)	19 th August 2025
	Amavasya	23 rd August 2025
	Note Panchak starts on 09th August 2025 ends on 13th August 2025 ----- Shravan (Shukla Paksha) from 25th July to 09th August 2025 Bhadrapada (Krishna Paksha) from 10th August to 23rd August 2025	



 Rahul Kilam



KASHMIR'S UNFINISHED JUSTICE

THE NEED FOR A TRUTH COMMISSION

The Kashmir conflict remains one of the most sensitive and complex issues in South Asia, wrapped in decades of political, ethnic, and religious strife. But amid all the narratives, negotiations, and geopolitical manoeuvrings, one brutal chapter remains glaringly unresolved: the exodus and trauma of the Kashmiri Pandit community in 1990. For genuine reconciliation and durable peace, India must confront this chapter with clarity, courage, and conscience.

The first step towards this is the creation of an independent Truth and Justice Commission—a body tasked not with stoking fresh hatred, but with

uncovering the facts. Who killed and raped innocent civilians? Who issued threats that turned a night of terror into an irreversible migration? Why did the then state administration collapse? And why, during one of the darkest phases in Kashmir's modern history, did those in power flee their posts—some even fleeing the country?

The forced displacement of the Kashmiri Pandits, who are among the aboriginal inhabitants of the Valley, is not just a humanitarian tragedy. It is a national shame that remains unaddressed. These families lost their homes, temples, heritage, and way of life—yet their pleas

This is not just a call to the central government, but to all political parties in India. Justice for the Pandits must become a national consensus, not a partisan issue



have often been met with silence or indifference. It is no longer enough to offer token gestures; justice demands accountability.

Naming the guilty is essential. Whether they were terrorists, political enablers, or elements of the state machinery that looked the other way, justice requires that the faces behind the slogans of “Azadi” and “Islamic rule” be named, shamed, and legally prosecuted where due. Reconciliation cannot be built on selective memory. If India is serious about healing the wounds of Kashmir, then this historical wrong must be corrected with integrity.

Unfortunately, the narrative around Kashmir is often hijacked by voices that thrive on chaos. Many of those who claim to represent the “Kashmiri cause” have commercialized conflict. Their interest lies not in justice, but in perpetuating grievance for financial and political gain. India must stop legitimizing these figures in public discourse, especially when they show no empathy for the Pandits' suffering or the unity of India.

This is not just a call to the central government, but to all political parties in India. Justice for the Pandits must become a national consensus, not a partisan issue. Every department of government that functioned—or failed to—from 1947 onwards must be held to scrutiny. Only then can the real truth of Kashmir's bloody 1990s be illuminated.

It is deeply distressing that even the Supreme Court of India failed to take cognizance of this issue. In 2017, a petition seeking investigation and prosecution of those responsible for the killings and mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits was dismissed

by the Supreme Court, citing the lapse of time as a barrier to justice. This decision sent a chilling message to a community that has waited for decades for acknowledgment, let alone accountability.

In a separate case, *Govt. School Teachers Association vs Union of India & Ors* (Delhi High Court, 18 May 2015), the court opened its judgment with a striking observation: “The petitioners before me appear to be the children of a lesser God.” This was not just judicial rhetoric—it was a painful indictment of the systemic neglect the community continues to endure. And perhaps they still are the children of a lesser god, as no institution—political or judicial—has yet shown the will to heal their trauma or deliver justice.

The proposal to establish a Truth Commission to investigate the Kashmiri Pandit genocide is both significant and long overdue. Such a commission would be tasked with uncovering the full scope of the violence, forced displacement, and enduring trauma experienced by the community during the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir in the late 1980s and early 1990s. At the heart of this initiative lies a pursuit of justice, historical clarity, and national reckoning. By officially documenting testimonies and facts, a Truth Commission could pave the way for healing, accountability, and informed policy decisions to ensure that such tragedies are neither forgotten nor repeated.

A Truth Commission is not a weapon of revenge, but a path to reckoning. And from reckoning comes healing.

The time for symbolic gestures is over. It's time for justice!!

Author is Student of law

"A Truth Commission is not a weapon of revenge, but a path to reckoning. And from reckoning comes healing"



 Dr Vinay Kantroo



ANTI -OBESITY MEDICATIONS ARE THEY GAME CHANGERS?

What is Obesity? Why is it important to Treat?

Obesity is excessive accumulation of fat in the body which can negatively impact health. The more the accumulation more the risk. The fat deposition around internal organs is especially harmful for overall health and in particular the cardiovascular health which the health of heart and vessels. Obesity does not merely cause a cosmetic concern, but many a serious medical condition that increases the risk of developing other health problems like type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and certain

cancers. Obesity is measured by the body mass index.

Until now, treatment options for obesity in India were limited to lifestyle changes and older drugs like orlistat, which typically resulted in only modest benefits. While healthy habits remain the foundation, sustained weight loss through lifestyle measures alone is hard to maintain. The arrival of tirzepatide, the new drug and the upcoming launch of injectable semaglutide could dramatically change how obesity is treated in India.

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{weight (kg)}}{\text{height}^2 (\text{m}^2)}$$



Normal
<25 kg/m²



Overweight
25 – 29 kg/m²



Obese
≥ 30 kg/m²

What are the new Anti-Obesity Medications?

Tirzepatide (Mounjaro) made its debut in India in March 2025, launched by the U.S.-based pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly. The excitement surrounding the drug is expected. It is arguably one of the most talked-about medications after the COVID-19 vaccine in recent years. Approved by the FDA in the U.S. in May 2022 for type 2 diabetes and later in November 2023 for chronic weight management, tirzepatide represents a major breakthrough in managing diabetes and obesity. Never has a drug created so much buzz and curiosity at the same time.

Tirzepatide's dual action makes it unique. The drug targets GLP-1 and GIP receptors and offers additional advantages over liraglutide and semaglutide, the other two internationally approved weight-loss drugs, which act only on GLP-1 receptors. The dual mechanism leads to weight loss of up to 22%, which is close to what bariatric surgery can achieve (typically 25–30%). To put things in perspective, older weight loss drugs usually offer around 5–8% reduction, although injectable semaglutide comes

close with 15% weight loss. So the amount of weight loss tirzepatide causes is remarkable and close to what bariatric surgery offers.

Semaglutide on the other hand is a GLP-1 receptor agonist that mimics the body's natural GLP-1 hormone to regulate hunger and insulin. This slows gastric emptying and increases satiety. It is marketed under brand names like Ozempic and Wegovy.



	Mounjaro® (tirzepatide)	Wegovy® (semaglutide)	Ozempic® (semaglutide)
Manufacturer	Eli Lilly & Co.	Novo Nordisk	Novo Nordisk
FDA Approved	May 2022	June 2021	December 2017
Delivery	Once weekly injection	Once weekly injection	Once weekly injection
Dose range	2.5 mg - 15.0 mg	0.25 mg - 2.4 mg	0.25 - 2.0 mg
Targets	GLP-1 and GIP	GLP-1	GLP-1
Most common side effects	Nausea, diarrhea, constipation, vomiting	Nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, constipation	Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain
Avg. weight loss in clinical trials	22.5% of body weight after 72 weeks (15 mg) ³	14.9% of body weight after 68 weeks (2.4 mg) ⁴	6.1% of body weight after 52 weeks (1.0 mg) ⁵

What are the Major Side Effects of these Medications?

Both medications are well-tolerated by most patients, though they can cause side effects such as:

- ✓ Nausea
- ✓ Fatigue
- ✓ Constipation or Diarrhea
- ✓ Mild injection site irritation

The risk and intensity of side effects tend to be dose-dependent and usually subside as your body adjusts. There are other safety issues to consider. The drug carries a boxed FDA warning for medullary thyroid cancer observed in animal studies, making it unsuitable for people with a personal or family history of this condition. While large multicenter trials did not consistently show a link with pancreatitis, it remains a potential risk. Rapid weight loss may also increase the likelihood of gallbladder issues, including gallstones and cholecystitis, which has been reported in about 0.6% of clinical trial participants.



What are the ways to Manage side Effects?

Start with the lowest possible dose and escalate based on advice from your healthcare professional.

- ❖ Stay hydrated by drinking adequate quantities of water

- ❖ Ask your healthcare professional about anti-nausea medications to manage nausea
- ❖ Eat smaller more frequent meals to minimise bloating and indigestion.

What are Additional Benefits of these Medications?

- ❖ They are helpful in managing diabetes and reduction of blood sugars
 - ❖ They mitigate the ill effects of obesity on cardiovascular health
- They are helpful and approved for treating obstructive sleep apnoea which is moderate to severe in nature.

How long does it need to be taken? What is the cost involved?

A study published in 2024 tried to analyze the possibility of weight regain after discontinuing the medication. Participants regained around 14% of the weight they had lost within a year after stopping. However, those who continued the drug lost an additional 5.5% over the following year. So, the question of how long one needs to stay on treatment remains unanswered.

Tirzepatide is priced at ₹3,500 per 2.5 mg vial and ₹4,375 per 5 mg vial, translating to ₹14,000–₹17,500/month for standard weekly doses. Clinical trials show that the mean weight loss with the drug after 72 weeks was 15% with 5 mg, 19.5% with 10 mg, and 20.9% with 15 mg weekly doses.

Ultimately, two golden rules in medicine continue to apply: we must always weigh the risks against the benefits and keep observing and learning as new data emerges. The currently available evidence favors the use of the newer anti-obesity medicines as an adjunct if diet and physical activity do not achieve or sustain sufficient weight loss. However, as with all new therapies, continued vigilance and open-minded studies are essential to ensure we help without harm.

With inputs from Dr Saptarshi Bhattacharya, Sr Consultant, Endocrinology, Indraprastha Apollo hospitals, New Delhi - 110076



 Ramesh Pandita



BHEDA-BAL

Abode of Mata Bheda Bhagwati

'Bheda-bal', abode of Mata Bheda Bhagwati is located on the outskirts of the village Hawal in Pulwama, Kashmir. This Bheda-bal Mandir is situated on the right bank of the river 'Laar' and is lined all-around by Chinar trees. The place is very much picturesque, centre of great attraction and reverence. It is a cool and calm place with an inside unique rivulet of fresh water, an ideal place for taking a holy dip and practising meditation. It is mentioned in Nilamata Purana that "the man who takes a bath at a place close to Bheda Devi (where Ganga is in disguise) attains 'phala' (virtue) of bathing in the Ganges and goes to Swarga Loka". It is believed that at this very place, the great saints and sages have

experienced unique moments of their transcendence and exhilaration and has remained a famous destination for spiritual awakening through the ages and peace surrounds from all sides here.

Kalhana, in his Rajtarangini makes a specific mention of an ancient tirtha of 'Gangod Bheda' in the dense forests near the Birnai Stream in today's Bujbror, which is just a few Kilometers from this very village Hawal and is the actual abode of Mata Bheda Bhagwati. Rishi Palustya, while doing a long penance at Gangod Bheda made the divine Ganga gust forth near him and wished to discharge the river but, the sage was told by a divine voice that this stream has its source in



the mountain in the forest called Bheda (Bheda Giti) and at place would arise the holy Gangodbheda and so the Gangodbheda Tirtha was created. Thereafter the Rishi undertook a hard penance and Maa Saraswati - Goddess of knowledge, appeared to him from the sky in the form of a flamingo (Rajhans) and the Rishi gave her the name of Bheda and proceeded to worship her as Hanswageshwari-Bheda on the 14th and 15th day of bright fortnight of Chaitra.

