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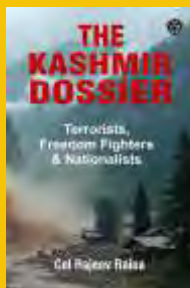


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THIS MONTH'S COVER
Martand Temple in
Kashmir

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Editorial



MARTAND TIRTHA AND THE SACRED CONTINUUM OF KASHMIRI CIVILISATION

Dear Readers,

The sacred observance of Adhik Maas, which occurs once every three years, holds profound spiritual significance for the Kashmiri Pandit community. During the months of May and June, thousands of devotees from different parts of the world turn towards the ancient Martand Tirtha in Anantnag to perform Shradha and offer prayers for their ancestors. Rooted in centuries of uninterrupted tradition, this annual spiritual congregation is not merely a ritual observance but a reaffirmation of Kashmir's enduring civilisational ethos.

According to the Martand Mahatmya, the performance of post-funeral rites and ancestral offerings at this sacred tirtha is regarded as an act of immense spiritual merit. It is believed that such rites help liberate departed souls from worldly bondages and ensure peace in their onward journey. For generations, Kashmiri Pandit families have preserved this sacred obligation with unwavering devotion, making Martand one of the most revered centres of ancestral remembrance in the Himalayan region.

The spiritual grandeur of Martand extends far beyond ritual practice. Tradition holds that Rishi Kashyap, the legendary sage



after whom Kashmir derives its ancient name Kashyapmar, performed penance at this very site. Among Kashmiri Pandits, the area is also revered as Bhawan due to the presence of four ancient goddesses — Bhargashikha Devi, Bhumi Devi, Basvati Devi and Banvi Devi. While traces of the first two deities remain identifiable and worshipped, the latter two have gradually receded into antiquity, reflecting the silent erosion of many aspects of Kashmir's ancient spiritual landscape.

The sanctity of the tirtha is further enhanced by the sacred spring associated with the manifestation of Lord Surya Narayan. The crystal-clear waters emerging from this spring, along with the fishes regarded by devotees as boon-giving yoginis, continue to evoke deep reverence among pilgrims. Nearby flows the Chaka stream, where Adhik Maas Shradha rituals are traditionally performed under the spiritual guardianship of Ganganand Bhairava.

Martand occupies an important place not only in spiritual tradition but also in historical memory. References to the tirtha can be found in Kalhana's Rajatarangini as well as in the Ain-i-Akbari of Abu'l-Fazl ibn Mubarak. Historical accounts further note that Mughal Emperor Akbar visited the shrine during his reign. In independent India too, leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi acknowledged the importance of the shrine through their visits. Such historical continuity underlines the enduring civilisational relevance of Martand across centuries.

Yet, despite its immense heritage value, the shrine today stands at a delicate crossroads. Years of turmoil and terrorism in Kashmir inflicted deep wounds not only upon communities but also upon institutions safeguarding cultural memory. Among the most irreparable losses suffered by Martand was the destruction and disappearance of invaluable handwritten Bhais — genealogical scrolls meticulously maintained over centuries by hereditary record keepers. These manuscripts were not ordinary records; they represented a living archive of familial lineages, migrations, rituals and social history of countless Kashmiri Pandit families. Their loss constitutes a severe cultural tragedy that deserves far greater national attention than it has received.

The revival and preservation of this endangered genealogical tradition must become a collective priority. Government agencies, cultural institutions and community organisations should work together to support the remaining Bhais and encourage younger generations of purohits to continue this invaluable heritage practice. In an age where

questions of identity and roots have acquired renewed importance, preserving such records becomes an act of civilisational responsibility.

The shrine has also faced persistent challenges in the form of encroachments, administrative neglect and prolonged litigation. Protecting the sanctity and original character of this ancient tirtha should not merely be viewed as a local religious concern but as part of preserving India's wider cultural and spiritual heritage. Ancient sacred spaces like Martand embody the continuity of traditions that have survived invasions, political upheavals and displacement. Their protection therefore demands sensitivity, vision and institutional commitment.

Encouragingly, the present management of the shrine under the stewardship of Shri Ashok Kumar Siddha has made sustained efforts to improve the infrastructure and preserve the sacred environment despite difficult conditions. Such initiatives deserve both recognition and broader community support. Preservation of heritage cannot rest upon a handful of individuals alone; it requires collective participation and a shared sense of duty.

At a time when rapid modernisation often distances societies from their roots, the annual pilgrimage to Martand serves as a reminder that civilisation survives through memory, ritual and continuity. The devotees gathering at this ancient tirtha are not only performing sacred rites for their ancestors; they are also reaffirming an unbroken cultural bond with Kashmir's timeless spiritual heritage.

As pilgrims continue to visit Martand during this sacred Adhik Maas, one hopes that the shrine receives the protection, preservation and reverence it rightfully deserves. Safeguarding such sacred spaces is ultimately not just about conserving stones and structures; it is about preserving the soul of an ancient civilisation.

मनील जैन गणेशक

From the *President's* Desk



Respected All

Namaskar to All AIKS family,

At the outset Jyeshthashtami Mubarak to the whole biradari.

AIKS is pursuing the matter of NFSA in High Court due to sustained efforts of our advocates who are working selflessly for the community without any remuneration. In the case : OWP No : 477/2016 titled ' All India Kashmiri Samaj & Ors V/S UOI and Ors pending adjudication, during Last Date of Hearing the Court took cognizance of migrants immovable properties at length. Due appreciation to advocates Sh. P. N. Goja, Kashmiri Lal in coordination with our Sh. A K Raina in Jammu.

AIKS has also written and demanded from Divisional commissioner Kashmir inventory of immovable properties of exiled community left behind in valley in 1990 exodus, We demand that outreach camps be immediately organized in Delhi NCR also where around 30% of Kashmiri displaced Hindus live since our forced migration. Earlier too, RC office J&K has conducted a similar exercise during issuance of Domicile certificates and Ayushman coverage.

AIKS further demands that despite pursuance in the past, by many Kashmiri Pandit organisations a complete inventory of Migrants immovable properties left behind in the valley has not been publicly issued. It was demanded that cut off dates of migrants revenue records be 1990 as the community fears a large scale tampering of records after the forced exodus in the valley.

And that Government should conduct a local survey regarding those migrants

ancestral properties left behind, for which they do not possess any records with them. These properties are the inherited ones through a lineage.

AIKS has come up with a request to community about the upcoming census to be in single voice about our status so that census is vivid about the displaced community regarding population and status. We have to come together on the issue of identity front so far as Census 2026 is concerned. As we met Registrar General Census with a plea to count us as a 'Distinct identity' many pertinent points came up. Our delegation was made to convince that we will have to identify ourselves as 'Migrants 'or " displaced' under the caste sub head in 2026 census that is being carried out. Our primary objective is to get our population census correct so that even if Central & State govt too wants to go for our return & rehabilitation process, our count should reflect a correct figure.. Our community is facing crisis on preservation and promotion of culture, heritage and language.

So far as demand of setting up of Kashmiri academy by Delhi Government on the lines of Punjabi, Sindhi, Urdu academy in Delhi is concerned we have done a couple of follow up meetings with concerned officers and minister as well. We need to create a museum and Martyr memorial.

Last but not the least I appeal to the whole community to opt for membership of AIKS and subscription to its mouth piece **NAAD**.

May Sharda Mata bless us all !!



 Sunil Kaul



General Secretary's Column

During May 2026, AIKS initiated an awareness and information campaign regarding the upcoming national census across the country. The organisation appealed to members of the displaced Kashmiri community to ensure accurate representation during the census process by recording their religion as Hindu, caste/jati as Displaced Kashmiri Pandit, and mother tongue as Kashmiri.

AIKS emphasized that, due to the displacement and dispersal of the community across various states, preserving identity through proper census documentation is of utmost importance. The organisation highlighted that inaccurate representation may adversely affect educational reservations, relief benefits, and other welfare measures available to the displaced community. In this regard, all state affiliates were informed and sensitised through various communications issued from the AIKS Administrative Office.

A Working Committee Meeting of AIKS was held on 2 May 2026 at the AIKS Office. The members expressed serious concern over the ambiguity surrounding various notifications related to the implementation of the National Food Security Act (NFSA), which has created confusion within the displaced Kashmiri migrant community. The Committee observed that the actions and communications issued by the Relief Organisation and the Government lacked clarity, thereby

creating uncertainty regarding the intent and implications of the policy.

The Working Committee resolved to seek legal opinion on the matter, and consultations with members of the legal fraternity were initiated to determine the future course of action.

AIKS reiterated that a community already bearing the pain of displacement and decades of hardship should not be subjected to further insecurity and confusion arising from administrative ambiguities and insensitive policy implementation. The organisation remains fully committed to safeguarding the legitimate rights, welfare structure, relief benefits, and identity of the displaced Kashmiri community.

During the month, the petition filed by AIKS before the Jammu & Kashmir High Court came up for hearing. During the last hearing of the case, the Divisional Commissioner furnished the reply as directed by the Hon'ble Court. The Hon'ble High Court further directed the State Government to furnish certain records relating to migration within the stipulated time for further proceedings in the matter.

Further updates regarding the case proceedings shall be shared with the community as developments take place.



 Chander Mohan Bhat



THE ANCIENT SEAT OF SURYA, BHAWAN



It is said that the Sun was born to Kashyapa by his wife Aditti.

Situated 7 kilometers from the district headquarters of Anantnag and 60 kilometers from the capital city of Srinagar, along the Anantnag Pahalgam road, Martand is a village of immense historical and spiritual significance, deeply rooted in Hindu theology. It is believed to be as ancient as the Sun itself, with a legend stating that the thirteenth Sun, Martand, was born here. This association makes Martand one of the most revered pilgrimage sites for devotees of the Sun God. Nestled at the base of a hillock known locally as Mattan Khrewa, (*Wuder*), the village is a place of both natural beauty

and profound religious importance. The hillock rises above the village, serving as a guardian over this sacred land, which has been a center of worship and devotion for centuries.

The Martand or Mattan pilgrimage centre, also known as Bhawan and *Machhi* Bhawan is just 3 km from the ruins of ancient Sun Temple, Martand. In ancient times this pilgrimage centre was also called as *Matsyabhavana*, due to abundance of sacred fish in the Holy Springs. There are three large springs measuring about 70 feet by 70 feet with a depth of about 25 feet. These springs are known as *Vimal* Spring, *Kamal* Spring and *Gauri* Spring.



The legend of Martand traces its origins to the revered sage Kashyap Rishi

The water of these Holy Springs flows out and mingles with the Mattan Stream. Near the entrance of the temple complex, this water flows from a tank, and this tank is meant for having bath before entering the temple complex.

On the second terrace there are many temples dedicated to Mother Goddess Durga, Surya, Lord Rama, and Lord Shiva. From this second terrace one is having a full glimpse of all the three Holy Springs and the panoramic view of the whole temple complex. There are 8 Chinar trees inside the temple complex

It is said that the Sun was born to Kashyapa by his wife Aditti. Vishnu and Brahma begot *Marici*. Prajapati Kashyapa was born for *Marici*. Several sons were born to Kashyapa and Aditti the daughter of Daksha. They are known by the names Adityas, Vasus, Rudra and so on. Of these, Adityas are twelve in number. (Aditya means the son of Aditti). There is a difference of opinion as to who these twelve Adityas are. According to Agni Purana, Chapter 51, the twelve Adityas are Varuna, Surya (the Sun), Sahasramshu, Data, Tapana, Savita, Gabhasti, Ravi, Parjanya, Tvasta, Mitra and Vishnu. But in Mahabharata Adi Parva, Chapter 65, Stanza 15, it is stated that the twelve Adityas are Dhata, Aryama, Mitra, Sukra, Varuna, Amsha, Bhaga, Vivasvan, Pusa, Tvasta and Vishnu. Very often these names are used as synonyms of the Sun.

The legend of Martand traces its origins to the revered sage Kashyap Rishi, who had two wives, Diti and Aditti. Diti, associated with worldly desires, gave birth to the demons, while Aditti, renowned for her deep spirituality and pious nature, bore Kashyap thirteen divine sons. These sons were not ordinary beings; the first twelve became the rulers of the celestial realm of the Sun, each reigning over the solar kingdom in rotation, corresponding with the twelve months of the year. Aditti's unwavering devotion to her spiritual practices and her dedication to religious rituals earned her a unique blessing from Lord Vishnu, who granted her the boon of becoming the mother

of thirteen sons, each destined for greatness.

However, during her pregnancy with her thirteenth child, Aditti's steadfast commitment to her rigorous fasting and rituals continued, much to the dismay of Kashyap Rishi. He feared that such intense devotion during this critical time might affect the well being of their unborn child.

His concerns were not unfounded, as Aditti's strict adherence to her spiritual practices led to the premature birth of her thirteenth son. Unlike a typical child, this divine offspring emerged in the form of a dark Orb...an egg like entity, radiating with an otherworldly glow, brilliant like the Sun itself.

Recognizing the immense power and divinity contained within this glowing egg, Aditti, using her spiritual powers, cast the radiant egg of darkness (*Andkar Pind*) into the depths of the ancient and mystical *Satisar* Lake. This act was not merely a means of protection, but a profound gesture of trust in the divine forces, setting the stage for the miraculous birth of Martand, the thirteenth Sun. The legend of this celestial event has endured through the ages, connecting the sacred land of Martand with the cosmic origins of the Sun God, and making it a site of immense religious significance for generations to come.

Upon discovering that his divine son lay submerged in the depths of *Satisar* Lake at the site that would later be known as Martand, Rishi Kashyap was filled with concern and determination to bring his son to life. Realizing the magnitude of the situation, he called upon the most powerful deities of the universe for assistance. Brahma, the creator, Lord Shiva, the destroyer, Goddess Parvati, the embodiment of divine feminine energy, and Lord Vishnu, the preserver, all heeded Rishi Kashyap's call. Together, these great deities descended to the sacred spot where the *Mrit-aend* (the divine egg), the glowing, lifeless egg that held the essence of the thirteenth Sun, had been cast by Aditti into the mystical waters of *Satisar*.

At the chosen moment, Lord Shiva, wielding his immense cosmic power, struck the lifeless *Mrit-aend*. In an extraordinary display of divine energy, the egg split into two parts. The upper part of the egg miraculously transformed into a sacred spring, which became known as "*Vimal*." This spring, revered for its purity and spiritual significance, has since been a place of pilgrimage for those seeking clarity and blessings. The lower part of the egg became another sacred spring, named "*Kamal*," which also holds great importance for devotees, symbolizing creation and the blossoming of divine energy.

As the egg split, a divine spark of energy burst forth from its core, igniting the manifestation of Goddess *Barga Shakha*. This powerful goddess, born from the very essence of the Sun, established her presence on the hillock overlooking the shrine, where she has been worshipped by devotees ever since. The hill, now a sacred site, serves as a constant reminder of the divine origins of the shrine and the goddess's protective energy.

In addition to Goddess *Barga Shakha*, three more divine forms, *Beema*, *Bagwati*, and *Shree Bhagwani*, emerged from the unleashed energy of the *Mrit-aend*. These powerful manifestations of *Shakti*, the feminine force of the universe, are also worshipped with great devotion at the site.

According to the ancient legend, when the *Mrit-aend* was split by Lord Shiva, a brilliant light emerged from it, transforming into *Martand*, the Sun God, radiating life and power across the cosmos. This radiant birth marked the divine manifestation of the thirteenth Sun, whose energy would forever be associated with the sacred land of *Martand*. From the spot of this celestial event, a stream began to flow, known as *Chakarsuta* or *Chaka Koel*. This stream was believed to be

imbued with extraordinary divine powers, its waters carrying the blessings of the gods, and was revered by devotees who recognized its spiritual significance.

The Goddess, deeply moved by the serene and divine nature of these springs, bestowed her blessings upon the fish that inhabited them. She declared that these fish were sacred, and that those who took care of them with devotion and compassion would be rewarded with salvation. This decree turned the act of caring for the fish into a spiritual duty, a pathway to liberation (*moksha*), for anyone who approached the springs with humility and reverence.

Raja *Ranaditya* is historically credited with shaping the *Vimal* Spring and constructing the *Surya Temple* at *Mattan*, a site of profound spiritual significance. However, the development of this temple complex extended beyond his reign. Queen *Didda Rani* and Raja *Ramdev* are also believed to have contributed greatly to its enhancement, ensuring its prominence in the region. Centuries later, Maharaja *Pratap Singh* undertook the renovation of the ancient *Surya Temple*, preserving its grandeur and ensuring its continued relevance to Hindu worshippers. Adding to the sanctity of the complex, a devoted Kashmiri Pandit *Jeevan Lal Hakoo* constructed the *Ram Darbar*, featuring the revered idols of Lord *Rama*, Mother *Sita*, and *Lakshman*, further enriching the spiritual experience for devotees. Together, these contributions have made the *Mattan temple complex* a lasting symbol of devotion and a vital center for religious pilgrimage.

The site of *Martand* holds profound significance for those seeking peace and salvation for the souls of their ancestors. It is widely believed that performing sacred rituals such as *Pind dhaan*, *Pitra Shraad*, and *Tarpan*, ceremonial offerings dedicated to the departed, within the temple complex can aid in attaining peace and liberation for the deceased.

"*Pind dhaan*" is a Hindu ritual performed to honor and offer respect to deceased ancestors. It involves making offerings to the souls of departed family members, usually in the form of food, water, and other symbolic

Martand holds profound significance for those seeking peace and salvation for the souls of their ancestors.



items, with the belief that it helps the souls attain peace and liberation (*moksha*). The word "*Pind*" refers to the rice balls offered during the ceremony, and "*Daan*" means offering or donation. This ritual is often performed during specific periods such as *Pitru Paksha* (a fortnight dedicated to ancestors), or when visiting sacred sites like Martand. The purpose of *Pind dhaan* is to express gratitude towards ancestors and seek their blessings, while ensuring their souls are free from any worldly attachments. It is considered an important duty for Hindu families.

The temple complex becomes especially significant during certain auspicious occasions when the potency of these rituals is believed to be amplified. One such occasion is the *Parshotam Mass* (Excess month), a rare month in the Hindu lunar calendar that occurs once every three years, offering a particularly potent window for performing rituals for ancestral peace. Other key times include *Vijay Saptami*, when the victory of good over evil is

celebrated, solar and lunar eclipses, *Amavasi* (the new moon), and Sundays, which are traditionally considered sacred days dedicated to *Surya Devta*, the Sun God.

During these spiritually charged moments, families gather at Martand to perform the rituals with devotion and sincerity, believing that the combined power of the location, the stellar conditions, and their offerings will guide the souls of their ancestors toward ultimate salvation. The site, with its ancient springs, divine energy, and sacred history, continues to serve as a bridge between the temporal and the eternal, making it a focal point for those seeking to honor and uplift their ancestors through age old traditions.

