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Milchar

The Official Organ of KPA, Mumbai



Winter in Kashmir

Photo : kashmirnews.com

**KPA Mumbai & Milchar wishes you all
A Very Very Happy & Prosperous New Year**

मिलचार



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Milchar

Official Organ of

**Kashmiri Pandits' Association,
Mumbai**

(Regd. Charitable Trust - Regn. No. A-2815 BOM)

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Vol. VII ~ No. 1

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**WITH BEST COMPLIMENTS
FROM**



RAJEN KAUL

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PANCH MARG, VERSOVA
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President's Message - Rajen kaul
Between Ourselves



amaskar.

At the outset I would like to wish you and your families **A HAPPY, HEALTHY & PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.** I look forward to 2012 with optimism to serve our biradari members.

In this issue of Milchar, I would like to update you on the major activities undertaken by your Board of Trustees (BoT) from October 2011 onwards:

BoT Meetings:

We had our Board Meetings in Nov. & Dec. 2011. To fill in vacancies caused by the sad demise of Shri P N Takoo and resignations of Shri Ashwani Hashia and Shri Anil Gadroo, your Board has approved in their place, nominations of Shri J L Kak as Vice President & Trustee and Shri Chand Bhat & Shri M K Kar as Trustees.

Sharda Sadan:

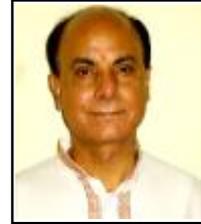
Since my last communication in Nov-Dec. 2011 issue of Milchar, we have finalized the Tender for Phase II of balance Civil and other associated works. We expect to award the contracts to the new contractors in January 2012 with the objective to complete the construction activities by March 2013, subject to the availability of funds.

Fund Raising:

Our Cultural Committee has worked our detailed plans to successfully host the Anup Jalota Fund Raising Nite on 9th March, 2012 for raising funds for completion of Sharda Sadan. We are working on a four pronged strategy – i) having multiple sponsors to sponsor this event, ii) appealing to all the biradari members for donations, iii) raising funds through advertisements for a

souvenir to be released on this occasion & iv) selling of donor passes.

I request all the biradari members to come forward to contribute wholeheartedly to make this event successful.



Annual Hawan:

As reported in the previous issue, Annual Hawan will be performed on 21st & 22nd January. I request our biradari members to participate in large numbers with their families and friends on this auspicious occasion.

Directory:

As reported earlier, Directory is being released on 22nd January 2012 on the Annual Hawan Day.

Involving Youth:

We are approaching more and more younger members of our biradari to get them excited to come forward to make our Youth Forum more active and vibrant.

While closing, I would like to thank you for your contribution and appeal to you to remain engaged in our ongoing projects/activities. I will be pleased to receive your suggestions for improving the functioning of BOT.

Regards,
Rajen Kaul



Contact Rajen Kaul at rkaul06@gmail.com



Editorial - M.K.Raina

Milchar



**Very Very Happy and Prosperous
New Year to all our Readers.**

With the publication of Nov-Dec 2011 issue, we have completed a year of new-face Milchar. Whether, we succeeded in providing good and informative reading material to our readers or not, whether we were successful in producing a quality magazine or not, is for our readers to decide. However, going through the letters and mails we received from our readers over the year, gives an indication that we at Milchar, have done our job satisfactorily. We are encouraged.

Producing a community magazine, which is not commercially viable, is definitely a challenging job, both for the editorial staff and the management. Resource crunches, not only put strain on the organisation, but also effect the editorial work in a big way. We can not engage professional columnists, professional graphic designers, professional proof-readers etc. to give our readers an advanced quality journal. We can only approach authors, columnists, photographers, graphic designers etc. mostly from our own community, who are definitely a dedicated lot and carry fire of belonging to the community in their hearts. We are thankful to all of them, for, we never faced a situation where we deferred our publication for want of quality material. We have renowned writers in our community, who spare time from their busy schedules to write for the community journals, and doing it with passion. We salute all of them.

A good editor's quality lies, not in what he wants readers to read, but in producing what readers want to read. In order to know the readers' priorities, it is essential to have regular feedback from them, not only on

the content published, but also on what they look forward to read. Unfortunately, in Mumbai, we don't find many who could favour us with their critical comments on the content or suggest improvements in the journal as they would like to see, on a regular basis. We however hope that this does happen sooner or later.

Our enthusiasm in reserving a page titled 'Your Own Page' for our readers, especially our youth, did not make much inroads as far as Mumbai biradari is concerned. The page was meant to provide space to our biradari to publicise their achievements, achievements of their children like meritorious results, awards, rewards, high order placements etc. Though there is good response to this page from people around the world, we would wish our biradari here to share their achievements with us, in text, in photos. Almost same is the case with Crossword Puzzles and Out of Box Columns. We seem to be failing in persuading and encouraging our children to apply their minds on something which connects them to their roots, culture, language and history. Though, the Crossword column has been discontinued now because of nil response, we are optimistic that we will be able to restart it with the initiative of our readers.

One more area where we don't get sufficient material is the local news section. We do get important news concerning our community from across the globe, but there is hardly any news forthcoming from our biradari here. We would not only like to impress upon the members of Mumbai



biradari to tell us about important events for publication in Milchar, but would also request members of the BOT and Area Mentors of KPA to report what they think deserve publication. We would like to reiterate that Milchar is your own mouthpiece. Give it a hand, a big hand.

Regarding self-financing of Milchar, it has been stated a number of times that a magazine will survive only if it is able to raise money by way of regular subscriptions and more importantly through advertisements. While we are thankful to all those whose support came instantly through cover advertisements for the 6 issues of 2011, we request our readers to come forward to make Milchar a commercially viable magazine. We intend to make it a Monthly publication in immediate future, but this is possible only if advertisements flow constantly. Those of our readers and well wishers who are associated with the corporate sector or running their own businesses, are requested to lend support in a big way to keep Milchar alive.

For a dedicated reader or a well wisher from the community, a small subscription of Rs. 300.00 per year (Rs. 2500 for Lifetime) is not a big sum. We would request all those who have yet to enroll for Milchar, to send in their subscriptions as early as possible and reinforce our thinking that Milchar is real *miltzar* and you all support it.

👁️👁️
Contact editor at :
editormilchar@yahoo.co.in
👁️👁️

ज़रा हंसिये!

...

निकु लाल

तौहीन

एक व्यक्ति ने अपनी पत्नी का हाथ तोड़ दिया। मैजिस्ट्रेट के सामने जब उसे पेश किया गया, तो उसने सुबकते सुबकते सारी घटना सुना दी। मैजिस्ट्रेट ने पति से भविष्य में अच्छे व्यवहार का आश्वासन लेकर छोड़ दिया।

दूसरे रोज़ उसे पत्नी का दूसरा हाथ तोड़ने पर मैजिस्ट्रेट के सामने फिर लाया गया। इस बार उस ने सफाई दी, “हज़ूर, छूटने पर अपने को सम्भालने के लिए मैंने थोड़ी शराब पी। हज़ूर, जब इससे भी कोई फर्क न आया तो थोड़ी थोड़ी करके मैं दो बोतलें पी गया। जब घर पहुंचा तो पत्नी ने मुझसे कहा - “शराबी आ गया नाली में लोटकर”। हज़ूर, मैं ने अपनी हालत पर गौर किया और सोचा शायद यह ठीक कहती है। मैं खामोश रहा। इसके बाद वह बोली, “हरामखोर, कुछ काम धंधा भी करा कर”। हज़ूर, इस पर भी मैं कुछ न बोला। पर हज़ूर, इस के बाद तो उसने हद कर दी। बोली “अगर उस मैजिस्ट्रेट में थोड़ी भी अक्ल होती तो तू अब तक जेल में होता”। बस हज़ूर, अदालत की तौहीन मुझसे बरदाश्त न हुई।

आराम

एक संगीत कलाकार से उसके पड़ोसी ने कहा, “क्या आज रात के लिए आप अपना सितार और तबला मुझे दे सकते हैं।”
“क्यों, क्या मेरा गाना सुन कर आप का भी मन गाने को कर रहा है?” कलाकार ने पूछा।
“नहीं”, पड़ोसी ने जवाब दिया, “आज मैं आराम से सोना चाहता हूं।”

Sweet & Sour - Sunil Fotedar

This Actually Happened



I was once watching a quiz competition on Srinagar TV. The show was in black and white, obviously before the Asiad games in 1982 when we all started receiving color transmission. The competition was between BSc students of Women's college, Nawa Kadal (I believe) and the other women's college at Maulana Azad road. The girls were dressed in their white uniforms.

One of the questions was about Pari Mahal's historical importance. The questioner asks, "Pari Mahal-as kya chhi khasoosiyat?" A few girls who seemed to know the answer to this seemingly simple question were anxious to be the first to answer. So, the questioner expecting the Dara Shikoh story picks one girl to answer, who said and I distinctly remember, "ati haz chhi pari rozaan." (Fairies live there, the word 'Pari' for a fairy).

In the same competition, a while later, the questioner asks as to why we should not sleep under a tree at night. Before the questioner could pick a girl to answer, one girl jumped off her seat and said, "bu haz wanai (I'll tell you). ati haz chhi jinn aasaan (Jinn/Genies are there)."

Needless to say, I switched off the idiot box as I had better things to do with my time.



Contact Sunil Fotedar at:
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Thesaurus - A.K.Misri

Questions & Answers



Q Why is shifting responsibility to someone else called 'passing the buck'?

A: In card games, it was once customary to pass an item, called a buck, from player to player to indicate whose turn it was to deal. If a player did not wish to assume the responsibility of dealing, he would 'pass the buck' to the next player.

Q: Why do people clink their glasses before drinking a toast?

A: It used to be common for someone to try to kill an enemy by offering him a poisoned drink. To prove to a guest that a drink was safe, it became customary for a guest to pour a small amount of his drink into the glass of the host. Both men would drink it simultaneously. When a guest trusted his host, he would only touch or clink the host's glass with his own.

Q: Why are people in the public eye said to be 'in the limelight'?

A: Invented in 1825, limelight was used in lighthouses and theatres by burning a cylinder of lime which produced a brilliant light. In the theatre, a performer 'in the limelight' was the centre of attention.



Contact A.K.Misri at:
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Report & Biradari News

Youth 4 Panun Kashmir to organise International KP Youth Conference :

The first International KP Youth Conference is being organised at Pune by the 'Youth for Panun Kashmir' on 7 & 8 January 2012. The Conference is being held under the aegis of Panun Kashmir. According to information received from the organisers, the idea (of holding this Conference) is to reinforce KPs' political and ideological struggle through youth who have been at the backfoot in the last 2 decades. "Time has come when we should seek our social, cultural and geographical right in Kashmir, not just as victims of 7th exodus but as equal stake holders", said the communique issued by the organisers. The Conference is expected to be hi-tech, providing audio & video features, so that those who can not attend, can participate remotely.

*Input : Veerji Wangoo/Rohit Bhat
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Kashmiri Pandits set up community radio station :

The displaced Kashmiri Pandits have set up a community radio station in Jammu in a bid to preserve, promote and revive their rich culture, art and language, which has received a set back during the past two decades of their mass migration from the Valley in 1990. The community radio station, a first of its kind in the state, was formally inaugurated by Minister for Relief, Revenue and Rehabilitation Raman Bhalla at Muthi on 5 December 2011.

Christened as 'Radio Sharda FM 90.4' with a punch line 'Boojiv Te Khoush Rooziv (Listen and be happy)', this broadcasting institution will function under Pir Panchal, a socio-cultural organisation, with the

active participation of the community. The radio station, with a 10-km aerial distance, will cover areas like Janipur, Barnai, Durga Nagar, Bantalab, Roopnagar, Anand Nagar, Bohri, New Plot, Sarwal and Chinore, where thousands of community members are presently putting up. The programmes broadcast from the station will be mainly in Kashmiri, Hindi and Urdu.

Speaking on the occasion, Bhalla hoped that the radio station could provide a platform to the artists who are nostalgic of their past. The minister said setting up Radio Sharda here would help the community in promoting their culture, art and language.

Shabir Mujahid, director, Doordarshan Jammu, who was present on the occasion, hoped that the radio station should have been named as 'Awaz-e- Dard' (Voice of Pain). "It is the pain of migration and living away from the Valley that Kashmiri Pandits wanted to have a community radio station here," Mujahid said.

Romesh Hangloo, President, Pir Panchal, said since the displaced community members were scattered all over, the need of the hour was to have a strong community institution. "Radio Sharda is a step in that direction. It will give voice to the voiceless community," he added. He said the plan to set up a community radio station here was okayed after the organisation had approached the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in 2008. "Today, the dream of every community member has been fulfilled," he said with tears in his eyes.

Report : Rajesh Bhat : raajbhat@gmail.com



Honour for Jeevan Zutshi :

Jeevan Zutshi, the founder and Chairman

Report & Biradari News

of Indo-American Community Federation (IACF-USA) has been selected for the Unity Award by California State Legislature this year. The event is on December 15th at James Logan Center for the Performing Arts located at 1800 H Street, Union City, CA. This is one of the only Indo-American events which is attended by all other ethnic communities from different countries.

Jeevan Zutshi is being honored for promoting unity and understanding amongst the diverse Californians since the advent of unfortunate events of 9/11. Prior to this, Zutshi was honored in July 2006 by Herb Wesson, the then Speaker of the California State Assembly for promoting assimilation of Indo-Americans in mainstream America.

Zutshi serves on GOPIO International, a global organization of Indian Diaspora, as well as the GOPIO Health Council. He has continued his efforts to be part of the solution for Kashmir problem, especially the return of Kashmiri Pandits who are still refugees in their own mother land.

*Report : Surinder Kaul
surinder_kaul2000@yahoo.com*



AIKS Elections :

In an important meet of All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) held on 11th December at Pt. J.N.Kaul Memorial Hall, Pamposh Enclave New Delhi, it was decided to hold the elections for the President for 2012-2015 term on 8th April 2012. Meeting was presided over by Shri Moti Kaul, President AIKS. Meeting also discussed amendments to the AIKS Constitution.

Dr. Umesh Moza was appointed as the Presiding Officer to conduct the election as per provisions of the AIKS Constitution.

Meeting was also attended by stalwarts like Mr. M.K.Kaw, former AIKS President, Pt. Gautam Kaul, Sq. Leader. B.L.Sadhu (KMECT), Shri A.N.Kaul Sahib, Shri P.L.Razdan, Shri Jatinder Kaw, Ms. Alka Lahori and Ms. Nancy. Dr. Romesh Raina, General Secretary AIKS conducted the meeting.

*Input : Sanjay wali
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Elections of Lalla Ded Educational & Welfare Trust :

According to notification issued by the returning Officer Shri Jay Kaul, elections for the 6-member Managing Committee of Lalla Ded Educational & Welfare Trust will be held at Vasai on 5th February 2012. Members of the Board of Trustees are eligible to elect the Managing Committee members including the Chairman. Elected committee will have a tenure of 3 years.



Clusters for migrants in Kashmir :

With 4,600 Kashmiri migrant families seeking to return to Kashmir Valley, Jammu and Kashmir Government is mulling a new proposal to set up 20 residential clusters for them. "We have mooted a new proposal for return and rehabilitation of displaced Kashmir migrants to Kashmir Valley in which 20 residential clusters would be set up for housing displaced community members," Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner Vinod Koul told a news agency in Jammu on 18 December, 2011. The proposal, mooted by Relief and Rehabilitation Department is being fine tuned for its submission to State Cabinet for its approval.

As per new proposal, residential plots

Report & Biradari News

in clusters would be provided by the state government to those who desire to return to the Valley as per the place of domicile and Rs 20 lakh would be provided for construction of the house per family for their rehabilitation. Koul said five clusters would come up in Anantnag district, 2-3 each in Srinagar, Baramulla districts, 2 each in Kupwara, Budgam, Kulgam and Pulwama and one each in Shopian, Bandipora and Gandherbal. "The Centre has already agreed to this new proposal and has asked us to get the proposal vetted through the state cabinet for its formal approval by the Centre," Koul said. He confirmed that so far no migrant family has returned to Kashmir.

Over 4,600 applications have been received from the Kashmiri migrant families, who wish to return back to the Valley under the policy of return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri migrants.