Ever since the Goddess Bheda has been worshipped at the Gangodbheda Tirtha on the 14th and 15th of the bright fortnight of Chaitra. Since then, Bhagwati Bheda is worshipped as Hans Wageshwari and it is believed that the goddess is an incarnation of Maa Saraswati and her 'Janam Utsava' is celebrated on "Chaitra Shukla Paksha Chaturdashi." With the passage of time Gangodbheda has undergone change in its nomenclature and it became Budbrar and later as Bujbror. This Bujbror had then lost its glory and was completely forgotten and no pilgrimage was made of that Tirtha.

It was M.A. Stein, historian, geographer, archaeologist and translator of Kalhana's Rajtarangini who brought this place to light again on September 16, 1895, when he reached there. He first arrived in village Hawal on September 15, 1895 and was shown a temple there known as Bheda-bal and from where, Sh Suraj Bayu, a purohit and a man from Gujar family named Khaira, took him to Bujbror or Bheda Van Path.

It is believed that the devotees from the village Hawal and adjoining areas were used to visit this sacred place Bujbror for daily puja and darshan of Mata Bheda Bhagwati on regular basis for their self-spiritual solace. There are many legends describing as to how the temple of Mata Bheda Bhagwati - locally called 'Bheda-bal' came into being in village

Hawal. It is said that one 'Pandit Nidaan Bhat', used to visit Bujbror regularly at dawn and prayed there for hours together with great devotion. On one day this old aged devotee, who was a regular visitor to that sacred place could not make it that day because of his old age and ill health, got engrossed in his prayers only at his home. On that very night Mata Bheda pleased with his devotion appeared in his dream and told him that She got much impressed by his devotion and he being old and having weak health to walk daily, She wants to come and stay at village Hawal near a group of Chinar trees, a little away from the bank of river and the sign of her coming would be a bowl of 'Kheer and a lotus flower' on that very next morning.

Another legend is that a saintly mahapursh from Pandit Amar Chand Bhat family of village Hawal, who was also a staunch devotee of Mata Bheda, had a dream or

“It is mentioned in Nilamata Purana that "the man who takes a bath at a place close to Bheda Devi (where Ganga is in disguise) attains 'phala' (virtue) of bathing in the Ganges and goes to Swarga Loka".”

an Akaashvani stating that the sign of coming and staying of Mata Bheda Bhagwati in his village would be a flying crow carrying a walnut in his beak and the walnut would fall at a spot where the Bhagwati would appear. Next day the same happened and after digging at the spot where that walnut fell, a Murti, replica

of one at Bujbror was recovered. And this Murti of Bheda Bhagwati so recovered was installed or consecrated in a temple called "Bhedabal" at village Hawal on the day of "Chaitra Krishna Paksha Chaturdashi".

It is believed that Murti Sathapna and a temple were built by a local saint 'Sahajanand'. So, this "Murti Sathapna Divas" translates to the day of installing or consecrating an idol or Murti of Mata Bheda Bhagwati in Bheda-bal temple. It's a significant event marking the beginning of worship at a new temple or the installation of a new idol. The installation ceremony involved specific rituals, including prayers, mantra chanting, and murti Abhishek.

Since then, this historical temple of Mata Bheda Bhagwati came into being at that very place near river Laar at village Hawal. From that very day, every year, this auspicious day of "Murti Sathapna Divas" on "Chaitra Krishna Paksha Chaturdashi" is celebrated with religious fervour by the devotees of the Goddess Bheda. A Maha Yagya is solemnized annually on this day of 'Murti Sathapna Divas' since ages and this Maha Yagya function promotes human values in society; it brings unity and creates an ideal human culture. In the words of Tony Robbins, ***"It's not the events of our lives that shape us, but our beliefs as to what those events mean."***

The very first historic Bheda-bal temple in brick and clay is believed to be built centuries ago in the centre of a slightly raised square shaped platform at village Hawal. Several stone idols were as well kept on the four corners of this very platform. Thereafter, a new concrete temple was built with its foundation made of Kashmiri carved dever stones in 1987. All the baradari members were present on the occasion and it was Swami Moti Lal Brahmachari Ji (Lalla Jee), renowned saint and Scholar, who took care of this ritual and the mantras were recited by Swami Brahmachari Ji, Pt Kashi Nath Ji and by all devotees. The Bheda-bal temple has recently been renovated and given a beautiful facelift in the shape of landscapes, small wooden bridges, dever stone walkways, interior wood carvings, row plantation, pakka rivulet, grill fencing, a Yagya Shalla (Hawan Kund) and much more. A historic erection of Duodi of Bhedabal at main road passing through the village was built recently in 2020, which fulfilled the long cherished desire and demand of all devotees since decades. It is in the year 2000 that the additional land of 31 Marlas has been procured and added to this temple complex, thereby measuring more than three kanals today, which paved the way for its planned beautification and development.

The people of this village and of the adjoining areas are both emotionally and spiritually connected to this temple from the times immemorial. Mata Bheda Bhagwati is

thought about the goddess of knowledge, and wisdom in Sanatan Dharma and is an incarnation of goddess Saraswati. Her 'Janam Divas' is celebrated on 'Chaitra Shukla Paksha Chaturdashi.' It is believed that 'Thursday' is said to be the auspicious day of the week for Mata Bheda Bhagwati. Hundreds of years of worship, community interactions and many religious rituals are associated with Bheda-bal Mandir and as such it is an important and integral part of people's cultural heritage.

Right from a rich cultural history that goes back thousands of years to the heritage of this very temple, which is not only related to religious faith but equally to cultures, ideologies and that actually form the layers of this village's history as well.

The village Hawal is the land of many temples where beauty of spirituality never fades and dreams never cease to exist. Bheda-bal Mandir has its own significance with beautiful scenic location and not too far away from Srinagar, the central point of tourism in Kashmir province. It is stated that a temple is a place for Tirtha – pilgrimage and even reflects a synthesis of arts, the ideals of dharma, beliefs, values, and the way of life. *Swami Vivekananda desired that every one of us should rise from animosity to divinity so that divinity is manifested in all our thoughts, words and deeds.* The Temple is a link between man and God, between man and humanity. It is a place where God dwells on earth to bless mankind or a building for religious acts.

This speaks of the positive approach towards preserving the temple heritage and an age-old identity. *It is well said by Erik Erikson that "In the social jungle of human existence, there is no feeling of being alive without a sense of identity."* Let us all be proud of our temple legacy, culture and cherish it to strive hard for making this ancient and historical 'Bheda-bal Mandir' a pilgrimage site.

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 Ashish Razdan



THE BRAVE THAT HISTORY FORGOT

RAKESH HANDOO AND THE INVISIBLE FRONTLINE

*A tribute based on the book *Kashmir Insurgency* by Col. (Retd.) Yoginder Kandhari*

The Fire Beneath the Silence

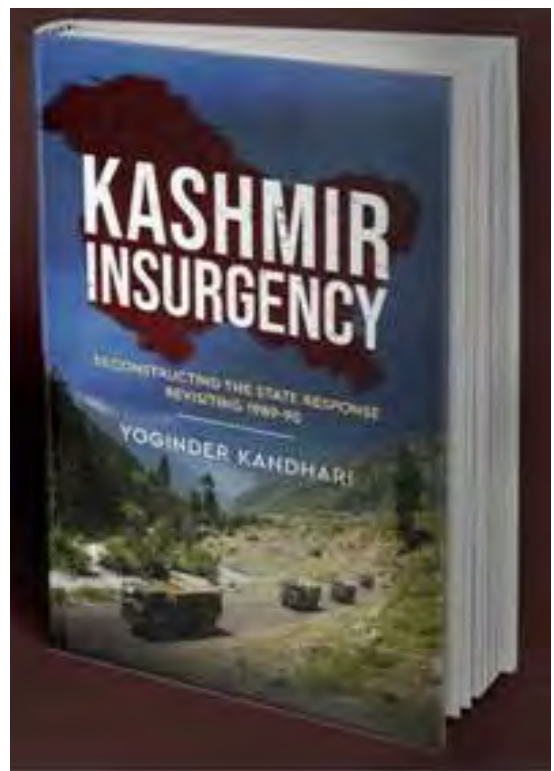
– Rakesh Handoo's War Within a War

In the dark winter of 1990, as the Kashmir Valley slipped into the quicksand of insurgency, the fabric of civil society unravelled. The security grid was overstretched, the state administration collapsed, and the Kashmiri Pandit (KP) community was driven into exile. Amidst this chaos, a band of young KP men dared to resist the tide of terrorism. Their story, often ignored in public discourse, finds its place in **Kashmir Insurgency** by Col. (Retd.) Yoginder Kandhari.

One such young man was **Rakesh Handoo**, who refused to accept helplessness as fate. Instead, he formed a group of spirited KP youth ready to assist the security forces in fighting insurgents on the ground, in their homeland (Kandhari, p. 98).

From Protest to Participation

After witnessing the community being branded as cowardly for fleeing the Valley, Rakesh led powerful protest demonstrations



against both the state and central governments. He, along with Somesh Bhan, Raj Nehru, and others, organized 'Mashaal' marches through Jammu and burned effigies of V.P. Singh and Mufti Mohammad Sayeed (Kandhari, p. 99).

Their resistance was not just symbolic. In March 1990, when a CRPF officer approached Rakesh seeking volunteers to aid security forces in navigating Srinagar's labyrinthine streets and decipher local dialects, Rakesh

seized the opportunity. He handpicked eight KP youth, both migrants and non-migrants, who were inducted for field operations (Kandhari, p. 100).

Boots on the Ground

The volunteers were stationed at Islamia College in Hawal under the 69 Bn CRPF. Initially unarmed, they accompanied forces during CASO (Cordon and Search Operations), identifying insurgents and providing real-time intelligence. However, facing direct fire and high risk of abduction, the boys were later allowed to carry SLRs and 9mm carbines (Kandhari, p. 102).

Their linguistic fluency and local knowledge made them indispensable. Disguised in civilian attire, they mingled with locals to gather intelligence on militant hideouts, leading to numerous arrests and arms seizures. Their fearless engagement earned accolades from officers like IPS officer S.S. Ali, who often mentored them in discrete information-gathering techniques (Kandhari, p. 103).

The Assassination That Changed Everything

On **21 May 1990**, the assassination of **Mirwaiz Maulvi Farooq**, a prominent spiritual and political leader, triggered a cataclysmic shift in the Valley's insurgency narrative. Farooq was considered a moderate voice, and Pakistan's ISI feared his growing influence. His assassination was executed by Hizbul Mujahideen operatives on direct orders from their high command (Kandhari, p. 115).

Rakesh Handoo, present in the area, witnessed the aftermath. A sea of mourners transformed into a storm of rage. At Rajouri Kadal and Hawal, CRPF pickets came under intense attack from armed militants posing as mourners. During this chaos, Assistant Commandant Balwant Singh Bawa and Rakesh rushed to the spot. The coffin was abandoned, and the crowd scattered in fear, leaving behind a trail of shoes and blood (Kandhari, p. 117).

The firing led to a tragic toll. While **The New York Times** cited 30 fatalities and over 200 injuries, other sources report even



higher numbers. Governor Jagmohan, already under political scrutiny, was removed shortly thereafter. Kandhari highlights how this incident, combined with the political silence around VP Singh's decisions, broke the morale of the KP volunteers (Kandhari, p. 118).

The End of the Mission

Disheartened and abandoned by the same systems that once sought their help, the group returned to Jammu. Calls from CRPF units to rejoin went unanswered. Rakesh's parents insisted he leave the State. The other members quietly resumed their education or moved away from public life (Kandhari, p. 119).

Legacy of the Forgotten Warriors

What Rakesh Handoo and his team achieved in those volatile months of 1990 was not just about counter-insurgency. It was a defiance of erasure, a statement of resilience. They proved that the Kashmiri Pandit community, often painted as victims, also bred warriors. Warriors who fought without a name, without a uniform, and without ever seeking glory.