Martand holds a place of deep spiritual significance as a crucial stop on the sacred route of the Holy Mace (*Chhari Mubarak*), a revered symbol during the annual Sri Amarnath Pilgrimage. As part of this pilgrimage, which culminates in a visit to the holy Sri Amarnath Cave, the *Chhari Mubarak* makes a two day halt at Martand, emphasizing the site's importance in the spiritual journey. Pilgrims, along with the holy entourage, pause here not only for rest but for reflection and spiritual rejuvenation.

Devotees who have completed their pilgrimage to the Sri Amarnath Cave, often visit Martand on their return journey to seek the blessings of *Surya Devta*, the Sun God. This stop is believed to hold the power to complete the spiritual cycle of their pilgrimage. According to tradition, the *Astangpranam*, a ritual of prostration in devotion to Sri Amarnath Ji, finds its full expression and culmination at Martand. Pilgrims believe that their journey remains spiritually incomplete without paying homage at this sacred site, as Martand is considered a vital part of the pilgrimage's holistic spiritual fulfillment.

The Bhawan at Mattan is renowned for three primary reasons, each contributing to its deep spiritual and cultural significance.

First, the Bhawan spring holds immense sacred value for Hindus. According to the

Martand holds a place of deep spiritual significance as a crucial stop on the sacred route of the Holy Mace (Chhari Mubarak), a revered symbol during the annual Sri Amarnath Pilgrimage.

famous historian Sir Aurel Stein, this site is distinguished by a magnificent natural spring that, according to ancient legend, is associated with the birth of the Sun God, Martanda. The mythology surrounding this spring adds a layer of divine importance, drawing pilgrims who come to offer prayers and seek blessings.

Second, the Mattan Yatra, or pilgrimage, takes place on *Surya Saptami*, a significant day dedicated to the Sun God. Known locally as *Maag Zoonu Patch Satam*, this event attracts devotees from all over, who visit Mattan specifically to participate in the holy pilgrimage. After performing rituals in honor of Surya, the Sun God, the pilgrims undertake Shraad (ancestral offerings) at the bank of the sacred river, *Chaka Koel*, also known as *Chakarsutram*. This ritual holds special importance for those seeking to honor their ancestors and invoke divine blessings for their departed loved ones.

Third, Mattan becomes a hub of activity and devotion during the annual Sri Amarnath Yatra. Pilgrims on their way to the sacred Sri Amarnath Cave often stay at Mattan for two days, where the atmosphere comes alive with devotion and spiritual energy.

In summary, Mattan's Bhawan is a revered site that draws pilgrims not just for its historical and religious importance, but also for the powerful spiritual experiences it offers, from the sacred spring and Mattan

Yatra to its pivotal role in the Amarnath pilgrimage.

The Sun Temple at Martand (now in ruins) and lying about 3 km from *Suriya* Temple, Bhawan, is believed to have been originally constructed by Raja Ramdev of the *Pandava* dynasty, establishing its ancient roots in Indian mythology and spiritual tradition. Over the centuries, various kings and rulers made significant contributions to the temple's preservation and expansion, ensuring its lasting importance in the religious and cultural fabric of Kashmir. However, it was during the reign of King Lalitaditya in the 8th century AD that the temple was elevated to its grand stature. Lalitaditya, known for his patronage of architecture and the arts, gave the temple its magnificent structure, transforming it into a marvel of ancient design that earned recognition far beyond the borders of India.

The Sun Temple of Martand, situated at the center of a sprawling courtyard, stands as a testament to the architectural brilliance of its time. Its most striking feature is the series of 86 fluted columns that surround the temple, each intricately carved and designed, providing a sense of strength and elegance to the structure. The temple itself is an embodiment of classical Hindu temple architecture, comprising a sanctum sanctorum where the deity is enshrined, an vestibule that connects the sanctum to the outer spaces, and a closed hall, which serves as a space for devotees to gather and perform rituals. This entire structure is approached by a grand flight of steps, adding to the temple's majestic presence.

Just 2 kilometers away from the majestic Martand Sun Temple lies the serene and unassuming hamlet of Bumzu, nestled at the mouth of the *Lambodari* (Lidder) River. Despite its quiet demeanor, this small village is home to an ancient and deeply revered cave temple, dedicated to *Kaldeva*, a form of the divine. Perched 55 feet above the riverbank, the temple is carved into a limestone cliff, a testament to the devotion and craftsmanship of those who built it. The entrance to the cave is marked by an intricately designed architectural doorway, blending natural beauty with sacred purpose.

Inside the cave, worshippers encounter a large *Shiva Lingam*, symbolizing the presence of Lord Shiva, which serves as the focal point for prayers and rituals. The cave emanates an aura of deep spirituality, further enhanced by its secluded and natural surroundings. Deeper within the cave complex lies another chamber, believed to be the final resting place (*Samadhi*) of an ancient sage. This inner sanctum adds an additional layer of sanctity to the site, with pilgrims viewing it as a place of deep meditation and spiritual fulfillment.

The Bumzu cave temple, in conjunction with the grand Sun Temple at Martand, forms an integral part of the area's rich spiritual landscape. Together, they symbolize the interconnectedness of natural beauty, divine energy, and historical reverence that has long characterized Kashmir's sacred sites. While Martand stands as a grand monument to the Sun God, the cave temple of Bumzu offers a more intimate space for reflection and devotion, both serving as essential stops for pilgrims and seekers drawn to the spiritual

heritage of the region. This harmony between the grand and the humble reflects the deep spiritual diversity of the land, where both the vastness of the cosmos and the quiet depths of inner wisdom are honored side by side.

The rich history, profound mythology, and stunning architectural grandeur of the Martand Sun Temple, along with the mystical legends surrounding Bumzu, come together to make this region a deeply significant spiritual destination. Rooted in the ancient cultural and religious traditions of Kashmir, Martand and Bumzu represent the convergence of divine narratives, sacred spaces, and artistic brilliance. The Martand Sun Temple, with its majestic fluted columns, expansive courtyard, and centuries old connection to the Sun God, stands as a towering testament to the spiritual devotion of past civilizations. Its architectural beauty not only reflects the mastery of ancient artisans but also encapsulates the deep reverence for cosmic energies, as it was dedicated to Martand, the thirteenth Sun, born from divine light.

Cartoon by- Anil Nakhasi





 Dr Verender Bangroo



CIVILIZATIONAL MEMORY AND GENEALOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN KASHMIR

(The Intellectual Legacy of Kashmiri Pandits and the Archival Tradition of the Bahis)



Kashmir emerged as one of the foremost intellectual centres of the premodern world, producing a corpus of Sanskrit scholarship whose influence extended far beyond the Himalayan region

The civilizational contributions of Kashmiri Pandits encompass virtually every sphere of human inquiry, yet their legacy in ancient Kashmir acquires particular distinction through a remarkable synthesis of literature, philosophy, spirituality, historiography, science, and artistic expression. Kashmir emerged as one of the foremost intellectual centres of the

premodern world, producing a corpus of Sanskrit scholarship whose influence extended far beyond the Himalayan region and continues to shape global academic discourse. The region fostered a sophisticated culture of knowledge in which philosophy, aesthetics, science, and spirituality were conceived not as isolated disciplines but as interconnected dimensions of a unified intellectual pursuit.

Among the most enduring achievements of this tradition is Kalhana's Rajatarangini, one of the earliest sustained historical chronicles in world literature, distinguished by its systematic narration of dynastic succession and political memory. Equally significant are the philosophical and aesthetic works of Mahamaheshwara Abhinavagupta, particularly the Abhinavabharati and Tantraloka, which established Kashmir as a major centre of literary criticism, dramaturgy, and non-dual Shaiva philosophy. The Trika tradition of Kashmir Shaivism, articulated through seminal texts such as the Shiva Sutras, advanced profound theories of consciousness and metaphysics that continue to inform contemporary philosophical and comparative religious studies.

Simultaneously, Kashmir served as an important centre of Mahayana Buddhist learning. Scholars associated with the region, including Kumarajiva, transmitted Kashmiri exegetical and philosophical traditions into Central Asia and East Asia, thereby embedding Kashmir's intellectual heritage within a broader trans-Asian civilizational network. Through these exchanges, Kashmir became not merely a regional cultural centre but a pivotal node in the transmission of knowledge along the Silk Route.

The intellectual culture of Kashmir also

Works such as the Nilamata Purana illustrate an epistemological framework in which empirical understanding coexisted harmoniously with spiritual cosmology.

demonstrated a remarkable integration of scientific inquiry with cosmological and metaphysical reflection. Texts associated with Jyotisha, calendrical sciences, and astronomy reveal sophisticated systems of observation and mathematical reasoning. Works such as the Nilamata Purana illustrate an epistemo-logical framework in which empirical understanding coexisted harmoniously with spiritual cosmology. Rather than separating science from philosophy, the Kashmiri tradition envisioned knowledge as an indivisible continuum.

This holistic worldview found parallel expression in the visual and architectural arts. The monumental remains of the Martand Sun Temple and Avantipura testify to an advanced architectural tradition that synthesized Gandharan realism with Gupta aesthetics. Kashmiri bronze and stone sculpture profoundly influenced the artistic development of the Himalayan Buddhist world, while regional schools of painting later informed the evolution of miniature

traditions in North India. Under the broader Shilpacharya ethos, artistic creation itself was regarded as a sacred and intellectual act in which aesthetics, spirituality, and technical mastery were inseparable.

At the heart of this civilizational achievement stood Kashmir's identity as Sharada Peetha, one of the most revered centres of learning in the Indic world. Connected intellectually with institutions such as Nalanda and Takshashila, Kashmir functioned as a trans-regional



seat of scholarship whose intellectual currents travelled across Tibet, Central Asia, and China. The legacy of Kashmiri Pandits, therefore, belongs not only to Kashmir or to the Indian subcontinent, but to the wider heritage of global civilization. Its enduring relevance lies in its integrated vision of knowledge, wherein literature, science, philosophy, and art collectively contributed to a comprehensive understanding of human existence.

Historical Consciousness and the Preservation of Genealogical Memory

The deeply rooted historical consciousness of Kashmir extended beyond royal chronicles and philosophical treatises into the preservation of community memory and genealogical identity. In a civilization capable of producing the Rajatarangini, with its extensive documentation of rulers, dynasties, and political transitions over centuries it is inconceivable that the histories of ordinary families and local communities would have been neglected. The same intellectual culture that carefully recorded the lineage of kings also developed systems for preserving the genealogies of common people with remarkable archival precision.

This consciousness manifested itself through structured genealogical traditions that enabled individuals and communities to

maintain continuity with their ancestral past. Genealogy in Kashmir was not merely a record of descent; it functioned as a mechanism for preserving cultural identity, social memory, and civilizational continuity across generations. Through these practices, individuals could situate themselves within broader networks of kinship, tradition, and inherited cultural belonging.

My own engagement with historical inquiry emerged within this environment of inherited historical awareness. From an early age, sustained encouragement from my grandparents and parents cultivated in me a deep appreciation for historiography, cultural memory, and the study of tradition. The intellectual milieu of the household became the foundation upon which my later academic interests developed, opening pathways into interdisciplinary explorations that transcended formal educational frameworks.

An equally formative influence was my tutelage under our family purohita, the late Pandit Deenanath Sharma, a respected custodian of ritual and genealogical knowledge. Under his guidance, I received foundational instruction in vamshavali studies the systematic documentation of lineage and ancestry within the Kashmiri Pandit tradition. This genealogical system was not merely archival in character; it functioned as a performative and socially embedded



Among the most significant manifestations of Kashmir's archival culture are the handwritten genealogical registers known as Bahis.

The custodians did not remain confined to pilgrimage centres alone; they frequently travelled to the homes of affiliated families in order to update genealogical entries and maintain continuity of record-keeping.

institution through which collective memory, kinship networks, and community identity were continually reaffirmed across generations and geographical displacement.

The convergence of familial historical consciousness and priestly genealogical praxis shaped the intellectual basis of my later research into lineage studies and archival traditions.

The Bahis of Kashmir : Genealogical Archives and Civilizational Continuity

Among the most significant manifestations of Kashmir's archival culture are the handwritten genealogical registers known as Bahis. These manuscripts, preserved for centuries by hereditary priestly families associated with major pilgrimage centres, constitute one of the most important yet understudied archival traditions of Kashmir. Far more than simple genealogical records, the Bahis function as living repositories of social history, migration, ritual continuity, and collective memory.

The tradition was especially associated with the sacred pilgrimage centre of Martand (Mattan), one of the oldest and most revered religious sites in Kashmir. Hereditary custodians, commonly referred to as pandas, maintained detailed records of yajman families who visited the shrine across generations. These entries documented births, deaths, marriages, ritual observances, clan affiliations, migration histories, and social transitions. Through continuous additions over centuries, the Bahis evolved into dynamic archival records reflecting the historical experiences of Kashmiri society.

During my research, I observed that the custodianship of these manuscripts rested primarily with hereditary Brahmin priestly families associated with Martand. Among the individuals who played a significant role in preserving and interpreting surviving

manuscripts was late Pandit Shyam Lal Tikoo, whose knowledge of the Bahis tradition proved invaluable. For these custodial families, the preservation of genealogical memory was regarded not merely as a professional obligation but as a sacred intergenerational responsibility.

A particularly distinctive feature of the Bahis tradition was the intimate relationship between the Brahmin priests and their yajmans. The custodians did not remain confined to pilgrimage centres alone; they frequently travelled to the homes of affiliated families in order to update genealogical entries and maintain continuity of record-keeping.

Consequently, the Bahis became living archives that documented changing patterns of migration, social transformation, and cultural continuity across centuries.

My engagement with the study of Bahis intensified after the forced displacement from Kashmir, when I was able to retrieve portions of earlier documentation concerning these genealogical records. Some of this material was later published in the Daily Kashmir Times, Jammu, including discussions of the genealogy of the Nehru family and descriptions of the Brahmin custodians responsible for maintaining Bahis across different regions. The article generated considerable public interest and received appreciative responses, encouraging further scholarly exploration of the subject.

Subsequently, while associated with National Herald as an illustrator and contributor, I published another article titled "Bahi and Their Keepers." This work approached the subject from a distinctly archival perspective, emphasizing the historical consciousness embedded within Kashmiri traditions of record preservation. The positive reception of the article

reinforced the significance of genealogical archives as an overlooked dimension of Kashmir's intellectual heritage.

My later research culminated in the paper "Hitherto Unknown Bahis: Important Archival Records of Kashmir," published in the April 2013 – March 2014 issue of *Kriti Rakshana* by the National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM). Through fieldwork conducted at major pilgrimage centres such as Mattan, and visit to Brahmin priests from Mattan, who migrated and settled in Jammu, I sought to reframe the Bahis not merely as religious registers but as primary anthropological and sociological archives of immense historical value.

This research demonstrated that the Bahis preserve detailed evidence of migration patterns, occupational structures, clan histories, settlement traditions, and cultural continuity within the Kashmiri Pandit diaspora. In many cases, these manuscripts capture dimensions of social transformation that remain absent from official state histories and conventional archival repositories. They therefore constitute a unique documentary record of lived historical experience.

At the same time, these manuscripts remain acutely vulnerable. The political

upheavals and displacement associated with the Kashmir turmoil of the 1990s caused extensive damage to this archival heritage. Numerous Bahis were lost, dispersed, or destroyed, while many surviving manuscripts continue to remain in fragile private custody without adequate conservation measures. The deterioration of these records represents not simply the disappearance of handwritten manuscripts, but the erosion of a vital component of Kashmir's historical consciousness.

The preservation of the Bahis must therefore be regarded as an urgent cultural and scholarly imperative. Systematic documentation, scientific conservation, digitization, and interdisciplinary study are essential for safeguarding this endangered manuscript tradition. These records preserve far more than genealogical data; they embody centuries of collective memory, social continuity, and civilizational self-understanding.

Ultimately, the Bahis remind us that the history of a civilization survives not only in monumental architecture, royal chronicles, and philosophical treatises, but also in the careful handwriting of generations who recognized the sacred responsibility of remembrance.

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CELEBRATING THE CENTENARY BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF **Shri Pushkar Bhan**



We are honoured to celebrate the Centenary Birth Anniversary of Shri Pushkar Bhan, the Maestro of Kashmiri literature. Through his timeless and iconic *Zoondab* and *Machama* series, he made profound contributions to Kashmiri language, literature and cultural heritage. His exceptional work earned him the prestigious Padma Shri and Sahitya Akademi Award.

Join us in paying heartfelt tribute to his inspiring legacy.

Be part of this memorable journey

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Martand Bhawan

A Ceaseless and Timeless continuation of Malmaas Relevance

The Martand shrine situated at Mattan village of south Kashmir district Anantnag, is dedicated to the Surya Devta in the aspect of Martanda. It is an ancient shrine complex, enshrining the Martand Surya temple, the Chaaka Devi Nadi Tirtha, holy water kunds of Vimal and Kamal and the venerated abodes of the Goddesses of Bhargashikha, Bheema Devi and that of the Shree Bhawani. It is also known by an alternative name of the Matsaya Bhawan as the hallowed *kunds* abound in plentiful of fish. The fish are held in great reverence as they are said to represent an aspect of Yoginis who are believed to be the divine feminine protectors and bestowers of super natural Siddhis to the devotees and the believers. The venerated *Kunds* of Vimal and Kamal, symbolically stand for spiritual purification and utmost sacredness. They also signify the sacred site for inner renewal and ritual cleansing. Both of them celebrate the confluence of the earthly and celestial realms as they are said to be bestowers of divine energy and tranquillity. The ritual bathing in the shrine *sarovars* are believed to cleanse both, the physical and spiritual imperfections and symbolically, represent the inner transformation from the mundane to the higher spiritual realm.

The Chaaka Devi Nadi Tirtha, being a part of the greater Mattan shrine complex, personifies the flowing grace of the Divine



Mother, who removes the sins and facilitates the liberation of the souls on the path of salvation. It lies beneath the tranquil sheltering ambience of the Devibal hillock, which is also known by the alternative name of the Bhawanibal. Its mingling waters form the sacred confluence of Sangam after meeting with the Lamboodari stream, near the Tika Bagh area. The sacred confluence is a place for the observance of *Shraadh* for the departed souls, tarpan and ritual bathing and offerings. It is usually done during Malmaas, Vijaya saptami, Sankranti, Amavasya and solar and lunar eclipses, and more so on Sundays, the day exclusively dedicated to the Surya Devta. As per a folk belief, the *Pind daan* done at Mattan during the Malmaas is believed to receive the blessings of the Lord Shiva Himself. One more indigenous belief speaks of additional religious merits for the said ritual as the originator of Kashmir, the divine sage Kashyap Rishi is said to have designated Shree Martanda to be presiding deity of Malmaas itself.