The largest number of 1,237 applications for the return to Kashmir Valley have been received from Srinagar district followed by 1,140 applications from Anantnag district, 462 from Baramulla district, 431 from Budgam district, 359 from Pulawama district, 283 from Kulgam district, 240 from Kupawara district, 150 from Shopian district and 98 from Ganderbal district. As many as 38,119 families of Kashmiris are registered as migrants with Relief Organisation at Jammu. Of these, 34,202 families are Hindus, 2,168 Muslims and 1,749 Sikhs. 19,338 Kashmiri migrant families are living in Delhi, 11 families in Himachal Pradesh, 924 in Haryana, 114 in Chandigarh, 319 in Punjab, 57 in Uttaranchal, 222 in UP, 43 in MP, one in Tamil Nadu, 38 in Karnataka, 208 in Maharastra and 48 in Rajasthan.

*Report : Deepak Raina
deepak.raina@yahoo.com*



AIKS rejects clusters in Valley:

All State Kashmiri Pandit Conference (ASKPC) today held a meeting under the chairmanship of its vice-president, R K Raina and discussed various issues. Shri Raina said the community rejects the clusters in the Valley and blamed so called secularists for making a mess with regard to return of Community. He sought a guarantee from both Central and State Governments that no exodus will take place in future and there will be constitutional, political and educational security to the community. He said Pandits will only return if they are rehabilitated at a single place in Kashmir with Constitutional and institutional guarantees.

It was also pointed that Revenue Department is tampering the revenue records for changing the names of owners of displaced KPs. The ASKPC appealed to the Revenue Department to stop such tampering under Migrant Property Act. They also stressed for immediate passage of Temple Bill, enhancement of monthly relief upto Rs. 12000 and grant of Rs. 25 lakh as one time stipend for over aged youth.

*Report : Deepak Raina
deepak.raina@yahoo.com*



Milchar Subscription & Matrimonial Tariff:

KPA, Mumbai has increased the subscription for Milchar from Rs. 250.00 to Rs. 300.00 per year. Also the tariff for Matrimonials has been fixed at Rs. 250.00 for ads upto 100 words.

Input : Chand Bhat : bhatchand@gmail.com



Report & Biradari News

New Co-opted Members of KPA BoT :

Shri J.L.Kak, Shri M.K.Kar and Shri Chand Bhat have been co-opted as trustees in place of Late P.N.Takoo, Shri Ashwini Hashia and Shri Anil Gadroo respectively. Shri Hashia and Shri Gadroo have resigned from the Bot recently owing to their pre-occupation.

Input : Chand Bhat : bhatchand@gmail.com



KP Woman Honoured in California :

Shefali Razdan Duggal, has been selected to receive '2012 Most Powerful and Influential Women of California' Award by the National Diversity Council. She will be formally recognized at the 2012 California Leadership and Diversity Conference on Thursday, February 2, 2012.

Input : Ankit Monga

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Kashmiri Sahayak Samiti, Jammu :

The 6th general elections of the Kashmiri Sahayak Samiti, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu were held at the office of the Samiti at Trikuta Nagar Extn. on 28 Nov., 2011. Er. Lokesh Ganju of Bhawani Vihar, Sec.3, Ext. Trikuta Nagar was elected as President of the Samiti by the electoral college for a two year term of 2012-13. Shri B.N.Sadhu, Shri Bushan Lal Handoo, Shri S.K.Moza and Er. Kulbushan Kaul were nominated as Vice President, General Secretary, Social Secretary and Treasurer respectively. The Samiti, a non-political organisation is celebrating its silver jubilee this year.

Input : R.N.Kaw : rughnathkaw@yahoo.co.in



Nuptials :

Kanchi D/o Smt. Hansa and Shri Uttam Kaul of Lokhandwala, Andheri, Mumbai got married to **Shabir** S/o Smt. Mabel and Col.

Vinod Ahluwalia on 26 November 2011 in Mumbai.



Kartiki D/o Smt. Rashmi and Shri Tej Kumar Karihaloo of Kandivali (W) got married to **Sanjeev** S/o Smt. Sushma and Shri Surinder Kaul of Delhi on 4th November 2011 at Jammu.



Sonia Neice of Smt. Sunita and Shri Krishen Kemmu of Sion, Mumbai got married to **Shivam** S/o Smt. Urjita and Dr. K.K.Sopori at Jammu on 3rd December 2011.



Nishita D/o Smt. Lalita & Shri M.K.Koul of Vasai got married to **Kanwal** S/o Smt. Neelam & Shri Pradeep Kapoor on 1st Dec. 2011 at Mumbai.



Ashmita D/o of Smt. Girija and Shri Ashok Monga of Borivali (E), Mumbai got married to **Anshul** S/o Smt. Kirti and Shri Ashok Sheopuri on 11th December 2011 at Mumbai.



Yagneopavit :

Yagneopavit Ceremony of **Rohit** S/o Smt. Bimla and Shri Roop. K. Bhat of Marol, Andheri was held on 9th October 2011 at Jammu.

Input : Neena Kher

neena1000068@iciciprupartner.com



New Arrivals :

Ivana Koul, a baby girl was born to Shri Sunil Koul and Smt. Dimple Fotedar Koul (Grand daughter to Smt. Kalpana and Shri R. Fotedar of Kopar Khairne, Navi Mumbai) on 3rd November 2011.

Input : Chand Bhat : bhatchand@gmail.com



*Spirituality & Religion - T.N.Dhar 'Kundan'***A Matter of Approach**

I have a great regard for all the religious leaders, founders of different faiths and seers and sages. I hold each one of them in high esteem, for these people appeared on this planet earth from time to time and revealed the truth for the benefit of the mankind. They invariably laid stress on one or the other aspect or facet of the Eternal Truth with due regard to the times when they lived, the place and region of their activity and the type of people they were addressing. Even so there is a universal appeal in what they said and preached. Christ propagated universal love. Moses and Muhammad emphasized oneness of God. Zoroaster was for worship. In the East, while Confucius stressed the importance of discipline in one's conduct, Lao-tzu showed the way, Buddha pointed out the apparent uncertainties of life, Mahavir was for non-injury and non-violence, Guru Nanak Devji propounded unflinching devotion. The Indian sages saw a great merit in spirituality and self-realization and took a world-view of the human existence. All these principles, tenets and philosophies were enunciated with a view to ensuring universal good, peace and prosperity. There is no conflict in these various ways. These can be viewed as different approaches to the same truth in the true spirit of the Vedic dictum, '*Ekam Sat viprah bahudhah vadanti* – The same truth is named in different ways by the wise'.

There is another dimension to this approach. One can have a negative or a positive approach. Buddha observed death, decay and disease when he saw a corpse,

an old man and a sick person. He thought of liberation from the suffering caused by these afflictions. If we have a negative approach in life we shall weep for the dead, grieve at the incapacity caused by the old age and lament the suffering caused by the disease and illness. If, on the other hand, we develop a positive approach in life we shall see death as an inevitable end for that which is perishable and see the truth in the fact that death does not come to that, which is imperishable. A poet has said, 'Dust thou art to dust returnest was not spoken of the soul'. The Gita says about the imperishable soul, '*ya enam vetti hantaram yaschainam manyate hatam, ubhau tau na vijaneete na hanyate hanyamane shareere* – Those who consider the soul as a killer and those who think it can be killed, both are ignorant of the fact that it does not get slain when the body in which it dwells is killed'. With the same positive approach we shall see the ageing as a process and as yet another stage in the growth of a body, which requires good habits and a life of purity and piety so that it is not troublesome and painful. We shall consider the illness also as a natural phenomenon, which needs cure and treatment and not tears and lamentation. We shall also realize that even the illness can be avoided by preventive action and moderate living substantially, if not wholly.

Death has to be conquered, decay has to be curtailed and illness has to be prevented and all this is possible only by a



positive approach. Any inevitability has to be accepted as something about which we can do nothing. Any eventuality has to be foreseen and remedied to the extent possible and within our means. We will all the time be well advised to keep in mind that in the scheme of things we are only partially in a position to affect the circumstances and the environment we live in. Therefore, we must have the strength to change what we do not consider good and also accept as good what we cannot change. A person with a positive approach makes the best use of what he gets and considers not useful all that he is unable to get or achieve. This helps him remain happy and contented in his entire life.

This contentment should not be construed to mean inertia, inaction or laziness. Contentment does not follow from inaction but frustration follows from it. Contentment is the sweet fruit of our sustained effort, our persevered toil and our resilient, committed and purposeful actions. This fruit is sweet because it gives us satisfaction that we did our best to achieve our goal and inspires us to accept the outcome in all humility. The Bhagavad Gita tells us in clear terms, '*Karmane- eva-adhikaras-te ma phaleshu kadachana, ma karma-phala-hetur bhu, ma te sangostu karmani* – You are entitled to do your deeds only and have no authority on their fruits. You should not make fruits the reason to act and you should not get attached to your actions'. This is a directive for us to act in a detached manner. We should not hanker after fruits but we should have a clear purpose in view. Our actions should be goal-oriented and not for any fruit.

This attitude is possible only if we have a positive approach to life. We should not get ruffled by obstacles, we should not be

deterred by hindrances nor should we fear difficulties encountered by us during our life. If we get bogged down by the fear of death, degeneration and diseases, we will develop a defeatist tendency and shall be defeated even before encountering the problem. The fear of defeat induces inaction and inertia sets in with the result we feel helpless and at the mercy of circumstances. This tendency had started to overpower Arjuna but the Lord warned him, '*Bhayat ranat upratam manasyante tvam maharathah. Yasyam tu bahumato bhutva, yasyasi lagavam* – The warriors will think that you have abandoned the battlefield out of fear and you will very small in front of those who used to hold you in high esteem'. We do not want to be labeled as defeatist or absconders or those running away out of fear. We have to be dauntless, fearless, bold and ever ready to fight the evil and face the odds of life. This positive attitude will see us triumphant and victorious, substantially if not wholly. Even if we fail there will be a great satisfaction that we did try but the odds were against us and it was not our day. Let there be no abject surrender. Our fight should be like a tennis player whose service is broken time and again but again and again he comes from behind to equalize the scores and eventually wins a dues game by the dint of his dogged perseverance and resilience.

There are two ways to evaluate a thing. The first is that we accept it as true and then go on to verifying it to be really true. In this case our investigation may either lead us to confirm our presumption or we may come to the conclusion that our premise was not correct. The correct one will in any case unfold before us. The second way is to deny it or refuse to accept it in the first instance and then make an attempt to

explore the reality. In this case we may either find that what we refused to accept was actually the truth or we may arrive at something else and find that as the reality. I would prefer to go by the first method because I find that as a positive approach. There is an advantage in that method. It is not always possible to attain the ultimate truth in our lifetime. The chances of our premise being correct are fifty-fifty and even if we do not reach the goal we would have believed in the reality all through even without knowing. If we take the second path, which is a negative path and do not reach the logical conclusion and if the denied premise happened to be true, we would have lost the reality in our lifetime. It is on the basis of this logic that many of our spiritual leaders, sages and saints have advocated that we believe in God with form and with attributes, 'Saakaara' and 'Saguna'. It is this positive attitude that devotion to Shri Rama and Shri Krishna has had its sway in the length and breadth of the country. Even those who worshipped, Shiva, essentially a symbol of formless and attribute-less God, eventually turned to devotional worship. They began propitiating 'Shakti', the energy aspect of Shiva while firmly believing that the two Shiva and Shakti were inseparable. Kalidas has expressed this inseparable nature in a beautiful verse thus: 'Vakh-arthau-iva samprikhtau – the two are fused into one as the word and its meaning.' He calls the two as the parents of the universe, 'Jagatah pitarau'.

I for one do not find any conflict or contradiction in these various forms of worship, be it worship of the Divine with form or without form, with attributes or without attributes, Shiva or Vishnu and His incarnations or the Goddess in any form,

viz. Goddess of wealth Laxmi, of knowledge Saraswati, of eternal time Mahakali, of power and vigour, Mahashakti or the Goddess of the great illusion, Mahamaya. The form, practice and procedure as also the method of worship vary according to the personal acumen and level of spirituality of the seeker. In the end every seeker reaches the same goal as the rivers do by merging with the great ocean whichever route they may flow on. 'Nrinam eko gamyah twam-asi payasam-arnava-iva.' Thus it is a matter of approach.



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Matrimonial

* An austere and compatible (BE & or MBA) alliance is sought for my son (188 cms) born 5th July 1983 (3.10 PM) at Srinagar. BE (EXTC) from Mumbai and MBA (Marketing) from JBIMS, Mumbai, he is presently working as product manager (FMCG) for a reputed MNC in Bangalore. Interested may contact me on Landline: 022-25579878, Cell: 09969773592 & 09869469895 (7.00 PM to 9.00 AM). EMail: srkaul@gmail.com



* Suitable Alliance invited for a KP Boy 5'7" Born 5th July 1985 @ 15.43 hrs, Anantnag Kashmir. BE & pursuing MBA, presently working with Godrej Group in Mumbai. Interested may contact Kapil Bhat on 9821189669 and 9821023965.

E-mail: bhatkapil1@hotmail.com



काव्य - पी.के.कौल

बगवानस सुत्य कथा बाथा



आस्या सना कांछा द्वाहा, येलि ज़न बु कुनि प्रज़नावहँथा
वछि कुठिस मंज़ रँछ्य करिथ जिगुरस अंदर ललनावहँथ ।।

क्या सना आसान छा, कुनि यिम च़े ज़ानान छी पज़ी
तिम छा सना पारय दिवान, तिम नँन्य ति छा आसान पज़ी ।

अख छोट सबीला, कारुबाराह, द्यार वटुनुक नाव चोन
यस बाँज्य गारस कँह नु कुनुनुयओस, तँम्य कुन नाव चोन ।

कनि फँल्यन स्वनु ताज लागान, त्वहि पनुन्य किन्य कोछ दिवान
युस अखा वनि छुस बु बब, तस छि अँस्य लॉरिथ गछान ।

कांह दपान ग्रेहद्यन दवा कर, पतु छु तॉवीज़ा कुनान
ग्रेह बिचॉर्य कति तान्य फेरान, ठग छि असि लूठा करान ।

बगवानन द्युत्तनम जवाब

पृछोव शेतानस यि कँम्य ताम्र चॉन्य शुर्य किथु पाठ्य लसन
तँम्य दोपुस येलि मुडु ज़्यवन म्यान्यन शुर्यन हँद्य गरु खसन ।

कौल साँबा क्या वौनुथ, यि ति छा सना कांह नँव कथा
शूश कटु सुंद, र्दम बटु सुन्द, क्या छना यि कहावथा ।



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Saints & Seers - Dr. C.L.Raina

Mahatma Krishen Joo Razdan & Kashmir Shaktivaad

Introduction: The topic, which I am going to discuss, is on the 'Shaktivad of Kashmir', with reference to the spiritual poetic heights of Pandit Krishan Joo Razdan. Shaktivad is the prominent way of life in maintaining the grand heritage of Kashmir Shaivism. The primary source of the poetic thought of Krishan Joo Razdan is based on the *Puranas*, and the applied religious thought of Kashmir Shaivism, read with the *Agama Shastras* of Kashmir. No doubt, he was a Saint-poet par-excellence; a Yogic in spirit and ritualistic in pattern in his *Sadhana*. He was singing the songs of immortality within the idiom of *Bhakti*. His choice of words were chiseled, and fermented with the Kashmiri environment, which suggests that he was very close to the Prakriti aspect of the Divine. I am here, concentrating on his representative poems, published under the title 'Krishna Darshun', edited by Pandit Sham Lal Razdan, in 1996.

Literally '*Krishna Darshun*' means the viewing of Shri Krishna, or it can suggest the darshana/philosophy of Krishna the poet. This is a *ShleSha* word in the Sanskrit diction. It can be interpreted both the ways. Whatever it is, the text of 'Krishna Darshun' speaks of the beauty of the Divine within the Vedic *Ritam*, to become the recipient of the Divine grace. It is an aspiration for Pandit Krishan Joo Razdan, to see the '*Satyam -Shivam-Sundaram*' within the orbit of Shiva and Shakti read with *Purusha* and *Prakriti*.