Their story, now chronicled in **Kashmir Insurgency**, serves as both a tribute and a challenge: to reclaim narratives and honour those who fought the invisible war.

Compiled and authored by Ashish Razdan, based on the accounts recorded in 'Kashmir Insurgency' by Col. (Retd.) Yoginder Kandhari.



 Chander M. Bhat



Dewan Temple, Fateh Kadal

Coordinates: Lat. 34 degrees 08 minutes, Long. 74 degrees 80 minutes

The Dewan Temple is situated in a unique and historically significant location on the right bank of the Vitasta River (the ancient name for the Jhelum River), which has long been a lifeline for the people of Kashmir. This sacred temple is located near the pinion joint of the bridge coming from the Namchibal side, placing it at a critical junction where history, spirituality, and the natural beauty of the river converge.

The temple's position along the Vitasta River is deeply symbolic. In Kashmiri tradition, the Vitasta (Jhelum) is considered sacred, with the river often viewed as the embodiment of Goddess Vitasta (Vyeth), the personification of water and life. Rivers in

Hindu culture are worshipped as divine entities, representing purity, life, and the continuous flow of time. The Vitasta River, in particular, has been central to Kashmir's spiritual and cultural identity for millennia.

Being located on the right bank of the river, the Dewan Temple offers a picturesque view of the flowing waters, which adds to the tranquility and sanctity of the temple environment. For devotees, the proximity to the river makes this temple not only a place of worship but also a place for spiritual purification, as many believe that performing rituals and prayers near the holy waters brings divine blessings.

The temple's proximity to the pinion joint



of the bridge further highlights its strategic importance. This bridge, connecting the Namchibal side of the river, has historically been a critical link between different parts of Srinagar. The temple's placement near this vital crossing point means that it has long served as a welcoming site for both pilgrims and devotees. Many would stop at the temple to offer prayers or seek blessings before crossing the bridge or after completing their journey across the Vitasta.

Although relatively small in size, the Dewan Temple holds great spiritual importance for those who visit it. Its architecture, like many other temples in Kashmir, reflects the rich cultural heritage of the region, blending traditional Hindu temple design with local Kashmiri architectural influences. The structure is simple yet elegant, designed to harmonize with the natural surroundings of the riverbank and the bustling life of the city across the bridge.

Inside the temple, devotees gather to offer prayers and perform rituals dedicated to various deities. The serene atmosphere, combined with the soothing sound of the river flowing nearby, creates a peaceful environment for reflection and meditation. The temple is a place where devotees come to connect with the divine and find solace in the presence of the gods, all while being surrounded by the beauty of nature.

The temple also plays a vital role during religious festivals, when the banks of the Vitasta come alive with rituals, prayers, and celebrations on *Vyeth Truvah*. The river is often integral to these festivities, as devotees use the waters for purification rites, immersing themselves in the holy river before entering the temple for worship at the *Ghat* (river bank) attached to this temple.

The Dewan Temple has stood as a symbol of continuity and devotion for generations. Its location at the crossroads of travel and trade has made it a significant cultural landmark in the area. Historically, temples near major river crossings and bridges have served as more than just religious centers; they were also places of community gathering, offering hospitality to

IN KASHMIRI TRADITION, THE VITASTA (JHELMUM) IS CONSIDERED SACRED, WITH THE RIVER OFTEN VIEWED AS THE EMBODIMENT OF GODDESS VITASTA (VYETH), THE PERSONIFICATION OF WATER AND LIFE.

travelers and playing a role in the spiritual life of the people.

The bridge near the Namchibal side is one of several historic bridges that span the Vitasta River, connecting different parts of Srinagar. The temple, with its prime location, became a focal point for those making their way across the river. The constant flow of people... whether pilgrims, traders, or local residents.... ensured that the Dewan Temple remained a lively and essential part of the community.

The Dewan Temple, situated on the right bank of the Vitasta River, near the pinion joint of the bridge from the Namchibal side, is a temple that blends spiritual significance with historical and cultural importance. Overlooking the sacred waters of the Vitasta, it offers a peaceful space for worship and reflection, deeply connected to the life-giving river that has shaped Kashmir's identity. Whether for religious devotion or a moment of peaceful meditation by the river, the Dewan Temple continues to be a beacon of spiritual and cultural continuity in the heart of Srinagar.

The Dewan Temple holds not only religious significance but also a rich historical background, as it is believed to have been built by Prime Minister Diwan Kirpa Ram during the Dogra rule in 1927. The temple was constructed as a testament to the devotion and reverence toward Lord Shiva, a deity deeply venerated in Kashmir. Diwan Kirpa Ram, serving under the Dogra Maharajas, was a prominent figure in the region and played a key role in the political and cultural life of Kashmir during that era.

His contribution in building this temple adds to the legacy of the Dogra rulers who were known for their patronage of Hindu temples and culture.

At the heart of the Dewan Temple lies the Sanctum Sanctorum, a sacred inner chamber where the temple's primary deity resides. Inside this sanctum is a Shiva Lingam, a symbolic representation of Lord Shiva. The Shiva Lingam in the main temple is a sacred stone, revered as the embodiment of Shiva's infinite power and formless nature. Devotees come to the temple to offer prayers and perform rituals, seeking Lord Shiva's blessings for peace, prosperity, and spiritual growth.

The Shiva Lingam holds a central place in Hindu worship, especially in Kashmir, where Lord Shiva has been worshipped for millennia. The Lingam is considered a powerful source of spiritual energy, and devotees believe that by offering their prayers and meditating in the presence of the Lingam, they can connect with the divine and receive the protective and transformative powers of Lord Shiva. The Sanctum Sanctorum is designed to maintain a quiet and contemplative atmosphere, allowing worshippers to experience a deep spiritual connection.

In addition to the main temple, there is another smaller temple situated in front of the primary structure. This secondary temple also houses Shiva Lingam, though smaller in size, along with several ancient idols that add to the spiritual richness of the temple complex. These ancient idols are believed to date back several centuries and represent various deities, contributing to the diverse expressions of devotion present at the temple.



The Dewan Temple complex not only holds immense spiritual significance but also includes several important features that enhance its functionality and connection to the community.

This secondary temple complements the main shrine and serves as an important part of the overall religious experience at the Dewan Temple. While the main temple is the focal point for large gatherings and primary rituals, the secondary temple offers a more intimate space for personal prayer and reflection. The presence of multiple idols and the smaller Shiva Lingam allows devotees to honor various

forms of the divine, paying homage to different aspects of Hindu theology and mythology.

The Dewan Temple, built in 1927 during the Dogra rule, showcases the traditional Kashmiri temple architecture of the time, influenced by both local styles and the patronage of the Dogra rulers. The use of local materials and the simple yet elegant design reflect the religious and cultural ethos of the period. The Dogra rulers, known for their contribution to temple architecture in Jammu and Kashmir, were instrumental in preserving and promoting Hindu culture and religious practices in the region.

Diwan Kirpa Ram's involvement in the construction of the temple highlights the role of the ruling elite in the cultural and spiritual life of Kashmir during the early 20th century. The temple stands as a reminder of the religious devotion and cultural patronage that were central to the governance of the Dogra rulers.

The Dewan Temple is not only a site of regular worship but also becomes the center of special rituals and festivals dedicated to Lord Shiva, particularly during significant occasions such as Maha Shivratri. On such days, the temple is adorned with flowers, and devotees gather in large numbers to perform Abhishekam (ritual bathing of the Shiva Lingam) with milk, honey, water, and other sacred substances, symbolizing the purification of the soul and invoking Lord Shiva's blessings.

The secondary temple, with its smaller Shiva Lingam and ancient idols, also plays a role during these festivals, with devotees offering prayers at both temples to ensure they receive the complete spiritual experience. The dual presence of the Lingams allows for a

peaceful environment to rest and engage in worship. In addition to the Dharamshalas, the temple complex is surrounded by approximately 3 kanals of land, which historically served various purposes related to the temple's activities, possibly including gatherings for religious festivals, rituals, or even agricultural use.

At the rear of the main temple stands a magnificent fruit bearing walnut tree, a symbol of the temple's connection to nature and the region's rich agricultural heritage. The walnut tree, revered in Kashmiri culture for its bountiful produce and longevity, adds a sense of natural beauty to the sacred grounds, providing shade and a tranquil atmosphere. Its presence further enhances the spiritual environment of the temple, linking the divine with the natural world in a harmonious way.

However, since 1990, due to the rising security concerns in the region, the temple has been repurposed to some extent and now houses a camp for security personnel. This change reflects the evolving circumstances in Kashmir, where many significant sites, including religious ones, have been adapted

The temple's dual role as a religious site and a security base is indicative of the broader changes in the region while also highlighting the resilience of such sacred places, which continue to stand as symbols of cultural and spiritual identity amidst challenging times.

broader range of religious expression, accommodating different forms of worship within the same sacred complex.

The Dewan Temple complex not only holds immense spiritual significance but also includes several important features that enhance its functionality and connection to the community. Attached to the temple are two Dharamshalas, which traditionally serve as resting places for pilgrims and devotees visiting the temple. These Dharamshalas offer a space for people to stay during their spiritual journey, providing them with shelter and a

to meet the practical needs of maintaining peace and order. The temple's dual role as a religious site and a security base is indicative of the broader changes in the region while also highlighting the resilience of such sacred places, which continue to stand as symbols of cultural and spiritual identity amidst challenging times. Despite this shift in its usage, the Dewan Temple retains its significance as a spiritual landmark, with its *Dharamshalas*, lush greenery, and symbolic walnut tree continuing to offer a connection to the divine for those who visit.



 Sanjay Pandita



THE RETURN THAT WAITS

A QUESTION OF WILL, BELONGING AND TIME

Thirty-five years is a long time in the life of a people. It is long enough to change addresses, occupations, and destinies. It is long enough to raise new generations in unfamiliar lands, speak in languages tinged with different accents, and remember a home not from experience but through stories. For the Kashmiri Pandit community, the exile from the Valley remains the most haunting chapter of their collective memory — one that continues to evoke not just sorrow, but a yearning that refuses to fade. Yet, whether this yearning can translate into a return remains the most pressing and unanswered question.

Various organizations from within the community, particularly those stationed in Jammu or closely tied to Kashmir, have persistently voiced the demand for a safe and dignified return. Their efforts, rooted in memory and an emotional umbilical cord with the Valley, are sincere and just. These voices echo with longing — a longing to reclaim not just ancestral homes, but cultural space, spiritual soil, and a heritage that cannot be transplanted elsewhere. Yet the journey of return is not merely a matter of slogans,

For the Kashmiri Pandit community, the exile from the Valley remains the most haunting chapter of their collective memory — one that continues to evoke not just sorrow, but a yearning that refuses to fade.

roadmaps, or government promises. It is far more complex — interwoven with realism, psychology, sociology, and trust.

The political rhetoric has often touched upon the 'return of the Kashmiri Pandits', sometimes as a symbolic balm, other times as a ticking box in manifestos. Governments have floated plans, spoken of satellite townships, incentives, and security assurances. Yet these assurances often remain cosmetic when faced with ground realities. The truth is — the return of Pandits is not just a logistical question. It is a question of desire, belonging, generational change, and the human cost of time.

For those who left in the early 1990s — often with hurriedly packed bags, trauma in their eyes, and uncertainty in their hearts — Kashmir is not just geography. It is memory soaked in pain and nostalgia. These individuals may still wish to walk those old alleys of Rainawari, Habba Kadal, Mattan, or Shopian, to hear the Azaan and temple bells echoing in unison as they once did. Their return, if it happens, would be to a remembered place. But for their children — born in Jammu, Delhi, Pune, Bengaluru, or even abroad — Kashmir is often a metaphor more than a memory. Their ties are vicarious, formed through the aching stories of parents and the cautionary tales of elders. For them, returning would not be going home — it would be venturing into unfamiliar terrain, disrupting careers, uprooting children, and leaving behind a life painstakingly built over decades.