Malmaas forms an inseparable time line

an aspect of Surya Narayan. Malamaas, as such is an extra lunar month added to the solar calendar, so that the lunar-solar years also become synchronized with the agrarian cycles and seasons, in addition to that of the religio-spiritual significance.

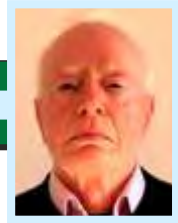
Adhik maas, additionally also signifies a celestial rhythm involving participation of natural elements and that of divine energies that together are responsible for determining the auspicious and inauspicious time periods. It is a kind of cosmic creativity that keeps the universe alive and thriving.

Malmaas comes every 32 months, 16 days and 8 ghadis. A ghadi is a period of 24 minutes and 60 ghadis make 24 hours. The time is also measured by tithi and there are thirty tithis in a month as per the Vikrami Samvat calendar that the Kashmiri Pandits follow. As such, Malmaas constitutes a thirteenth month of the lunar month. There is also a lunar year, which has just eleven months in a year. It is a rare phenomenon that occurs once after every 140 or 190 years. But, a solar year is made up of 365 day's and about 06 minutes.

Malmaas comes every 32 months, 16 days and 8 ghadis. A ghadi is a period of 4 minutes and 60 ghadis make 24 hours. The time is also measured by tithi and here are thirty tithis in a month as per the Vikrami Samvat calendar that the Kashmiri Pandits follow.

with the Martanda shrine. Malmaas is also known by additional names of *Adhik maas*, *Khar Maas* and *Purushottam maas*. It constitutes an intercalary month in the Hindu calendar. It is added after every 325 months to align the lunar year with that of the solar year. Malmaas is a compound of two Sanskrit words of Maal and Maas. Maal meaning impure and maas, signifying the month. It is regarded as a sacred period for the observance of spiritual practices and ritual offerings, especially connected to that of the departed souls. However, any social function of auspicious nature or celebration is disallowed during this period. Reading of the Bhagwat Geeta, Shrimat Bhagwatam and recitation of the holy name of Lord Vishnu is said to give religious dividends as the God Vishnu is also

The Goddesses of Bhargashikha, Beema Devi and that of Shri Bhawani are integral to the holy Mattan shrine. Bhargashikha is a Goddess with a radiating golden crest, having her abode at the hillock of Bhawanibal. She is a revered Goddess in the Tantric and Shakti tradition of Kashmir and is regarded as an aspect of the Jagadamba Sharika. Bheema Devi, also having her presence here, is a powerful and protective manifestation of the Goddess Kali. The Goddess Bhawani also has her sheltering and assuring presence here, being a fierce but compassionate aspect of Shakti. To sum up, the Martand or Mattan shrine of Anantnag along with the related contextual relevance of Malmaas, represents an enduring continuation of a timeless reverence and an antiquated tradition.



 Prof. ML Pandit

Pandits Back in Kashmir

Why Homeland is the Only Option if They are to Stay Back and Resettle?

Continue from Previous Issue....

Why homeland, by whatever name, is the only option?

While both the union and the state government had been tirelessly proclaiming their commitment to reverse the exodus and with dignity, especially as it happens to be the most shameful and exclusive episode of our so called post-independence secular polity. Communal or other disturbances across country did happen after and before independence resulting sometimes in displacements but each of those got reversed

after peace returned and security enhanced within months. But the exodus of KPs, already 37 year old, and despite their desperateness to be back remains to be reversed and that too in the overwhelmingly Hindu India. It also does not evoke round the clock global condemnation because there is no other Hindu majority country in the world barring the tiny and poor neighbourhood Nepal, itself in deep turmoil, leave alone a single Hindu country in the world.

Both the union and the state



governments have, no doubt, begun exploring moves to make a beginning. First, a special package of government jobs to the displaced youth with the mandatory condition of being placed back in their respective districts with arrangements for secured residence at specially erected one-room clusters or elsewhere. However, some of these employees also came under militant attack, causing some casualties as well, including while inside their offices. Consequently, they either work mostly from their secured residences or return back to Jammu for long intervals after each terror incident or apprehensions thereof or of some scheduled separatist announced protests. The experiment has not worked as expected given the fact that militancy largely contained remains to be eliminated as incidents keep on happening not only in Kashmir but now also beyond including the district Kishtwar, once a safe abode.

Second, the government has also begun motivating and encouraging the displaced to visit their prominent places of worship back in Kashmir for some days on special annual occasions and also to interact with their old

neighbours as a confidence building measure. Facilities and motivations include free return transport, accommodation and security. The experiment has evoked positive response as devotees in good numbers have been availing the facility and returning optimistic. Temples demolished or in dilapidated conditions have also been rebuild or renovated to a large extent. Likewise, attempts to restore devotee footfalls at the holy Amarnath cave have also been in place and rewarding as the pilgrimage opens for a month now attracts million plus devotees. The temptation of visiting Kashmir, the paradise, also acts as an additional magnet to attract the devotees from across the globe, notably rest of India. But without round the clock and extensive security it would not be safe for the pilgrims to undertake the long and arduous mountainous journey for days on. Likewise, tourism sector has also been working hard to attract tourists throughout the year. Security apprehensions and continuing random acts of terror remain a challenge yet. Under the changed ground realities, the exodus can only be reversed permanently only if all the displaced KPs are settled at one place only. Since their houses and business establishments



are in ruins, every structure has to be rebuilt afresh and every piece of land/orchard to be brought under cultivation or reclaimed from the encroachers, which offers the opportunity in shaping a single settlement. Such a settlement would be cheaper to build and defend instead of rebuilding and securing every house in each village, town and city. How and where to have such a cluster as also how to manage to get the displaced persons assets at native places disposed of and proceeds invested in buying a large tract of agricultural/ orchard land at a single place can be worked out. The reasons why relocating the displaced to their native places or clusters around them is not practical are briefly detailed below.

Why a single cluster rather than native places or clusters around these is the only viable and secure option?

Kashmir over the past two decades has changed more than ever in multiple directions. Radical infrastructural transformations, including educational and recreational and thereby enabling Kashmir to grow faster than ever before. The growing ease of doing business is offering multiple economic opportunities and those visiting the valley after a long interval are amazed to see the multidimensional transformations not only of the capital city but the entire valley as reflected in a network of roads, newly built houses, educational and training institutions of varied types, parks and gardens like the now world famous Tulip Garden. No surprise, the number of tourists visiting the valley is already near two million and with over ten-fold potential to grow, given the variety of tourist spots Kashmir uniquely offers. The only condition for rapid economic transformation is that terror is fully replaced with tourism and plans in place to take care of them as also of apprehensions of over tourism impacting the overall environment. Kashmir, not long ago a seasonal exporter of labour is already a net importer and in a big way. While such changes are welcome, but the post-1987 election protests ultimately leading to a long phase of militancy, separatism and claiming a huge toll

of youngsters of the majority community and the forced exile of almost the entire minority (overwhelmingly aboriginal KPs) have consequently transformed the social landscape radically. The uprising is largely contained and peace restored but the impact remains quite deep in people's psyche and which cannot be erased instantly but only in the distant future and that too with some well-thought out initiatives and programmes. The impact is formidable for the generations born from early 1980s, rather a decade or so before the start of the militancy and until restoration of peace some time back. Even the mindsets of the elderly may also have been impacted during long years of turmoil. The changed mindsets are also visible as females at all age levels including those attending schools, colleges and universities, for instance, are mostly now in religiously mandated dress codes, a first after independence. For males the change is no less visible, including some visibility of previously unseen West Asians headgears. While growing religiosity is welcome as long it restricts itself to being observant but growing religious conservatism is a challenge for a secular polity, more so when the religious diversity resurfaces after a long interval. It is quite expected that long years of militancy and separatism have produced a large number of hardliners who may be opposed even to the return of the displaced people and resurfacing religious diversity. While the generations who had coexisted with KP community for long before the exodus may be missing their old time neighbours, the newer generations may not be feeling the same way as they do not even know how they looked like. Therefore to presume that the displaced would be welcome back with open arms at their native places across the valley may not be the new ground reality. In fact the ground reality at the time of the exodus had also not been as earlier. For instance, while protests over alleged security forces excesses during peak militancy or over the killing of a prominent militant had evoked strong protests and processions but no such protest

was ever held against the selective killings of KP's, not even against massacres at Vandhama, Gandharbal (1998) and Nandimarg (2003), Shopian, among others. Had a single call for a shut down against the killings of KPs or their leaving the valley been given and materialised further killings, warnings and the exodus might not have happened, as militants could not anger the majority for obvious reasons. It may also be worth recalling that during the 1947 tribal raid, the poor and illiterate neighbours then had stood shoulder to shoulder with their microscopic KP community across Kashmir and saved not only lives but also an exodus. But in 1990 when the guns were mostly with the sons of the soil, the literate and economically better off majority had remained silent and casualties and exodus did happen. Why? Was it due to the previously referred to community divides following the discriminatory land reforms and policies of prioritising employment and promotions for the majority?

Similar may be case with the younger generations of the displaced community as they have been brought up far away and not as microscopic minority but along with the national majority. Their reactions on sensitive issues may not match those of their older generations. Diversity resurfacing again may be a milder challenge in urban areas, given the larger numerical strength and concentration in specific localities as before, but in rural areas where a single or a couple of KP families arriving after four decades may look like, 'aliens' from another universe and their rehabilitation may not be that easy. Besides, the younger KP generations are largely not familiar with their mother tongue too which would pose a challenge in socialisation and integration. On top, the younger generations from both the communities have been fed tales of many unfortunate episodes happening during years of militancy and thereby adding additional challenge for the resurfacing diversity and integration.

Additionally, the entire KP community leaving the valley in early 1990 got transformed overnight into urbanites - initially in refugee camps and rental shelters and then in one-room sets at Jagti, Muthi, Purkhoo, Udhampur and the like. This transformation would by now have rendered them unsuitable to live back in their villages where each person has to be a farmer, a gardener and much more to sustain himself/herself. The returnees, moreover, would initially comprise elders mostly, including a large number of senior singles as displacement had also led to many premature deaths. The exodus likewise ended the joint family system overnight as well as residential accommodation available both in the camps and outside could not hold the entire families together. In bifurcated families, the youngsters subsequently had mostly to move out in search of jobs and better survival. Child bearing and rearing for the displaced younger generations has also been a victim. A family with more than one child is rare already. But the urge to be back in the paradise is strong enough to bring most of the displaced, including the younger generations back home from any party



of the world provided it turns out to be safe and with enough of economic opportunities to relocate and settle. The optimism about the reversal of the exodus is strong enough given the fact that all the preceding exoduses had also got reversed, indicative enough of how Kashmir lives in the hearts of aboriginals. When each exodus reversed even under monarchy, why not now when democracy and secularism define the times?

Additionally, in the age of loneliness for the elderly as the younger generations are over busy with work and smart phones, community's elderly have found a new source of socialisation. While building replicas of prominent temples at major centres of settlements was quite expected and necessary, surprisingly, a host of multipurpose structures in memory of some, rather all prominent saints of Kashmir have come to be constructed mainly in and around Jammu city, where the largest number of displaced KPs are settled. These centres have temples, prayer halls with the portraits of the saints as also space for community functions on occasions like thread ceremonies and marriages, besides many others. These centres have turned out to be a socialising blessing for the neighbourhood community, notably the elders. As the centres remain open to public most of the time, they offer opportunities to meet and socialise on a daily/weekly basis and notably on special occasions. Way back in Kashmir at native places such socialisation would not be possible, notably in rural areas. But a single cluster would take care of everyone's socialisation and that too meaningfully as prayers, bhajans and sermons by saintly and knowledgeable personalities can be organised regularly in similarly built structures.

In view of what has been said above, relocation of the microscopic KP community back to their native places spread across Kashmir is not only an impossible task but highly risky and costly adventure. Each house there would have to be secured round the clock for a pretty long time. A single unfortunate incident or a rumour can overturn the apple cart instantly leading to another exile and

much faster than in 1990 given the speed at which information, good or bad, circulates on social media and also the increased mobility with a fairly large number of people owning now their own motor vehicles. But at a single location such apprehensions can be contained. Another and important justification for a single cluster is to counter the impression/belief that the majority always feels that minority is a liability and a competitor in job markets and professions especially the government sector, as also in competitive exams for admissions to high demand professional courses. A single cluster of KPs would give them an opportunity to show they can create all sorts of economic and academic opportunities given their diverse skills in multiple areas not only for themselves but the majority, rather the state as well. In other words, the cluster would offer an opportunity to the community to show that they can rise to be innovators and creators for a robust Kashmir by taking advantage of the infrastructural revolution that the valley has witnessed over the past decades.

Community leadership challenge

Plans and modalities for the proposed cluster with any suitable nomenclature can be worked out and put in shape after the proposal is discussed, debated and approved. That of course presents a big challenge in uniting the community leadership under one banner, given the fact that each KP, forget the leaders, is a mountain of arguments and a leader himself. While the objective is one, namely of being back in paradise like Kashmir and settle but the organisations perusing the mission are fairly large. Wonder, when Muslim separatist leaders of different organisations could sink their differences and unite under the umbrella of Hurriyat, why can't our leaders of different organisations follow suit by uniting under a single banner? Let us conclude by appealing all stakeholders and leaders to join hands and heads to help reverse the exodus and shape a single KP enclave in Kashmir in coordination with the Muslim majority, the state and the union governments.



 Sanjay Kundu



WHEN ANUPAM KHER CAME CALLING A Kashmiri Lunch in Chamba

My wife rarely called me during office hours unless it was urgent. One morning, while I was immersed in work at the office, she called. So I was surprised when she asked me excitedly if I could guess who was coming for lunch. When I couldn't hazard a guess, she revealed the news: Anupam Kher had called her from Dalhousie. Speaking in Kashmiri, he asked if she could prepare a traditional meal. When she said yes, he told her he would be arriving for lunch to spend the day with us, bringing along his father and a friend. My wife was already heading out to buy mutton,

fish and chicken for an elaborate Kashmiri spread.

This was in the year 2000, during my posting as the Senior Superintendent of Police in Chamba. A breathtaking and culturally vibrant district, nestled along the borders of Jammu & Kashmir, Chamba had not only geographical but also deep cultural ties with the region, particularly its Dogra heritage. It is renowned for its exquisite miniature paintings and the Chamba Rumal, a unique textile embroidered identically on both sides. Due to its untouched and spectacular natural beauty,





the district became a favoured filming location around that time for several prominent movies, most notably *Taal* and *Gadar*. Dalhousie, a premier tourist destination in the district, along with Khajjiar, Kalatop, and Chamera Lake, offers visitors a complete package of natural beauty. Film crews usually stay in Dalhousie's upscale hotels while shooting at various scenic locations throughout the region.

About two hours later, while a group of local politicians were in my office arguing over some regional issue, Anupam Kher walked in with his father and a friend. The politicians were stunned; at the sight of the celebrity, they quietly told me they would return later. They filed out of the office, rubbing their eyes in disbelief and tripping over the doorstep on their way out.

After I greeted my guests, Anupam Kher introduced his father Pushkar Nath Kher and his childhood friend, Rajender Malhotra, a Superintendent with the State Education Board in Dharamshala. It was a small world. Anupam's father, formerly a Superintendent at the State Forest Department in Shimla, knew my father, the Vice-Chancellor of Himachal Pradesh University, quite well. Anupam shared that whenever he travels for film shoots, he asks locals about senior Kashmiri Pandit officers in the area. In Dalhousie, the hotel staff

had promptly told him that the District Police Chief was a Kashmiri Pandit and provided my residence number. This led him to connect with my wife, and he expressed how much he was looking forward to meeting my family and enjoying a traditional Kashmiri meal.

After a brief conversation, we moved to my official residence, a beautiful bungalow perched on the banks of the river Ravi. My wife, son and daughter greeted our guests as we gathered in the drawing room. Anupam said that he had journeyed from Mumbai to Jammu by air, completing the final leg to Dalhousie by road. He spoke about his career, reflecting on the experience of completing over 220 movies by that time. His father shared that Anupam's younger brother, Raju Kher, had also moved to Mumbai and was deeply involved in the film industry. Despite a demanding celebrity schedule, Anupam clearly made it a point to prioritize family and friends. His father had travelled from Shimla, and his friend from Dharamshala, to spend time with him.

My wife excused herself to set the table and soon invited us to lunch. She had prepared a sumptuous Kashmiri feast: *Tabak-Maaz*, *Rogan-Josh*, chicken, *Gaad-Muj* (Kashmiri fish), *Dum-Aloo*, *Chaman* (yellow paneer), *Rajma*, and *Nadru*, all served with

fragrant basmati rice and rotis. Anupam, his father, and their friend savoured the aroma and every bite of the authentic Kashmiri cuisine. True to our community's tradition of hospitality, my wife insisted on several helpings, and our guests, all genuine foodies, happily polished off every dish.

The meal was seasoned with wonderful conversation. We spoke of Kashmir and his father's journey from the Valley to a career with the State Government in Shimla. Anupam shared stories of his childhood and his early struggles in the film industry before his meteoric rise to success. He noted with a smile that he had won awards across every category—main lead, supporting role, comedian, and villain. At the height of his career, he was so ubiquitous that a common joke in Bollywood was: "If you want to make a 'different' film, make one without Anupam Kher." He also reflected on his journey from having just a few rupees to his name to being offered 60 lakhs per film.

After lunch, my wife suggested we move to the sit-out overlooking the Ravi river, where she served Kashmiri Kahwa. As we



enjoyed the tea, the gentle sound of the river provided a serene backdrop. I told the guests that these quiet waters, flowing below, would travel beyond these hills towards Lahore, once the heart of undivided North India, now across the border of Pakistan. In that moment, the river felt less like a boundary and more like a reminder of a shared past.

A distant relative from my mother's Malla side, Anupam's father shared stories of raising his children in Shimla and spoke fondly of his association with my father, Professor C.L.



Kundu, the Vice-Chancellor of Himachal Pradesh University, recalling the many meals they shared at our home. Meanwhile, my son and daughter were delighted to chat with Anupam; having seen him in so many films, they were thrilled to have a star in our residence. Anupam mentioned that he, Anil Kapoor and Satish Kaushik had formed a film company and that the latter two would soon be arriving in Chamba to shoot their upcoming project, *Badhaai Ho Badhaai*. He asked if I could offer them some assistance during their stay, which I was happy to promise.

As we strolled through the garden to digest our meal, admiring the beauty of the Ravi river and the Pir-Panjal ranges, my wife suggested showing our guests the famous Lakshmi Narayan Temple. They happily agreed. However, word had somehow gotten out; by the time we arrived, the entire town had gathered. While the locals recognized me, they hadn't seen much of my wife, leading them to believe that Anupam Kher had arrived to seek blessings for his new film alongside a new heroine, mistaking my pretty wife for the heroine. It took a bit of effort from local temple authorities to manage the crowd so we could have a quiet Darshan.