Discussion: I would love to listen to the

Kashmiri Pandits both men and women singing :

ब्यल तय मादल
व्यनु ग्वलाब पंपोशु दस्तय
पूजायि लागस
परम शिवस शिव नाथस तय

[byal tai maadal vyana gulab pamposhu dastai Poozaayi laagay parama Shivas Shiva Nathas Taæ]

छख महा वेद्या जगत माता, छख महालक्ष्मी शिव प्रिया
वेषु माया छख सर्व सेद्या, सर्व शक्तिमान छख महा राज्ञा
[Chhakh Maha Veddyā Zagath Mata Chakh Maha Lakhmii Shiva Priya Vishnu Maya Chakh Sarva Sedhaa sarva Shaktimaan Chakh Maha Ragnya]

He says in the 'Ragnya devi hunz tvataa' (राज्ञा दीवी हुंज त्वता) :

राज्ञेश्वरी राजन हुंज छख बँड सरकार
फिर दयि लोनय सोनुय चोनय रोट दरबार
सथा छे चॉनी ज्ञेय निश अँस्य आयि व्वमेदवार
अथु त्युथ दितु युथ अँस्य करुहॉव पर-व्वपकार
[raizeeshvari raazan hunz Chakh ba'ida Sargaar phir dayu lonuya sonuya chonuya ro't darbar sathaa Chi chaini Tseyi nish Ayi a'si vomedwaar athaa tyuth dituya yuth a'si karahaiv boDha wopkaar]

The beauty of Krishan Joo Razdan lies in the fact that he prays Shiva and Shakti considering the Absolute both in the Purusha and Prakriti. He sees an integral approach in paying his obeisance to the Divine.

कथु कॅर्य कॅर्य गव मे ल्वकुचार, आर यीतनय शम्भू
अँन्य आशा नॅन्य तु नादार, करि हे कम कम कार
नञ्जुवन्य छस नॅन्य तरवार आर यीतनय शम्भू



[Katha kari Kari gava lokachaar aar
yiyatanai shamboo" a.an~ya aashaa
na.a`nya tu naadaarakari he kama kama
kaara nachuwunya chasa nanya
tarawaaraara yiyatanaya shambhuu]

Further he says:

परम शक्ती स्वस्त बूल बालय

नॉल्य छय छुनिथ कल मालय

मस्तानु बे परवाये, अनुग्रह छु चोन जायि जाये

[paramu\` shaktii svasta bhuula bhaalai
naa.alya Chai Chunitha kala maalaya
mastaanu\` be para waaye anugraha chu
chona jaayi jaayæ]

These were the popular Bhakti poems sung by the Kashmiri Pandits around fifties and so on, on the occasions of व्यूग त्रावुन, माँज़िराथ, कन्यादान [vyuuga Trawun, ma'inzi Raath, kanyadaan etc]

I happened to listen to these Bhajans in Satsangs/devotional congregations at Tullamulla shrine . Bel Tai madal Bhajan was in the air from the Radio Kashmir, Srinagar, as well. These Bhajans had a strong effect on me, in understanding, what the genius of Pandit Krishan Joo Razdan would have been, to depict spirituality through his Bhakti Poems, in Kashmiri diction, phrase and idiom. He was a Mahatma. I should call him a *Rishi*, because *Rishi* is always a कवि [Kavi], but a Kavi (poet) is not always a Rishi. Mahatma Krishan Joo Razdan's poetry is integrated with the spiritual ethos, welded with the strong metaphysical approach to find Lord Shiva in Saguna form. But Saguna Shiva is always with Shakti, hence we have the beautiful Shiva Parinaya - a transcreation of the Shiva Puranam, in his native language Kashmiri. When we go through the Shakti/ Devi Sahsrnamas, we read '*Shiva –Shakti Eka Roopinyai Namah*' Verily, it suggests that Shiva and Shakti are identical in *Samvit*/pure consciousness and

Svabhaava/ nature. Mahatma Krishna joo Razdan speaks of the *Shuddha Vidya* aspect of the Trika Darshana/Kashmir Shaivism. A devotional poet always pays obeisance to Shri Ganesha. So did Mahatma Krishna Joo Razdan, in the traditional manner. In his devotion to the *Adi Deva Astuti* in Kashmiri, he refers to *Adi-Shakti*, and sings in ecstasy:

आदि शक्ति हुंदे आदि कारो

एक दन्त वेद व्यस्तारयो

[*Adi shakti hundey Adi Kaaro Eika Danta Veeda Vyastaaryo.*]

A great significance has been attached to *Adya Shakti* in the Agamas of Kashmir. The *Adi Shakti* is the Primordial energy, who is the *Ichha –Shakti* of Shiva. Shakti is revered with the Sanskrit बीज [Bija] Mantra, which is the fourth phoneme of the *Varna-Mala*, revered as the *Turiya Avastha*/ transcendental state of mind. It has the supreme significance in the *Chakreshvara Puja* , and in the *Matrika Pujan*, very special to the Kashmiri Pandit religious ethos. Mahatma Krishan joo Razdan Ji further says:

परम शक्ती हुंदि सेवाकारो

येछा पुत्र व्यवहारो

[*Pana Shakti Hundi seevaa karo, Yechha Putra Vyavharo*]

The word *Parma Shakti* is Absolute Energy, which is independent, is स्वच्छन्द vachhanda]. Therefore, Parvati could create Ganesha through her innate *Ichha Shakti* / will power. It is the *Svachhanda Bhiravi Roopa* of Parvati. *Ichha Shakti* is the *Moola Rekha* / Base of the *Moola Trikona* of the *Chakreshvara* at Hari Parbat. He has referred to *Vallabha*, in the same *Stuti*/ - eulogy, as being the consort of *Maha Ganesha*. *Vallabha* is the Shakti of Ganesha, *Vallabha* means attachment, drawing

together, closeness as *jivatma* is to *Parmatman*, so is *Vallavha ti Ganesha*. Therefore, the Kashmiri *Prepyuna / Naivedya* Mantra invokes the Divine and says:

वल्लभा सहिताय श्री गणेशाय

[*Vallabha Sahitayai Shri Ganeshai*].

Ridhi and *Sidhi* are often used with the symbolic *Ganesha* in India in the form of *Swastika*. But *Vallabha* is within the recesses of heart of *Ganesha*, which again lays emphasis on the *Shakti* concept within religious symbols as given by Pandit Krishan Joo Razdan. He has again used the word '*Avidya*', which according to the *Devi Atharva Shirsha* is to destroy ignorance, and evil in the form of *Mahishasura* and other mighty *Rakshasas* like

चन्द्र मुण्ड रक्तबीज शुम्भ निशुम्भ धूम्रलोचन

[*chanda-munda ,rakta bija, Shumbha, nishumbha, dhumralochana*] etc. by Shri Durga. The Vedic mantra is

सा विद्या च अविद्या च

[*Saa Vidya Cha-Avidya Cha*]

Devi is both mighty and witty. She kills *Mahishasura*, for being the very personification of evil and ignorance. He says in the scene of '*Posh Pooza* of *Shiva* and *Parvati*:

लक्ष्मी मीठिय छस दिवान दामानस

[*Lakhmi Meethiya Chhas Diwaan Daamaanas*]

According to the *Markandeya Purana*, *Lakshmi* is the incarnation of *Maha Lakshmi*, She is none else but the *Ashta dash Bhuja Sharika*. *Lakshmi* is *Artha / riches* and *wealth*, and is the second *Purushartha*, in the Vedic ethos. Developing his poetic construction on the *Posha Pooza*, very dear to the Kashmiri pandits during the *Kanya Daan* ceremony at the *Lagna* time of bride and bridegroom, he receives the inspiration from the *Shiva purana*, where '*Maina*'—

the Mother of *Uma or Parvati* prays to *Maha vidya*, which is the first attribute of the *Shri Ragnya*, revered as *Shri Bhavani*. She also addresses to *Mahamaya*, which is the elixir of life in human understanding of the concept of *Jaganmata*, the Motherhood aspect the Divine, to grace the couple of *Shiva* and *Parvati*. What a wonderful message is given by our saint-poet in the *Shiva Parinaya*. Further she says that *Hari Parbat* is the *Lila of Shri Sharika*. What does it signify? It is the very source of Kashmiri *Shaktivad*. It conveys the message of the creation of *Kashmir* out of *Satisar* by *Kashyapa Rishi*. *Shri Sharika* is verily, *Sati*. Such is the affinity of *Mahatma Razdan Ji* for *Shrika, Hari Parbat* and the *Chakreshvara*. He says: *Parbatai Sharikayi Leela Parasui*. For *Himvan* and his wife *Maina*, *Parbat* is more auspicious as they want to pray *Shri Sharika* for the good and auspicious days to come for *Shiva* and *Parvati*. The *Poshi Puza* for *Shiva* and *Parvati* would be at the *Chakreshvara* spot, as per the wishes of *Maina*. Therefore, *Shiva* was to come to *Kashmir* from *Kailash*, for receiving the hand of *UMA*—, what a beautiful description given by *Krishan Joo Razdan*! He affirms that *Shaktipat* as defined in the *Trika* philosophy is the essential feature to receive the Energy force from *Shiva* through *Guru*. He describes the place of *Nishat* for the same spiritual wealth, *Dal* is the *Shakti* and *Shiva* is the *Nishat*. *Dal* is the *janan shakti* —the creative energy and *Nishat* is the manifestation. Here *Nishat* should be taken as the *Nandan Van*, close to *Ha'rvan*, within the *Mahadeva* range of hills of *Kashmir* in the *Himalayas*. He sees the Divinity in *Radha*, the *Shakti* aspect of *Shri Krishna*, who along with the *Gopis* in their ecstasies, as they see the *Gopla Krishna* every where. Thus *Krishan Joo*

Razdan refers to the Motherhood aspect of Divinity, both in the *Vaishnavite* and the *Shaivite* faith. Kashmiri Pandit culture sees no difference in the various incarnations of the Divine. It believes in the सर्व सौंदर्य स्वरूप ईश्वर [*Sarva Saundarya Svaroopæ*] of the Ishvara in the Ice-lingam of Shri Amarnath and *Sarveshvari Shri Ragnya*, Mahatma Krishan joo Razdan Ji is all praise for Vakh and says

छय तसुंज वॉनी सुय ग्यानी छुय

[*Chhai Tasunz Va'ini Suyi G'yani Chhuyi*]

It means that he who recites the *Bhavani Sahsrana* is verily, a Gyani, an embodied soul with *Pragnya*—intuitive faculty .

Conclusion: To establish his dedication and love for the Divine Mother, *Shri Raj Rajeshvari Raginya*, Pandit Krishan Joo Razdan has chosen some of the names for Maharagnya Bhagawati from the *Bhavani Sahsrana* and explained their efficacy to understand the spiritual import in those words. *Bhavani Sahsrana* is a section from the *Rudrayamala Tantra*. These are *Mahavidya, Maha Lakshmi, Shiva priya, Vishnu Maya, Durga, Sarva Mangala Mangala, Kaalika, Sharika, , Shri Shiva, Chandra bhaga, Vitasta, Saraswati, Gomati, Send/Sindhu, Jamna/ Yamuna. He has love for the places like Rudra Sandhya, Pavan Sandhya, Godhavari/ gudur, Mattan's Tsaaka, Ganga, Gaya, He reverts the Vatak puja. He asks us to have Ekta and Shraddha. Aapya, Lanka, Dwarika, Shabda, Bharamri and Ulka has been used to understand the geo-physical situations of the country. Tullamulla Nag, is the very breath of his spiritual strength. He receives significant vibrations for his works, in confirmation to the Prakriti as a very complement to Purusha. In the poem dedicated to Shri Raj Rajeshvari, Krishan Joo Razdan says about Shri Rajeshvari that the*

Divine Mother is OMKAR in the *Tullamulla spring*. She is the *Ragnya Devi*. She incarnates with different colours, and is the *Jal Tattva / Primal Water* element, personified in the form of *Raj Rajeshvari*. Krishan Joo Razdan wants to ascend to the heights, along with the *Raj Hamsas*, the mystic swans, who are always in tune with the Divine. Philosophically, he refers to the *Ardhanarishvara* aspect of the *Svayambhu Shiva* in SOHAM, where *Shri Raj Rajeshwari* is the *Raj Hamsini*, the *Vaama* —the left portion of Shiva. There is the element of spirituality and devotion in the works of this great saint, whose poetry will inspire the youth in KP Diaspora. It is hoped so.



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Kashmiri Pandits' Association, Mumbai

VAARSHIK HAWAN
21st & 22nd January 2012

Vaarshik Hawan will be performed at Kashyap Bhawan, Plot No. 16, Bhawani Nagar, Marol Maroshi Road, Andheri (E), Mumbai on 21st & 22nd January 2012. Hawan will commence on 21st January 2012 at 1.00 PM and will culminate with Purna Ahuti on 22nd January 2012 at 1.30 PM.

All are cordially invited to be a part of the ceremony and for partake of Naved.

President ~ General Secretary
KPA, Mumbai

J&K Hindu Shrines - Dr. K.L. Chowdhury

Making a Case for 'J&K Shrines & Religious Places of Kashmiri Hindus Bill'

Reproduced below, is the text of a lecture delivered by Dr. K.L. Chowdhury at a seminar in Jammu on 4th December, 2011. The Seminar was organised by the Prem Nath Bhat Memorial Trust for the passage of the bill on Preservation, Protection, Management of Hindu Religious Places in Kashmir in J&K legislature. Shri Raman Bhalla, Minister for Relief, Rehabilitation and Revenue was the chief guest.

 I am grateful to Prem Nath Bhat Memorial Committee to have invited me to participate in this seminar on the burning issue of the temples, shrines and other religious places of Hindus in Kashmir. It could not have come at a more opportune moment, especially when a draft bill for the management of these institutions is hanging fire for a long time now and being deferred under one pretext or other from being introduced in the J&K State legislature.

All that is left of our community in Kashmir are the dilapidated remains of these sacred institutions that have held us together and are so much enshrined in our daily lives in exile. Our ancestors have bequeathed to us these fantastic monuments to their faith that we may cherish and draw inspiration from them and nurture them with our love and devotion to carry forward the great traditions, rituals, and religious practices that define us as a distinct and proud community.

I am neither an archeologist, nor theologian, nor historian, who could speak with authority on these religious monuments, but I was lucky to have grown - and so must many of you here - in a uniquely spiritual milieu where the temples of gods and goddesses, and the shrines of saints and savants formed the fulcrum of our lives. In my childhood, we would spend all our play time in the halls

and courtyards of these wonderful monuments to our gods. I recall thousands of denizens flocking to the precincts of Hari Parbhat in the city of Srinagar every morning - Pandits, Muslims and



Sikhs - to offer prayers and pay their obeisance at the famous places of worship - the temples of Hindu gods, the Makdoom Sahib shrine and the Chatti Padshahi gurdwara - all placed on, near, and around the Hari Parbhat hillock, which defines the old city of Srinagar. I would visit the pantheon of gods in the many temples that dotted the way, beginning with the Ganesha temple on to the Chakreshwar temple of Sharika, the Durga temple inside the fort, the Hari temple, the Ambri Koul and Pokhribal temples, and back home after that long circumambulation. I wish I had the time here to describe those unforgettable days, what with the festivals of badamvari (the almond blossoms), Sonth (Spring), Naureh (New Year), Baisakhi etc. that we celebrated in the sprawling lawns of Devi Aangan and adjoining lands at the feet of Chkreshawr temple. But if you go there now, you may not find your way about to these coveted places of worship - the lands, and lanes have been encroached, annexed and absorbed, the gods are besieged. The Ganesha temple is locked most of the time and in dilapidated state, the other temples

are in a pitiable condition. Last month, a fire consumed part of the Chakreshwar complex. No one in authority batted an eyelid, not to speak of doing anything about it.

When I moved from my downtown Rajveri Kadal home which was a stone's throw from all these spiritual centers at the foothills of Hari Parbhat, I relocated at the feet of the famous Ramchander temple at Barbarshah. It was like coming from the lap of Sharika into the loving embrace of Rama. Twice a year, there used to be a nine-day festival, the Ramnavami, when devotees from far and wide flocked to the sprawling grounds around the mound on which the temple stood. And what a sight it used to be, what pageant, what rejoicing and praying and frolicking. Alas, a huge chunk of this Ramchander temple land has been assimilated into the highway by the municipal administration and the temple is now almost bared and exposed to the hazard of traffic, its sanctity blighted.

I moved on a second time, now to Indira Nagar and found myself face to face with Shankaracharya. I could not restrain myself from the call of divine and I started my daily climb to the mountain top to feel the touch of Shiva, to have a view of the heavens, to feast my eyes on the placid Dal lake, the meandering Vitasta and the distant snow-peaked mountains that shimmered like sheets of silver with the morning rising sun and enveloped you in a divine embrace. But even this most tourist-frequented temple is now reduced to a mere fortress, with most of the traditional routes closed for pilgrims. Then came an evil wind that blew it all over, as if it had been a dream, and I woke up to find myself in the wilderness of exile along with hundreds and thousands of my community. It has never been the same again. Now the pangs get worse with each passing day as news of the ruination of all

we left behind floats in every day. The temples and shrines are falling apart and going into ruin because the managers, trustees, caretakers, devotees have all been forced out with no one to look after and maintain these institutions and their estates. It seems we have lost everything.