Here in lies the most fundamental

dilemma — the idea of return is romantic and just, but is it practical? Is it even desirable for those who have never known that life firsthand?

Equally vital is the role of local Muslims in the Valley. Their role is central, not just politically but emotionally and socially. While there have been noble individual gestures of reconciliation, the community-wide outreach has often lacked conviction or visibility. The tragic silence of 1990 still haunts the memory of many Pandits. Overcoming that betrayal — real or perceived — is not easy. Trust, once broken, takes generations to heal. And if the return is to be more than ceremonial — if it is to be meaningful, integrated, and permanent — then this trust must be rebuilt not through government circulars but through human connection, neighbourliness, shared festivals, shared grief, and shared hope.

On the other hand, one must acknowledge that time has not stood still. The Kashmir Valley has changed — demographically, politically, socially. Homes once abandoned have collapsed, burnt down, or been encroached upon. New communities have taken root. A return would now mean navigating not just identity but infrastructure, employment, schooling, healthcare, and integration into an ecosystem that has moved on. Will the locals accept this return not just legally but emotionally? Will the neighbours who now live in Pandit houses greet their original owners with open arms or suspicious silence?

Then there is the economic angle. Many Pandits have thrived outside — as bureaucrats, professionals, academics, and entrepreneurs. They have invested in careers, built new communities, and grown used to a different rhythm of life. For them to return would mean sacrifice, risk, and starting afresh — again. Only a few, perhaps driven more by emotion than logic, would contemplate such a reversal. And even they would ask: will my child get a quality school here? Will there be peace? Will we be safe? Will I be treated as a Kashmiri or an outsider?

Thus, while the idea of return is noble, it

may now belong to a different realm — not one of mass migration back to the Valley, but perhaps one of symbolic restoration. The idea that a Pandit can return, settle if he or she so chooses, without fear or bias — that would itself be a victory. Perhaps return today must be reimagined: not as a physical resettlement of thousands but as a reclaiming of space — cultural, emotional, and spiritual. A return of shrines, of Kashmiri Pandit literature in school books, of their music in radio stations, of their language in public spaces. That, too, is a form of return.

The reality is stark: those driving the idea of return are, more often than not, those who still live close to Kashmir — in Jammu or nearby towns — where the connection remains tangible. They visit on yatras, have relatives across the Banihal, and still celebrate festivals like Herath with a faint echo of what was. But for the vast majority now spread across metros and continents, the idea of returning is wrapped in layers of hesitation, doubt, and distance.

Yes, every displaced community must have the right to return. That moral and constitutional right cannot be denied. But in the case of the Kashmiri Pandits, the return must be voluntary, dignified, safe — and most importantly — welcomed. The yearning must be matched by action, by trust-building, by societal healing. The question is not whether the Pandits want to return. The deeper question is: does Kashmir still know how to welcome them back — as neighbours, not as guests?

In the final reckoning, perhaps it is not about going back but about not being forgotten. About leaving the doors open, the hearth warm, and the nameplates intact — for whoever chooses to knock, whenever they choose to come home.

Until then, the idea of return will live — in conversations, in poems, in festivals, and in the hearts of those who still dream of a snow-laden almond bloom in the Valley they once called home.

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Isha Raina

"KASHMIR... SHRINES AND TEMPLES, VOLUME 3"

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Foreword : Prof. Tej N. Dhar

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"KASHMIR... Shrines and Temples", Volume 3, authored by Chander M. Bhat, stands as a monumental testament to the timeless spiritual and cultural soul of Kashmir. This third installment in the author's magnum opus, a six-volume series meticulously chronicling over 531 sacred sites, transcends the role of a mere catalog. Instead, it emerges as a deeply personal homage to a land where every stone, stream, and shrine tells stories of faith, resilience, and devotion passed down through generations.

The journey of this extraordinary work commenced in 1990, a period marked by political turbulence and communal unrest that shook the very foundations of the Kashmir Valley. Against this harrowing backdrop, Bhat, with steadfast resolve and a heart steeped in devotion, embarked on an odyssey to document and preserve the sacred geography of his homeland. Over three decades of tireless exploration, research, and documentation have culminated in a series that captures the spirit of Kashmir in all its spiritual splendor.

What elevates this volume beyond scholarly documentation is its ability to weave together the threads of history, mythology, architecture, and the intangible spiritual ethos of the Kashmiri Pandit community. Each shrine, temple, sacred spring, and hallowed grove comes alive under Bhat's discerning gaze, presented not merely as physical structures but as living embodiments of the region's ancient traditions and the undying faith of its people.

Volume Three offers readers an immersive window into the sacred geography of Kashmir, illuminating the profound interconnectedness between nature, faith, and culture that defines this mystical land. Through vivid narrative and meticulous research, Bhat captures the essence of these sites, ensuring that they resonate with contemporary seekers and serve as a lasting cornerstone for future generations.

Structured thoughtfully into five thematic sections, the book invites readers on a journey through the diverse dimensions of Kashmir's sacred landscape. The first section delves into ancient temples that have withstood the ravages of time and conflict. These architectural marvels stand as silent sentinels of history, bearing witness to the spiritual fervor and artistic genius of bygone eras. The reader is guided through their legends, architectural features, and current state, with each description imbued with reverence and scholarly precision.

The second section is devoted to Devi shrines...abodes of the Divine Feminine, whose presence permeates the valley with maternal grace and fierce protection. Here, the spiritual philosophy of Shakti finds its most profound expression, as Bhat explores not only the physical shrines but also the living traditions, festivals, and rituals that continue to honor the Mother Goddess in her myriad forms.

The third section brings forth the valley's deep rooted connection to Shaivism through an exploration of Shiva shrines. Kashmir, often referred to as the cradle of Kashmiri Shaivism, is home to countless temples dedicated to Lord Shiva, the cosmic dancer and ascetic yogi. Bhat masterfully presents these sacred sites, interweaving their historical narratives with philosophical reflections on the valley's enduring spiritual heritage.

In the fourth section, the narrative shifts to the sanctity of natural springs, many of which are venerated as sacred pilgrimage centres. These life giving waters, flowing from the heart of the Himalayas, have for centuries been revered not only for their physical sustenance but also for their spiritual potency. Through



poetic prose and careful documentation, Bhat brings alive the legends, rituals, and healing traditions associated with these sacred springs.

The fifth and final section broadens the horizon, inviting readers to lesser explored yet equally significant sacred elements...ancient trees, mystical caves, and serene mountain lakes. Each of these natural sites holds a sacred resonance, often rooted in folklore and oral traditions that speak of sages, saints, and divine manifestations. Bhat's holistic approach underscores the intrinsic harmony between Kashmir's natural beauty and its spiritual heritage, reminding readers of the region's unique identity where divinity and nature are one.

In addition to the main chapters, two thoughtfully curated sections enrich the volume before the Bibliography. The first, titled "*What They Said*," offers readers a glimpse into the heartfelt responses, reflections, and commendations received for Volumes 1 and 2 from scholars, spiritual seekers, and members of the Kashmiri community worldwide. These testimonials not only underscore the impact of the earlier works but also highlight the emotional and cultural resonance they have evoked. The second section provides a comprehensive list of the shrines, temples, and sacred sites meticulously documented in the previous two volumes, serving both as a useful reference and as a testament to the vastness of Kashmir's spiritual heritage already preserved through this ongoing series. Together, these sections enhance the reader's journey by honoring the voices of the community and by offering continuity to this monumental documentation of faith, history, and devotion.

What sets this work apart is not only the depth of research but also the remarkable personal sacrifices behind its creation. Bhat's fieldwork, conducted often in volatile and hostile environments, reveals a narrative of quiet courage and unwavering determination. In many instances, he faced suspicion, hostility, and even threats to his safety as he traveled through remote villages to photograph and document neglected or forgotten shrines. Yet, propelled by an unshakable sense of duty and a profound spiritual calling, he persevered, ensuring that these treasures would not be lost to time and oblivion.

The author's attention to detail is impeccable. Each entry in the book is meticulously annotated with geographical coordinates, historical context, architectural features, and the current state of preservation. Equally captivating are the mythological and cultural anecdotes that accompany these descriptions, tales that breathe life into stone and water, transforming the sites from static relics into vibrant testimonies of living faith.

Bhat's literary style is both scholarly and poetic, striking a delicate balance between academic rigor and heartfelt storytelling. His prose flows with elegance, capturing not only the physical beauty of these sites but also their spiritual resonance. Readers are not mere observers; they become fellow pilgrims journeying through the sacred landscapes of the valley.

The importance of this volume, however, extends beyond mere documentation. In a time when Kashmir's cultural and religious heritage faces unprecedented threats, from neglect, encroachment, and the erosion of collective memory, this work emerges as a clarion call for preservation. Bhat reminds us that these shrines are not just architectural marvels or historical artifacts; they are living embodiments of identity, continuity, and spiritual belonging. To lose them is to sever the threads that connect the present to the ancestral past.

The anticipation surrounding Volume Three reflects the profound impact that Bhat's earlier volumes have had on readers across the globe. Scholars, historians, spiritual seekers, and members of the Kashmiri diaspora eagerly await each new installment, recognizing in these pages a rare and invaluable preservation of a culture on the brink of vanishing.

The book is further enriched by a foreword penned by the distinguished professor Tej N. Dhar, whose insights into Kashmir's religious history lend gravitas to the narrative. Prof. Dhar's words serve as both an endorsement and an affirmation of the significance of Bhat's endeavor, situating it within the broader context of cultural conservation and scholarly discourse.

Ultimately, 'KASHMIR... Shrines and Temples, Volume 3' is more than a book; it is a labor of love, a spiritual pilgrimage in prose, and a monumental contribution to the preservation of one of the world's most endangered cultural heritages. It is a call to remember, to honor, and to protect the sacred legacies that define us.

For readers who seek to understand Kashmir not just as a place but as an idea, a living embodiment of faith and resilience, this work offers an indispensable guide. It invites us to walk alongside the author through the valleys and mountains, to listen to the ancient whispers of the land, and to carry forward the torch of remembrance for generations yet to come.



Dr. Mahesh Kaul

THE TANTRIC AND PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS OF KASHMIR SAIVISM

Author: Moti Lal Pandit

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Kashmir has been the nucleus of the Sanskrit Civilisation of India and this can be witnessed in all spheres of life even today after continuous socio-political turbulence that has led to the genocidal attrition causing immense damage to the aesthetics and place consciousness. Kashmir's contribution to the pool of civilizational values through philosophy and aesthetics is matchless. It has enriched the Dharmic landscape of entire India. It goes to the credit of the Sanskritists of Kashmir who not only developed the parameters for the Paramarthika and Vyavharika but established complete system based on original methodologies shaping the foundations and evolution of the Kashmir Shaiv Darshan that prevailed in the valley from the times immemorial. It is a myth propounded by the neophytes that Shaivism made its advent in the later centuries. Perhaps this narrative was spread to justify and bail out the De-Sanskritisation of

Kashmir at the hands of the subversives who wanted to erase the indigenous Dharmic culture having a pan-India reach at all levels of society. In spite of these efforts to whitewash the Agamic and Nigamic moorings of Kashmir Mandala; the place consciousness of

The Tāntric and Philosophical Aspects of Kashmir Śaivism



Moti Lal Pandit

Kashmir has prevailed and that is why we are witnessing the re-emergence of its Sanskrit culture in one form or the other.