As evening approached, the guests noted the time, wishing to reach their hotel in Dalhousie before dark. After a quick round of "Lipton Tea"—the local Kashmiri term for standard milk tea, they began their journey back.

The phones didn't stop ringing until sunrise, as the entire district convinced itself that our residence had become a VIP lounge for Bollywood. My wife spent the night, debunking the rumours that we were hiding the 'secret heroine' in our residence. By dawn, the dust had settled, but the legend remained. To this day, the people of the district still talk about the afternoon a Bollywood star brought a touch of Mumbai magic to our laid-back riverside life.

Ultimately, experiences like this are a powerful reminder of how the Kashmiri Pandit community, though small and dispersed, stays connected through shared meals, native language and vibrant culture preserving an unbreakable civilizational bond across any distance.

The writer served as DGP Himachal Pradesh and can be reached out at sanjaykundu184@gmail.com





 Surinder Kaul



OMAR MAXIM AND THE POLITICS OF KASHMIRI PANDITS PERPETUAL RETURN

Three and a half decades after the forced exodus of Kashmiri Pandits, the political class in Jammu and Kashmir continues to circle the issue without ever confronting it directly. The latest articulation by Omar Abdullah in the Assembly on April 26, 2026, fits seamlessly into this pattern—acknowledging the tragedy, invoking the right vocabulary, yet ultimately deferring resolution into an undefined future.

Abdullah's assertion that the return of Kashmiri Pandits depends on a secure environment, legal protections, and a broader societal consensus is not, in itself, unreasonable. What is striking, however, is how these conditions have become a permanent preface to inaction. For over thirty years, the same prerequisites—security, trust, reconciliation—have been cited as necessary before any meaningful return can occur. But when conditions are framed as ideal rather than incremental, they cease to function as policy goals and begin to operate as convenient deferrals. No post-conflict society has ever restored its displaced populations by waiting for perfect consensus. Kashmir's insistence on doing so appears less like prudence and more like avoidance.

The exodus of 1990 is frequently reduced, in official discourse, to a “breakdown of law and order.” This phrase, repeated often enough, has come to obscure more than it reveals. What unfolded was not merely



administrative failure but a collapse of the state's willingness and capacity to protect a vulnerable minority. Targeted killings, threats, and a climate of fear—amplified by militant organisations such as other insurgent formations—created conditions under which flight became the only viable option. To describe this as a generic security lapse is to strip it of its human and moral dimensions.

Yet, if the events of 1990 remain inadequately acknowledged, the political response that followed has been even more

troubling. Leaders across the Valley's political spectrum—Farooq Abdullah, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, Ghulam Nabi Azad, and Mehbooba Mufti—have, at different moments, expressed support for the return of Kashmiri Pandits. But these expressions have rarely translated into enforceable policy frameworks or sustained administrative initiatives. The gap between rhetoric and reality has become the defining feature of the issue.

Consider the oft-repeated assurance that Kashmiri Pandits are “welcome” to return. On the surface, it appears conciliatory. In practice, it raises uncomfortable questions. Welcome to what circumstances? To homes that have been

The violence of 1989–90, marked by targeted assassinations and widespread intimidation, was not followed by credible prosecution or institutional accountability.

encroached upon, damaged, razed to the ground or occupied with the help of lower, land encroachment and entangled in protracted legal disputes? To neighbourhoods where demographic shifts have altered the social landscape beyond recognition? Or to an administrative system that still struggles to guarantee security beyond guarded enclaves? A welcome devoid of guarantees is not an invitation—it is a symbolic gesture that shifts responsibility without assuming it.

This ambiguity is compounded by the dual messaging that has characterised much of the Valley's political discourse. Farooq Abdullah, for instance, has frequently stated that Pandits are free to return, while simultaneously expressing doubts about whether they would choose to do so after establishing lives elsewhere. This rhetorical balancing act subtly reframes displacement as voluntary migration, thereby diluting the moral urgency of return. Over time, such narratives have hardened into a convenient explanation: that exile persists not because conditions are inadequate, but because the displaced have moved on.

The record of governance during and



after the exodus offers little evidence to support such claims. The violence of 1989–90, marked by targeted assassinations and widespread intimidation, was not followed by credible prosecution or institutional accountability. Cases languished, investigations faltered, and justice remained elusive. The absence of accountability has not merely been a failure of process—it has eroded the very possibility of trust. A community that has seen neither justice nor acknowledgment is unlikely to respond to assurances that lack both.

The role of Mufti Mohammad Sayeed illustrates the complexities and contradictions that have shaped the political handling of the issue. During the critical months of early 1990, when the exodus intensified, critics have long argued that his public posture—



The role of Mufti Mohammad Sayed illustrates the complexities and contradictions that have shaped the political handling of the issue.

reflected in sections of the press—downplayed the targeted nature of the displacement. Whether this was a calculated political stance or an error of judgment remains debated, but its impact on public perception has been enduring.

Even before 1990, the communal disturbances of 1986 in South Kashmir, particularly in Anantnag, signalled a dangerous shift. Attacks on Hindu homes, temples, and properties deepened communal divides and foreshadowed the larger rupture that would follow. Critics have consistently linked these events to political manoeuvring within the state, suggesting that the unrest was shaped, at least in part, by power struggles and shifting alliances. Regardless of interpretation, the episode remains embedded in the collective memory of the displaced community as an early warning that went unheeded.

Security concerns today, often cited as the primary obstacle to return, remain both valid and unresolved. The persistence—however fragmented—of militant or separatist narratives opposing Pandit resettlement continues to create an atmosphere of uncertainty. Alongside earlier groups like Al-Faran, names such as Farzandan-e-Millat, Save Kashmir Movement, Al-Arifien, and Al-Nasreen surface intermittently in rhetoric that is hostile to reintegration. Whether these groups possess significant operational capacity or function largely as symbolic actors, their presence reinforces a deeper reality: the idea of a plural Kashmir is still contested in sections of the Valley's socio-political imagination.

Beyond security, structural barriers have steadily accumulated. Property restitution has become a labyrinthine process, complicated by disputed ownership, alleged tampering of land records, and the

sheer passage of time. For many displaced families, reclaiming property involves navigating a legal system that is both distant and daunting. The psychological burden of returning to contest ownership in an environment perceived as unsympathetic further discourages engagement.

Employment initiatives introduced under Manmohan Singh were intended to facilitate reintegration by providing opportunities within the Valley. Yet, many beneficiaries have found themselves professionally marginalised—confined to limited roles, excluded from mainstream career progression, and uncertain of their long-term prospects. Such outcomes undermine the very objective of these schemes, reinforcing the perception that return is being managed rather than enabled.

The demographic consequences of prolonged absence are equally significant. Constituencies such as Habba Kadal, Amira Kadal, and Rainawari—once reflective of a diverse social composition—have undergone electorate transformation in case of Kashmiri Hindu Minority during pre political turmoil span, when G,M,Sadiq, Mir Qasim and later Shiekh Mohd Abdullah were in power to reduce their electoral strong hold. Political representation has shifted accordingly, and with it, the priorities of governance. A community that does not participate in the electoral process inevitably loses its voice in shaping policy. Over time, absence becomes invisibility.

At the same time, the narrative of “normalcy” has gained prominence. Infrastructure projects, expanding road networks, and a surge in tourism are frequently cited as

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evidence that the Valley has stabilised. While these developments are undeniably important, they do not address the central question of restitution. A region does not achieve normalcy merely by attracting visitors; it does so by restoring confidence among those who were forced to leave. Without that restoration, development risks becoming a parallel narrative that coexists with, rather than resolves, the underlying issue.

The generational dimension adds another layer of urgency. Those who directly experienced the violence and displacement of 1990 are gradually fading. Their children and grandchildren, now settled across India, carry inherited memories but face different realities. For them, the idea of return is shaped not only by history but by present-day considerations of security, livelihood, and identity. The longer the delay, the more the possibility of return shifts from a lived aspiration to a symbolic demand.

At its core, the issue is no longer administrative—it is moral and civilisational. It requires an honest reckoning with the past, including acknowledgment of the failures, silences, and complicities that accompanied the exodus. Without such a reckoning, policy

measures risk appearing transactional, addressing symptoms rather than causes.

Omar Abdullah's recent formulation of preconditions reflects an awareness of complexity, but awareness alone is insufficient. If these conditions are to carry meaning, they must be accompanied by clear timelines, enforceable legal safeguards, transparent mechanisms for property restitution, and credible guarantees of security. Equally important is the need for societal engagement—an effort to rebuild trust that goes beyond official statements.

The continued exile of Kashmiri Pandits is not merely a humanitarian concern; it is a test of political will and ethical clarity. A region that cannot create conditions for the safe and dignified return of its displaced citizens must confront the implications of that failure. Until then, the promise of return will remain suspended—invoked in speeches, deferred in policy, and diminished in belief with each passing year.

In the end, the question is not whether the return of Kashmiri Pandits is possible. It is whether there exists the political courage and societal honesty to make it happen.

Calendar of Month

Kumar Shashti	21 st May 2026
Ashtami (Shukla Paksha)	23 rd May 2026
Ekadashi (Shukla Paksha)	26 th May 2026
Poornima	31 st May 2026
Sankat Nivaran Chaturthi	03 rd June 2026
Ashtami (Krishna Paksha)	08 th June 2026
Ekadashi (Krishna Paksha)	11 th June 2026
Amavasya	15 th June 2026

Note

Panchak starts on 06th June 2026 ends on 11th June 2026

Zyeastha (Adhik Maas) (Shukla Paksha) from 17th May 2026 to 31st May 2026

Zyeastha (Adhik Maas) (Krishna Paksha) from 01st June 2026 to 15th June 2026



 Rohini Vaishnavi

"1967 PARMESHWARI AGITATION"

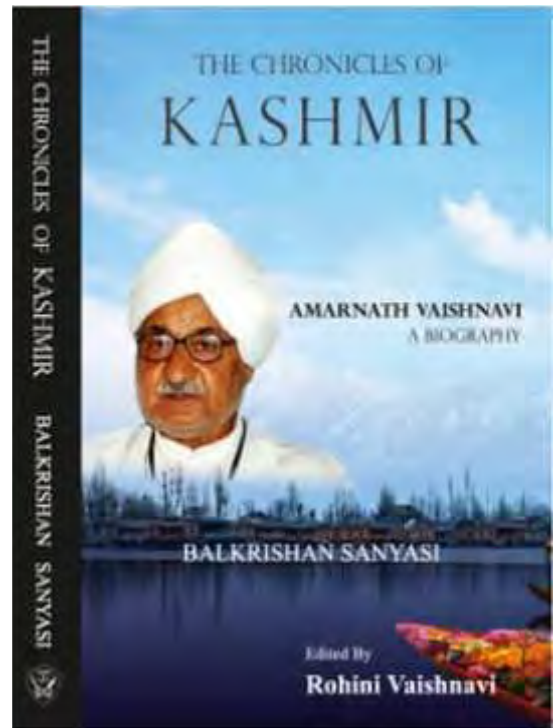
NOTES FROM THE PERSONAL DIARY OF SH. AMARNATH VAISHNAVI

Sh. Amarnath Vaishnavi- The man who led the Parmeshwari Agitation from the front penned down his experiences of the agitation in his diary. The detailed account is documented in "*The Chronicles of Kashmir*," biography of Sh. Amarnath Vaishnavi, written by Kashmiri poet and author Balkrishan Sanyasi.

In June 1967, Srinagar witnessed a historic agitation by the Kashmiri Pandit community. Parmeshwari, a 17-year-old Kashmiri Pandit girl working as a cashier in the Government Co-operative Department, was ensnared in a sinister conspiracy.

Orphaned at a young age, Parmeshwari lived with her widowed mother. She often found cash shortages at work, which a Muslim colleague discreetly covered, manipulating her trust. Eventually, he abducted her, hiding for days before secretly marrying her. When her mother filed a police complaint, authorities refused to act, prompting the Kashmiri Pandit community to launch a full-scale agitation.

The All-State Kashmiri Pandit Conference Yuvak Sabha at Sheetal Nath led the movement, with Pandit Shiv Narayan Fotedar and the Hindu Action Committee, under Pandit Amarnath Vaishnavi, spearheading the protests. Leaders like Shri Amarnath Ganjoo, Shri Tika Lal Taploo, and RSS Swayamsevaks actively participated. For two months, daily Satyagrahas took place, led by Pandit S. N.



Kachroo, Pandit Gopi Krishan Koul, Pandit Prem Nath Gasi, and Pandit Jagan Nath Kheibry. Large public gatherings at Sheetal Nath resonated with Pandit Vaishnavi's rallying cry: "*jai Kara Har Har Mahadev.*"

The movement faced brutal repression —protesters were lathi-charged, arrested, and many lost their lives, including Sarva Shri Maharaj Krishen Razdan, A. K. Khushoo, Hriday Nath Mattoo, Lassa Koul Badami, and

Gopi Nath Handoo. Shri Pushkarnath Vakil's self-immolation attempt was foiled, and hundreds were injured. Journalist Pandit Jagan Nath Kheibry ensured national newspapers covered these human rights violations. The agitation was not just about Parmeshwari but a broader fight for Kashmiri Pandit rights.

Amid the turmoil, an iconic moment unfolded—Pandit Vaishnavi, moved by the suffering, soaked his turban in water from nearby houses to wipe the tear-gas-induced tears of the protesters.

Delhi Satyagraha

In October 1967 Vaishnavi left for Delhi with the band of activists (almost all from Sangh) which included Shri Balaji Bindroo, Shri Ashok Kumar Braroo, Shri Chuni Lal Koul, Smt Dulari Zadoo, Janak Rani Jagyasu and Shri Balkrishan Seru. On their arrival at Hindu Mahasabha office, the food fell short so no chapattis could be made available to them. Vaishnavi Ji as the team captain ordered them to buy the wheat from the market and boiled it to make it edible. His dictum was followed and they ate boiled wheat after being without food for two days. Before the food was served, Vaishnavi Jee addressed them and said: “We are on our mission to save our Dharma and our county so while dedicating ourselves to the said cause, we may have to miss meals or even to digest pebbles”. The Satyagrahis thus courted arrest outside Tihar Jail just after three days of stay at Hindu Mahasabha office in New Delhi. The Satyagraha was led by Pandit Amar Nath Vaishnavi and while courting the arrest they raised slogans “**Kashmir Bachao, Desh Bachao**”. Inside Tihar Jail Vaishnavi Ji couldn't bear to see that some underprivileged prisoners were not getting meals two times and he stood up for them and raised his voice to highlight their cause. However the agitation failed in the end due to lack of cooperation by the government.

National and Political Reactions

The agitation drew responses from national leaders. **Prof. Balraj Madhok**, President of the Bharatiya Jan Sangh, visited Srinagar and warned anti-India elements to leave Kashmir if

they did not wish to live under the Indian flag. His visit was soon followed by **C. Rajeshwar Rao**, a Polit Bureau member of the CPI(M), who met the Action Committee at Hotel Taj in Maisuma Bazar, facilitated by local Marxist leader Pandit Moti Lal Misri. However, the meeting ended in **discord**—Rajeshwar Rao dismissed the movement as communal, prompting an enraged Pandit Vaishnavi to challenge him, demanding he listen to the community's grievances or leave.

Amid mounting pressure, **Y. B. Chavan**, **India's Home Minister**, arrived in Kashmir, initiating talks with Kashmiri Pandit leaders, alongside **Chief Minister Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq and D. P. Dhar**. However, political manoeuvring led to a **forced compromise**, and under pressure, the Action Committee had no choice but to call off the agitation.

Sabotage That Spoiled the Show

Pandit Amarnath Vaishnavi detailed in his diary how the State Government misled the Centre while anti-Indian elements exploited the unrest, aided by the government itself.

On August 31, 1967, Chief Minister G.M. Sadiq addressed the State Assembly, downplaying the crisis yet admitting criticism from the majority community for alleged leniency. He acknowledged protests by the majority community on August 24 but issued veiled warnings against those “creating tension”—a clear reference to the Kashmiri Pandits.

Regarding the abducted girl, Sadiq dismissed concerns, citing ongoing court proceedings. However, the legal process was deliberately stalled, with even basic matters — such as whether the grieving mother could present her complaint in the abductor's presence—still under debate.

Political infighting within the ruling party and factions of the so-called Congress Party further eroded the rule of law. Amid this chaos, Union Home Minister Y.B. Chavan arrived in Srinagar on September 2, 1967. The Kashmir Hindu Action Committee submitted a memorandum outlining

government negligence in the Parmeshwari case and presented six key demands:

1. Return of the abducted girl to her widowed mother.
2. A judicial probe into police misconduct and abduction cover-ups, with suspension of implicated officers.
3. Release of all detainees from the agitation and withdrawal of punitive actions against government employees.
4. Compensation for victims of police brutality, arson, and looting.
5. Restoration of law and order to ensure minority safety.
6. A tribunal led by a High Court judge to investigate minority grievances.

Amarnath Vaishnavi reflected on the events of September 2 as follows:

“Throughout the day and late into the night, discussions took place. Later, a deputation from the Hindu Action Committee held a second round of talks with Shri Chavan. However, behind the scenes, a different narrative was being crafted by government loyalists.

Disguised as 'Peace Loving Citizens,' members of the government's 'Control Room' presented another memorandum, also dated September 2, 1967, to Shri Chavan. They lavished praise on him for his recent statements in New Delhi regarding the tragic Ranchi incidents. Notably, their memorandum was compiled and printed within two days—a clear indication of government involvement. It contained statistical data about the representation of different communities in government services and admissions, particularly at the Regional Engineering College in Srinagar. Unsurprisingly, these figures were readily available, further proving the government's role in orchestrating this counter-narrative.

Most shockingly, the memorandum trivialized the abduction of the minor Hindu orphan girl, stating: *“The conversion to Islam and the marriage of a Kashmiri Pandit girl with a Muslim is a very trivial matter in our normal life and could not and should not have caused a sizeable conflagration.”* This

statement starkly highlighted the indifference towards the plight of the Kashmiri Pandit community, as their legitimate grievances were dismissed in favour of political manoeuvring and appeasement.

Unintentionally revealing their bias, these self-proclaimed “Peace Loving Citizens” detailed every atrocity committed by the majority community, but with a calculated reversal—portraying Kashmiri Pandits as the perpetrators instead. In their fervent attempt to sway Shri Y.B. Chavan's perspective, they included the following statement in their Memorandum:

“The actual truth is that they (Kashmiri Pandits) have spared no efforts to wipe out the Muslim population by resorting to violence. Unfortunately, the State Government has also suppressed many of the glaring activities of incendiarism, in which the Kashmiri Pandit community has engaged itself during the last two or three weeks or so. Huge stocks of arms and ammunition have been recovered from temples, houses, and large truckloads of armaments have been seized, but neither Kashmir Radio nor the information department has had to say a word about the disclosures, although there is hardly any person in the State who is not aware of the matter.”