What is it that makes our hearts bleed about these places of religious import? What is special to Kashmir and what is unique to the temples there that the poets sing about, the mystics mull over, and lay people like me long for? While there is no denying Kashmir is the paradise about which Jehangir, the Mughal Emperor, waxed eloquent: Agar Firdous bar roo-e zameen ast-o, Hameen ast-o, hameen ast-o, hameen ast-o (If there is paradise on earth, it is here, it is here, it is here), for us, it is also the land of gods and goddesses, of saints, savants and sages as exemplified by the temples, shrines, and ashrams that dot every nook and corner, every hamlet, town and city.

In the words of Aurel Stein, who was stationed in Kashmir from 1888-1905, "Kashmir is a country where there is not a place as large as a grain of sesame without a tirtha (pilgrimage) – time and conversion to Islam of greater portion of the population has changed but little in this respect." To this, I would like to add: There is not a spring which was not holy to us, not a hill where Siva did not reside, not a pasture where Vishnu did not stride, not a river on whose banks we did not perform our ablutions, rituals and rites, not a village around which a myth is not woven. Vitasta, Sheshnag, Kaunsarnag, Gangabal (Harmukt Ganga), Amarnath, et al - they are just a few names that are inseparable from our ethos, from our consciousness. They are the symbols of our culture and heritage and the signposts of our civilization, and they occupy our conscious thought and our

subconscious aspirations even after two decades in exile. Now, they are the very fount of hope which strengthens our resolve to return to our homeland.

Kashmir lives in our souls even as we have been torn asunder from her physically. She is our mother, our beloved our deity. Our whole history is woven around the rivers, springs and hill of Kashmir, around and on which these temples and shrine came up over the course of history. Just for an example there are sixteen temples, with the post fix of yar to their names, on the banks of Vitasta in the Srinagar city alone, starting from Batyar downstream on to Somayar, Ganpatyar and others up to Shurah yar at Shvpora upstream. Not only have they inspired the Hindus, but Muslims also in large measure. Recall the spiritual experience of the Afghan governor, Ali Mardhan, who had a vision of Shiva on looking at Mt. Mahadev that inspired his famous verse:

Huma asle maheshar bood, Shabshahe ki man deedam

Ghazanfar charage dar barbood, Shabshahe ki man deedam

(I saw the real Maheshwar this evening ...)
But, it seems his inspiration has lost itself somewhere on the denizens of Kashmir like water falling off from a lotus leaf. Since Stein made that observation, Kashmir has changed a lot, and, sadly, changed for the worse. It has changed so fast in the last two decades, that if Stein were to come alive he would believe he was not in Kashmir but in an Islamic State with the sad demise of those tirthas he spoke about that were the showpiece of her glorious cultural and religious past.

We have an inventory of the temples as they existed when the mass exodus of Hindus took place in 1989-90. A quick look at the list below shows 499 Hindu temples

scattered almost uniformly over the length and breadth of the valley in all its nine districts:

District Anantnag: Anantnag 17, Bijbehara 17 Phalgam 24, Duroo 23, Kokernag 13, Shangas 22. Total = 116

District Baramulla: Baramulla 13, Pattan 25, Tangmarg 15, Uri/Buniyar 6, Ruhama/Rafiabad 7, Sopore 13. Total = 79

District Bandipora: Bandipore 9, Sumbal-Hajan 8. Total = 17

District Budgam: Budgam 22, Beru 16, Khanshab/ Chadoora 6. Total =44

District Gandarbal: Gandarbal 4, Laar/Kangan 12. Total = 16

District Kulgam: Kulgam 27, Dhmal Hanjipora 11, Devsar 10. Total =48

District Kupwara: Handwara/Karnah 31, Kupwara/Sogam 35. Total = 66

District Pulwama: Avantipora 5, Pulwama 22, Tral 10. Total 47

District Shopian: Total 22

District Srinagar: Total 44

Grand Total = 499

Alas, most of the temples stand in utter ruin. Sometime back, Shri Raman Bhalla, the Hon Minister for revenue, relief and rehabilitation, acknowledged in written reply to a question from a legislator that as many as 170 temples had been damaged during past two decades of militancy in Kashmir valley. I am sure the minister is aware of the fact that most temple estates of the 499 properties enumerated above are under the covetous eyes of land mafia; that even the State government functionaries in the departments of revenue and administration are hand in glove with these unsavory elements; that several temple lands have been sold or seized illegally; and that unauthorized constructions have already been allowed by the concerned municipal and town area authorities.

It is not a question whether 170 temples have been damaged or more than 400 as we

claim with substantive evidence. Even the damage of a single temple should be a matter of grave concern and shame. But, here, we are speaking about encroachment and annexation, desecration and defilement, derailment and destruction of almost all these institutions.

Therefore, to prevent further rot of these historic monuments and to reassemble them from the ruins and to resume their proper upkeep and development, we urge for their holistic management through an act of legislature which should be akin to the existing acts that govern the institutions of other religious communities, namely the Auquaf and the Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee.

We are not asking for the moon, and it is not just the Hindu community that will benefit from the legislation, but the whole valley and the State of J&K. We have reached the age of globalization when cultural and religious tourism is fast catching the imagination of pilgrims and vacationers all round the world. Imagine the great potential of some of these ancient and historic temples especially the sun temples at Parihaspura, Mattan, Naran Nag and Awantipura, the revered Kshir Bhavani in Tulamula, the Jwala temple in Khrew and the numerous temples in the springs of Anantnag, Mattan, Pahalgam, which can all be developed and showcased. We have the example of Zeth Ashtami when more than a hundred thousand Pandit pilgrims visit Kshir Bhavni every year, bringing huge revenue to the local Muslims, transporters, hoteliers etc. Look how Mata Vaishnav Devi was transformed to become one of the leading and most well organized pilgrimages in the country, the revenues from which are filling the coffers of our State, benefiting all layers of civil society, including the boost to education after the

creation of Mata Vaishnov Devi University. Such models can be replicated in some of the Hindu religious institutions we want to safeguard through this bill in the valley.

We fail to understand what are the impediments in getting the bill introduced? The National Conference, when in opposition in the last legislature, was nice to pilot the bill, but the introduction was deferred because the ruling alliance at that time gave us to understand that an improved version of the bill would be brought up. It did not happen. Now that NC is in the ruling alliance, the bill has again been deferred for no tangible reason. As far as we are aware, none of the mainstream parties have expressed any reservation or opposition to the bill. If the coalition alliance is genuinely in favor of the bill, it can be introduced and passed without any hitch, bypassing any quaint objections by individuals or groups with vested interest in keeping the institutions in a perpetual state of mismanagement.

This is not a political issue but one that concerns the whole of Jammu and Kashmir. Fundamental to the claim of those who rule Kashmir, those who do not tire claiming that Kashmir is incomplete without Hindus (Pandits), and those who desire to restore Kashmiriyat, is the need to come forward and support this cause. This is the cause of Kashmir's ancient and hallowed past, her proud heritage, her future projection as the real crown of a modern secular democratic India. Let us prove it to the world that Kashmiris are not Taliban who destroyed the icons and institutions of their glorious past by pulverizing the Bhamiyani Buddhas, but true inheritors of the legacy of Badshah, Lalla and Nunda Resh.



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शर्गापुराण - डा. बैकुण्ठ नाथ शर्गा कश्मीरी पंडित और मोहल्लेबाज़ी

प्रा चीन काल में लगभग हर ऐतिहासिक नगर में जातियों और समुदायों के आधार पर अलग अलग मोहल्ले बसते थे जिसके कारण हर मोहल्ले की अपनी एक बिलकुल अलग विशेष संस्कृति होती थी जिसका अपना अलग स्वरूप होता था और पूरा मोहल्ला एक प्रकार से एक वृहद परिवार का आभास कराता था और उसका हर सदस्य एक दूसरे के सुख-दुख में साथ देना अपना कर्तव्य समझता था। हर मोहल्ले का अपना एक बुजुर्ग होता था जो चाचा कहलाता था जो उस मोहल्ले के प्रत्येक नागरिक के लिये एक आदर का पात्र होता था और मोहल्ले के छोटे-मोटे विवादों को निपटाने में एक अहम भूमिका निभाता था।

एक ही समुदाय के व्यक्तियों का एक ही मोहल्ले में बसने का एक मुख्य कारण यह भी था कि इससे उन्हें अपने तीज-त्योहार मनाने में अधिक कठिनाई का सामना नहीं करना पड़ता था और आपसी सौहार्द तथा भाईचारे को बल मिलता था। इस प्रकार के रहन सहन के ही कारण हर समुदाय अपनी विशेष संस्कृति को एक लम्बे समय तक सुरक्षित और संरक्षित करने में सफल हो सका जिसको हम अनेकता में एकता की संज्ञा देते हैं और जो भारत को विश्व में अन्य देशों से भिन्न बनाता है।

आज के वैश्वीकरण और भूमण्डलीयकरण की चूहा दौड़ में हमारे सदियों पुराने सामाजिक मूल्य और आदर्श तीव्र गति के साथ समाप्त होते जा रहे हैं। मोहल्ले में कोई क्या कर रहा है अब इससे न

तो किसी को कोई मतलब है न कोई सरोकार। घर के बुजुर्ग अब चौकीदार बन कर रह गये हैं। जो व्यक्ति जितना अधिक बेकार और फालतू है वह उतना ही



अधिक अपने को व्यस्त बताता है। और दिन के २४ घण्टों में अपने काम पूरा न होने की बात कहता है। वह एक दिन में ४८ घण्टे होने की मांग करता है। कुछ लोग ऐसे व्यक्ति को ढपोर संखी कहकर यद्यपि उसका उपहास करते हैं पर वास्तविक धरातल पर अब यह सब चीजें एक कड़वी हकीकत बन चुकी है। कुल मिलाकर आज के युग में डुप्लिकेट चीजों की कमी नहीं है बल्कि हर तरफ उनकी भरमार है। उन में असली कौन है, यह पता लगाना बहुत कठिन हो रहा है।

समाजशास्त्रियों तथा अन्य विशेषज्ञों द्वारा महानगरों में रहने वाले व्यक्तियों के मानसिक स्वभाव के बारे में किये गये एक विश्लेषण के अनुसार अब वे बहुत अधिक रिजर्व हो गये हैं और उन की सोंच बहुत अधिक संकुचित हो गई है। वे अब अपनी नाक के आगे कुछ भी देखना पसंद नहीं करते जिसके कारण उन के अपने पड़ोसी के प्रति व्यवहार में एक अजब सा रूखापन हावी होता जा रहा है। फ्लैट कल्चर में पड़ोसीपन गुम होता जा रहा है। जहां मोहल्ले के हर निवासी को पता रहता था कि किस घर में कितने प्राणी रह रहे हैं और उनकी जीवको-पार्जन के साधन क्या हैं, वहीं फ्लैट और अपार्टमेंट कल्चर में किसी को भी अपने पड़ोस में रहने वाले व्यक्ति की पृष्ठभूमि के बारे में कोई

जानकारी नहीं होती। जब कि मोहल्ला कल्चर आप को बड़े और शाही परिवार का एहसास कराता है। पाश्चात्य सभ्यता के प्रभाव में हमारी मानसिकता में भी अमूल चूक परिवर्तन हुआ है जिसका परिणाम अब हर व्यक्ति के व्यवहार और रहन सहन में साफ झलकता है। अब रिश्तों में वह गर्माहट और अपनापन महसूस नहीं होता। हर व्यक्ति एक दूसरे से कटा कटा सा रहता है और एक प्रकार से बनावटी ज़िन्दगी जीना पसंद करता है। वह वह सब करने को सदा तत्पर रहता है जिसमें उसको आर्थिक लाभ की सम्भावनायें प्रतीत होती हैं चाहे उसके लिये उसको अपने आदर्शों एवं मूल्यों की बलि ही क्यों न देनी पड़े। समाज में इस तीव्र गति के साथ पनप रही नव संस्कृति से सतर्क रहने की आवश्यकता है।

आजकल औरतें बन-ठन कर किटी पार्टी का आयोजन करती हैं जहाँ चुहलबाज़ी होती है। एक दूसरे के कपड़ों और ज़ेवरों पर विचार विमर्श किया जाता है। अब पार्टियों में टुन्न होकर कमर तोड़ डांस किया जाता है। इससे कहीं अधिक मज़ा पुराने समय में बहुत कम पैसों में मोहल्लेबाज़ी में मिलता था।

घर में अचार मुरब्बा बनाना हो, मंगौड़ी-पापड़ डालने हों या फिर साड़ियों में फाल लगाना हो या सब्जियां काट कर उनकी माला बना कर छत पर सुखाना हो, इस प्रकार का सारा काम परिवार की औरतें मिलजुल कर करती थी और साथ ही साथ गपबाज़ी भी होती जाती थी जिसका एक अपना अलग आनंद होता था और जिसमें अपनेपन का भाव साफ झलकता था। जिसका वर्णन शब्दों में करना बहुत कठिन है। मोहल्ले के बुजुर्ग हर बच्चे की कारगुज़ारियों पर नज़र रखते थे और उसको अनुशासन का पाठ पढ़ाते थे चाहे उससे उनका

कोई खून का रिश्ता हो या न हो। आज की बदली हुई परिस्थितियों में यह सब असम्भव सा प्रतीत होता है। आजकल झूठी इज्जत के लबादे में ढके लोगों में इतना साहस नहीं रह गया है कि वे बिना किसी लाग-लपेट के दिल खोल कर अपनी बात किसी से कह सकें या अपने सीक्रेट्स किसी से शेयर कर सकें। वे वास्तव में घुट घुट कर जी रहे हैं और विभिन्न रोगों को खुला न्योता दे रहे हैं। जिनमें मानसिक अवसाद से ग्रस्त होना सबसे प्रमुख है क्योंकि उनको अपने भीतर दबी हुई भावनाओं को प्रकट करने का उचित अवसर नहीं मिल पाता। उनका सेफ्टी वाल्व नष्ट हो चुका है। वे केवल चलते फिरते एक यंत्र के समान हैं जिसमें मानवीय संवेदनाओं के लिये कोई स्थान नहीं।

समाजशास्त्रियों के अनुसार मोहल्लेबाज़ी की प्रथा कलकत्ते से चली जहां हर उम्र के व्यक्ति के अपने अपने अड्डे होते थे जहां वे इकट्ठा होकर ताश, गंजीफा, चौसे, शतरंज, पच्चीसी, गुल्ली डंडा, कंचे, खो-खो, चोर पुलिस, कोडा जमाई शाही वगैरह खेल कर अपना मनोरंजन करते थे। धीरे धीरे यह मोहल्ला कल्चर १८वीं और १९वीं सदी में हर एतिहासिक नगर का एक अभिन्न अंग बन गया। मोहल्लों में घरों की छतें आपस में मिली हुई होती थीं। पतंगबाज़ी में चीख पुकार के साथ एक अनोखा आनंद मिलता था। एक बुजुर्ग बड़े जोश के साथ आत्मविभोर होकर पतंगबाज़ी की कमेंट्री करते थे। होली, दीवाली तथा शिवरात्री जैसे त्योहार मोहल्ले में सामूहिक रूप से मनाये जाते थे। रामलीला देखने सब एक साथ झुंड बनाकर जाते थे। नवरात्रि में कन्यायें जिमाई जाती थी और एक दूसरे के यहां उनका हिस्सा भेजा जाता था। पन में सब को न्योता मिलता था। जब किसी

की खिंचाई की जाती थी तो उसमें किसी प्रकार की कुंठा या हीनभावना नहीं उत्पन्न होती थी। उसको मौज मस्ती के रूप में लिया जाता था। तब बात कुछ और थी, अब बात कुछ और है।

यहां पर सुधी पाठकों के लिये यह बताना नितान्त आवश्यक है कि १८वीं और १९वीं सदी में जो भी कश्मीरी पंडित परिवार अपने धर्म की रक्षा तथा मुगल और पठान सूबेदारों द्वारा उन पर किये जा रहे अत्याचारों के कारण कश्मीर से निकल कर उत्तर भारत के प्रमुख महानगरों और रजवाड़ों में बसे, उन्होंने इस मोहल्लाबाज़ी के महत्व को भली भांति समझा और यही एक मुख्य कारण था कि उन्होंने एक जुट होकर एक ही स्थान पर एक वृहद परिवार के रूप में रहने को प्राथमिकता दी ताकि वे एक बिल्कुल नये परिप्रेक्ष्य और वातावरण में अपनी विशेष संस्कृति और पहचान को अधिक समय तक बिना किसी प्रकार के प्रदूषण के सुरक्षित और संरक्षित रखने में सफल सिद्ध हो सकें। इस प्रकार इन महानगरों और रजवाड़ों में कश्मीरी मुहल्ले एक मिनी कश्मीर के रूप में अस्तित्व में आये और एक लम्बे समय तक उनकी सामूहिक शक्ति का प्रतीक बने रहे।