Kashmir's contribution to the Dharmic Consciousness of India lies in internalising the Integrality of Agama (Tantras) and Nigama (Vedas) by clarifying all the misconceptions that were interpolated into the public domain by the subversive narrative. It evolved into a complete system known as non-dual Shaiv Darshan. Moreover, it must be noted that Kashmir Shaiv Darshan is also known as Trika and it can be argued that Trika is a system of Yoga that has evolved on the basis of tantric consciousness. And this injects substances into the philosophical undertones and overtones of Kashmir Shaiv Darshan. Majority of the principles that are enshrined in the Trika Tantric Shaiv Darshna of Kashmir are absent in other schools; the reason being that it is based on 36 Tattavas. Whereas in the other schools the number of Tattvas is lesser. Thus shrinking the level of experiences. This does not mean that Kashmir Shaiv Darshan evolved in isolation. It reached the new levels of Tantric consciousness by internalising the concepts and nuances of the other schools of philosophy that existed side by side. But the beauty of this system lies in developing an integral system that proves the continuity of Indic philosophical tradition. At the outset I would like to make it clear that there is an undeclared norm in practice that terms the Kashmir's Tantric Shiva Philosophy as Kashmir Shaivism. I would like to differ on this as it is a comprehensive system based on the primacy of the Tantric consciousness. As such I would prefer to call it as Kashmir Shaiv Darshan as it includes all the elements and models that establish it as a well-defined study area that needs a complete dedication and regimentation to master it. It has both theoretical and practical aspects that need to be inculcated to internalise it. It won't be an exaggeration to say that Tantra is the science of Yoga. People have been associating the tantric formulations with the magical powers. This is indeed an over simplification of the reality. Kashmir Shaiv Darshan goes to the root of the Bhairava Consciousness and decodes the influx and outflux of the cosmic energy that is understood in terms of Prakash and Vimarsh. Shiva is termed as Prakash and Vimarsh is His Shakti in Kashmir Shaiv Darshan.

Various Tantric practitioners and scholars ranging from Utpaldeva to Abhinavagupta and many more have contributed to the corpus of the Kashmir Shaiv Darshan in terms of their observations and realisations. As Shiva Tantra system is not the creation of an individual but owes its existence to the interactions between the Bhairavi and Bhairava codified in various Tantras and have come down from generations to generations through Guru-Shishya Parampara. But there were times that led to the suppression of the Shaivas due to external invasions and series of proselytisations by invaders that led to a period of dormancy. That does not mean Kashmir Shiava Darshan was lost. Moreover, being an absolute Tantric system, it needs its own serene well-established ecosystem to execute its functioning away from the public glare.

Many modern theorists and philosophers have contributed to the corpus of Kashmir Shaiv Darshan but in the contemporary era Moti Lal Pandit stands out as the beacon of light who has been able to trace the evolution and philosophical undercurrents of this system in a comprehensive manner. His contribution to make the adherents and curious scholars internalise the nuances of the Shaiva tantric System of Kashmir is matchless. He has the distinction of being the fluent speaker and equally competent writer of this system working tirelessly. His ability to weave the history of Kashmir Shaiv Darshan with the minute and

difficult concepts is flawless. He is a trained theologian and linguist who brings his experience in Ideological research to decode the hidden truth of tantric moorings. His advantage lies in being a scholar who internalises the Buddhist philosophy and its implications on the society when Trika was facing challenges. That makes him an expert to sift the myths from the reality and use his pen like a surgeon's knife to sift the pearls from interpolation. To understand his theological basis one needs to read his previous works as well.

His latest book titled “The tantric and Philosophical Aspects of Kashmir Shaivism” is a comprehensive manual that dives deep into the development and evolution of Kashmir Shaiv Darshan. In this book Moti Lal Pandit has taken a holistic view of the Shaiva worship in Kashmir. What makes this book different is that it attempts to find out as to how the proto-Shiva of the Mohenjo-Daro evolved as the synthesis of the both terror and boons. It is important to note that in Kashmir Shaiva system Bhairava is the one who overcomes fears and tears them apart and has the qualities of both influx and out flux of energies. In this work he makes it clear that the spiritual atmosphere was developed in such way so as to transform, in the Svetasvatara, the conceptuality of Shiva into such spiritual heights that would assume, with the passage of time, such a role which would be both philosophical and religious.

It is clear from the book that Shiva was assigned the role of transcendence and as a religious reality Shiva would be conceived as representing the principle of immanence. It means that the presence of transcendent principle would be experienced as the principle of immanence within the realm of manifestation. Thus in the proto-Shiva of Mohenjo-Daro would be expressed, on the one hand, the concept transcendent principle as being the creator of the world and thereby making Him master and ruler and on the other hand it would explain the nature of reality being identical with the cosmic consciousness. This work also establishes that initially the concept of Isa or Shiva and expresses itself theistically in terms of which the immanence of the Creator-God would be established logically. He argues that such a theistic conception of Isa or Shiva leads to the emergence of a sentiments clothed in the garments of Bhakti and on the other hand God as a metaphysical entity expresses itself as consciousness. The motive and objective is clear and that is to establish the transcendent nature of Shiva. In the post-Upanishadic period there is the emergence philosophical undercurrents that that spreads in the form of spirituality being rooted in Bhoga and Moksha. The author succeeds in establishing that this spirituality culminates in the affirmative metaphysical spiritual consciousness of Kashmir Shaiv Darshan. That is how the all types of differentiations are made to disappear in the non-dual unity of the being and that is the basis of Kashmir Shaiv Darshan.

The book “The Tantric and Philosophical Aspects of Kashmir Saivism” is divided into fourteen chapters besides the appendix, bibliography and index making it a complete manual based on rigorous research for which Moti Lal Pandit is known. Chapter 1 titled “The early Sources of Shaivism traces the primordial nature of Siva and then elaborates the prototypic Shiva. Author then moves to investigate the nuances the tantric consciousness in terms of the Linga-Yoni representations. This leads the author to conclude the unification of Shaivism and Saktism. Chapter delves in detail into the close antiquarian association of Yoga with Shaivism. This makes it easier for the readers to internalise the synthesis of

Rudra-Siva. He then writes about the religion of the Vedas and explores the Aryan socio-religious system and delves at length on Aryan and Non-Aryan conceptions of worship that later on synthesised towards the non-duality.

Chapter 2 titled as “The Beginnings of Kashmir Saivism” is an important chapter to understand the concepts of the system as it explains the agamic nature of the Kashmir Shaiv Darshan in terms of its foundational texts. He has underlined various agamic texts that are the basis of Kashmir Shaiv Darshan. These include Malinivijaya Tantra, Svachchanda Tantra, Siddha Tantra, Namaka Tantra. This helps to situate Kashmir Shaiv Darshan in terms of its philosophical and theological tradition. He has cited the Pratyabhijna Literature that gave the sound footing to this tantric system of Kashmir. He has also underlined the contribution of Maha Maheshwaracharya Abhinavagupta who with his genius synthesised into harmony the various strands of the Kashmir Shaiv Darshan into a fragrant garland making it a complete system. The various strands of Kashmir Shaiv Darshan that he integralised include Spanda, Pratyabhijna, Krama and Kaula. This chapter deals with the philosophical contents of the Philosophy of Recognition as enshrined in Shaiv Darshan of Kashmir. Moti La Pandit has given due space to the emission of the manifest categories making us understand the subtle themes in the Tantric system. He has also dealt on the concept of Prakrti and Purusa and how the Trika system adopted it and synthesised it with larger contours of Tantra. The chapter addresses the issue of the internal and external categories and the various soteriological concerns.

Chapter 3 titled as “The Conceptual Tantric Background” and Chapter 4 titled as “The Tantric Formulation” explains the content of Tantric esotericism and the necessary background for its development. Author makes it amply clear in these chapters that the nature of the Tantric texts is both extensive and varied and upholds that that these are considered by the Tantric adherents as having issued from the mouth of God itself and thus identified with the Divine word (Paravak). As such these texts and treatises are considered to be existing eternally.

Chapter 5 titled “The Divinization of the Body” and Chapter 6 titled “The Nature of the Absolute” focus on the concept of Tantricism as a positive alternative leading toward non-duality establishing the Divinity of the body and the being. This helps to establish the unitary nature of consciousness. The chapter deals with correspondence between the microcosm and the macrocosm in terms of tantric realm. These chapters describe the spiritual ascension of a Yogi and the process of deification and establishing the senses as the medium of delight. If seen in terms of the seminal of Sri Aurobindo-The Life Divine, the author is successful to prove life as a divine wonder that is the cardinal principle of the Tantra of Kashmir. Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga is a Tantric formulation and is ready to meet Kashmir Shaiv Darshan's principles of Introversion and Extroversion. The chapters are important to internalise the non-dualism of Kashmir Shaivism by proving the Absolute as the unity of Prakash and Vimarsh. The fullness of the being and the order of manifestation are well addressed in the Chapter 6. This chapter also describes the theory of appearance and the mutuality of Shiva and Shakti besides delving on the freedom as the Absolute nature of Shiva who is the embodiment of the splendour of powers.

Chapter 7 titled “The nature of the Doctrine of Vibration” delves on Spanda and thus discusses the content and concept of Spanda. It deals adeptly with the equivalence of Spanda with Shakti and the phases of Spanda testifying Spanda as the embodiment of power.

Chapter 8 titled as “The nature of Knowledge” discusses the earlier views of knowledge and decodes the Self as the source of knowledge as rooted in Kashmir Shaiv Darshan in terms of degrees of knowledge. The chapter also sensitises about the content of empirical knowledge and supernal knowledge. Validation of knowledge, error and ignorance with the two-fold format of ignorance have been discussed for the sake of clarity. He has concluded the chapter aptly with remembrance and knowledge.

Chapter 9 “The Emission of Categories” talks about the emission of pure categories and impure categories in Kashmir Shaiv Darshan. The central concept of Kashmir Shaiva System known as the Five Kancukas has been explained in detail for the adepts and learners both. The concept of Purusa and Prakrti again finds mention in this chapter for the sake of clarity.

Chapter 10 titled as “The Soteriology of Bondage and Liberation” posits bondage and liberation as a Divine play and decodes these in terms of the thralldom of ignorance and bondage. The chapter brings to the fore the concept of knowledge as a means of liberation as propounded in Tantra system of Kashmir Shaiv Darshan. It deals with the nature of liberation and its essential types and suggesting the approaches to liberation as well. The Chapter ends with the nature of grace. Chapter 11 titled as “The nature of Grace” takes this discussion on grace to its logical conclusion.

Chapter 12 is titled as “Forms of Initiation”. This chapter deals with the initiation into the Tantric System of Kashmir Shaiv Darshan and is a must read for both scholars and practitioners to quench their thirst about this system. Then this discussion is taken to its logical conclusion in the Chapter 12 titled as “Spirituality as a Form of Philosophy”. This chapter makes it clear that Kashmir Shaiv Darshan helps individuals to transcend the circle of conditioned existence through the process of affirmation of the conditioned existence. Ultimately the last Chapter that is Chapter 14 titled as “Spirituality of Interiority as a Means of Freedom” posits the self- dependence and other –dependence with an emphasis of the way of ease, recognition and knowledge, the nature of recognitive knowledge and the practical means of interiority besides the individual way and the way of energy. The nature of the mystical centres that are important for the tantric system of Kashmir have been discussed. The chapter goes to the core of the Kashmir Shaiv Darshan and discusses the cosmic attributes of the ritualised sex and terms it as the primal energy. This chapter underlines that apart from sexual intercourse, there are other ways and means that are seen to be the fit instrumentalities for facilitating the arousal of ecstatic joy in the region of the heart and one such appropriate means is considered to be the excitement of nerve system. The chapter ends with the way of Shiva, the Null way and the seven hierarchical disciplines that is Vamadeva, Saivacara, Vamacara, Daksinacara, Kulacara, Matacara, Triakcara.