However, these so-called “Peace Loving Citizens” conveniently failed to address a crucial question: how exactly had the State Government disposed of these alleged truckloads of arms and ammunition? Their silence on this matter only deepened suspicions about the true intent behind their claims.

On 2nd September 1967, a printed appeal was issued by Khawaja Ali Shah, Chairman of Idara Auqafe-Islamia, Jammu and Kashmir, former President of the Plebiscite Front, and an ex-Minister of Revenue during Sheikh Abdullah's tenure. Addressed to the Prime Minister, the appeal described the seduction case as follows:

“Recently, an event has taken place which, from whatever point of view it is looked upon, was a common occurrence but has been exploited in a way that has shaken the country's peace to its foundation and deeply and rudely

shaken the confidence of the majority community. A Kashmiri Pandit girl has married a Muslim after fulfilling legal formalities. There have been well-known inter-communal marriage cases in Kashmir that caused no tension or excitement. Why the present case was treated as an exception passes our comprehension, particularly when it was sub judice and when judicial findings would have revealed the true position. It appears that the know-how in this particular case must have been determined by some ulterior motive, which was used as a camouflage.”

While making similarly flagrant statements in his appeal, Khawaja Ali Shah also advocated for the release of Sheikh Abdullah.

The above extracts from the Memorandum of the “Peace Loving Citizens” and Khawaja Ali Shah's appeal revealed the prevailing mentality of the majority community regarding the minority. The State Government, through its Department of Information, issued the following joint communiqué on 3rd September 1967:

On the conclusion of the visit of the Union Home Minister, Shri Y.B. Chavan, to Srinagar, the following agreed statement was issued:

The representatives of the Hindu Action Committee met the Union Home Minister in Srinagar on 2nd and 3rd September 1967 and presented various matters concerning their recently launched movement. The Union Home Minister urged them to strive for an atmosphere of peace and order, facilitating a calm and impartial assessment of all issues. He earnestly advised them to withdraw the agitation.

The State Government reiterated that in a democracy, every citizen has the right to voice grievances, and it is the duty of the Government to ensure redressal where necessary. The Chief Minister reaffirmed this commitment multiple times, both within and outside the State Legislature.

The Action Committee also expressed concerns regarding various hardships and difficulties faced by their community in areas

such as economic development, employment, and educational opportunities. The Chief Minister had already announced his decision to form a committee to examine these and related matters. Soon after receiving a Memorandum on the subject from the Action Committee, the State Government assured that an impartial committee would be established, one that would command universal confidence.

The government issued the following statement:

The Action Committee agreed to suspend the agitation in response to the Union Home Minister's appeal. In return, the Chief Minister promised to release all detainees and withdraw punitive actions against those involved.

In a joint statement, the Union Home Minister and the Chief Minister urged the people of Jammu & Kashmir to maintain communal harmony and reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring equal rights and security for all, including minority communities.

Following this, Shri Y.B. Chavan held a press conference in Srinagar after meeting the United Muslim Front, which effectively became the new “Control Room.” It was agreed that by September 13, the abducted girl would be removed from her abductor's custody and placed with her mother or a third party while the court handled the case.

However, this was never implemented. Instead, the “Control Room” mobilized the majority community to sabotage the agreement. Chavan did not return to Srinagar as planned, citing tensions at Nathula as an excuse. This episode exposed the State and Central Governments' collusion in deceiving the Kashmiri Hindus.

Dodged Arrests of Pt. Vaishnavi – Interesting Episodes

During the agitation, police in plain clothes surrounded Sheetalnath, determined to arrest Vaishnavi Ji. His supporters, always vigilant, disguised him by swapping his red turban with a black cap, while Shri Prem Nath Ji

Gasi wore the turban. After the speech, they further altered his appearance with a muffler and a lit cigarette, helping him blend into the crowd alongside Shri Pushkar Nath Karnel. He was not a smoker. As they slipped into a lane, the police, mistaking Shri Gasi for Vaishnavi Ji, followed him instead.

Sensing police presence ahead, Vaishnavi Ji quickly entered a nearby house, where the family welcomed him. Their daughter-in-law had just given birth and was resting under a mosquito net. When the water delivery man arrived, the elderly woman, fearing he might inform the police, had her daughter-in-law get up and instructed Vaishnavi Ji to lie down on the bed, covering him with a quilt. Once the man left, they resumed their places, and after tea, Vaishnavi Ji left, staying overnight at a friend's house.

A day earlier, as he addressed a gathering at Sheetalnath, a jeep pulled up, and five men

stepped out. One called for him, and as he descended the stairs, two small children ran to him, clinging to his legs and crying. Though too young to explain properly, they begged him not to go outside, warning that the men were police planning to arrest him. Witnessing their distress, the men hesitated and drove away. Later, the children revealed they had overheard the officers' plan: one would lure Vaishnavi Ji past a marked spot, where the others would seize him. Their innocent yet timely warning saved him from arrest.

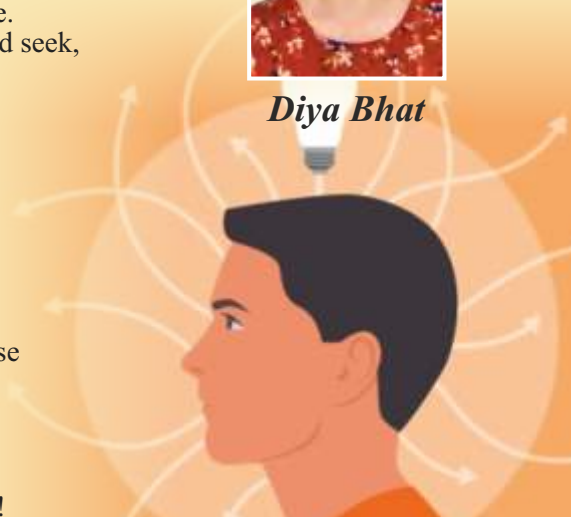
Though the movement was suppressed, the **1967 Kashmiri Pandit agitation remains a landmark struggle**—a testament to a community's unwavering fight against injustice, a moment in history that must not be forgotten. Vaishnavi's battle cry, "Jaikara Har Har Mahadev," continues to echo through history as a symbol of resilience and defiance against oppression.

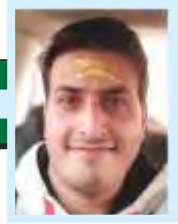
Oh technology, are you a friend or a foe?
 You can make humans evolve and grow
 My phone wakes me up with a loud alarm,
 Then drains my battery with equal charm!
 Online classes, what a dream,
 Pyjamas below, shirt on screen!
 Teacher says, "Are you listening, my dear?"
 "Ma'am... your voice is breaking... not clear!"
 If the internet suddenly goes away,
 What would I do? How would I spend my day?
 Maybe swim freely in a river so wide,
 And stand in the sun with warmth by my side.
 Maybe join my friends for a game of hide and seek,
 Or climb up a mountain to the highest peak.
 Robots working, humans on break,
 Reports written, but real or fake?
 Technology is a helper, not our master,
 Control it today or regret it later!
 Watch one video only, make it a rule,
 Or time slips away... and plays you the fool!
 AI for recipes, for writing mails
 AI teaches students so nobody fails
 Sitting at home, you can book hotels with ease
 Just open chrome, and get for lower fees
 Patients heal faster with innovation,
 Farmers grow better with smart cultivation.
 Boon or bane , it's how we choose to use,
 The control in our hands... we must not lose!

TECHNOLOGY BOON OR BANE



Diya Bhat





Bhagwaan Krishna and Kashmir

SHRI KRISHNA AGMAN

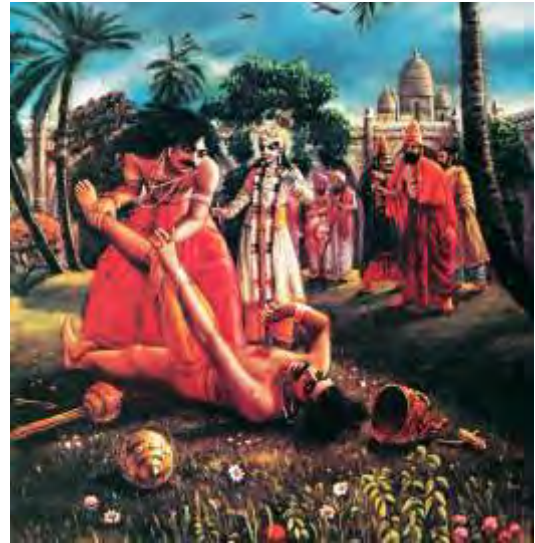
The name of Bhagwaan Krishna evokes images of divine love, cosmic justice, and timeless wisdom. Known as the eighth avatar of Lord Vishnu, Krishna's influence stretches across the spiritual, cultural, and political landscape of Bharat. While most associate his leelas with Mathura, Vrindavan, and Dwarka, there lies a profound and lesser-known connection between Krishna and Kashmir—a land revered as Rishi Vaer, the abode of sages.

This connection is not merely symbolic. According to ancient legends and historical narratives, Bhagwaan Krishna personally set foot in Kashmir, intervened in its political affairs, and upheld dharma by crowning Queen Yashomati as ruler. This remarkable episode—where divinity met destiny—marks the Krishna Agman, or divine arrival, in the sacred valley.

King Gonanda, Jarasandha, and the Yadava Conflict

The story begins with King Gonanda of Kashmir, an ambitious monarch who was allied with Jarasandha of Magadha, one of Krishna's fiercest rivals. As tensions escalated between the Yadavas and Jarasandha's allies, Gonanda joined the war against Krishna's clan.

During a fierce battle, it was not Krishna but his elder brother, Balarama, who confronted Gonanda. In the clash, Balarama killed King Gonanda, leaving the kingdom of



Kashmir without a ruler and plunging it into uncertainty.

Damodara's Revenge and Death

Following his father's death, Prince Damodara, the son of Gonanda, sought revenge. Gathering his forces, he marched to Gandhara, where he challenged Krishna himself. A fierce battle ensued between the forces of Krishna and Damodara. Despite his valor, Damodara was slain by Krishna, thus ending the direct male line of Gonanda's rule.

This moment of karmic reckoning set the stage for a pivotal and compassionate act by Bhagwaan Krishna—one that would change the course of Kashmir's history.

Krishna Crowns Queen Yashomati

After the fall of Damodara, Krishna turned his attention to Damodara's widow, the noble and pregnant Queen Yashomati. A political debate erupted in the valley: could a woman ascend the throne? In response, a Dharamshala Sansad—a spiritual and political assembly—was convened in Kashmir to determine the rightful heir.

It was here that Bhagwaan Krishna Himself stepped forward, not only to defend Queen Yashomati's right to rule, but to personally coronate her as the first reigning queen of Kashmir.

Krishna declared that leadership must be based on dharma, merit, and the welfare of the people—not gender. Furthermore, he considered the land of Kashmir to be a manifestation of Devi Parvati, and in honoring Yashomati, he honored the divine feminine principle.

Queen Yashomati's Reign and Kashmir's Neutrality in the Mahabharata War

Under Krishna's protection and guidance, Queen Yashomati ruled the kingdom with wisdom and grace, preserving peace and stability during a turbulent era. She remained regent until her son, Gonanda II, came of age and took the throne.

This transition of power explains a crucial historical detail: Kashmir remained neutral during the Mahabharata war. Since the kingdom was ruled by a queen regent on behalf of a minor heir, it did not participate in the epic conflict between the Pandavas and Kauravas.

Kashmir: A Land Blessed by Krishna

Krishna's visit to Kashmir and his direct involvement in its royal succession is not just a historical or mythological tale—it is a sacred moment in the valley's legacy. By personally upholding justice, protecting the widow and unborn heir, and recognizing the feminine power of leadership, Krishna reaffirmed Kashmir as a divine land—blessed by Dharma and Devi alike.

The story of Shri Krishna Agman—his divine arrival and action in Kashmir—adds

depth to the region's spiritual heritage, elevating it as more than a beautiful landscape. It becomes a land where God Himself walked, judged, and crowned a queen.

Krishna in Kashmiri Mysticism and Philosophy

Even beyond this royal episode, Krishna's spiritual presence in Kashmir runs deep. Ancient texts like the Nilamata Purana mention Krishna and his divine plays. Kashmir's devotional and philosophical traditions—especially among the Kashmiri Pandits—revered him through Janmashtami celebrations and temple rituals.

In the world of Kashmiri Shaivism, Krishna is not in opposition to Shiva but is seen as another form of the supreme consciousness. Famous Philosophers and saints of Kashmir acknowledged the unity of all divine forms—Shiva, Vishnu, Shakti—as expressions of the same cosmic reality.

Shri Krishna Agman: A Call for Spiritual Return

In today's age of political unrest and spiritual searching, the memory of Bhagwan Krishna's presence in Kashmir serves as a call for reawakening. His defence of dharma, his respect for feminine power, and his blessing of Kashmir as a divine land carry profound meaning. Shri Krishna Agman is not just an ancient memory—it is an eternal truth. When justice falters, when leadership is questioned, and when society forgets its roots, Krishna returns—not as a man, but as a principle of truth, compassion, and cosmic order.

Conclusion: The Eternal Flute in the Valley

From the battlefields of Gandhara to the royal courts of Kashmir, from the coronation of a queen to the silence of Himalayan peaks, Bhagwan Krishna's presence in Kashmir is undeniable—etched in story, spirit, and soul.

As the chinars whisper in the breeze and the sacred rivers flow gently through the valley, perhaps the echo of Krishna's flute still lingers—reminding us that dharma is eternal, and that even in the darkest times, the Divine arrives to restore balance. This is Shri Krishna Agman—the Lord's arrival, the valley's blessing, and the soul's awakening.



A Fight With Destiny

I am writing this piece on a topic about a rare disease called ALS (Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis). It is close to me as it occurred to my heart and soul my beloved mother. This disease struck her when she was 73 years old and within two years her health deteriorated rapidly, and she passed away and went to the other realm of the world. It's painful as I write about this disease as it is a reminder of my beloved mother who was a pious and righteous person all her life and this should not have happened to her. My dear mother was the youngest among her five siblings and she was fondly called 'Dida' at her maternal home. She had lost her mother at a very early age when she was just three years old. As far as I can remember she was a dutiful daughter an upright and a just person who was strict as well as loving at the same time. All children respected her and loved her at the same time. She was a jewel in the crown of her husband who entertained and did up her house beautifully wherever my father was transferred. She brought up her children with a lot of love and care at the same time she was very strict about their manners and studies. She was an all-rounder and there was not a thing she couldn't do. She was the epitome of beauty, grace and confidence. She was a pure soul and even in her death her beauty did not wane away, and she had the same angelic smile on her face as when she was alive. I wish she was still around prodding and chiding me to get involved with life before the cruel disease took her away from us.



ALS or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis affects nerve cells responsible for muscle action. As a result, muscles begin to waste away, causing weakness.

Each year, ALS is diagnosed in about 1.7 to 2.2 out of every 100,000 people. These numbers make it a rare illness in the broader scope of health conditions. Although rare, its impact on those affected and their families is profound. ALS symptoms can mimic those of other neurological diseases, such as dementia, multiple sclerosis, or peripheral neuropathy. Early symptoms, like muscle weakness and cramps, are often subtle and

can be easily attributed to aging or other conditions.

There is also no single test for ALS, and diagnosis typically relies on a combination of clinical evaluations, history, and the exclusion of other conditions. This often involves a series of tests to assess muscle and nerve function.

ALS symptoms can also progress at different rates, making it difficult to determine if a person is experiencing a degenerative disease or a temporary condition. This variability can lead to delays in diagnosis.

These factors contribute to the complexity and difficulty of diagnosing ALS, often resulting in a lengthy diagnostic process.

Types of ALS : ALS is divided primarily into two types: Sporadic and Familial.

Sporadic ALS

Sporadic ALS is the most common, representing 90-95% of all cases. It arises seemingly randomly, with no known family history. This means many cases develop without an apparent cause, making research into its origins challenging. Gene mutations can cause sporadic ALS by triggering abnormal protein folding or cellular dysfunction, even in the absence of a family history, due to random genetic changes or environmental factors that affect the nervous system.

Familial ALS:

Familial ALS accounts for about 5-10% of all cases. Unlike sporadic ALS, familial ALS is genetic and often passed through families. Genetic mutations, such as those found in the SOD1 gene, are contributing factors.

Factors influencing ALS disease progression rates

ALS rates depend on several factors, including genetics, environment, and lifestyle. A strong genetic predisposition can be present, as seen in familial ALS cases. Gene mutations like those in the C9orf72 gene significantly influence these cases. In contrast, sporadic ALS might find its roots more in environmental aspects.

Most ALS diagnoses occur between the ages of 40 and 70. This age range reflects the majority of cases, making it a focal point for understanding disease onset and progression. Interestingly, ALS is extraordinarily rare in individuals younger than 20. As age progresses, risks associated with cellular degeneration become more pronounced, complicating the body's ability to repair nerve cells.

Neuroscience research highlights this connection between aging and ALS. These studies delve into cellular mechanisms like oxidative stress and malfunctioning protein aggregation that worsen with age.

The age factor triggers questions on whether the late-life onset of ALS could mask underlying vulnerabilities accumulating over a lifetime. While genetics play a key role, lifestyle factors such as dietary habits and physical activity levels may also influence age of onset.

ALS incidence varies significantly among different ethnic groups and regions. Caucasians show higher rates of ALS compared to other ethnic groups and the C9orf72 gene mutation is more frequent in European populations. However, a lack of research in diverse populations and underrepresented communities impedes progress in understanding the global incidence and cause of ALS and creates bias in research that is currently available. The Target ALS Natural History Study's comprehensive biosample and dataset collection for ALS biomarker discovery and research efforts aims to address these gaps in data. The consortium is expanding to include international sites to bolster sample analyses from diverse genetic and ethnic backgrounds. Genetic research into ALS has made significant strides recently. New genes associated with ALS have surfaced, offering promising avenues for diagnostics and treatment. For example, a recent study published by members of a Target ALS research consortium explores the genetic underpinnings of the disease using machine learning analysis of large datasets. Such

discoveries hold potential for targeted therapeutic approaches and advanced diagnostics in affected populations.