भारत के १९४७ में स्वतंत्र होने से पूर्व दिल्ली का बाज़ार सीताराम, फैज़ाबाद का राठ हवेली मुहल्ला, लखनऊ का काश्मीरी मोहल्ला तथा लाहौर का वच्छूवाली कश्मीरी पंडितों की कश्मीर से बाहर उनकी बड़ी जनसंख्या का केंद्र थे जिनमें सबसे अधिक कश्मीरी पंडितों की जन संख्या लखनऊ के कश्मीरी मोहल्ले में निवास करती थी जहां एक मोटे अनुमान के अनुसार लगभग १००० कश्मीरी पंडितों के घर थे जो अब पाश्चात्य सभ्यता और नव विकसित कालोनी, अपार्टमेंट और फ्लैट कल्चर

की आंधी में पूर्ण रूप से उजड़ कर अपना अस्तित्व खो चुके हैं। मोहल्ले तो अपनी जगह कायम हैं पर उन के बाशिंदों के रफूचक्कर होने से उनकी रूह और रवानी अब गायब हो चुकी है। वे केवल अब अपने गौरवमय अतीत के मूक गवाह बन कर रह गये हैं। अब शोधकर्ता उनको अपने शोध का विषय बनाते हैं और उन पर शोध प्रबन्ध लिखकर विभिन्न विश्वविद्यालयों से अपनी पी.एच.डी. की उपाधि प्राप्त करते हैं।

चूंकि अवध के नवाब आसफुद्दौला (१७७५-१७९७) काफी उदार स्वभाव के व्यक्ति थे अतः सबसे अधिक संख्या में कश्मीरी पंडित उनके शासन काल में लखनऊ में कश्मीर से तथा दिल्ली से आकर बसे और इस प्रकार १७७५ और १७७८ के मध्य लखनऊ का कश्मीरी मोहल्ला आबाद हुआ। ये कश्मीरी पंडित फारसी भाषा में विद्वान तथा प्रशासन में दक्ष होने के कारण अवध के दरबार में उच्च पदों पर आसीन हुये। उन्होंने अपने परिवारों के आवास के लिये ईरानी वास्तुकला पर आधारित भव्य हवेलियों का निर्माण कराया जिनमें बड़े बड़े हवादार कमरे, दालान, दुछत्ती, तयखाना, सहन्धी बीच में औरतों के काम करने के लिये बड़ा चौकोर आंगन वगैरह होते थे। चूंकि उस काल खण्ड में पर्दा प्रथा का बड़ा ज़ोर था और सम्पन्न परिवारों की औरतों का सडक पर सटर सटर पैदल चलना बहुत अच्छा नहीं माना जाता था अतः एक हवेली से दूसरी हवेली में भीतर ही भीतर जाने के लिये गुप्त मार्ग होते थे जिनका उपयोग औरतें करती थीं।



(अगले अंक में जारी)

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Culture & Heritage - Prof. Raj Nath Bhat
Cultural Legacy of KPs

Kashmir has a very pristine culture that has undergone changes due to exigencies of time yet it has all through maintained a stable base. But the threat after the displacement of 1990 seems the hardest because the dispersal of the miniscule community may virtually destroy this rich legacy. The present essay briefly examines the origins of the cultural base, its ups and downs over millennia, and the perceptible threat that it faces on account of the community's dispersal across the globe.

Culture: Scholars have defined culture variously over the last two odd centuries. Some believe that it is an abstraction in itself that cannot be put in any specific sheathing for it encompasses multiple, rather endless, practices that govern lives of men and women of a 'community', belonging to different strata and sects, from their birth, rather conception, to death. These practices evolve over a period of time and from generation to generation. Each generation may make some amends and additions to the existing practices, thus rendering 'culture' an ever evolving, non-static construct. Culture has been used to refer to cultivation of crops, rearing and breeding of animals, and by extension to the active cultivation of mind of a people which eventually informs and perhaps monitors their whole 'spirit'; their way of life. A professional anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor (1871) wrote: "Culture or civilization, taken in its widest ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a society."

For Raymond Williams (1981), culture, attributable to both the elite and the working class, is ordinary. He states: "There are no masses; there are only ways of seeing [other] people as masses." Claude Levi Strauss (1975) assigns culture to *primitives*. Mahadevi Verma (1994), in her seminal essays on culture assigns it to those attributes that make life meaningful as a member of a society. One could be civilized yet uncultured, or cultured yet uncivilized. Culture is determined by the geography, and history of a people, where there is a gradual evolution of ethical and moral values and philosophies, belief systems, festivals, rituals and rites, ceremonies and worship patterns, traditions, art, literature and litterateurs. In order to sustain itself as a unified, distinct group, the community evolves practices and institutions, organizations and identities that monitor, rather pervade, their religious, intellectual and secular lives. It must be mentioned here that everything produced or provided by tradition cannot be preserved. Histories of wars, kings, warriors, saints and seers etc. can be preserved but tradition is a different entity which undergoes change with the change in our thoughts, broadening of our knowledge, expansion of experience, and our own *karma*. Knowledge and experience influence our ethical and moral values as well, which eventually impact our beliefs, practices, rituals, institutions etc.

Hindus, when they comprised the majority in Kashmir, were stratified into layers depending upon one's potential and



capacity to contribute to the society at large. There was a division of labour that was not necessarily determined by one's birth. The pursuit of knowledge, both religious and secular, was accorded the highest place but not everyone could be a pundit. There were agriculturists, ironsmiths, barbers, potters, goldsmiths, carpenters, and many other sections that could be considered skilled in their respective professions. Such skills would usually flow from the parent to the child. However, if a young mind had the capacity to shift to another profession, there were no social barriers to prevent him/her to do so. The men and women in the King's court were powerful people who owned large properties. They were primarily skilled in administration. There was a strong section of people who pursued knowledge and provided explanations and analyses of the mundane and theories of the spiritual. This section comprised *dharmacharyas*, litterateurs, critics, aesthetes, logicians, mathematicians, grammarians, astronomers; they were the men and women of scholarship. Their worldly possessions used to be very ordinary but they carried an aura and respect with all sections of the society, including the King and the men/women of King's court. Thus there was a set of identities for every family and further for each individual. The role one played, the contribution one made determined one's identity. The intrigues and conspiracies in the King's court would not normally affect all sections of society.

Thus, there was an overall tranquility and the community had ample opportunities to celebrate. The climate and the flora and fauna added to the festivities. Hence, we find a festival or 'holy' day almost every week. The lunar calendar that the community follows divides each month

into two fortnights depending upon the presence or absence of moon during night: the dark fortnight (*krisnapaksh*) and the moonlit/bright fortnight (*shuklapaksh*). The sun determines seasons. Broadly speaking, spring, pleasant-summer, rains, golden-autumn, winter, frosty-winter are the seasons in Kashmir. In not so remote past, the winter in Kashmir would force one to be indoors - there were no roads and the means of communication were abysmal. Disease and death were two major characteristics that one would attribute to winter those days. The impact snow and frost made upon the Kashmiris can easily be evaluated by referring to the offerings they make to gods and goddesses during this season. The months of *magar*, *posh*, and *magh*, December-February are the coldest so is the possibility of disease and death. On the *puṇnima* - the 15th bright night of the *magar* month, *tahar* 'yellow rice' is offered to the deities. Fifteen days later, an offering of rice, lentils etc., *tshoṭ*, is prepared for *yachh*, ('*yaksha*' in Sanskrit), on *khetsi mawas* the night of *posh amavasya*- 15th dark night-, when it is frozen all around. This is followed by offering *gad-batl* 'fish and rice' during the second fortnight (*shuklapaksh*) of the *posh* month to the house-deity, *dayut*, preferably on a Tuesday/Saturday. The *puṇnima* of the *Magh* month falls in January-February when the temperature shows a little upward trend. This day is celebrated as 'crow's *puṇnima*', *kavl punim*, when rice and vegetables are offered to crows and other birds on 'hand-spun cups', *kavl potul*. Within a span of two months four major events take place to appease the deities to seek happiness and good health for the members of the household. The geography, and the climate make these events significant. The elaborate *herath* 'shivaratri'

celebrations take place in the month of *phalgun*, February-March. Shivaratri, the most sacred festival for Kashmiri Hindus, falls on the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight of the month of *phalgun*. The weather during this season is not at sub-zero levels. Days are slightly warm and one can move out of one's home with much ease. The *herath naviid* 'shivaratri prasada', in the form of walnuts and *roti* made of rice flour, is distributed to all the families in the village/locality and to all the near relatives in other towns and villages. This gives one an opportunity to meet with one's kith and kin after a gap of nearly three months, December-February, of frosty winter.

The *sonth* 'spring' is welcomed on *sankrati* of *chaitra krishnapaksh*, the dark fortnight of *chaitra*, March. The first day of the moonlit fortnight of *chaitra* marks the beginning of the new year, *navreh*. Both the auspicious days of *sonth* and *navreh* are observed by filling a plate (*thali*) with rice and decorating it with flowers, currency-notes/coins, a pen and inkpot on the eve of the day. Usually, the eldest female member of the family takes the *thali* to every individual member early in the morning before s/he is out of bed. This is done with the wish that the family members would have food, fragrance (health), knowledge and job with them during the whole year.

It is pertinent to state once again that Shivaratri is the major festival of Kashmiri Hindus (KH hereafter) and the only one mentioned above where an elaborate *puja* is performed; others do not involve any special kind of *puja* or prayer. A few, like, *kaavpunim* seem to be merry-making occasions; on this day kids go to the house-top and invite crows to a feast offered on 'hand-spun plates', made of hay/paddy-straw. *Puja* is also performed on one's birth-anniversary (strictly according to the lunar

calendar), and on the *ashtami* of *zyeshTh*, May-June, *pujima* of *shrawan*, August, Krishna JanmaashTami in *bhadra krishnapaksh* and Vinayak *chaturthi* in *bhadra shuklapaksh*, August-September. The birth-anniversary celebrations involve a special kind of *puja* normally monitored by the Kulapurohit whereas pujas on *krishnajanamshtami*, *shrawana puja*, Ganesh *chaturthi* are offered by family members jointly either at home or in a community celebration. *Ashtamis* of all the *shuklapakshas* are devoted to one or the other Goddess; some adults observe fast on these days. Non-vegetarian food is not consumed on *ashtamis*, *ekadashis*, *amavasyas*, and *pujimas*.

This does not mean that *puja* does not constitute an important part of the KH's life. On the contrary, the KH performs *puja* every morning in his *puja*-room or in a nearby temple. Some people do both. And the family members together sing *bhajans*, devotional songs, in praise of God every evening before supper. But as far as the festivals are concerned, only a few can be termed as purely religious.

The situation changed adversely after the advent of Islam in the valley. There were large scale conversions and killings when Sikandar (14th century) was enthroned, and again after Mughals invaded and took control of the valley (16th Century). The ninth Sikh Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur, attained martyrdom during the reign of Aurangzed to save KPs from total annihilation; Gurudwara Sheeshganj at Delhi is an evidence of the savagery that was inflicted upon righteous and peace-loving souls during that period. KHs were reduced to a miniscule minority after people in large numbers were forced to embrace Islam. The minority KHs have had to pay *jaziya* to survive. Even the payment

of jaziya did not reduce barbarities of Muslim rulers. After the downfall of the Mughals, Pathan invaders played havoc with the lives of KPs in the 18th century. There was some semblance of peace when initially Sikhs took over the control of Kashmir and more saner times came when Dogras became the rulers which rule came to an end at the time of India's independence in 1947.

Hindus and Buddhists were the only inhabitants of the Valley before the advent of Islam. Buddhists were completely wiped out from the valley but a small percentage of Hindus could, with great difficulty, cling to their faith. During those dark times, they were forbidden to celebrate or observe any religious festivities openly. However, the neo-converts tolerated them if they did anything religious without making any noise or show of their activities. Hence, the minority Hindus could preserve their rituals and rites to a great extent. However, there was a great deal of shift in the mode of celebrations due to the demographic changes that had occurred due to conversions. For instance, it became customary with some families to eat non-vegetarian foods on Shivaratri-the most pious festival of the community. This reflects the deep impact of Muslim way of celebrating Bakr-Id.

Though the advent of Islam produced a clash of civilizations, yet saintly figures (Rshi, Pir, Mot, Shah) continued to be revered and respected equally by the Hindu as well as the Muslim. The journey through over three millennia has shaped the cultural moorings of the Kashmiri Pandit and provided him with a vast corpus of expressions, which give him a distinct cultural identity.

The Dogra rule brought a great relief to the community. The community could celebrate its festivals without fear or fright.

The KPs occupied a dominant place in the political spectrum. They were reenergized and rejuvenated. The rituals, rites, customs, festivities lived on.

The post 1990 displacement presents a delicate situation. It is difficult to say as to what will survive hereafter. The community has been scattered far and wide and the young have little or no time to learn about our heritage. The festivities in ample measure are indicative of a community's zest for life. It breaks life's monotony and gives each day a meaning and direction. Such celebrations are possible with settled and contented groups; a scattered people rendered rootless and nameless may find it difficult to maintain observance of such celebrations and festivities. Today the KP is on the crossroads, his progeny is in a flux, unsure of its morrow and unaware of the traditions that its forefathers held dear to their hearts.

Festivities and Purification : In the sequel we intend to record major socio-cultural beliefs, traditions, customs and festivals of the KP with the hope that the younger KP will know, learn, and comprehend the essence of KP culture that has evolved through long periods of peace and turmoil.

Religion has played a pivotal role in shaping the community's customs, rituals, rites, festivals and fasts, ceremonies, food habits and the worship of their deities. Kashmir is widely known as the birth-place of 'Kashmir Shaivism', hence Shiva-shakti constitute the substratum of their ritualistic worship. Kashmir has also been a great centre of Buddhist learning for over a millennium during which period a sizeable number of revered Kashmiri Buddhist scholars traveled as far as Sri Lanka in the South and Tibet, China and the Central Asian region in the North.



(To be continued)

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Know Your Motherland - Chander M. Bhat

Vasak Nag

*Sanyaasai Ha Gosaaney, Kuney Kaanay Yekh Na Vaaney,
Vasak Nag Tchu Yooni Kaanay, Kuney Kaanay Yekh Na Vaaney*

- Krishen Joo Razdan



Vasuki is a Sanskrit word for a naga, one of the serpents of Hindu mythology. He is a great king of the naga and has a gem on his head. Manasa, another naga, is his sister. The famous legend in Hinduism in which Vasuki took part was the incident of Samudra Manthan, the churning of the ocean of milk. In the legend, Vasuki allowed devas (gods) and the Asuras (demons) to bind him to Mount Mandara (name of a mountain located on the highway between Bhagalpur and Dumka which was used as a churning rod to churn the ocean of milk) and use him as their churning rope to extract the ambrosia of immortality from the ocean of milk. In the Bhagvada Gita (Chapter 10, verse 28) Lord Krishana explains his omnipresence by proclaiming, "Of weapons I am the thunderbolt; among cows I am the Surbhi. Of causes of procreation I am Kamdeva and of serpents I am Vasuki."