Moti Lal Pandit is undoubtedly the foremost Acharya's of the Kashmir Shaiv Darshan in the contemporary times who has the distinction of situating the Tantricism of Kashmir in a comprehensive manner due to his vast scholarship and experience of other philosophies primarily the Buddhist philosophy. It is a must read for scholars, adepts and Tantra practitioners.

(The Author is Editorial Director, The Chancellor)



Hawan was Performed at Nadimarg in Kashmir

A three-day-long Maha Yagya was held at Nadimarg village in Kulgam district, where 24 Kashmiri Pandits were massacred by terrorists over two decades back in a brutal attack.

The homa was performed in the village after 1990. The home had significant importance as it was held in the town since the tragic Nadimarg Massacre of 2003.

The Hawan served as a symbol of resilience, remembrance, and revival, paying tribute to the innocent lives lost in the massacre while reaffirming faith in peace, healing, and social harmony. Devotees, saints, locals, and members of the Kashmiri Pandit community gathered in large numbers to offer prayers and participate in the

The religious function was organised by Arda Nareshwar Temple, Nadimarg, Shopian/Kulgam, led by Bushan Lal Bhat, its Chairman.

The Migrants of Jagti Township taken with the Relief Commissioner

On June 20, 2025, a delegation from Jagti Township met with the Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner, Dr Arvind Karwani, to highlight the problems faced by migrants living in Jagti Camp.

The delegation submitted a detailed memo listing the pressing concerns of the migrants living in the TRT.

The main problems included incompetence in the Relief Department, failure to address the delay in shop allotments, irregular drinking water supply, poor road connectivity, and the absence of solar street lighting.

The delegation demanded automation of the e-filing and receipt systems to improve transparency and governance.

They also called for a survey to ensure a

reliable drinking water supply, steps to prevent waterborne diseases, and proper receipts for transactions.

Other distresses included the installation of solar lights, improving road connectivity from Kandoli to Jagti to reduce accidents, and regular visits by officers to monitor case disposals.

The Relief Commissioner assured the delegation that the issues had been addressed with the relevant departments.

KP Leaders Remember HL Chatta

Excelsior Correspondent

On June 17, blooming tributes were paid to former president of the All-States Kashmiri Pandit Conference (ASKPC), Hira Lal Chatta, on his 11th death anniversary in Jammu.

Amar Balidan Trust organised a function under the chairmanship of senior KP leader Moti Lal Malla at Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra, Anand Nagar Bohri.

The event was attended by a large number of community members, dignitaries, and well-wishers, who gathered to pay rich and heartfelt tribute to the departed leader.

A.K. Raina, President of Amar Balidan Trust, delivered an insightful address, recounting the foundation and mission of the Trust.

A proposal was made during the event to permanently display a photograph of Late Hira Lal Chatta in the main hall of Sanjeevani Sharada Kendra, alongside portraits of other revered saints and community leaders. P.K. Raina conducted the programme. Hira Lal Bhat presented the Vote of Thanks.

Kashmiri Play 'Gadd Bateh' Staged in Saptahik' Angdhara Series

During the Saptahik Rangdhara weekly theatre series, the J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL) in Jammu presented the Kashmiri play 'Gadd Bateh',

which P'r Panchal' Ceses) Organisation staged.

Harvinder Kour, Secretary, JKAACL, presented a memento to the performing group in appreciation of their outstanding performance.

Gadd Bateh is a Kashmiri play written by Rakesh Roshan Bhat and directed by Rohit Bhat. The play revolves around a Kashmiri Pandit who, while striving to preserve the cultural traditions of the KP (Kashmiri Pandit) community in exile, finds himself unable to celebrate Gadd Bateh due to not owning a house for 35 years in Jammu. When he finally builds his own home, he wishes to mark the occasion quietly. However, other characters—including his daughter-in-law, a fish-loving neighbour and even the divine figure of Garr Devta—turn it into a memorable celebration.

Prominent KP artist Triloke Kaul Passes Away

Triloke Kaul, one of the most distinguished

pioneers of modern art in Kashmir and a towering cultural figure of the Kashmiri Pandit community, has passed away.

Kaul was among the first recipients of the Sharda Samman in 1993 at the World Kashmiri Pandit Conference in Delhi, honoured alongside icons such as Jagmohan, Pt Prem Nath Shastri, Nirmal Verma and Giri Lal Jain.

Born in Shalakadal, Srinagar, and trained in Baroda, he was a founding force of the Progressive Artists' Association. As the Artist-in-Residence of the School of Design, he played a vital role in reviving Kashmiri handicrafts and nurturing a generation of artists.

His forced displacement in 1990 led to the tragic loss of much of his artwork, a personal and collective wound that still bleeds. Yet his legacy lives on, in every line and colour that captured a world we were driven out of, and in every young artist he mentored in spirit and thought.

*Editing: Vijay Kashkari
Sources: Agencies*

BHOOMI PUJAN AT GAURI TEMPLE, PAHALGAM MARKS START OF ANNUAL YATRA ON GURU PURNIMA



On July 10, 2025, the auspicious day of Ashad Shukla Paksh Guru Purnima, Bhoomi Pujan was performed at the historic Gauri Temple in Pahalgam in the presence of Sh. Dipinder Giri Mahant. Devotees from Martand Tirath and volunteers from PM Package Employees Martand participated in large numbers. The event was supported by Martand Tirath Trust and key contributors including Sh. Ashok Sidha, Sh. T.K. Tickoo, Sh. Shanti Lal Sidha, Sh. Bhaskar Nath Bhawani, and KNS reporter and social activist Sh. Tasaduq. The yatra has commenced with deep devotion and spiritual enthusiasm.

VoterList Updation & Registration of Fresh Voters

Kashmiri Pandit (Hindu) Baradari in general is informed that the election process for the post of President ASKPC, SSDYS will start soon. As such fresh registration of interested persons of KP community to become voters and updating the voter list of 2014-15 is needed.

We request Baradari members aging 18+ to get themselves enrolled or update their particulars mentioned in the 2014-15 voter list of ASKPC.

Eligible KP Community members will have to submit Aadhaar or any ID proof or ration card (Xerox copy) for verification of particulars.

Interested persons eligible to become voters are requested to make contact on below mentioned mobile numbers of District they belong in the valley which are as under:-

Srinagar	:	9419147181
Anantnag	:	9419193776
Kulgam	:	9419302727
Pulwama	:	9419146909
Shopian	:	7889745993
Badgam	:	9086261610
Ganderbal	:	9419784226
Bandipora	:	9796459967
Baramulla	:	9596919466
Kupwara	:	9419174779

For out side Jammu stations contact

Delhi NCR : 9810225255

Udhampur : 9469166342

Interested persons of KP community eligible to become voters residing in other states or in foreign countries are free to connect any above mentioned mobile number.

Further to facilitate Voters for fresh registering or updating voter list of 2015 you can contact/visit our voter registration offices from 10 am to 12 noon. Contact numbers of these offices in Jammu are:

1) Priority Health Care

Shop No. 1 Lane 1/A

Udhaywala: Bhoori Jammu

9906008908, 9818186228

2) Joy Electronics

Near Metadar Stand

Durga Nagar, Sect. 1 Jammu

9419302727

Those members of the community who have already submitted membership forms along with documents and fee to District Margdarshak need not apply fresh. Interested persons eligible to become voters are requested to obtain membership forms after contacting above mentioned numbers for enrollment/updating.

The last date for fresh registration and updating the voter list is 15.8.2025

M.L.Malla

President ASKPC

All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS)

Congratulates Meritorious Students

All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) extends its heartfelt congratulations to all students of Classes 10th and 12th who have successfully passed their examinations. Your dedication, perseverance, and hard work have brought pride not only to your families but also to our community.

We wish you
Continued Success in your Future
Academic and Professional Endeavors.

JKVM Observed Batta Loot / Holocaust Day as Black Day

Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch along with other community organisations observed July 13, 2025 as “BLACK DAY”. A programme was organised at Mahamanya Malviya Smriti Bhawan, Deen Dyal Upadhayay Marg, New Delhi.



The programme started with a feiry speech by a young community girl Ms. Himanshi Raina. She presented to the audience the perspective of Kashmir and Kashmiri Pandits as young Kashmiri visualises it. She touched the historical perspective of the subject, the current situations and the future outlook also that set the tone for the main speakers.

Speaking on the occasion, the president JKVM emphasised the need for all comminity activists and organisations to come together and and join hands to put up a united response to the problems of the community. He also spoke at length about the neglect and ignorance of the administration and the political parties vis a vis kashmiri Pandit Community especially the youth residing in Kashmir. A unified vision and response to the challenges should be ensured at all stages and in all forums.

Col. Tej Tikoo ji, a well known author and social worker very extensively explained the history behind “Batta Loot Day” and the communal genocide effected in 1931. The conspiracy hatched to overthrow the king by Britishers and the exploitation of the same by local fundamentalists resulted in genocide of kashmiri Hindus.

Sh. Aditya Raj kaul, a prominent young KP journalist explained his on ground experiences while working and the challenges he had to face. The discrimination he would face for reporting the truth of Kashmir. He also presented a very discreet view point of the Kashmiri youth.

The programme was conduted by a young Kashmiri girl Ms. Chavi Kaul with her very captivating description and well researched content. She recited a very touching poem which fully charged the audience.

The General secretary JKVM gave the vote of thanks. He applauded the efforts by the JKVM youth team and appreciated their involvement in the proceedings. He also thanked the community at large and all those who took time to attend the programme.

The programme was culminated with National Anthem sung together with the audience. This was followed a peaceful candle march.





ALL INDIA KASHMIRI SAMAJ (REGD.)

(APEX BODY OF INDIAN & OVERSEAS KASHMIRI PANDIT ORGANISATIONS)

AIKS Camp Office:-B-36 Samavar Premises GK-1 NEW DELHI -110048

OBITUARY



Shri R.K. Bhan

(1953-1925)

On behalf of the **President of AIKS** and the entire **AIKS Family**, we express our deepest and heartfelt condolences on the sad and untimely demise of **Shri R.K. Bhan**.

Shri R.K. Bhan was a remarkable soul who dedicated his life quietly yet wholeheartedly to the welfare and upliftment of the **Kashmiri Pandit community**. A man of few words but profound actions, he worked tirelessly, away from the limelight, ensuring that the needs and aspirations of his community were always safeguarded and supported.

At this moment of immense grief, we stand in solidarity with his family, offering them our prayers and support. We pray to the Almighty to grant eternal peace to his noble soul and to give his loved ones the strength and courage to bear this irreparable loss.

Shri R.K. Bhan's legacy of service and compassion will continue to guide and inspire us in the times to come. He will be deeply missed but fondly remembered always.

May his soul rest in peace.

On behalf of the AIKS President, Executive Members, and the entire AIKS family.

AIKS affiliated Units at:

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

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

“KASHMIR...SHRINES AND TEMPLES, VOLUME 3” RELEASED AT RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, SRINAGAR ON 10TH JULY 2025 (GURU PURNIMA) BY SWAMI VINIRMUKHTANANDA JI MAHARAJ



Srinagar, 10th July 2025: In a simple yet spiritually uplifting ceremony befitting the solemnity of the occasion, the much anticipated third volume of the monumental series “*Kashmir...Shrines and Temples*” authored by noted historian and writer Shri Chander M. Bhat was released at the sacred premises of the Ramakrishna Mission, Srinagar, on the auspicious day of *Guru Purnima*, 10th July 2025. The release was graced by the revered Swami Vinirmukhtananda Ji Maharaj, Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission, Srinagar, who formally unveil the book.

This third volume is part of an ongoing six volume encyclopedic work that meticulously documents the ancient shrines, temples, and spiritual heritage of Kashmir, a land often described as the 'Abode of Gods' and the 'Cradle of Shaivism'. The author, Shri Chander M. Bhat, through years of painstaking research, field visits, oral testimonies, and archival exploration, has brought to life the rich tapestry of Kashmir's sacred geography and its enduring spiritual legacy.