My mother's illness belonged to the former type of ALS that is Sporadic ALS mainly caused by uncongenial environment which affected her lifestyle. In her latter years she stopped going out for gardening a long-cherished hobby of hers (in every posting as my father being an ex-defence officer was transferred every two to three years, she groomed her garden well). My mother's muscles weakened first, and she used a walker to assist her in walking, she would fall down losing her grip on the walker often. Her food pipe had narrowed down considerably, and she had to be given food and medicines mashed with curds and honey respectively. She gradually lost her voice and fractured her foot. It was a difficult moment for all of us watching her struggle. She was a very brave lady she didn't let her fall deter her from trying to stand up again and again and fight for life. We all knew she didn't want to give up that easily as she was valorous and alert till the end. I should say she was a witness to her own death as she

was alert till the end as she was approaching her death. Her ALS was discovered while on a visit to her son in the US and the doctors there were very transparent, they told her she had only a short while to live. Anyways she decided to come to her motherland India and to her beloved husband's house to depart to another world. Her husband and daughters and son provided her with every comfort to ease her pain. Towards the end of her disease, she had lost total control over her muscles. The hospital in the US had provided her with the latest breath assisting machine V-Pap which is not yet available in India and even the hospitals here have access only to bi-pap an inferior model of V-pap. And being a rare disease its cure is still in its nascent stages in India and there are not many doctors well equipped to treat ALS patients. I pray to God that her soul is at peace after a painful but valorous fight with the situation and excruciating painful one. All our attempts to increase her life failed. Maybe she was too noble a soul to live in this sinful world and I wish Ma wherever you are now you are at peace and rested.

SAVE SHARDA COMMITTEE CALLS ON UNION MINISTER SHIVRAJ SINGH CHAUHAN FOR WIDENING OF TEETWAL ROAD AND SETTING UP OF YATRI NIWAS AT SHARDA TEMPLE



Save Sharda Committee Chairman, Ravinder Pandita Called on Union minister of Agriculture & Rural development Shivraj Singh Chauhan ji in New Delhi today. He requested the minister for widening of Chamkote to Teetwal road and setting up of yatri niwas on EP land available near Sharda temple LoC Teetwal Kashmir under his ministry. This will promote Border & religious tourism. The meeting was facilitated by Vivek

Tankha ji, only KP MP in Parliament. The Hon'ble minister assured to get it done and also desired to visit sharda temple at LoC Teetwal in near future.

In a press release, Ravinder Pandita, Chairman of Save Sharda Committee Kashmir Regd (a trust), Ajaz khan Coordinator and on behalf of People of Karnah thanked Shivraj Singh Chauhan ji and expressed hope that this pre independence road will facilitate not only public but indian army as well to the last post. He presented Sharda Shawl, prashad of Sharda Temple and the representation to the Hon'ble minister on this occasion.

- Ravinder Pandita



THE CITY I CARRY

Kumar M Tiku

How would
My city be now
The one
I left behind
On a night
That smelled of blood
And gunfire
And My unfinished
Adulthood?

Does the river
Still bend
Like a patient
Old storyteller
Beside the crumbling
Fateh Kadal railing?
Where
We once
Leaned over
To watch
Paper boats drift
Toward a future
We did not
Yet fear?

I wonder
If the chinars
Still stand
Like a canopy
At the entrance
Of *Naseem Bagh*
Its leaves
Once falling
Like small
Red letters
From autumn's
Quiet hands
Or did someone

Cut them down
Mistaking memory
For inconvenience?

So many years
Have passed
Since the night
The shouting began
Since doors closed
Like frightened
Eyelids
And streets
Forgot
Their laughter
I was
Young enough
To believe
Exile
Was temporary
That cities
Waited
Faithfully
For those
Who
Loved them

But years
Stretch
Strangely
In absence
They become
Deserts
Where
Familiar voices
Fade
Into the wind
Does

My house
Still exist?
Not the bricks
And plaster

Houses
Are patient things
I mean
The echo
Of
My mother's
Voice
Calling me in
From the alley
At dusk
The smell
Of bread
Rising
In winter
The rickety radio
With
A scratchy reception
Murmuring
Old songs
While
Snow gathered
Softly
On the silent roofs
Do strangers
Live there now?
Placing
Their cups
On
The windowsill
Where

My father
Once
Kept his books?

Perhaps
They
Have painted
The walls
A color
My childhood
Never knew

Perhaps
The apple tree
In my friend's
Courtyard
Still blooms
Every spring
Without
Asking
Where
the boy
I loved
Has gone

Cities change
Even
For those
Who stay
And for those
Who leave
They become
Unfinished
Sentences
Haunting
The mind

Sometimes
I close
My eyes
And walk
Its streets
Again
The market
Breathes spices
And noise

The baker
Still knows
My name
Children chase
Kites
Through
Narrow lanes
Where the sky
Is only a ribbon
Of blue.

But time
Has surely
Moved on
New shops
Must stand
Where Palladium
Our cinema
Once showed
Western flicks
The Polo Ground
May now be
A shopping mall
The old library
Of Ramakrishna
Ashram
A forgotten
Skeleton
Of dust

And yet
I believe
Something
Survives
Cities
Are
Not only stone
They are
Whispers
In the air
Footsteps
Stored
In the soil
Laughter

Pressed quietly
Between
The pages
Of time

Somewhere
In that city
A breeze
Must still pass
Through
The streets
Of
My childhood

Perhaps
It pauses
Outside
The door
Of my old home
Confused
By my absence

Perhaps
The wind
Still remembers
The boy
Who once
Ran there
Barefoot
Dreaming
Impossible dreams

And sometimes
I wonder
If I were
To return
Now
Older
Slower
Carrying
The long
Shadow
Of exile
Would the city



Recognize me?
Or would I
Stand
Among its streets
Like a stranger
Trying
To introduce
Himself
To his own past?

Still
In the quiet
Hours
Of night
When
Memory
Loosens
Its knots
I speak
Softly
To that
Distant
Place
Wait
For me

Not in
Your buildings
Not
In
Your
Changing streets
But
In the stubborn corner
Of the sky
Where
Childhood
Once lived

For cities
May forget
Their people
But somewhere
In the dust
Of an old lane
Or the shade
Of a patient tree
My footsteps
Are
Still there
Waiting
To be found

This verse, offered to Naad, as an exclusive, is from the Poet's "My City of Seven Bridges", a forthcoming anthology on Kashmir



ALL INDIA KASHMIRI SAMAJ (REGD.)

(APEX BODY OF INDIAN & OVERSEAS KASHMIRI PANDIT ORGANISATIONS)

Web: www.aiks.org; E-mail: hqaiks@gmail.com

OUR IDENTITY. OUR FUTURE.

Let's Ensure We Are Counted.



CAPTURING CENSUS DATA IS CAPTURING OUR IDENTITY



Dear Members of the Kashmiri Pandit Community,

We earnestly request your participation in the upcoming census.



It is vital that we ensure accurate representation by
**MARKING OUR RELIGION AS HINDU
AND SPECIFYING OUR CASTE/JATI AS
DISPLACED KASHMIRI PANDIT.**

WHY IT MATTERS



PRESERVING OUR IDENTITY

Given how displacement has scattered us across the country, preserving our identity is paramount.



EDUCATION & RESERVATIONS

Without proper identification, we risk losing reservations in education and other benefits.



RELIEF & SUPPORT

Many families may lose vital relief support if our numbers are not accurately captured.



STAND UNITED

Let's stand united and ensure we are counted.



REMEMBER:



Religion - Hindu



Caste - Displaced Kashmiri Pandit



Mother Tongue - Kashmiri

Thank you for your commitment.

AIKS affiliated Units at:

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



 R K Rawal

Importance of PITRA SHRADH



Every parent struggles and faces hardships to ensure happy future for his children. Our parents faced the same situation and every parent of previous numerous generations also followed the same path thereby creating a debt (rin) on the succeeding generation. It is difficult to imagine the extent of debt we owe to our pitras. It is not possible in every case to trace all our ancestors hence we confine to our previous three generations. Its importance can be seen from Shrimad Bhagwat Gita: Chapter 1, shalok 42

सङ्करो नरकायैव कुलजानां कुलस्य च।
पतन्ति पितरो ह्येषां लुप्तपिण्डोदकक्रियाः ॥४२॥

*sankaro narakāyaiva kula-ghnānām kulasya cha
patanti pitaro hyeṣhām lupṭa-piṇḍodaka-kriyāḥ*

B G 1.42: अवांछित सन्तानों की वृद्धि के परिणामस्वरूप निश्चय ही परिवार और पारिवारिक परम्परा का विनाश करने वालों का जीवन नारकीय बन जाता है। जल तथा पिण्डदान की क्रियाओं से वंचित हो जाने के कारण ऐसे पतित कुलों के पित्तरो का भी पतन हो जाता है।

We live in BHULOK. After death, our Pitra (ancestors) go to PITRALOK, which is a level above Bhulok. But the final destination is BHUVARLOK and beyond. Till the time of the death the soul is wandering in various



worlds. The most accepted manner to pacify the departed ancestors is by performing Shradh. Shradh is our way of repaying the debts of our Pitras. As the descendants, we respect our ancestors. We donate in their name and undertake activities that will please them. As per the scriptures, performing *Shradh* is a part of abiding by *Dharma*. The *pitras* are satisfied only after receiving *pinda* and water from their sons or qualified Shradh performer.

In Shrimad bhagwat Gita it is said, if Shradh, Pindadan and Tarpan is not performed, the departed soul goes to the Hell region. Souls need energy on the onward journey. The food offered in shradh performed as per the 'Tithi' nourishes the subtle body of that individual for the whole year. So long as there are unfulfilled desires and expectations, the deceased expects food from his descendants on that particular shradh day. By performing *Shradh*, not only are the desires of *pitras* fulfilled, but they also get energy for their onward journey.

If the deceased individual's wish of someone performing Shradh is not fulfilled from the expected descendant, then the deceased becomes unhappy. It may lead to the deceased becoming a *Pishach* (A type of spirit), and take revenge on its relatives for not performing the *Shradh* rites. The

deceased soul may manifest in its relative and starts speaking.

In Bhramapuran it is said that; 'He who performs the *Shradh* rites diligently and as per his financial status, satisfies everyone right from Deity Brahma to the insignificant blade of grass. No one in the family of the individual performing the *Shradh* remains unhappy.' Hence, Shradh rituals are performed.

In a nutshell, *Shradh* rites, help *pitras* in the *Pitru Lok* (Region of the *pitras*), gain momentum for their onward

journey. Pitra who are stuck in the inferior region due to unsatisfied wishes and desires gain momentum to their onward journey. Some PITRA due to their Karma does not go to *Pitru Lok*, instead enter the ghost area. To relieve them, *Shradh* is performed.

Origin of Shradh

As per Hindu sacred texts, Rishi Atri (one of the 10 sons of Lord Brahma) was the first one to decipher the rituals of Shradha as told by Lord Brahma to his son Nimi Rishi.

Nimi Rishi, guided by Narad Muni, started invoking his ancestors who appeared and told, "Nimi, your son has already taken place amongst Pitra Devas. Since you have performed the act of feeding and worshipping the soul of your departed son, it is same as if you had performed Pitri Yajna". Since that time the Shradh is accounted as an important ritual of the Sanatan Dharma.

The Benefit of Performing Shradh

आयुः पुत्रान् आयुः पुत्रान् यशः स्वर्ग कीर्तिं पुष्टिं बलं श्रियम् ।
पशुन् सौख्यं धनं धान्यं प्राप्नुयात् पितृपूजनात् ॥

Garudpuran, Ansha 2, Adhyaya 10, Shloka 57

The benefits of performing *Shradh* are Long life, a male child, success, heaven, fame, nourishment, strength, riches, animals, happiness and wealth. Performing Shradh during eclipse gives fruits equivalent of donating the earth.

One of the debts people have is PITRA-RIN; an obligation towards the creator-Brahma. Pitra Rin is only paid off by offering Pindadan, performing Shradh and Tarpan for the ancestors. The other two are DEV-RIN-obligation towards Vishnu, RISHI-RIN-obligation towards Lord Shiva. It is necessary that man should aspire to clear himself of these Rin or life remains unfulfilled and wasted.

The Presiding Deities of Shradh

Vishvedevs (a group of Deities representing the Deities during a sacrificial fire'), namely Pururav-Aardrav and Dhurilochan (Dhurismoke Lochan -eyes), are deities of ancestors' souls. They are invoked to preside during Shradh.

The other Deity associated with shradh are Vasu, Rudra and Aditya. The person for whom the ritual of Shradha is performed is considered a follower of Vasu. His parents are regarded as followers of Rudra and his grandparents' followers of Aditya. Therefore during Shradha, the names of father, grandfather and great grandfather (or mother, grandmother and great grandmother) are pronounced as representatives of Vasu-Rudra-Aditya respectively. Vasu-Rudra-Aditya also represents Desire-dissolution and Action.

Different Kinds of Shradh

12 kinds of Shradh are Nitya, Neimitik, Kaamyaa, Vriddhi, Sapindan, Paarvann, Goshtth, Shurdhyarth, Karmaang, Deivik, Oupcharik and Saanvatsarik Shradh. There are more than 96 types of Shradh, but we are here only limited to Pitra and Parental shradh.

Who Should Perform Shradh

Son is typically expected to perform Shradh. Shradh should ideally be performed by the person for parents and ancestors. But, as we do not know the ritual- we outsource it to the Brahman.

For Whom Shrad Can Be Performed

An individual can perform Shradh for the father, grandfather, great paternal grandfather, mother, grandmother, great maternal grandmother, stepmother, mother's father, grandfather and great maternal grandmother,

wife, son, maternal uncle, brother, brothers wife, father's sisters, mother's sisters, sisters, father-in-law, daughters, guru, paternal cousins and disciple.

When There is No Son to Perform Shradh

Hindu rituals have dictated a line of order for deciding who performs the shradh. Hence Shradh is possible for all Pitra. The Holy text Dharmasindhu says, if after considering every possible candidate, if we do not find anyone to perform shradh, than the King should perform Shradh.

Here is the order of the person eligible to perform shradh. 1) Son (including one whose thread ceremony has not been done) 2) Daughter 3) Grandson 4) Great-grandson 5) wife 6) Daughter's son (if he is one of the heirs to the property) 7) Real brother 8) Nephew 9) Cousin's son 10) Father 11) Mother 12) Daughter-in-law 13) Children of elder and younger sisters 14) Maternal uncle 15) Sapinda individual (anyone from seven generations and belonging to the same family lineage) 16) Samanodak individual (anyone after the seven generations and belonging to the same gotra (The same family domain) 17) Disciple 18) Upadhyay (Brahmans) 19) Friend 20) Son-in-law of the deceased individual

Who Performs Pitra Shradh in a Joint Family

The head of the family, the eldest in the family or Karta; one who shoulders the responsibility of caring for everyone, should perform Shradh. However for any genuine cause the younger in the family can perform it with the permission of Karta.

Can Women Perform Shradh

Women can perform Shradh. If you look at the order of people to do Shradh, women are part of it. In earlier times, even women used to have their thread ceremony and were eligible to perform Shradh. Now, as this practice has been mostly stopped, Brahman refuses to be part of Shradh, where the person doing Tarpan is a woman. However, suppose there is no one to perform Shradh. In that case, it is considered better and appropriate that Shradh

is performed by a woman than not performing it at all.

Feeding Brahmins During Shradh

Kunti Putra Karna of Mahabharat fame donated a lot of wealth as a charity to the poor and needy during his lifetime, but he never offered food to them. After his death, when Karna went to heaven, he was offered all the luxurious and materialistic pleasures but was not given any food. Karna understood the cause and requested Yamraja to send him back to earth for 15 days to donate food to Brahmins and the needy. Yamaraja accepted his request and sent him to earth for a fortnight. When Karna returned back, he was greeted with abundant food. It signifies Brahmin bhoj, and feeding poor people is an effective ritual to gain fulfillment afterlife.

The Significance of

Cow, Crow, Dog and the Ant in Shradh

When food is cooked in Shradh, we take out five portions. One for Cow representing Earth, Dog representing water, Crow representing ether and Ant representing fire. The fifth portion is for Devtas representing the sky, and this we pay respect to all the five elements of life.

It is also said that PITRA comes in the form of animals to consume Shradh Bhog, and hence it is served to them.

The third reason. COW represent all the five elements and helps the soul cross the mythical Akashganga. Crow is the messenger and the Dog- an associate of Lord Yamaraj and gives company to the deceased soul.

Chanting the Name of Deity Dattatreya During Pitrupaksha

Chanting of 'Shri Gurudev Datta' during the *Pitrapaksha* is a tradition. It is supposed to help the *pitras* gain momentum for their onward journey. At the other time, this chanting provides protection from distress caused by the *pitras* and they gain momentum for their onward journey.

God Dattatreya is the incarnation of the Divine Trinity Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. The word Datta means "Given", as the divine trinity have "given" themselves in the form of a son to the sage couple Guru Atri and Mata Anusuya. He is the son of Guru Atri, hence the name "Atreya."

Where Should Shradh Be Performed

There are many locations considered appropriate for Shradh Performance.



1. The ground floor of the performer's house. It is said that when Shradh is performed in the performer's home, it gives eight times the merit as compared to performing at a Holy place.
2. Holy place
3. A place smeared with cow dung, A place without insects, animals and inauspicious objects.
4. Places not owned by anyone. Forests, mountains, banks of rivers or lakes, places of pilgrimage and temples.
5. Land with the slope in the southern direction.

Shradh At Gaya Considered Significant

When pinda is offered on the pretashila (Shila means a stone) at Gaya, the corpse state is destroyed, and the soul goes to Pitru lok.

Shradh at Holy Places

It is said that when Shradh is done at specific holy places, the departed soul obtains an eternal position. These holy places (in addition to the above) are

1. House of the Shradh performer.
2. Banks of Holy rivers. Ganga, Saraswati, Yamuna, Payoshni (an ancient river mentioned in the epic Mahābhārata. Pandavas had visited this place as part of their pilgrimage. It lies in Vidarbha.
3. Seashore
4. Places of pilgrimage. Prabhastirth (Near Somnath Mahadev), Pushkirtirth (Pushkar), Prayag (Allahabad), Kashi (Varanasi), Gaya, Matrugaya (Near Sidhpur Gujarat), Kurukshetra and Gangadwar (38 km from Nasik. It is the place where the Godavari River makes its first appearance on the Brahmagiri hill.
5. Forests such as the Naimishkshetra. 32 km from Sitapur and 42 km from the Sandila railway station, 45 miles north of Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh. Dharmaranya near Gaya, Dhenukaranya (meaning area of darkness) is mentioned in Mahabharata; it refers to the forest in Chattisgarh. It includes Balaghat (MP), Abhujmar hills and Bastar (Chattisgarh)

6. Bhandara, Gondia, and Gadchiroli in Maharashtra are part of Dandakaranya.
7. Near the lakes of Brahmasarovar; an ancient water pool sacred to Hinduism in old Kurukshetra city- Thanesar, Mahasarovar or Mansarovar, Pushkar Sarovar, Bindu and Narayan Sarovar in Gujarat, Pampa Sarovar in Karnataka.
8. Akshayyavat, the “indestructible Banyan tree”, is a holy tree located near the Patalpuri Temple at the Allahabad fort. There is a Bodh Tree in Gaya, and one is Varanasi which is also considered as Akshayyavat.
9. Mahakshetra like Krukshetra
10. In a **garden** with tulsi (Holy basil plant) and amla trees.