Vasak Nag also known as Sarsa is located in the erstwhile Devsar Pargana at the base of a mountain near Wagam in Kund area near Qazigund in South Kashmir. The holy spring is the ancient Vasuki Nag pilgrimage of

Kashmiri Pandits. Vasak Nag is a fairly large spring and is dedicated to Vasak the satellite of Shiva. It flows for six months and runs dry for six months. A week before it begins to flow the wind blows very



hard, there are rain and thunder storms, and people of the area say, "Vasak Nag is coming". A large stream flows out of it and irrigates a large area. The water of this stream will run five water mills. This stream flows gracefully

between willow orchards and turfy banks covered with yellow buttercups, columbines and forget-me-nots. As soon as the autumn irrigation of the paddy fields is over and the crops are ripe, it runs dry. A story goes that a monk took Vasak Nag away in his wallet to irrigate the arid parts somewhere during winter, but the legend is something else. My respected father Pt. Dina Nath Bhat used to tell me the stories about Vasak Nag when I was reading in 6th standard. He was a regular visitor to this shrine. I can very well recall one of his stories which go like this, "In the month of

April, one elderly Kashmiri Pandit namely Pt. Neel Kanth Pandita of village Levdoora heard an un-usual sound during the day in the month of April. He became curious and went out in the fields to see the source of these sounds. To his surprise he saw a big snake crawling through the fields and going towards South. On the next day the news spread like a wild fire that Vasak Nag is full of waters. It is a belief that the water of Vasak Nag comes back on trithiur tray. According to Hassan's account, though not confirmed, the water continues to ooze till the end of Bhadrapad, when paddy ripens, after which the water suddenly disappears and re-appears at a place at Bhaderwah (since the history of Bhaderwah for the pre-historic and pre-epic period is closely linked with the history of Kashmir) and flows there for six months. The phenomenon reverses for the next six months. The shrine is spread over an area of about 8 kanals of land and has a number of Chinar trees.

Now the question arises, where the water does go for six months. There is a legend and a folk lore too that the waters of this spring go to Bhaderwah during winter. Bhaderwah also known as 'Nagon Ki Bhoomi', the land of snakes, a land of natural beauty, clear streams, green turf, magnificent trees and mighty mountains enveloped with glistening snow peaks is the abode of the Vasak Nag for six months. Numerous Naga chiefs ruled Kashmir when the valley was a lake. One water borne dragon named Jallodbhava, started killing and eating Nagas living in the lake relentlessly with the result many Nagas and their subjects migrated to different directions for safety. Some went to Kishtwar and Bhaderwah, the nearby areas of the valley. The folk legends and the Purnic traditions mention that notable Naga chief like Gamani Nag, Kali Nag and Pant

Nag whose temples and springs still exist at different places in Kishtwar migrated to Kishtwar and settled there. Right back in Kashmir, after the death of Kashyap Rishi, succession dispute started amongst his sons born from two queens Kadru and Vanita. From Kadru were born Vasuki Nag, Shesh Nag and Mahel Nag and their elder sister Bhadra (Bhaderkali) while Garud and his brothers were born from Vanita. Garud the eldest son attempted to eliminate Vasuki and his brothers. Bhaderkali had already shifted to Bhaderwah and settled there as ruling queen. She extended invitation to Vasuki and his brothers to come to Bhaderwah for safety. Bhadra divided her territory amongst the three brothers. The Maon Bhaderwah valley on the left bank of Neeru was given to Vasuki. The temples of Vasuki Nag at Bhaderwah are located at village Galtha, Nalthi, Bheja and Nagar Bhaderwah where many locals worship them as its 'Kul Devi' but at present it is believed that village Nalthi with more than 100 springs is the abode of Vasuki in Bhaderwah. The idol of Vasuki at Nalthi is marvellous and a wonder of art and sculpture. Two idols of Nagraj Vasuki and Raja Jamute Vahan are made of black stone which stands at an angle of 88° without any support from either side.

After settling her brothers at Bhaderwah, Bhadarkali migrated back to Kashmir valley and settled at a village Wadipora situated at a distance of about seven km from Handwara, and at present the temple exists in the midst of pine trees on a hill top. This temple is being maintained by Rashtriya Rifles at present. Bhaderkali is the Isht Devi (family deity) of some Kashmiri Pandit families. One more temple of Vasak Nag is located at Gandh Top, some 30 km from Ram Nagar on the

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अफसान - हृदयनाथ कौल रिंद

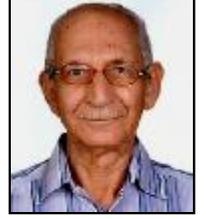
पूशुख ति नय, चोलुख ति ना - 8

शां

तस लोग अमि वननु दकु। टाठि साँबन, ज़ांह नु मंगान, मोंग अज़ शांतस अकि बजि बतु। तमि दिचोस वुनि, ज़ु सिन्य पाकुसुय आसनु म्वखु ओड गंटु खंड प्रारनुक तजवीज़। अमापुज़, तँम्य वोनस, “मे शेर बी ज़ु चोर मँड्य, यि तैयार छुय, तँथ्य सुत्य। तोह्य खेयिव पतु बाँग्य येलि साँरी सिन्य तैयार गछन।” अमि ब्रोंह जि दिपु या सारिका करिहे अथ मुतलिक सवाल, शांतन वोन सारिकायि जि पिता जियस छुनु बनान खॉली म्यादु रोजुन तु व्वजुल स्युन ख्योन, अमि किन्य ख्यन तिम ग्वडय। सारिकायि गव पनुनि जायि शख जि मामाजी छु तँमिस सुत्य अँक्यसुय टेबुलस प्यठ ख्योन टालुन यछान, अमापुज़ येलि शांतन अख जेलोसिल टेबल्यट तु पां गिलासु ति बतु थालस सुत्य टाठि साँबस ब्रोंठु कनि डायनिंग टेबुलस प्यठ थँव्य, सारिकायि बास्योव पनुन शख बे-बुनियाद। यि छे वखरु कथ जि ख्यनु बजायि थँव टाठि साँबन टेबल्यट त्वति पॉठ्य चंदस।

दिपु तु सारिका रूद्य तमि पतु र्यतस मंज़ अकि द्वयि लटि सरि टाठ्युन यिवान। सरि तु शांतु ति गँय अकि द्वयि लटि त्युहुंद, अमापुज़, टाठि साँब रूद कुनुय ज़ोन कुनि नतु कुनि बहानु क्वाटरसुय प्यठ। बरसातु पतु येलि बम्बयि हुंद मूसिम रुत सपद्योव, बनोव द्वश्रुय गरव पनुन पनुन ख्यन ह्यथ बोरीवली नेशनल पार्क फेरनि गछनुक प्रोग्राम। लंच करनु वख्तु शूर शांतन पनुन्यन बाँचन तु सारिकायि पानस तु दिपस पनुनि पनुनि गरि प्यठु ओनमुत बतु स्युन। शांतस ओस रोगन जोश, अलु यखुन्य तु मटर पालख। तमि त्रॉव्य यिम सिन्य दिपस तु

सारिकायि ति। सारिकायि ओस मीट पैटीज़, चिकन करी तु रायतु ओनमुत। स्व वँछ पनुन मीट पैटीज़ कैसरोल ह्यथ तु त्रोवुन सरि टॉठिस तु शुर्यन।



अमापुज़, युथुय टाठि साँबस त्रावुन हेचोन, तँम्य डोल थाल दोयिमि पासु ‘नो थँक्स’ वँनिथ। सारिकायि बासेयि यि बँड बेज़ुती। तस डोल बुथिस रंग। तमि कोर लंच ज़हरमार। तिम साँरी रूद्य शामुचि चायि पतु ताम पिकनिक मनावान, अमापुज़ अडी मनु। टाठि साँबुनि वरतावु किन्य सारिकायि हुंद दिल फुटुन ज़न पेयि कृहन्य छाय अथ ख्वशगवार तापु दहस। गरु वॉतिथ शामस मतेयि सारिका दिपस, “बोड ओसुहम वनान म्योन माम छु, बे-तोसुब तु अँज्यकि वख्तुक। मगर सु ति द्राव त्युथुय तंग दिल शिटु तु कट्टर पंथी युथ म्योन बब माँज तु समाज तु चोन बब माँज तु समाज छि।” दिपु ओस ब्रोंहुय खँजुल तु नॉदिम। तँम्य वोन अलबतु ज़नानि हँलीमी सान, “म्योन बब माँज तु माम छि प्रानि वज़हुक्य तु वख्तुक्य। तिहुंज सोंच, मथ, संसकार यथ वॉसि मंज़ बदलुन्य छिनु सँहल बँल्यकि छि नामुमकिन। अमापुज़ सानि वॉसि हुंद्य जवान छिनु तीत्य शिटु तु तोसुबी। वुछतु सरि टॉठ्य तु शांता बाबी मा ज़ोन ब्येन। तिम छा च़े सुत्य छेचर श्रोचर ज़ानान। तिमव ज़ॉन्यहँख ना चु पानस बराबर। बड्यन बुज़र्गन हुंदि यिथय ह्यु गछुन गव अबस। तिमन हुंद वरताव दरगुज़र कँरिथ पज़ि असि तिमन यज़थ मान द्युन तु असि पज़ि बटु समाजस मंज़ अँज्य मँज्य गँछिथ तमिक्य सरगरम

कारकुन बननु।” गो सारिकायि आव नु दिपुनि वननु सुत्य बावर, ताहम सूंच तँम्य वुछव अथ सिनिस ति नून, अथ गजस ति मीच।

चिनांचि दिपु तु सारिका बनेयि बम्बयि हुंदि बटु सबायि हुंद्य म्यम्बर तु सबायि हुंदिस प्रेथ प्रोग्रामस मंज हेचुख शरकथ करुन्य। ज्ञान पछान बडुनस सुत्य बड्योव युन गछुन ति। नवरेहस क्युत आव सबायि हुंद्य सालानु हवन। दिपन द्युत वछि वाँजि चंद तु बेयि कॅरुन पनुन्य सीवा ति पेश। हवनुक द्रह द्रायि द्रश्वय बाँच दँह बजे ह्युव श्रान द्यान कॅरिथ छँलिथ छोकिथ पलव लॉगिथ बांद्रा कुन येति अँकिस हालस मंज हवनुक इन्तिजाम ओस। सारिकायि आँस उचकस व्वज्जु टेक्य बिंदी लॉजमुच। हवनस प्यठ वातुवुनुय गँयि द्रश्वय बाँच पँडित जियस निश ट्योक करनि तु नॉर्यवन गंडुनि। पँडित जियन युथुय सारिकायि ट्योक कोर, सुत्य बिहिथ अख ल्वकट बटुन्याह वँछ हक तु पां गड तुलिथ वोनुन पँडित जियस, “वँलिव, यथ चिलमची मंज श्रोचुराँविव योकुन अथ।” अँमिस ज्ञानानि हुंज यि हरकथ तँर नु पँडित जियस फिकरी तु न सारिकायि, अमापुज, दिपन कॅर नोट। तँमिस फ्यूर अकि रंगु ब्याख रंग। सारिका, ख्वसु ज्ञन ग्वडुनिचि लटि बटन हुंदिस कुनि दार्मिक संसकारस मंज शरकथ करनि आमच आँस, रूज बडु श्रदायि तु श्वदि मनु शोकु सान सारी माहोलुक मुशॉहिदु करान। हवन ओस सायबानस तल सपदान येति ज्ञन अकि पासु ज्ञानानु मर्द बिहिथ आँस्य अँगु राजस आँही मंगान तु बेयि पासु आँस बजन मंडली छकरि प्यठ लीलायि ग्यवान। माहोल ओस अँकीदथ अफजा। दिपु तु सारिका आयि हालस येति कँह नफर आँस्य नँवीदु बापथ सळ्जी चारान, कतरावान, तु हालस पँत्य किन्य येति क्रायि पाख कडनु तु रननु प्यवनु यिवान

ओस, साम ह्यथ। अथ दोरान वुछ दिपन जि कँचन लुकन आँस तिमन दून बाँचन कुन वुछिथ उचकस द्रह खसान, तिम आँस्य यिमन निश हना दूर ह्यवान। दिपन चोप खश्मु तु तिम द्रश्वय बाँच बीठ्य मंजस ह्युव अँकिस ज्ञान पछान वॉलिस जोरस निशि बजन मंडली तु हवन क्वंडस नखु। तिमन पतु कनि आसु ल्वकचय ज्ञनानु जोराह यिमव सारिकायि हुंदि ब्युहवुनुय उचकस द्रह लँदिथ तु ब्रेड्य कँडिथ दँत्य वँट्य। अकि वोन बेयिस दंदव तँत्य, “यि मुसलमानँन्य कोत पँट हवनस छेट्याँरी करनि योर नम्बलि?” दिपन बूज यि तु तँमिस रूद नु पानस ताम। सु वोथ थोद तु वोनुन शरारतु सान तस ज्ञनानि, “हरगाह पानस श्वदी करनॉविथ ति यि (सारिकायि कुन हॉविथ) मुसलमानँन्य छि, तोह्य कमि रंगु छवु बटनि? तोह्य ज्ञायिवा माज्यन ट्योक कॅरिथ तु नॉरिवन गँडिथ? तुहुंद्य बब, बाँय, बरथा ज्ञाया ट्योक छोग तु योनि ह्यथ? येत्यथ बिहिथ लुख छि साँरी बटु तिव्याजि तिम छि बटन हुंद्य सनसकार मानान। तिमन छे बटन हुंद्यन दीवी दिवताहन प्यठ पछ तु तिम छि तिमन पूज करान। नतु छा कुनि मजहबुक्य पैरवकार उचकस प्यठ लीखिथ यिवान ज्ञन्मस जि च्छुख ह्यौद, मुसलमान, सिख, ईसाँयी बेतरी। तस छु फिकरी प्यवुनुय बब माँज पनुन्य सनसकार दिवान, दर्म माँन्यरावान तु सु छु पानस ह्यौद मुसलमान बेतरी वनान। तँमिस अँदुर्य पछ आस्था छे या न छे। अमापुज महज वनुनुय छुनु काँफी। इनसान छु पँज्य किन्य ह्यौद मुसलमान बेतरी पनुनि ईमानु, पनुन्यव कर्मव, आचार व्यचारु तु व्यवहारु सुत्य बनान। फकथ हँद्य या मुसलमान गरस मंज ज्ञनम ह्यनु सुत्य नु। मे गछि माँफी दिन्य हरगाह म्यानि यि वननु सुत्य त्वहि आजार वाति जि यथ मँजलिसि मंज छि स्यठह्य

कम तिम यिमन पँज्य पॉठ्य बँट्यलि तु यथ हवनस प्यठ श्रदा छे। नतु गोछ ना यथ अँगनु दिवताहस ब्रोंह कनि, येम्यकि दुह तु अँगनु सुत्य माननु यिवान छु जि सारि जगतुक वातावरन छु सारिनय जीव ज़ॉचन हुंघ अंतःकरन छि श्वद सपदान तु मनशि सुंघ सॉरी पाफ तु हानु छे गलान, ट्योक करन वॉलिस तु वछि वॉनिजि नतमस्तक सपदन वॉलिस दिहय योत नु बँल्यकि अंतःकरन ति श्वद सपदन्य तु सु तुहँदिस समाजस मंज रँलिथ तुहुंद अख बांदव बनन। येमि हिसाब त्वहि येमिस (सारिकायि कुन हॉविथ) श्रदावानि निशि हवनस प्यठ अँगनस ब्रोंह कनि परन प्यथ तु ट्योक वँरिथ ति दँल्य वँट्यव, तमि हिसाब छुनु तुहुंघ किन्य यथ अँगनस त्यूत प्रताप तु यिमन शलूकन त्युथ तॉसीर जि सु शोजुरावि तुहुंघ या बेयि काँसि हुंघ सॉच तु मन। लेहजा सोन येति त्वहि निशि बिहिथ पनुन पान अश्वद करुन छुनु असि मंजूर। तमि अलावु छुस नु बु नँवीदु वख्तु तुहँदि बापथ दर्मु संकट पॉदु करुन यछान। लेहजा (वदन हटि तु नम चेश्मव गुल्य गँडिथ) नमस्कार।

सारिकायि वन्योव स्यठाह दिपस नँवीदस ताम रोजनु बापथ अमापुज दिपस ओस लुकन हुँदि व्यवहारु सुत्य बारु छवख लोगमुत। तँम्य वँर सारिकायि नरि थफ तु द्राव शामियानु मंजु। मुन्तुजिम तु बाक्य लूख गँयि रूजिथ हँक्य नु बँक्य तु पशैमान। तिमन ज़न गँयि ज्यव न्यंगलिथ। काँसि वोन नु दिपस नँवीदस ताम रोजनु बापथ।

पँतिम्यन सारिनय गुजरेमुत्यन हॉरिसातन हुंज साम ह्यनु पतु ब्यूठ दिपस पूर पॉठ्य जि हिंदुस्तानस मंज तु दुनियिहक्यन अक्सर मुल्कन मंज छि नसली, मजहँबी, रंग, ज़ॉच तु बेतरी रंगु तफ़रुक तु तोसुब। हरगाह असि समाजस मंज बहैसियति इनसान

बराबरकि दरजुक रोकुन बँनिथ रोजनु छु, असि पजि हिंदुस्तान त्रॉविथ तिछि जायि गछुन येति नु अमि कुस्मच तफावथ आसि। चिनांचि, शैयि रेल्य पतु आयि अकि दूह शामस दिपु तु सारिका टाठि सॉबस, सरि टॉठिस तु शांता बाबी पनुनि नक़लि वतन वँरिथ कैनाडाहस मंज बसनुक फॉसलु बोजुनॉविथ वंखसथ हेनि। अदु पतु कैनाडहस मंज मीजा तिमन ततिकिस समाजस मंज तोसुब रोस कबूलियथ किनु यि ति द्राख दूर्युक द्रमुन, ति ज़ानि दय।



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Vasak Nag

...