The venue, Ramakrishna Mission, Srinagar, is itself a symbol of harmony, service, and spirituality, making it an ideal setting for the release of a work deeply rooted in the spiritual soil of Kashmir. The choice of *Guru Purnima*, a day that celebrates the eternal bond between the Guru and the disciple, the teacher and the seeker, further amplified the significance of this event. The Mission has been serving the people of Kashmir selflessly for decades, providing not just humanitarian assistance but also preserving the values of spiritual wisdom, tolerance, and inner awakening.

“*Kashmir...Shrines and Temples, Volume 3*” continues the author's noble mission

of resurrecting the forgotten history of Kashmir's sacred spaces, temples, springs, shrines, and pilgrimage routes that have, over centuries, shaped the spiritual consciousness of Kashmir. This volume delves deeper into the stories of lesser-known temples and holy places, many of which have faded from public memory due to socio-political upheavals, migration, and the tragic exodus of the Kashmiri Pandit community in 1990.

In his message, Shri Chander M. Bhat expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Ramakrishna Mission for hosting the release, emphasizing that the work is not merely a collection of historical facts but a humble offering to the Divine Mother and an attempt to preserve the spiritual and cultural identity of Kashmir for future generations. "Each stone, each sanctum, and each sacred spring has a voice. These are not mere ruins; they are living witnesses to the collective faith, devotion, and resilience of our ancestors," he remarked.

Swami Vinirmukhtananda Ji Maharaj, who presided over the ceremony, has been instrumental in nurturing spiritual values and community welfare in Kashmir. His presence lends both spiritual gravitas and social relevance to the event, reminding the gathering of the timeless message of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarda Devi and Swami Vivekananda which transcends religious, linguistic, and regional boundaries.

The ceremony included Vedic chanting, a brief discourse on the significance of *Guru Purnima*, and reflections on the spiritual heritage of Kashmir. Attendees included scholars, spiritual seekers, members of the Kashmiri Pandit community, and well-wishers from across Kashmir.

The previous volumes of "*Kashmir...Shrines and Temples*" have been widely appreciated for their authenticity, depth of research, and evocative narrative style. The books serve as invaluable resources for historians, academicians, cultural enthusiasts, and devotees who seek to reconnect with the sacred geography of Kashmir.

In a time when cultural erosion and historical amnesia threaten to overshadow the spiritual past of Kashmir, this monumental series stands as a beacon of remembrance, reverence, and revival. The release of Volume 3 is not just the unveiling of a book, it is the continuation of a sacred journey to preserve and protect the timeless soul of Kashmir.

Among others the Monks from different Centres of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission were present on this occasion which includes Swami Vinirmukhtananda Ji Maharaj, Swami Ishakripananda, Srinagar Centre, Swami Anamananda, Srinagar Centre, Swami Japayajnananda, Vivekananda College, Kolkata, Swami Devadhipananda, Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Varanasi, Swami Matrirupananda, Ramakrishna Vivekananda Ancestral House and Cultural Centre, Kolkata, Swami Punyarupananda, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Sribhumi, Assam, Swami Mridesananda, Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar, Jharkhand, Swami Shridhamananda, Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Taki, Kalkota, Swami Buddheshananda, Ramakrishna Mission Aalo, Arunachal Pradesh, Swami Riddhshananda, Ramakrishna Vivekananda Institute of Values, Gurugram, Swami Arkaprabhananda, Ramakrishna Math, Madurai.

KASHMIRI PANDIT MARTYRS

List for July Month

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.	Sh. Shridar Joo	...	01.07.1990
2.	Smt. Smt. Babli	Drusu, Pulwama	01.07.1990
3.	Smt. Roopawati (Mother Of Babli)	Drusu, Pulwama	01.07.1990
4.	Sh. Trilkoi Nath	...	01.07.1990
5.	Sh. N.G. Sadhu	...	01.07.1990
6.	Sh. Dina Nath	Ali Kadal, Srinagar	01.07.1990
7.	Sh. Raj Nath Dhar	Ali Kadal, Srinagar	01.07.1990
8.	Smt. Girja Dhar	Ali Kadal, Srinagar	01.07.1990
9.	Smt. Teja Dhar	Ali Kadal, Srinagar	01.07.1990
10.	Sh. Predman Krishan	Kokernag, Anantnag	02.07.1990
11.	Smt. Arandatti	Batyar, Srinagar	02.07.1990
12.	Sh. Mohan Lal	Harwan, Srinagar	03.07.1990
13.	Sh. Arjan Nath	Shopian	03.07.1990
14.	Sh. Makhan Lal	Srinagar	03.07.1990
15.	Sh. Dharamdass	Srinagar	03.07.1990
16.	Sh. Hari Krishan	Uri	06.07.1990
17.	Sh. Satish Kumar	Baramulla	06.07.1990
18.	Sh. Jawahar Lal Bhat	Harwan, Srinagar	06.07.1990
19.	Sh. Dina Nath Mujoo	Rawalpura, Srinagar	06.07.1990
20.	Sh. Gopi Nath Raina	Ganderbal, Srinagar	08.07.1990
21.	Sh. Avtar Krishan	Hawal, Srinagar	08.07.1990
22.	Sh. Suraj Prakash	Rainawari, Srinagar	09.07.1990
23.	Sh. Gauri Shankar	Baramulla	09.07.1990
24.	Sh. Shiban Koul	Tangmarg	09.07.1990
25.	Sh. P K Kotru	Srinagar	09.07.1990
26.	Sh. Brij Nath Koul	...	09.07.1990
27.	Sh. Inder Krishan Kumar	Mehjoor Nagar, Srinagar	10.07.1990
28.	Sh. Kuldeep Chand	Natipora, Srinagar	10.07.1990
29.	Sh. Shambu Nath	...	11.07.1990
30.	Sh. Inder Kumar	Natipora, Srinagar	11.07.1990
31.	Sh. Nanaji	Batmaloo, Srinagar	11.07.1990
32.	Sh. Nank Chand	...	11.07.1990

S No.	Martyr's Name	Location Killing	Date
33.	Sh. Shanker Nath	Shopian	11.07.1990
34.	Sh. Raghu Nath	Tral, Pulwama	
35.	Sh. Kameshwar Lal	Anantnag	
36.	Sh. Jiwan Lal	Rainawari, Srinagar	15.07.1990
37.	Sh. Bishambar Nath Koul	...	15/16.07.1990
38.	Sh. Radha Krishan Koul	Ashmiji, Anantnag	15/16.07.1990
39.	Sh. Ved Prakesh Koul	...	16.07.1990
40.	Sh. Brij Nath Koul	...	16.07.1990
41.	Sh. Shibban Lal Koul	Ashmiji, Anantnag	16.07.1990
42.	Sh. Anand Narayan	...	17.07.1990
43.	Mrs. Sahini		18.07.1990
44.	Sh. Chand Ram Kher	Damjan, Anantnag	18.07.1990
45.	Sh. Hansraj Suri	...	20.07.1990
46.	Sh. S S Abrol	Anantnag	20.07.1990
47.	Sh. Roop Raj	Badgam	22.07.1990
48.	Sh. Janki Nath	Sumbal	26.07.1990
49.	Sh. Nath Ji	Anantnag	26.07.1990
50.	Sh. Vaed Lal	Sopore	26.07.1990
51.	Sh. Badri Nath Wattal	Rainawari, Srinagar	26.07.1990
52.	Sh. Bharat Bhushan	Jammu	29.07.1990
53.	Sh. Avtar Singh		29.07.1990
54.	Sh. Adarsh Jee	Baramulla	29.07.1990
55.	Sh. Gauri Shankar	Anantnag	29.07.1990
56.	Sh. Bharat Singh	Jammu	29.07.1990
57.	Sh. Omkar Nath Matoo	Dragbal, Pompore	29.07.1990
58.	Sh. Sundri Lal	Kangan, Srinagar	30.07.1990
59.	Sh. Mahesh Kumar	...	30.07.1990
60.	Sh. N G Sadhu	Manzgam, Anantnag	31.07.1990
61.	Sh. Virander Kumar Suri	Mandirbagh, Srinagar	30.07.1990
62.	Sh. Mohan Lal Mattoo		01.07.1991
63.	Smt. Vijay Bhat		31.07.1991
64.	Sh. Jagar Nath		06.07.1993
65.	Sh. Neel Kant Lala		25.07.1993
66.	Sh. Piyar Lal Raina		13.07.1994
67.	Sh. Sona Ram		25.07.1995

Professional Courses Offered in India

Professional courses are offered by the colleges and universities in India in the following fields:

Fashion Designing

A fashion design course is an educational training that teaches the various methods and aspects of designing and making clothing and accessories. A fashion design course can lead to an associate degree, bachelor's degree, or master's degree.

Medical

Medical education refers to the education related to the practice of being a medical practitioner, encompassing the initial training required to become a physician. Paramedical courses focus on both theoretical knowledge and practical training for professions such as nursing, Physiotherapy, Radiology, Optometry, and medical laboratory technology.

Engineering

Engineering courses are interdisciplinary studies of math and science. General engineering courses teach students how to design and conduct experiments. Engineering courses include: BE / BTech, Diploma in Engineering, and MTech

Interior Designing

Interior design is the art of enhancing the interior of a space to create a more aesthetically pleasing and functional environment.

Fashion Technology

Fashion technology courses are the bridge that connects style and innovation in the fashion industry.

Accounts and Finance

Accounting and Finance is a field that involves concepts related to money, business, and management. An accountancy degree provides a foundation on which you can build a rewarding career in Finance.

Banking

Banking courses offer a comprehensive understanding of the banking industry, equipping students with the key skills necessary to perform a variety of banking services.

Law

A law course is an academic program that teaches individuals the principles, practices, and theory of law. A law degree is an academic degree conferred for studies in law, and it generally prepares individuals for legal careers.

Journalism

A journalism course is a practical field of study that trains students to research, report, and communicate objectively for print, web, or broadcast media. The course teaches students the foundations of journalism and mass communication.

Web Designing

Web design courses teach students how to create visually appealing websites using programming languages such as HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. You can find web design courses at undergraduate, post-graduate, and certification levels.

Beauty Culture and Hair Dressing

Hair Designing, Styling, Hair Dressing, and Beauty Therapy are the Course contents. Diploma courses are available in specialised fields.

Photography

Photography courses provide aspiring photographers with the knowledge, skills, and creative vision necessary to excel in this competitive field. A foundation course or a diploma course in photography helps you understand the basics of the profession of photography

Education

Education in India encompasses various levels and types of learning, including early childhood education, primary education, secondary education, higher education, and vocational education.

Social Work

Social work courses focus on studying social welfare systems and developing skills in communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and time management. There are different types of social work degrees, including Bachelor of Social Work (BSW), Master of Social Work (MSW), and Doctorate (DSW) or PhD in Social Work.

Computer Accounting

A computer accounting course is a program that combines accounting and computer technology. The duration of the course ranges from 6 months to 1 year.

Visual Merchandising

A visual merchandising course teaches the basics of a marketing technique that presents products in a visually attractive style and form. These courses focus on teaching students how to design and create in-store displays.

Graphic Designing

A graphic design course teaches students the Fundamentals of design, Skills for visual communication, Principles and techniques for digital media, print materials, branding, and multimedia presentations. Use of software like Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign. Exploration of typography and visual design.

Dietetics, Health and Nutrition

Nutrition and Dietetics is a specialised field that involves the study of the relationship between foods, health, and well-being. Numerous colleges provide Nutrition and Dietetics courses with high educational standards and facilities. To gain admission to top colleges, students need to achieve qualifying marks in both the board and entrance exams.