Tarpan

It is said that one should do Pitra Tarpan every day. 'Trup' in Sanskrit means 'to satisfy'. Offering water to Deities, Sages, *pitras* and human beings and satisfying them through it, is called *Tarpan*. *Shraddhanga* (performed during *shraddha*) is one of the *Tarpans*. *It is done by sending water flowing from the palm of the right hand with the thumb pointing downwards. When Tarpan is done for deities, the palm is open and angled to the top straight. That the water flows from palm to fingers ad out. When Tarpan is done for sages – the thumb is upside and the water goes from the palm (not fingers) on the other side of the thumb.*

Pitara Tarpan is preferably done facing south. *Darbha* is necessary for performing *Tarpan*. *Tarpan* for pitra is performed from the root and tip of two *darbhas*. Three Anjali's *Tarpan* is done for pitras. In the case of matrutrayeri (Mother, grandmother and great-grandmother), offer three anjalis and for other ladies, offer *Tarpan* of one Anjali. Two for sages and one for deities.

ॐ पितृगणाय विद्महे जगत धारिणी
धीमहि तन्नो पितृ प्रचोदयात्.
ॐ देवताभ्यः पितृभ्यश्च महायोगिभ्य एव च।
नमः स्वाहायै स्वधायै नित्यमेव नमो नमः.
ॐ आद्य-भूताय विद्महे सर्व-सेव्याय धीमहि।

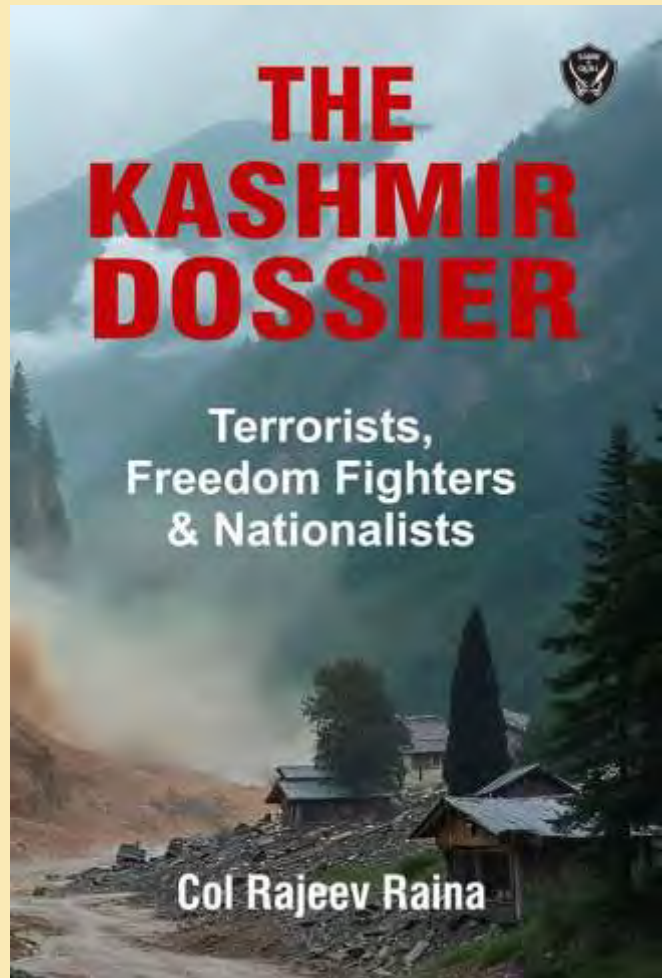


Col Tej K Tikoo, Ph.D. (Retd)

KASHMIR DOSSIER TERRORISTS, FREEDOM FIGHTERS AND NATIONALISTS

Kashmir Dossier: Terrorists, Freedom Fighters and Nationalists', is the latest addition to the "Exodus Literature", viz., books written by the members of the displaced Kashmiri Pandits community living in exile. The 222-page book under review, published by Sabre and Quil, has been authored by Col Rajeev Raina (Retd) who, as a member of the displaced community, is eminently suited to present a credible narrative of the terrorists and the 'freedom fighters', who were responsible for the ethnic cleansing of the microscopic Kashmiri Pandits community from the valley in 1989-90. More importantly, he is also competent enough to write about the silent voices of the numerous young people of Kashmir who, despite facing threats from the Pakistan-sponsored religious fanatics, kept the *Tiranga* flying even in most challenging circumstances. Rajiv, it may be mentioned, played a significant role in inducing confidence and self-belief among the nationalists during his tenure in the valley. That the patriotic people carrying/unfurling *Tiranga* in Kashmir, were no longer afraid of reprisals by the radical terrorists, came as a breath of fresh air from the Valley, where it was the separatists and the fork-tongued politicians, who set the narrative, mostly against India and generally in favour of Pakistan. Rajiv played a significant role in lending these patriotic elements a voice.

Essentially, the book concentrates on the role played by Pakistan in exploiting the



youth of Kashmir (on both sides of the Line of Control) for serving its own ends. The book also covers with irrefutable evidence, the manner in which Kashmiri leaders, while swearing by India in Delhi, played the tune of Azadi/Pakistan in Kashmir to keep their own vote bank tethered to their parties. It lays bare the hypocrisy of Pakistan, that proclaims to the whole world from every religious and diplomatic pulpit, that it supports the Kashmiri 'freedom fighters' in their struggle against their 'oppression' by India, but, in fact, has little concern for Kashmiris. The book presents evidence-based history of Pakistan, proving time and again, that it covets Kashmir's geographical stretch and has little concern for Kashmiris as such.

From early sixties till the late eighties when armed uprising began in Kashmir, Pakistan's hypocrisy was evident in its treatment of Kashmiri youth. A classic case discussed by the author among others, is the hijacking of Indian Airlines Fokker Friendship aircraft, Ganga, to Lahore during its flight from Srinagar, by two Kashmiri brothers; Hashim Qureishi and Ashraf Qureishi. On its arrival at Lahore, the hijackers were given a rousing reception, with no less than Zulfikar Ali Bhutto himself coming to Lahore to felicitate the hijackers. The plane was subsequently set on fire. But the euphoric lionizing of the hijackers soon gave way to Pakistan- deep state arresting the two hijackers and subjecting them to inhuman torture on the mere suspicion that they were, perhaps, Indian agents. They suffered innumerable privations, brutal violence, including solitary confinement over long periods. It may be mentioned that this hijacking, with Pakistan's complicity being all too evident, subsequently resulted in India banning Pakistani flights over India to reach their eastern wing, an action that contributed a great deal to Pakistan's defeat in the 1971 war. However, it is worth mentioning that in January 1971, when the hijacking took place, the revolt building up in East Pakistan had not existed even in the realm of possibility. Nevertheless, despite the torture suffered by the hijackers, they refused to sign on the dotted line which would have established their complicity in what Pakistan called an Indian Intelligence operation.

The book traces the birth of various groups made up entirely of Kashmiri youth from both sides of the Line of Control; all believing in liberating Kashmir through violent means. It was these groups which eventually, metamorphosed into Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), that was in the forefront of launching an armed uprising in the Valley in late eighties. It is surprising that these youth, driven by the concept of Jihad, fell into the trap of Pakistani ISI propaganda. Despite being aware of the fate that had befallen the earlier 'Liberators', like Amanullah Khan, Maqbool Bhat and the Qureishi brothers. Be it as it may, a large number of Kashmiri youths picked up arms to 'Liberate Kashmir.' Pakistan not only funded them, but also trained them and took care of their logistics. Many young men crossed over to Pakistan occupied Kashmir, where they were trained in various camps, which already existed for the training of Afghan Mujahideen. On return to Kashmir they indulged in ruthless violence, almost entirely directed at Kashmiri Pandits, pro-establishment people and nationalist Muslims. The romanticism of being an armed Jihadi, attracting the admiration of the locals, further boosted their cadres. However, because they talked of independence and not about the merger of Kashmir with Pakistan, their days were numbered. Pakistan soon sidelined them, replacing JKLF first with Hizb

ul Mujahideen (HM), who stood for merger of Kashmir with Pakistan *bara e raast* Islam, and later with Lashkar e Toiba (LeT) and Jaish e Mohammad (JeM); both made up of entirely Pakistani cadres.

The author has touched upon nearly every political and socio-religious development of the last/present century that impacted Kashmir's social and political life, events which continue to drive/influence the Kashmir narrative even today. These include the rise of Sheikh Abdullah, the creation of Jammu Kashmir Muslim Conference, its split and formation of Jammu Kashmir National Conference, revolt against Maharaja Hari Singh and the fateful events of July 13, 1931, Indo-Pak war of 1947-48, including the sack of Baramulla and the legend of Maqbool Sherwani. The author also touches upon the post-accession events which had great bearing on the militant Islamic uprising later in 1988. These include the loss and subsequent recovery of *Mo e Muqadas* from Hazratbal Shrine, creation of the Plebiscite Front, formation of Awami Action Committee, Sheikh-Indira Accord of 1975, and return to power of Sheikh Abdullah, with disastrous consequences for the nationalists in the state.

While describing in some detail the birth of All Party Hurriyet Conference (APHC), the author has given sufficient background of the events that led to creating this umbrella organization, embracing all anti-India, pro-Pakistan militant/Jihadi organizations and those which provided overground support to these. However, the author has overlooked the role played by America, through its points person, Robin Raphael, who played a significant role in getting all these groups together. It is a different matter that the experiment lasted only for a few years.

Col Raina has also described in detail the burning down of Kashmir's most revered shrine at *Tsrar e Sharief* and also the cooperation of the local people in ensuring the same. This event must go down among the most shameful episodes of nearly four decades of militancy in Kashmir.

The author also dwells on Sheikh Abdullah's lust for power, which saw him parting ways with Jinnah, the Muslim League, Maulvi Yousuf Shah, the Mirwaiz of Kashmir, Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas, his colleague in Muslim Conference and, subsequently, with Mirwaiz Maulvi Farooq too. The author has taken pains to describe the challenges India faces in Kashmir due to Pakistan exercising enormous influence on every political/social development of Kashmir. The significant role played by Pakistan's proxies in Kashmir, continues to keep the fires simmering in the valley. The book reinforces, with examples, the doublespeak of leaders of pro-Pakistan parties who are forthright in criticizing New Delhi at the drop of a hat, but seal their mouths when Pakistan is clearly guilty of crossing the *Laxman Rekha*.

The author has held no punches in describing the insipid response of the Centre to the much-evident subterfuge indulged in by the mainstream politicians of Kashmir, whose primary concern was to coax the central leadership in dishing out doles to the state, while at the same time, strengthening anti-India sentiment in Kashmir.

It is a handy book, an important addition to the narrative of Kashmir's less-spoken milestones seen in the context of the violence that has turned the 'Heaven on Earth' into a veritable hell.



Kashmiri Pandits protest against NFSA

Displaced Kashmiri Pandits are protesting in Jammu against the government administration's move to integrate ration cards into the National Food Security Act (NFSA).

On May 5, Kashmiri Pandits protested against the implementation of NFSA. The protestors demonstrated in front of the Relief Commissioner's office in Jammu.

As the demonstrators attempted to march towards the Relief Commissioner's Office, minor clashes broke out between demonstrators and police.

As the protestors apprehend "conspiracy" to dilute their migrant and genocide victim status, they wanted to convey their perception that the demonstration was held. The police didn't allow them to march inside the RC office. The protesters staged a sit-in after the police used force on demonstrators to disperse them. The demonstrators raised anti-Government and police slogans.

The protesters included residents of Jagti, Purkhoo, Nagrota and Muthi migrant camps.

Migrant relief holders hold a massive protest in front of the Relief Organisation.

RRC allays fears, asks migrants not to panic

Earlier on April 29, Kashmiri Pandit relief holders held a massive protest in front of the Relief Organisation, totally rejecting the National Food Security Act (NFSA). They demanded that it should not be implemented for displaced Pandits.

The protestors in support of their demand flay them for putting them to unnecessary harassment by the Government after introducing NFSA forms. They said that the migrants who filled out their NFSA forms face a lot of inconvenience in getting rations, as there are so many discrepancies in the system.

They demand that the ration be provided to relief holders on the same analogy and pattern as it was provided since 1990.

Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner Inspects Migrant Ration Depots

On April 30 Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner (M), J&K Dr Arvind Karwani, accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Relief Vijay Sharma; Deputy Director Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Jammu Sham Abrol and field officers from Relief Organization and FCS&CA, visited Migrant ration depots to take stock of the ration distribution in terms of the Special Relief Ration Scheme for Kashmiri/Jammu Migrants, notified by the J&K Government recently.

RC (M) claims that a large number of migrants are beneficiaries of the scheme.

At the Migrant Camp Purkhoo, the team informed that ration distribution is being carried out by the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department in accordance with the Special Relief Ration Scheme for Kashmiri/Jammu Migrants notified vide Government Order No. 15-JK(FCS&CA) of 2026 dated 05.03.2026, from all 32 designated ration depots in District Jammu. That migrant can get a ration from any nearest ration depot.

"All Relief Ration Card holders, whether PHH, NPHH, or Special Category, will continue to receive 11 kg of free ration per person per month along with 1 kg of sugar, while migrants under the non-relief category, such as pensioners, categorized as NPHH, are entitled to ration at government-approved NFSA rates," they were informed.

It was further clarified that those migrant ration card holders who may not be able to collect the ration during the current month (April) may collect the two-month ration (April and May) next month, after immediately completing e-KYC formalities.

Dr Karwani, the Relief Commissioner (M), reiterated that the integration of migrant ration cards into the NFSA database is being

done in compliance with relevant Government Orders and rules.

ASKPC for Talks with Community Leaders on NFSA

The All State Kashmiri Pandit Conference (ASKPC), under the leadership of Moti Lal Malla, convened a meeting on May 4 to deliberate upon the pressing issues confronting the Kashmiri Pandit community living in exile for over three and a half decades.

The main agenda was held on the implications of the National Food Security Act (NFSA) and its proposed implementation among the migrant community.

It categorically stated that the implementation of NFSA is a deliberate attempt to categorize and fragment the victims of genocide, thereby undermining their unique and distinct status as a displaced community. The organisations emphasised that the Kashmiri Pandits were forced into exile due to extraordinary circumstances and cannot be equated with any other category under routine welfare schemes.

ASKPC urged the Government to immediately halt the implementation of NFSA in its present form and engage in meaningful dialogue with representatives of the community before taking any such decisions.

Releases of 'Waves of Resilience Story of Radio Sharda' by LG

The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, J&K, on April 28 in Jammu, launched a book, 'The Waves of Resilience, Story of Radio Sharda'. Speaking on the occasion, the speaker said that the successive generations of Kashmiri Pandits endured profound hardships beyond genocide, a wound which can't fully heal,

The LG, who was the chief guest on the occasion, said, "The Kashmiri Pandit community endured genocide and was uprooted from their ancestral soil. They left behind all material possessions, carrying only the light of culture, tradition, faith, education, and language".

He said, "Radio Sharda and various Government initiatives are pathways for youth from the community. Now it is their responsibility to protect and expand rich cultural heritage, breathe new life into traditions, language, music, and rituals". The Lieutenant Governor urged the youth to ensure that Kashmiri Pandits' cultural legacy thrives, evolves, and endures meaningfully for generations to come. "Youth must ensure that Kashmiri Pandits cultural legacy thrives, evolves and endures meaningfully for generations to come".

Ramesh Hangloo, the founder of Radio Sharda, edits the book. It is a collection of articles written by common listeners, litterateurs and renowned personalities from the Kashmiri Pandit community and highlights the impact of Radio Sharda on the socio-cultural activities of the community.

J&K integrates 17,500 Migrant Ration Cards into NFSA

Principal Secretary, Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation & Reconstruction, Chandrakar Bharti, in a review meeting to implement the ration distribution in terms of the Special Relief Ration Scheme for Kashmiri/Jammu Migrants and extension of benefits of social sector schemes to the eligible migrants.

In the meeting, it was stated that more than 17,500 migrant ration cards have already been punched into the NFSA database, and the process of integration of about 8,000 migrant ration cards is in the pipeline. The ration distribution under the Special Relief Ration Scheme for Kashmiri/Jammu Migrants has started on 18-04-2026 from the migrant camps. The directions have been issued for ration distribution from all the designated 32 ration depots in Jammu district in a hassle-free manner, so that migrants can avail ration from any nearest ration depot. Similarly, we will distribute the ration from the designated depots in other districts of Jammu Province.

KP Sabha Jammu Holds Meeting

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Kashmiri Pandit Sabha (KPS) Jammu was held

on April 28 in Jammu under the chairmanship of its president, K. K. Khosa. The speakers in the meeting expressed deep concern over the delay in the formation of a pragmatic and time-bound roadmap essential for the return of displaced Pandits to Kashmir.

The meeting said a credible roadmap must be anchored in three non-negotiable principles: security, livelihood, and dignity. The establishment of secure residential settlements in the three erstwhile districts of Kashmir, supported by fast-track judicial processes for targeted crimes, is essential to restore confidence.

It said the return of Kashmiri Pandits is not merely a rehabilitation exercise—it is a test of our collective resolve to uphold justice, pluralism, and national integrity. It's time for decisive, transparent, and results-oriented action to ensure the community is not victims of history, but equal citizens with dignity, security, and rightful belonging.

Dr Rajesh translates M. N. Srinivas's book into the Kashmiri language.

For the first time, the seminal sociological work 'Social Change in Modern India' by noted Indian sociologist, M N Srinivas, has been translated into the Kashmiri language by an eminent journalist and author, Dr Rajesh Bhat.

This translation is part of the National Translation Mission project of the Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysuru, which aims to make knowledge texts accessible in Indian languages.

Considered a foundational text in understanding Indian society, the book introduces key concepts such as social mobility, cultural change and the interaction between tradition and modernity.

Dr Rajesh Bhat, who has over 35 years of experience in journalism, is known for his deep engagement with Kashmir's socio-political landscape. His earlier, extensively researched work, Radio Kashmir in Times of Peace and War, has been widely appreciated for documenting the region's media history.

FIR Against Jagti Resident Over Social Media Remarks

On May 7, the Assistant Commissioner (Relief) J&K, Kailash Devi, has requested the SSP Jammu to register an FIR against a Jagti resident for allegedly posting derogatory comments on social media against the Relief Organisation and the Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (Migrant) Jammu.

The letter stated that the remarks had tarnished the image of the Relief Organisation and the Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner.