From Page 31

way to Dudu Basantgarh in Udhampur District. The temple is located at an idyllic location on the top of a ridge, providing a magnificent panoramic view on all sides. Another temple of Vasak Nag forms the part of village Batyari near village Khagote some 13 km from Udhampur on the way to Ram Nagar.



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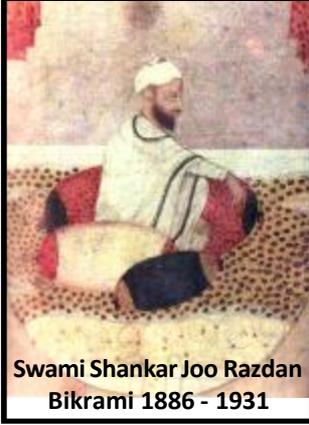


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Without Comments

Committee is a group of the unwilling, picked from the unfit, to do the unnecessary.



Swami Shankar Joo Razdan
Bikrami 1886 - 1931

Our Literary Treasures - Prof. Anil Raina

Leelas of Swami Shankar Joo Razdan - 2



Just a few specimens:

I am reproducing below five stanzas of the Leelas transliterated into modified Latin script from the original, along with the translation. This is to give you some idea of the poetic quality of the original, and of what one might be losing in the translation (ch stands for च ; chh for छ) :



*Mayayi kandi zaal chathtam Haro,
Zani saet zani hund mucharam bar,
Tami saet yemi samsara nish taro,
Chai Ishwaro daya kar.*

[O Harihara, deliver me from the prison of Maya,
Open for me the gates of Knowledge
That will help me wade across the ocean of life,
Have Mercy on me, My Lord.]

*Anis kastam andhyakar,
Aanas kastam khay zangar,
Krudh, kaam, lubh, madh, moh nyawaro,
Dandavat karhai namaskar.*

[Take the darkness away from the visionless,
Polish away the rust of the mirror,
Do away with my anger, lust, greed, ego,
and attachments,
I prostate myself before Thee.]

*Gafilo gach bedar,
Kenh ma zaan mohara ta dyar,
Kandyi zaal moh sansar,
Mana karo Raam Raamai.*

[O ignoramus, be watchful,
Treat the worldly riches as petty,
Treat the world of attachments as a net of thorns,
O my mind, keep chanting the name of Ram.]

*Vathith chas vav andar,
Kum kum drai Gandhar,
Shrepeye beyi mechi andar,
Karyo goor goorai.*

[He is blown up with the wind,
Many Gandharvas are born,
But dust returns to dust,
Let me rock you.]

*Mechi beye mechi mechei,
Herei bona aas mechey,
Mochhi manz sar mechay,
Karyo goor goorai.*

[Dust mingles with dust,
There is dust from top to bottom,
What I clench in my fist is nothing but dust,
Let me rock you.]



1. To Lord Ganesha

Introduction: Hindus all over the world often start a new venture by praying to Lord Ganesha and invoking his blessings. Swami Shankar Joo also begins his epic narration by invoking Lord Ganesha in this poem. It addresses Lord Ganesha by different names, and describes his various qualities. This eighteen-line poem consists of an initial couplet followed by four quatrains. The rhyme scheme in the original is abab.



Praise be to Om Shuklam Lord Ganesha,
I bow before you, Balachandra.
O Mushakvahana, O Lambodara,
With a befitting forehead on your elephant
face,

The crown on your head looks so pleasing,
I bow before you, Balachandra.
You are a bestower of blessings, Lord
Ganesha,
A saviour and a remover of obstacles are you,
O Lord of Sidhi, you are a giver of
supernatural powers,
I bow before you, Balachandra.

You with your four arms and a trunk,
Have three eyes shining like the moon,
Vallabh is with you, Lord Ganesha,
I bow before you, Balachandra.

The two mice are your mounts,
You are a remover of obstacles for your
devotees,
O 'Shankar,' he has three eyes on his
forehead,
I bow before you, Balachandra.



Notes:

Line 2. Shuklam: It means 'white'. It is an epithet commonly used for Vishnu in his white robes; in some instances, as in the present case, it has been used in relation to Lord Ganesha as well.

Line 3. Balachandra: 'moon-crested'; One of Ganesha's names.

Line 4. Mushakvahana: One who uses the mouse as his vahana(mode of conveyance); One of Ganesha's names Lambodhara: 'Huge-bellied'; Another name of Ganesha.

Line 10. Sidhi: Ganesha's wife

Line 14. Vallabha: Beloved, Spouse. The meaning here is not clear to me.

Line 18. 'Shankar': To differentiate between Lord Shankara, and the poet Shankar, Shankar is put within inverted commas when it stands for the poet, Swami Shankar Joo Razdan. The Translator has adopted this practice in all subsequent Leelas and the Shankar Ramayana.



2. To Harihar

Introduction: This poem in honour of

Harihar consists of an initial couplet followed by four quatrains. The rhyme scheme in the original is abab. "Harihar, also spelled Hari-hara, in Hinduism, is a syncretic deity, combining the two major gods, Vishnu (Hari) and Siva (Hara). Images of Harihara (also known as Sambhu-Vishnu and Sankara-Narayana, variants of the names of the two gods) began to appear in the classical period after sectarian movements, which elevated one god as supreme over the others, had waned sufficiently for efforts at compromise to be attempted" (Wikipedia). However, in this leela, Harihar is used as another name of Lord Shiva.



O Shiva Shankar and Hariharo,
Have Mercy on me, My Lord.

O blissful and graceful obstacle-remover,
Shower on me your boons and blessings,
I seek shelter in you, the Eternal One,
Have Mercy on me, My Lord.

O Harihara, deliver me from the prison of
Maya,

Open for me the gates of Knowledge
That will help me wade across the ocean of life,
Have Mercy on me, My Lord.

I did not realise the Truth in time, that was
a mistake,

I did not comprehend the nature of this
worldly Ocean,

Now tell me, how do I cross this Ocean?
Have Mercy on me, My Lord.

In the form of the Guru, help me overcome
my blurred vision,

Tell me, 'Shankar,' this way you can cross
the Ocean?

I have no other to fall back on but you,
Have Mercy on me, My Lord.

Notes:

Line 7: The literal meaning of the popular Kashmiri expression 'mayayi kandi zaal' means the thorny/barbed net/trap of Maya.

The Hindi expression 'maya jaal' is made more poetic and concrete in Kashmiri by adding 'kandi' to it. I have to admit that my translation 'the prison of Maya' fails to catch the poetic quality of the original.



3. To Lord Shiva

Introduction: This poem in honour of Lord Shiva consists of an initial couplet followed by seven quatrains. The rhyme scheme in the original is abab. In addition to addressing Shiva by his various names, it alludes to the traditional Hindu ideas: of avoiding the typical five human weaknesses of "kaam, krodh, moh, lobh, and ahankar," and of looking within to find the Immanent God.



O Blissful God, the embodiment of Shakti,
I prostrate myself before Thee.

O Supreme God, Immanent in everyone,
Sovereign of all that is in the Universe,
O Gangadhar, I wish to pray to you,
I prostrate myself before Thee.

O Jatadhari, Praise be to Thee,
You carry a king-serpent around your Blue Neck,
Three moons adorn your forehead,
I prostrate myself before Thee.

Out of your matted hair, flows the Ganga,
Holding a trident, and wearing a garland of skulls,
You are the one, who took poison for his food,
I prostrate myself before Thee.

You ride the bull, O Pre-eminent One,
Parvati accompanies you, O Padmadhar
(Lotus-based),

You are omnipresent, you consort of Uma,
I prostrate myself before Thee.

O ash-covered ascetic, the formless one,
You dispense mercy to the devotees,

O Merciful one, grace me with success,
I prostrate myself before Thee.

Take the darkness away from the visionless,
Polish away the rust of the mirror,
Do away with my anger, lust, greed, ego,
and attachments,
I prostrate myself before Thee.

Seek inward in your mind, O 'Shankar',
It is inhabited by the one and only Onkar,
Cast away the ten colours to attain
Nothingness,
I prostrate myself before Thee.



Notes:

Line 1: It is almost impossible to reproduce the essence and the beauty of the original "Ananda ishwaro shakti aakaro" in the above translation.

Lines 5, 7, 8, 16: *Gangadhar, Jatadhari, Neelkanth, Padmadhar:* Names of Lord Shiva. 'Padmadhar' means Lotus-based.

Line 8: 'Shahmar' is translated by me as 'king-serpent'. Once again, it is difficult to catch the nuances and the rhythm of the word 'Shahmar'.

Line 24: The image of wiping clean of the rust of the mirror is found at many places in Swami Ji's poetry. Compare the Persian Sufi Jalaluddin Rumi's "I shall cry so loud, I shall play such trick s;/That the rust will be removed from the mirror [of the heart] of every denier."

Line 27: The literal translation of this line would be, " Say Hu Ha in your Mind". The Sufis use 'Hu Ha' to describe God. There are enough indications in other poems to show that Swami ji was familiar with Sufi terminology.

Line 29: Ten Colours: The reference may be to the ten Indriyas. The original in Kashmiri uses the expression "dah veh shamith." In traditional Yoga philosophy and practice, the human being is visualized as a building with ten doors: five entrance and five exit doors. Consciously, actively and intentionally *witnessing* these ten senses as

they function is an important part of Yoga meditation, and meditation in action. Karmendriyas, the five exit doors from the Internal to the External world are the five means of expression, viz. Eliminating, Reproducing, Moving, Grasping, and Speaking. Jnanendriyas, the five entrance doors are the five cognitive senses, viz. Smelling, Tasting, Seeing, Touching, and Hearing. This information is reproduced from Swami Jnaneshvara Bharati's "Training the Ten Senses or Indriyas in Traditional Yoga Practice" available on the Internet.

(To be continued)

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Do You Know

Letters 'a', 'b', 'c' & 'd' do not appear anywhere in the spellings of 1 to 99. (Letter 'd' comes for the first time in Hundred)

Letters 'a', 'b' & 'c' do not appear anywhere in the spellings of 1 to 999. (Letter 'a' comes for the first time in Thousand)

Letters 'b' & 'c' do not appear anywhere in the spellings of 1 to 999,999,999. (Letter 'b' comes for the first time in Billion)

And Letter 'c' does not appear anywhere in the spellings of entire English.



पञ्चाङ्ग

सप्तर्षि-५०८७ * विक्रमी-२०६८ * क्रिस्तान-२०११-१२ *

निर्वासन-२२

१ फरवरी २०१२ से २२ मार्च २०१२ तक



३ फरवरी (एकादशी, शुक्रवार)	... भीमसेन एकादशी
६ फरवरी (चतुर्दशी, सोमवार)	... यक्ष चतुर्दशी
७ फरवरी (पूर्णिमा, मंगलवार)	... काव पूर्णिमा
१० फरवरी (तृतीया, शुक्रवार)	... संकट चतुर्थी
१३ फरवरी (षष्ठी, सोमवार)	... संक्रान्ति व्रत
१५ फरवरी (अष्टमी, बुधवार)	... होराष्टमी, चक्रीश्वर यात्रा
१७ फरवरी (एकादशी, शुक्रवार)	... विजया एकादशी
१९ फरवरी (त्रयोदशी, रविवार)	... शिवरात्रि (हेरथ)
२० फरवरी (चतुर्दशी, सोमवार)	... शिवचतुर्दशी
२१ फरवरी (अमावस्या, मंगलवार)	... पंचक आरम्भ, डून्य अमावसी, वटुक परमुजुन
२६ फरवरी (चतुर्थी, रविवार)	... पंचक समाप्त
२७ फरवरी (पंचमी, सोमवार)	... कुमार षष्ठी
१ मार्च (अष्टमी, गुरुवार)	... तैलाष्टमी
८ मार्च (पूर्णिमा, गुरुवार)	... होली
११ मार्च (चतुर्थी, रविवार)	... संकट चतुर्थी
१३ मार्च (षष्ठी, मंगलवार)	... थाल भरुन
१४ मार्च (सप्तमी, बुधवार)	... सोन्थ
१९ मार्च (द्वादशी, सोमवार)	... पंचक आरम्भ
२२ मार्च (अमावस्या, गुरुवार)	... थाल भरुन, चैत्रामावसी विचारनाग यात्रा श्रीभट्ट दिवस



स्रोत : विजयेश्वर पञ्चाङ्ग

सम्पादक : ओंकार नाथ शास्त्री

Revisiting Kashmir - Sneh Kaw

A Sojourn to my Homeland – 2



On arriving in Pahalgam, we found it to be bustling with people and activity, and we had to clamor hard to find a picnic spot less crowded. Some families carried food while others had bought cylinders and cauldrons, and were cooking under tree shades. We found a nice shaded spot to spread our mats, and sat down to munch hungrily on the sandwiches we were carrying. We'd bought some mangoes too on the way, which were now resting under a rock, submerged in the ice-cold river water, utilizing the natural resource for refrigeration. I stretched out lazily on the rugs, looking ahead at the tall grandiose mountain peaks that spread out far and wide. The nearer ones were wrapped in bright green, with tiny white dots, which must've been the mountain goats. The ones far away looked more formidable, graying and barren, with oozes of creamy white snow dribbling on the top. Later, we went down to the river side and sat on the rocks, enjoying the chill of the snow fed water. Pahalgam valley was mesmerizing, although over the years, crowding and general administrative apathy had somewhat tarnished its exquisiteness. But it still bore signs of a place which, in the past, would have been scrupulously beautiful.

On the way back, I kept thinking about how I'd always referred to Kashmir as my homeland, when only now, after a quarter of my life had gone by, did I get a chance to discover it. In the past 2 days, I'd seen a Kashmir; very different from the stories I'd heard growing up. What I saw instead, was

an alien land that felt very little like me, and was very different from what I had imagined it to be. Kashmir, had only traces, of a population I belong to, and a few decaying reminiscences of our history there.

Once in Srinagar, we went for a stroll around Lal Chowk. In the evening, Srinagar downtown was scrambling with life and vigor. We got down near Biscoe School that stood at the outset of the marketplace. My dad had studied here, so naturally I was somewhat curious about it. But tall dark wooden bastions surrounded the school now. I think it was only natural considering the dark history of Lal Chowk. As I moved towards the gate, a tiny peephole appeared in the wooden gate, and two cautious eyes peered out at me suspiciously. "I don't have a good feeling about this", my husband murmured from behind. "Neither do I, let's just go to the market". And we turned towards the busy street. The street was full of tiny shops, selling about everything from basic necessity items to luxury goods. In the heart of the market stood the parched black structures, bearing witness to the April 1993 carnage. I wanted to click some pictures, but my husband advised me not to. "Look around you", he said, and then I noticed what he was talking about. We had managed to invite much unwanted attention; people stared at us, with hard repulsive expressions. A chill ran down my spine, as I nervously tried to cover my small gold earrings (Traditionally, Kashmiri married women wear a dejhoru that is an almond-shaped ornament made of gold hung from a gold chain which is threaded

through the middle of the earlobe or the cartilage of the upper ear. It symbolizes Kashmiri marriage and hence reveals our true ethnicity). Some shopkeepers were nice to us though. "This child would have never been here before", a portly old shopkeeper said to my mother-in-law, pointing towards me. "I don't know why all that happened, otherwise, you and me, we were the same people", he finished. We smiled, picked up our stuff, and left. Losing faith in kindness is perhaps, the final triumph of terror over humanity.

Some family friends accompanied us over dinner that night. As we talked and laughed out loud at common jokes, I felt the unpleasantness of the day's events wearing off. This, I realized, is where I belonged. Home, or homeland, is made up of people, and feelings, of love, friendship and respect; the significance geography is only overrated.

Later in the room, I stared out long, at the dimly lit up bund, and the silent, passive Jhelum beside it, glowing in patches, with reflections of city lights. This was my last night in Srinagar, reminiscent of what we had lost and yet, what we managed to save.