Corporate Communication

Corporate communication is a set of activities involved in managing and orchestrating all internal and external communications aimed at creating a favourable impression among stakeholders on which the company depends.

Gemology and Diamond Grading

Students use professional diamond grading equipment to examine a diamond's quality characteristics and grade and identify diamonds.

Animation and Multimedia

Multimedia is a combined version of text, audio, images, videos, graphics, and sound. After completing 12th grade, there are several animation and multimedia courses you can consider.

Career Counselling

Career counselling is a structured process designed to help individuals understand themselves and the world of work, enabling them to make informed decisions about their careers, education, and life.

Foreign Trade

There are several UG and PG courses, as well as diploma courses, available in the field of foreign trade. These courses help students clarify their concepts about the trade business conducted between countries.

Medical Transcription

Medical transcription is an allied health profession that involves transcribing voice-recorded medical reports. The Medical Transcription courses typically last from 6 months to 1 year and are available as certificate or diploma programs.

Computer Applications

Computer Application is a discipline that focuses on topics such as Internet Applications, Operating Systems, Database management systems, and HTML. Approximately 6,800 colleges offer degrees at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Business Administration

A Business Administration degree is an

undergraduate or post-graduate-level program that provides students with a comprehensive education in various aspects of business management and administration.

Foreign Languages

Foreign language education refers to the process and practice of teaching a second or non-native language. Increasing globalisation has created a great need for people in the workforce who can communicate in multiple languages. Common languages are used in various fields, including trade, tourism, diplomacy, technology, media, translation, interpretation, and science.

Disc Jockeying

The minimum educational qualification for becoming a Disc Jockey is either a Diploma or a Bachelor's Degree in Sound and Music Technology. A disc jockey, more commonly abbreviated as DJ, is a person who plays recorded music for an audience.

Radio Jockeying

Radio Jockey courses are designed to train individuals in the art and craft of radio presenting. It encompasses a wide range of skills necessary for a career in radio broadcasting, including voice modulation, scriptwriting, hosting shows, interviewing guests, and managing a console.

Travel and Hospitality

The Indian tourism and hospitality sector has emerged as a crucial engine of growth in India's services sector. Universities and colleges offer various tourism-related courses, such as the Bachelor of Travel & Tourism Management (B.T.T.M.), Bachelor of Tourism Studies (B.T.S.), and Bachelor of Business in Tourism & Hospitality Management, MBA in Tourism, MTA (Master of Tourism Administration), MTTM (Master of Tourism and Travel Management)

Learning and Child Development

Early childhood education, also known as nursery education, is a branch of education theory that relates to the teaching of children

from birth up to the age of eight. To qualify for roles related to learning and child development education, typical requirements include a bachelor's degree in early childhood education, child development, or a related field.

Performing Arts

Performing arts education encompasses a diverse range of practices and approaches. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) focuses on arts education for students from pre-K to 12th grade, educators, and civic leaders.

Event Management

A career in event management in India can encompass various roles, including event coordinator, event organiser, event planner, event specialist, and event producer. While a specific educational background is not mandatory to enter the field of event management, a degree or diploma in event management or a related field can provide a solid foundation.

Fire Technology

Fire Technology is the study and application of fire prevention and suppression techniques. There are a total of three entrance test examinations that aspiring candidates for a career in B Tech in Fire and Safety Engineering can take.

Architecture and Planning

Architecture and planning refer to the process of designing and constructing buildings, as well as other structures. The career path in architecture in India typically begins with a five-year Bachelor of Architecture (B.Arch.) degree, followed by a two-year Master of Architecture (M.Arch) degree.

Gems and Jewellery Management

The gems and jewellery industry is one of the biggest businesses in India, playing a crucial role in the Indian economy. There are several Jewellery Design Colleges in India. There is no strict eligibility requirement for pursuing Jewellery Design Courses. Students from any stream (Arts, Commerce, or Science) who have passed their 10+2 from a recognised board are eligible for Jewellery Design Courses.

Cosmetology

To become a cosmetologist, after completing 10+2, enrol in a vocational training programme in cosmetology at a recognised institution or opt for a professional degree course at a university. Cosmetology is the study and application of beauty treatments and techniques.

Pharmacy

Pharmacy education encompasses the training and preparation required to become a pharmacist. The pharmacy is taught at the Diploma, UG and PG levels.

Sound Engineering

To work as an audio engineer, a minimum of a high school diploma or a GED is required. Specifically, you should take courses such as information technology, communications, mathematics and electronics.

Health and Social Care Technology

Healthcare education is rapidly evolving due to technological advancements

Industrial Safety Management

"Industrial Safety" refers to a set of safety protocols, policies, and regulations designed to protect workers, workplaces, work equipment, and the environment from hazards. With the gradual increase in workplace injuries, the demand for industrial safety professionals is rapidly increasing. Many institutions offer several diploma-level courses in industrial safety.

Footwear Designing

Footwear design encompasses the design of footwear and the study of materials used. It is one of the most demanding professions in the fashion industry. Over the years, footwear design has bloomed to its peak, and it has become a leading career option. Some of the degrees to be pursued by a candidate interested in footwear design are B. Des., M. Des.

B.Tech. or M. Tech.

Aromatherapy and Naturopathy

Aromatherapy is the use of essential oils from plants to promote physical and psychological

well-being. An online Master of Science in Aromatherapy provides a comprehensive understanding of clinical aromatherapy. Graduates can educate clients and consumers about a holistic approach to health and wellness using essential oils. Naturopathy focuses on natural healing methods and preventive care. Some universities offer degrees in naturopathy or related fields of study. Certification Programs cover topics like herbal medicine, nutrition, and holistic health.

Chemical Process Design

Education in Chemical Process Design involves teaching students the principles and techniques necessary for designing and optimising chemical processes.

Physical Education

Physical Education (PE) is an educational program or curriculum that focuses on the development and improvement of physical fitness and overall well-being through physical activity and exercise. PE teachers hold at least a bachelor's degree in education or physical education.

Urban and Rural Development Planning

Urban studies, also known as pre-urban planning, is the paraprofessional version of urban and regional planning education, mostly taken as a bachelor's degree before taking up post-graduate education in urban planning or as a master's or graduate certificate program for public administration professionals to get an understanding of public policy implications created by urban planning decisions or techniques.

Technical Writing

If you want to become a technical writer, you don't need a specific college degree, but you do need a strong command of the English language. The most sought-after education for a technical writer is a bachelor's degree in English, Computer Science, Journalism, or Communications. There are also many online courses and certifications available.

Feedback: vijaykashkari@gmail.com



AIKS Matrimonial Service



Looking for a suitable match for our younger Son. Masters in Engineering, presently employed with leading Indian Auto Multinational as Asst Manager International Operations @ Chennai. Date of Birth: 07/06/1996, Time of Birth: 2.57am, Place of Birth: Noida. Family based at Noida. Pls respond on shahnshah108@gmail.com / 9910076101



Seeking alliance for my daughter. DOB: 8-06-1994, Time: 15:45(PM) in Chandigarh, Height: 5.1" Qualification: B.Sc in Microbiology from Punjab University Chandigarh. MBA in Marketing, Diploma in Computers applications. Working as Product Manager in Torrent Pharma one of the leading Pharma Company in Ahmedabad. Valley Address: Nai Sarak, Srinagar. Present Address: Ahmedabad/Chandigarh. Please contact on WhatsApp 9417687460 for Takini and Biodata.



We are looking for a suitable match for our son born on 09th June 1995 at 9:30 am at Dehradun. Qualification: B.Tech in E&I from Amrita School of Engineering, Coimbatore, TN, India. MS from Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts, USA. Working in an e-commerce company in Boston. Ht. 180 cms. Parents: Father retired from ONGC as GM & Mother retired as Gazetted Officer from Central Government department are settled in Dehradun & Chennai. Sister working in Microsoft is married and settled in USA. Preferences: US based girl & ht. 5.6 feet or above. Interested family may contact on +919445005028, +919840345098 kamalzutshi60@gmail.com.



Seeking alliance for our daughter DOB October 1999, born in Jammu. Height 5'-8".

Qualification: - BA in Mass Communication (Journalism), diploma in International Humanitarian Law, Post Graduation in Rural Development (result awaited). Working as partnership manager in Edu. Tech Company at Hyderabad. Valley Address: - Safa Kadal, Srinagar, Present Address: - Talab Tiloo, Jammu. If interested please contact or WhatsApp Tekni & Kalawali on 9796220711, 8899284050.



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





Letter to the editor

The Lifeline of Our Community: Celebrating the Enduring Spirit of "Naad" Magazine

As a member of the Kashmiri community forced into exile, I can attest to the profound impact that newsletters and magazines have had on our lives. These publications have served as a beacon of hope, motivation, and inspiration, bridging the gaps created by distance and displacement. For years, we've relied on these tangible sources of connection to stay informed about community activities, share our stories, and showcase our aspirations.

The "Naad" magazine, brought out by the All India Kashmiri Samaj, is a shining example of this. With its diverse range of topics, including history, sociology, community affairs, and even matrimonial services, it has become an indispensable resource for our community. The magazine's dedication to showcasing the lives and struggles of Kashmiris, as well as its tribute to our martyrs, is particularly noteworthy. The recent inclusion of a page dedicated to our martyrs is a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by our community and serves as a powerful tribute to their memory.

What's truly remarkable about "Naad" is the selfless effort that goes into producing it. As a voluntary body, the All India Kashmiri Samaj relies on the dedication and hard work of its team members to bring out a quality publication every month. Their efforts deserve our appreciation and recognition. The team behind "Naad" is a testament to the community's resilience and determination to preserve our heritage and identity.

I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to Shri Sunil Raina Rajanaka, the esteemed editor of NAAD magazine, for his tireless efforts in elevating this community publication to new heights. His dedication, perseverance, and commitment to excellence are truly praiseworthy. As a voluntary endeavor, running a magazine like NAAD requires immense hard work, and Shri Rajanaka's selfless service to the community is a testament to his passion and leadership.

I have been a loyal reader of NAAD for many years and have witnessed firsthand the effort that goes into producing a high-quality magazine every month. From sourcing genuine articles to editing, designing, and execution, the behind-the-scenes work is truly remarkable. I applaud Shri Rajanaka's unwavering

commitment to maintaining the magazine's standards and ensuring its uninterrupted publication. My sincerest appreciation for the dedication and hard work that goes into creating this exceptional magazine. NAAD is a shining example of community spirit and a testament to the power of collective effort.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the presidents of the All India Kashmiri Samaj, past and present, who have worked tirelessly to ensure the magazine's success. In particular, I would like to commend the current president, Shri Ravindra Pandita, for his visionary leadership and boundless energy. Under his guidance, the community's voice is being taken to a national platform, and I have no doubt that NAAD will continue to thrive and serve as a mouthpiece for our community.

In today's digital age, where online platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube dominate our lives, it's heartening to see that printed magazines like "Naad" continue to hold a special place in our hearts. The tactile experience of flipping through its pages, the sense of community that comes with sharing physical copies, and the permanence of its content all contribute to its enduring appeal.

However, for "Naad" to continue thriving, it needs the support of our community. I urge everyone to subscribe to the magazine and help spread the word about its importance. Door-to-door campaigns and announcements can go a long way in increasing subscriptions and ensuring the magazine's survival. By supporting "Naad," we're not just sustaining a publication – we're preserving our community's history, culture, and identity.

In conclusion, I'd like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the All India Kashmiri Samaj and the team behind "Naad" for their tireless efforts in keeping our community connected and informed. Their dedication is a testament to the power of community and the importance of preserving our cultural heritage. I hope that our community will rally behind this initiative and support it wholeheartedly.

From my daily diary
22nd July, 2025
virendrabangroo@gmail.com



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