It further alleged that through his social media activities and other inputs, the accused was instigating people against the Government-notified Special Relief Ration Card Scheme and encouraging actions that could create public disorder.

The department maintained that the allotment of shops at Jagti was carried out in a transparent manner on the recommendations of a committee of senior officers.

Jammu & Kashmir Academy Commemorates 36th Death Anniversary Of Sarvanand Koul Premi





Jammu, May 1, 2026: The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages organized a literary-cum-musical programme at KL Saigal Hall to commemorate the 36th death anniversary of noted scholar and poet Sarwanand Koul Premi.

Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (Migrants), J&K, Dr. Arvind Karwani attended the programme as the Chief Guest, while eminent historian Dr. Ratan Lal Hangloo presided over the function. The distinguished gathering also included B. L. Bhat and Rajinder Premi on the dais.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Karwani appreciated the continuous efforts of Rajinder Premi in preserving and promoting the literary and cultural legacy of Sarwanand Koul Premi. He highlighted Premi's immense contribution to Kashmiri literature and his role in strengthening cultural harmony, describing him as a symbol of intellectual and artistic excellence.

In his presidential address, Dr. Hangloo emphasized the timeless relevance of Sarwanand Koul Premi's literary works, stating that his writings continue to inspire generations and reflect the composite cultural ethos of Jammu and Kashmir.

Scholarly papers on the life and literary contributions of the late poet were presented

by Dr. Sohan Lal Koul and Er. Vinod Kumar, who offered detailed insights into his literary achievements and philosophical vision.

On the occasion, Piare Hatash, Prof. Rattan Talashi and Bal Mukand Sanyasi were honoured with the Sarwanand Koul Premi Memorial Award for their distinguished literary and social contributions.

A musical tribute added colour to the programme with compositions by Kuldeep Sapru and soulful performances by artists including Harshita Pandita, Shivani Joshi, Gandharv Kaloo, Shriya Gurtoo, Simran Gurtoo and Akash Kaul. The accompanying musicians included Ashish Gill, Rakesh Jasotra, Rajeev, Chandan Kumar and Sahil Jasotra.

The programme also featured a Mushaira in which prominent poets including Santosh Shah Nadan, Bal Mukand Sanyasi, Chaman Lal, Piare Hatash, Maharaj Krishan Bhat, Kundan Paras, Kusum Dhar, Ashok Kumar Dhar, Rajinder Aagosh and Ramesh Kumar Bhat recited their verses and captivated the audience.

The proceedings of the programme were conducted by Vijay Wali, while the vote of thanks was presented by Rajinder Premi, who expressed gratitude to the participants, audience, media and the staff of JKAACL for making the event successful.

B-Schools Revamp Curricula

Business schools are extensively revamping curricula to align with the BANI world (Brittle, Anxious, Nonlinear, Incomprehensible), prioritizing AI integration, sustainability (ESG), and practical "day-one readiness" skills. Key updates include embedding data analytics, Fintech, and digital transformation across core courses, alongside a greater emphasis on leadership, emotional intelligence, and experiential learning projects. Core Areas of Curriculum Revamp Technology & AI Integration: Schools are moving beyond theoretical knowledge, incorporating AI, machine learning, data science, and blockchain to produce tech-literate managers.

Sustainability & Ethics (ESG): Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria are becoming foundational in finance, marketing, and strategy courses rather than just optional electives.

Practical Skills and "Day-One" Readiness: To bridge the industry-academia gap, there is a strong focus on live projects, internships, and simulation-based learning, reducing the reliance on traditional, heavily theoretical, and outdated case studies.

Soft Skills & Resiliency: Leadership development, crisis management, and adaptability are prioritized to help students handle high-pressure business environments.

Specialized and Niche Offerings: The rise of specialized MBAs, including entrepreneurship, Fintech, and Digital Marketing, caters to new industry needs.

Key Drivers of Change Industry Demand: Corporations demand graduates capable of contributing immediately, reducing training time.

Technological Advancement: The rapid evolution of AI requires professionals who can use digital tools effectively.

Ethical Concerns & Climate Change: Growing pressure for corporate social responsibility makes ESG knowledge essential.

Key Examples of B-School Revamps IIM Ahmedabad: Integrating AI and data science into core management curricula, as highlighted in this Business India article.

Global Initiatives: Institutions like GMAC member schools are utilizing fintech labs and advanced analytics to teach.

India-Specific Shifts: As outlined by CAT King, Indian institutes are increasingly adopting data analytics, machine learning, and blockchain, says CAT King.

Curriculum Focus: The Sunstone analysis recommends a "Curriculum 4.0" which emphasizes technological fluency, Sunstone adds.

Sustainability: As discussed on India Today, major schools are now integrating sustainable investing and ESG risk assessment into their core curriculum, says India Today.

Challenges in Transformation Faculty Readiness: Many faculty members need training to teach AI and advanced technology, according to The Times of India.

Ethical Concerns: Implementing new technologies requires careful navigation of ethical implications, as noted in the Scribd report.

Need for Speed: Curricula must adapt faster to the rapid

Reference: indiatoday.in/education

Indian Institute of Technology Bombay Bachelors' Programmes Key changes

Key changes include: Introduction of hands-on courses like maker space, early integration of data science and AI courses, and increased flexibility in course selection, both within and outside of departments. More non-technical

courses to foster well-rounded graduates. Students can also opt for minor programmes.

Dual Degree: The Dual Degree program (DD) is a 5-year program where, upon successful completion of the necessary academic requirements, a student is awarded two Degrees. B.Tech. Degree in Electrical Engineering and M.Tech. Degree with Specialization in (e.g. Communication and Signal Processing).

Department of Electrical Engineering (B.Tech+M.Tech)

Admission to IIT Bombay's 4- and 5-year undergraduate programmes is through the exams listed below. For more information on eligibility criteria and other details, please visit the provided links below.

Joint Entrance Examination-Advanced (JEE-Advanced), Joint Seat Allocation Authority (JoSSA)

- Undergraduate Common Entrance Exam for Design (UCEED)
- Indian National Mathematical Olympiad (INMO).
- IIT Bombay admits a few students who qualify for the Indian National Mathematical Olympiad (INMO).

IIT admission for B.Tech

IIT admission for B.Tech requires qualifying both JEE Main and JEE Advanced (top 2.5 lakh ranks), with 75% marks in Class 12 or being in the top 20th percentile. The 2026 JEE Advanced exam is set for May 17, 2026. PG admissions (M.Tech/MSc) require GATE or JAM, while IIT Delhi and others also accept applications for PhDs. Requires qualifying GATE (administered by IISc/IITs) or JAM (for M.Sc programs). For specific details, refer to the Council of the Indian Institute of Technology or the official IIT Delhi PG Admissions and Home Page.

Seat Allocation for UG is conducted via JoSAA (Joint Seat Allocation Authority).

CMAC 2026

The admission into Management Programs in three pioneering Universities of the Govt. of NCT of Delhi, namely Delhi Technological University (DTU), Netaji Subhas University of Technology (NSUT) and Indira Gandhi

Delhi Technical University for Women (IGDTUW), will be conducted through the Common Management Admission Committee (CMAC 2026).

Prospective candidates are required to fill a single online application form on this website to participate in the centralized admission under CMAC-2026.

Admission Reservation under the KM category

There are special provisions and reservation-like benefits for Kashmiri Migrants (wards of Kashmiri Migrants/Pandits) in admissions to National Institutes of Technology (NITs) and other Centrally Funded Technical Institutions (CFTIs). However, these seats are generally not listed within the standard JoSAA (Joint Seat Allocation Authority) rounds and are often handled separately through special counselling rounds (CSAB) or as supernumerary seats.

Key Provisions for Kashmiri Migrants (KM) Supernumerary Seats:

Wards of Kashmiri migrants get supernumerary seats (extra seats) in NITs, meaning they do not compete for the regular seats meant for the general category.

Under guidelines from the Ministry of Education (formerly HRD Ministry) and AICTE, the following concessions are provided: 10% Relaxation: Relaxation in cutoff percentage up to 10% in educational institutions. Extra Intake: Increase in intake capacity up to 5% course-wise. Seat.

Reservation: Reservation of at least one seat in the merit quota in technical/professional institutions. Lower

Cutoffs: Due to the small applicant pool, cutoffs for the KM quota are significantly lower than the General category.

Eligibility: Must be registered with the Relief Commissioner or be a displaced person, supported by a KM Certificate. Applicability by the Institute

NITs & CFTIs: While not all NITs might list them in every brochure, they do offer supernumerary seats for Kashmiri migrants, usually managed via CSAB Special Rounds.

IITs: Admission to IITs is based on qualifying marks. Still, they generally do not have a dedicated, widespread Kashmiri Migrant seat quota similar to NITs/DTU, though they follow Ministry of Education guidelines regarding concessions.

How to Apply

Kashmiri Migrant students should look for the "Kashmiri Migrant Category" during CSAB Special Rounds: CSAB handles the admission process for Supernumerary seats. Institute Specific

Counselling:

Some institutions (e.g., DTU, IIIT Delhi, PEC Chandigarh) have direct, separate applications for KM seats. JEE Main Requirement: A valid JEE Main score is required. It is crucial to check the specific year's CSAB Supernumerary seat matrix, as these seats can vary annually.

Admission UG/PG courses 2026

Migrants of Jammu & Kashmir in Gujarat

Admissions for Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) migrants in Gujarat for 2026 UG courses typically fall under specialized, supernumerary quotas in engineering and pharmacy colleges. The Admission Committee for Professional Courses (ACPC) Gujarat usually handles these processes, requiring a certified migrant certificate for registration, with applications likely opening in early to mid-2026.

• Engineering/Pharmacy/Architecture:

The ACPC Gujarat is the nodal agency for professional courses. They provide specific reservation seats for J&K migrants and students (JK migrants quota).

Documentation: Students must provide a certificate of registration as Kashmiri Migrants issued by the Divisional Commissioner/Relief Commissioner.

Candidates may also apply for the Prime Minister's Special Scholarship Scheme (PMSSS) to gain admission to colleges in Gujarat.:

Monitor the ACPC website regularly for the 2026 guidelines.

Website ACPC: jacpcldce.ac.in,
<https://acpc.gujarat.gov.in/jk-admission>

For the year 2025, the following link was used for online registration: <https://forms.gle/a1LszLeJ1N2LAFyR8>. Application forms and other details were available on the website: www.acpc.gujarat.gov.in.

Students applying under the migrant category for admissions to the first-year Degree Engineering, Degree/Diploma Pharmacy, and MBA/MCA were exempted from GUJCET-2025 and CMAT-2025, respectively.

Separate application forms were asked to be filled out for the Degree in Engineering, Degree/Diploma in Pharmacy, and Degree in Architecture courses. For the MBA/MCA course, the DD of ₹500/- per form and ₹750/- for applying for both MBA and MCA courses.

For 2025, it was mandatory to produce the domicile Certificate issued by the competent authority along with the application for Kashmiri Pandit / Kashmiri Hindu Families (Non-Migrants) living in the Kashmir valley. The domicile certificate was not required for the J&K migrants.

Candidates whose names appear in the merit list are asked to remain present with all original documents & necessary token tuition fee (₹ 1,500/- for Govt./Grant-in-aid institutes and ₹20,000/- for self-financed institutes) at their own cost. The candidate who was present but did not have the original documents was not permitted to participate in the counselling.

Details of institutes, their profiles, and tuition fees are available on the website www.acpc.gujarat.gov.in.

Last year, the end dates for Degree Engineering, Degree/Diploma Pharmacy, Degree Architecture and MBA/MCA were 15/07/2025 and 01/08/2025, up to 05:30 PM respectively. Merit list for Degree Engineering, Degree/Diploma Pharmacy, and Degree Architecture was published on 22/07/2025, and for MBA/MCA on 04/08/2025. Counselling was held on 29/07/2025 at 11:30 AM for Degree Engineering, Degree/Diploma Pharmacy, and Degree Architecture. On 07/08/2025 at 11:30 AM, the counselling session for MBA/MCA was held.

Address to Post/Courier the Application along with DD and other required Documents was Admission Committee for Professional Courses, Room No.111, First Floor, L. D. College of Engineering Campus, Navarangpura - Ahmedabad -380015, Gujarat.

The merit list published by the ACPC for participating in the counselling, course-wise, is the following:

B.E./Beach: 134

B.Arch: 5

MCA: 1

MBA: 65

Scholarships for Indian Students to Pursue Postgraduation in the UK

There are 12 postgraduate scholarships available from UK universities, across a wide range of subjects, for students from India.

GREAT Scholarships applications are open for the 2026-27 academic cycle. The scheme provides opportunities to study at institutions such as Trinity Laban, Queen's University Belfast, the Royal College of Art, and several other UK universities. The official notification states that the UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) should award the scholarships by June 30, 2026. However,

application deadlines may vary for individual institutions.

According to the official website of the British Council, each scholarship is worth a minimum of 10,000 pounds towards tuition fees for a one-year postgraduate course. Successful scholars will be informed by individual universities of the results of their applications, and the scholarship funding will be issued by individual universities after registration.

Candidates must visit the university's official page and apply for individual scholarships after carefully reading the instructions. The deadline to apply for a GREAT Scholarship varies for different institutions. The university will inform successful applicants after selection. Candidates must also note that scholarship funding will be issued to successful scholars by individual universities after registration.

The official notification remarks that an applicant must be willing to contribute to capacity-building and socio-economic advancement in future through the benefits achieved after graduating from the UK higher education.

Source: ndtv.com/education/

Feedback: vijaykashkari@gmail.com





AIKS Matrimonial Service



Seeking alliance for our son born 10-06-1995 at 05:37 pm in Mohan Nagar, Ghaziabad. Height 5'10"; BBA from SYMBIOSIS, Pune MBA from SYMBIOSIS INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, PUNE Working as Manager International Marketing in MNC Pharma co. based in Bangalore. Valley address: - Civil Lines, Exchange Road Present Address: - House no. D -233, Sector 61 Noida E-mail: - vinod_bhat7@yahoo.co.in; Mobile:- 9810917550, 9971973833



Seeking a suitable match for my daughter, born on 05/02/1998 in Jammu, height 5.2 ft. She has completed her B.Tech in Computer Science from JNTUH and MBA from the Indian School of Business (ISB). Currently, she is working as a Product Manager in a multinational company in Gurugram. Father is a retired Central Government officer and mother is a homemaker. The family is presently residing in Dehradun and originally belongs to Baramulla, Kashmir. Interested may kindly contact at 8077364644



Seeking alliance for my son, 5'9", B.E. (EXTC, Mumbai University), MBA (Business Analytics, Symbiosis Pune), born 28th May 1995 at 12:06 noon in Jammu. Working as Business Insights and Engagement Partner at TE Connectivity, Bangalore. Contact Ramesh Pandita (9419189513), 3/1 Anand Nagar, Borhi, Jammu; aryanramesh99@gmail.com



We are seeking a suitable alliance for our daughter. Date of Birth: 13.08.1996 (01:38 AM), Place of Birth: New Delhi, Height: 5 ft 4 in, Manglik: Anshik Manglik
Qualification: M.Sc. in Pharmaceutical Design and Engineering – Technical University of Denmark (DTU), Denmark. B.Sc. in Biomedical Engineering – University of Texas at Arlington (UTA), USA. Professional Details: Presently working in Denmark as a Senior Regulatory Affairs Specialist in a global organization providing medical devices and technologies for chronic care management. Career is well established with strong long-term prospects.
India Address: Faridabad, Delhi NCR (Currently residing in Denmark) Preference: Kashmiri Pandit boy residing in Europe (working and well-settled). Tekni Milap is a must.
Interested may kindly contact: +91 98104 21789 or Email: vinay@bhat.co



Seeking a suitable alliance for our well-cultured, and family-oriented daughter, born on January 21, 2000 at 8:46 AM in Delhi, holding Bachelor's in Forensic Sciences and a Master's in Digital Forensics, Cyber Security, and IT. Currently, employed with a leading Big 4 firm. Interested families are kindly requested to contact us at 9312007931 or 9999573333, or email at alliancekp65@gmail.com.



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 shahshah108@gmail.com / 9910076101



KASHMIRI PANDIT MARTYRS

List for May 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. Sarwananad Koul Premi	-	01.05.1990
2	Sh. Virender Kumar	-	01.05.1990
3	Sh. Chuni Lal Shalla	-	02.05.1990
4	Sh. Makhhan Lal Thaploo	-	02.05.1990
5	Sh. Surinder Kumar Raina	Tullamula, Ganderbal	02.05.1990
6	Sh. Virender Kumar Chatta	Baramulla	03.05.1990
7	Sh. Saroop Nath	Beru, Badgam	03.05.1990
8	Sh. Mohan Lal Bhat	-	04.05.1990
9	Sh. Ramesh Kr. Raina	-	05.05.1990
10	Sh. Surinder Dhar	-	05.05.1990
11	Sh. Vinod Kumar	Natipora, Srinagar	06.05.1990
12	Sh. Prof. KI Ganjoo	Sopore	07.05.1990
13	Ms. Prana Ganjoo	Sopore	07.05.1990
14	Ms. Dolly	-	07.05.1990
15	Sh. Dev Kant Roy	Srinagar	08.05.1990
16	Sh. Bihari Lal Labroo	Anantnag	09.05.1990
17	Sh. Rattan Lal	V Khaller	10.05.1990
18	Sh. Gulshan Lal	Pulwama	10.05.1990
19	Sh. Surinder Kumar	-	10.05.1990
20	Sh. Moti Lal Bhat	-	10.05.1990
21	Smt. Babli Raina	-	10.05.1990
22	Sh. Amar Nath Bagati	Srinagar	11.05.1990
23	Sh. Omkar Nath	-	11.05.1990
24	Sh. Poshkar Nath	-	11.05.1990
25	Sh. Daya Krishen Dullo	-	12.05.1990
26	Sh. Mohan Lal	Anantnag	13.05.1990
27	Sh. Chaman Lal	Badgam	13.05.1990
28	Sh. Veer Ji @Vaid Ji Bhat	Badgam	13.05.1990
29	Sh. Ashok Kumar	Pulwama	13.05.1990
30	Sh. Bushan Lal	Srinagar	13.05.1990
31	Sh. Saroop Nath	..	15.05.1990
32	Sh. A.K.Wazir	Srinagar	15.05.1990
33	Sh. Bushan Lal Koul	Anantnag	16.05.1990
34	Sh. Bushan Lal	Anantnag	17.05.1990
35	Sh. Sham Lal Sharma	Vanpoh, Anantnag	17.05.1990
36	Sh. Suresh Kr. Kisoo	Purshiyar, Srinagar	17.05.1990
37	Sh. Chuni Lal	Habakadal, Srinagar	17.05.1990
38	Sh. Manmohan Bachloo	Baramulla	18.05.1990

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