Day 3:

The climb up the mountains to Gulmarg was incredible. Small streams carved out tiny passages down the hills that were otherwise covered with thick strands of trees. We stopped at various site seeing spots on the way up, to get a breathtaking view of the valley below and the snow capped mountain peaks far-far away. The hills echoed with a concoction of mountain sounds, from that of flowing river and splashing water, to the loud whispering of tree leaves, to a faint distant melody, that sounded like a flute.

Gulmarg was a meadow, of green fields

and white purple flowers. The weather had turned cloudy, and soon it was drizzling. As we drove around the meadow, we saw huts, cozy and inviting, they bore semblance to rustic country homes, set comfortably amidst green, yellow pastures. The gondola was the most popular attraction, flocks of tourists gathered in long queues outside it. While riding the gondolas, we passed above the shepherd huts, made of mud and straw; their domestic flock grazing nearby. Many people had chosen to trek all the way up. Some kids looked up as we passed above them and waved. As the clouds moved, some stretches of the mountain terrain turned grey, while others became bright brown and sunny. In some places, the sunlight pierced through the clouds to produce radiant white patches. In life there are moments that speech cannot define, Gulmarg will give you some. I pushed aside all the conflicting thoughts that were raiding my mind since the last two days, and let the simple plain beauty of this place sink in.

Gulmarg was our last stop in Kashmir. At around 3PM, we reached the airport to board the flight to Delhi. While entering through the airport doors, I looked back one last time, to get a final glimpse of the Chinaar tree that had caught my fancy just 2 days ago.

My parents were at the airport to receive us. "Welcome home! How was it?" dad asked. "Best trip of my life.....but now, I'm home", I said. "So, worth it or not?" he asked again.....I smiled, and thought "Every bit of it, every bit". "You should write about it", my husband said, reading my thoughts. "I will, I sure will".



धारावाहिक - म.क.रैना

गुले बकावली - ५

जिन्न ने अपनी बात पूरी की पर शाहज़ादे की हालत देख कर वह कुछ सोचने पर मजबूर हुआ। उस ने शाहज़ादे से कहा, “तुम ने मुझे कसम दिलाई है इसलिये मजबूर हूँ। मुझे एक रास्ता दिखाई दे रहा है। यदि तुम वैसा ही खाना फिर से बनाओ जैसा तुम ने मेरे लिया बनाया था, तो मैं वहाँ के एक दैत्य, जो मेरी पहचान का है, को खाने पर अपने यहाँ बुला लूँ। यदि वह तुम्हारा खाना खा कर खुश हुआ तो मुझे पूरा यकीन है कि वह हमारी मदद करने को तैयार होगा।”

शाहज़ादा खुश हुआ। उस ने दैत्य के खाने का सारा सामान मंगवाया। जंगल में जाकर उस ने एक बड़े ऊंट को मारा और उस का गोश्त घर पर लाया। अब वह दैत्य के लिये अच्छे से अच्छा खाना बनाने के लिये पूरी तरह जुट गया। उस ने तरह तरह की ज़ियाफतें तैयार कीं जिन में नान व कबाब भी शामिल थे। उस ने जिन्न को बुला कर कहा, “मैं ने तुम्हारे दोस्त के लिये तरह तरह की ज़ियाफतें तैयार की हैं। अब तुम उस को जल्द से जल्द बुला लो ताकि वह खाना टंडा होने से पहले खा ले।

जिन्न ने खाने का सारा सामान देख लिया। इतनी सारी ज़ियाफतें देख कर बहुत खुश हुआ। वह उत्तर की तरफ मुँह करके इतने जोर से चिल्लाया कि आसमान में बादल गरजने लगे। देखते ही देखते उन के सामने एक बड़ा दैत्य नमूदार हुआ। उस का कद देख कर शाहज़ादा डर से काँपने

लगा। जिन्न ने दैत्य को गले लगाया और सलाम दुआ की।

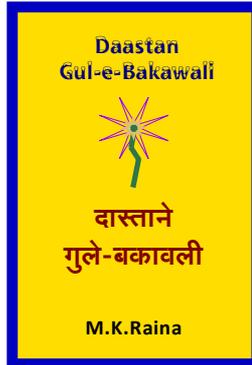
खाना खाने के लिये जब दैत्य ज़मीन पर बैठा तो उस को शाहज़ादा दिखाई दिया। शाहज़ादा फिर से काँप उठा पर कांपते कांपते उस ने दैत्य को सलाम की। दैत्य उस आदमी को यहाँ देख कर हैरान था। उस ने जिन्न से कहा, “आदम का तो यहाँ कोई काम ही नहीं। फिर यह आदम ज़ाद कौन है, कहाँ से आया है और यहाँ क्या कर रहा है?”

जिन्न ने कहा, “तुम बजा फरमा रहे हो कि आदम का यहाँ कोई काम नहीं। लेकिन इस आदमज़ाद का मुझ पर एक बड़ा एहसान है। इस ने मुझे इतना लज़ीज़ खाना खिलाया है जो मैं ने पहले कभी न खाया था। इसी वजह से मैं ने इसे कोई नुकसान नहीं पहुँचाया।

इस ने वैसा ही खाना तुम्हारे लिये भी बनाया है। तुम खाओगे तो समझ जाओगे।”

जिन्न ने शाहज़ादे को इशारा किया। शाहज़ादे ने जो कुछ तैयार किया था, सब सामने लाकर रख दिया।

दैत्य ने पहला ही निवाला मुँह में रखा कि उस के होश उड गये। उस ने ऐसा खाना पहले कभी न चखा था। उसे लगा कि उस ने आबे हयात पा लिया है। उस ने मन में सोचा कि ऐसा खाना तो मुर्दे को भी ज़िंदा कर सकता है। वह जोर जोर से अपना मुँह चलाने लगा और देखते ही देखते आधे



से ज़्यादा खाना चट कर गया। वह शाहज़ादे की तरफ देख कर उसे दाद देने लगा। शाहज़ादे ने कहा, “मैंने यह सब कुछ आप के लिये ही बनाया है। आप आराम से खाइये।”

खा पी कर दैत्य बहुत खुश हुआ। जिन्न का उस ने शुकिया अदा किया और कहा, “मैंने इस जैसा आदम कहीं नहीं देखा है। तुम्हारे साथ साथ मैं भी इस का नमक-हलाल हो गया। मुझे बताओ कि यह कहाँ से आया है और तुम्हारे पास इस का क्या काम है?”

जिन्न ने कहा, “इस का काम इतना कठिन है कि मैं अकेले नहीं कर सकता हूँ। यह बकावुल देश में सैर करने की गरज़ से आया है और इस में मैं इस की कोई मदद नहीं कर सकता हूँ।”

दैत्य बोला, “जो काम हो ही नहीं सकता, उस की बात करने से कोई फायदा नहीं। इस की मुराद न तो तुम से और न ही मुझ से पूरी हो सकती है।”

जिन्न ने कहा, “आप ठीक कह रहे हैं पर मेरी जान अटकी हुई है। मैं ने इसे हज़रत सुलैमान की कसम खाकर कहा है कि यह जो मांगेगा, मैं पूरा कर दूंगा। मैं बहुत परेशान हूँ और मैं ने आप को इसी लिये यहाँ बुलाया है कि आप मेरी मदद कर सकें।

दैत्य हैरान व परेशान हुआ। उस ने अपने आप को कोसा कि क्यों वह जिन्न की पुकार सुन कर चला आया और क्यों उस ने इस आदमज़ाद का बनाया हुआ खाना खाया। इस ने अपने आप से कहा, “अब तुम फंस चुके हो। किसी का नमक खाकर कैसे दगा कर सकते हो?”

दैत्य की एक बहन थी। नाम था हमाल। वह बकावुल शहर का रख रखाव करने वाले अठारह

हज़ार दैत्यों के ऊपर थी। उसे बागे बकावुल में बिला रोक टोक जाने की आज्ञादी थी। दैत्य ने उसे एक पत्र लिखा। उस ने लिखा, “मुझे तुम से मिलने की बहुत चाह है लेकिन काम की वजह से समय नहीं मिल रहा है। तुम्हें बहुत समय से नहीं देखा है इसलिये दुखी हूँ। इस पत्र का जवाब देकर तुम मुझे इस दुख से निकाल सकती हो। एक और विनती है। मेरे सामने पूर्व देश का एक शाहज़ादा है। उस की शक्ल सूरत ऐसी है कि उसे देख कर कोई भी अपना गम भूल जाये। उसे परिस्तान देखने और वहाँ घूमने का बडा शौक है। मुझे मालूम है कि उस का वहाँ पहुँचना आसान नहीं है। लेकिन उस ने मेरा मन जीत लिया है इसलिये मैं उसे वहाँ पहुँचाने में कोई भी मदद करने को तैयार हूँ। मैं उसे तुम्हारे पास भेज रहा हूँ ताकि तुम उसे परिस्तान की सैर करा सको। मुझे तुम पर पूरा भरोसा है और यकीन है कि तुम मेरी बात को नहीं टुकराओगी। इस बात का भी ध्यान रखना कि उसे किसी प्रकार की कोई तकलीफ न हो। इसे तुम मुझ से भी ज़्यादा अज़ीज़ समझना और हर प्रकार से इस का खयाल रखना।”

दैत्य ने पत्र लिख कर अपने एक पदाधिकारी को बुलाया। उसे पत्र सौंप कर शाहज़ादे को भी उस के हवाले कर दिया और कहा, “इस शाहज़ादे को इस पत्र के साथ तुम्हें मेरी बहन के पास पहुँचाना है। पर एक बात का खयाल रखना कि रास्ते में शाहज़ादे को कोई तकलीफ न हो।” पदाधिकारी ने सर हिलाया और कहा, “आप यकीन रखें। मैं शाहज़ादे को फूल की तरह ले कर जाऊंगा और परिस्तान में आप की बहन के हवाले करूंगा।” यह कह कर वह शाहज़ादे का हाथ पकड कर आसमान की तरफ इतनी तेजी से उडान भरने

लगा कि पल भर में ही वह नज़रों से ओझल हो गया।

परिस्तान पहुँच कर पदाधिकारी ने शाहज़ादे और पत्र को हमाल के हवाले कर दिया। हमाल ने ज्योंही अपने भाई का लिखा हुआ पत्र पढ़ा, वह बहुत खुश हुई। उस ने तुरन्त पत्र का जवाब दिया। उस ने लिखा, “आपका पत्र पा कर मेरे सब दुख दूर हो गये और चैन मिला। आपका शाहज़ादा मेरे पास सही सलामत पहुँच गया है। शाहज़ादे को यहाँ भेज आप ने मेरे मन की एक बड़ी मुराद पूरी कर दी। बात यह है कि एक बार मुझे मनुष्यों की बस्ती में जाने का मौका मिला। मैं वहाँ बहुत घूमी। एक जगह मैं ने एक शाहज़ादी को चांदी की डोली में देखा। मुझे वह बहुत अच्छी लगी और मैं उस को अपने यहाँ ले आई। आज पूरे चौदाह साल से मैं उसे पाल रही हूँ। मैं ने उस का नाम महमूदा रखा है। मैं दिन रात खुदा से दुआ मांगती थी कि मुझे उस के लिये कोई सुन्दर शाहज़ादा मिले जिस से मैं उस की शादी करा दूँ। आज खुदा ने मेरी दुआ सुन ली और एक सुन्दर राजकुमार स्वयं मेरे पास चला आया।” हमाल ने पत्र पदाधिकारी के हवाले कर दिया और कहा कि वह तुरन्त वापस जाकर पत्र उस के भाई के पास पहुँचा दे। पदाधिकारी पत्र लेकर चला गया।

शाहज़ादा हमाल के पास पहुँच कर बहुत खुश हुआ। उसे अपनी मंज़िल करीब होती दिखाई दे रही थी। हमाल ने उस की खूब खातिर की। उसे एक से एक बढ़ कर ज़ियाफतें खिलाईं। कुछ समय के बाद हमाल ने शाहज़ादी को बुलाया और उसे वहाँ के कानून के मुताबिक शाहज़ादे के हवाले कर दिया। हमाल और महमूदा, दोनों बहुत खुश थे लेकिन शाहज़ादा खुश नहीं था। महमूदा ने देखा

कि वह कुछ उदास है और उस का मन किसी चीज़ में नहीं लग रहा है।

दिन इसी तरह बीतते गये। एस दिन महमूदा ने हिम्मत करके शाहज़ादे से पूछा, “मुझे बताईये कि आप इस तरह उदास क्यों रहते हैं? आप मेरे साथ बात भी नहीं करते हैं और न ही मेरी तरफ कोई ध्यान देते हैं। क्या मुझ से कोई भूल या गलती हुई है? आप को अगर यहाँ कोई तकलीफ है तो खुदा के लिये मुझे बता दीजिये। मैं आप के लिये कुछ भी करने को तैयार हूँ।”

शाहज़ादे ने कहा, “तुम मेरी माशूका हो। तुम्हारा कोई कसूर नहीं है। मुझे दर असल बागे बकावुल की सैर करने का बहुत शौक है। यदि तुम इस में मेरी मदद कर सकते हो तो मेरे मन की तमन्ना पूरी हो जायेगी।”

महमूदा ने शाहज़ादे की बात सुन ली और कहा, “बस, इतनी सी बात के लिये आप इतने परेशान हैं? यह तो एक मामूली बात है। मुझे जिस औरत ने पाला है, वह यह काम आसानी से कर सकती है क्योंकि केवल उसे ही बागे बकावुल में जाने की इजाज़त है। मैं उसे कह कर आप को सारा बाग, उस के फूल, वहाँ की परियाँ और झील दिखला दूंगी।”

दूसरे दिन सुबह जब हमाल उन दोनों को जगाने आई, देखा कि महमूदा उदास है और अपना सर पकड कर बैठी है। हमाल ने पूछा, “क्या बात है। तुम इतनी उदास क्यों हो? तबीयत ठीक है ना? तुम जानती हो कि मैं तुम्हें दुखी नहीं देख सकती। बोलो, क्या चाहिये, मैं ला कर दूंगी।”

(अगले अंक मे जारी)



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Know Your Motherland - M.K.Raina

Wular Lake



(Photo : Yogesh Masuria)



ular Lake, the largest fresh water lake in India, is situated at a distance of about 40 Kms. towards north-west of Srinagar. It is said to be formed as a result of tectonic activity.

Wular Lake is about 189 Sq. Kms. in area which varies from season to season. It lies at an altitude of 1580 Mtrs. It has a length of 16 Kms. and a breadth of 10 Kms. Its maximum depth is 14 Meters. The deepest part of the Lake is known as Mota Khon which means Gulf of Corpses. The Sopore and Bandipora towns are located on its banks.

Jhelum river evacuates into the Wular Lake at Banyari, which is 40 Kms. from Srinagar and again separates at Ningli. The flood water of river Jhelum acts as a natural reservoir. The catchment area of the Lake is covered with coniferous forests, alpine

pastures and orchards which add to the scenic beauty of the lake.

The Wular Lake plays a significant role in the hydrographic system of the Kashmir valley by acting as huge absorption basin for annual flood water. The Lake and its surrounding marshes have an important natural wildlife. The Lake is the home to as many as 50 species of aquatic animals and several migratory and resident birds which include waterfowl species such as Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*), Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*), Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*), Common Pochard (*Aythya farina*) and Mallard. Birds like Marbled Teal (*Marmaronetta angustirostris*) and Pallas's Fish-eagle (*Haliaeetus leucoryphus*) are species listed in the Red List of IUCN. Many terrestrial bird species observed around the lake are Short-toed Eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*), Little Cuckoo (*Piaya minuta*),

European Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*), Monal Pheasant (*Lophophorus impejanus*) and Himalayan Pied Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos himalayensis albescens*).

In 1986, the lake was designated as a Wetland of National Importance under the Wetlands Programme of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India for the purpose of conservation and management. In 1990, it was assigned as a Wetland of International Importance under

the Ramsar Convention.

The rivers Bohnar, Madamati and Erin from the mountain ranges and the rivers Vitasta (Jhelum) and the Ningal from the south bring hundreds of tons of silt into the lake every year. This rampant siltation and the human encroachments have devastating effects on the lake.



[Sources: 'Indianetzone-Geography of India', 'SAVE' and 'Project Zaan Archives']

साहित्य - कौशिर्य तल्मीह च्चचि वॅरिस जनथ

वननु छु यिवान जि बहलूल ओस खॅलीफा हारून रॅशीदु सुंद बोय। अकि दूह गव सु अँकिस राजु सुंदिस दरबारस मंज ख्यनु खॉतरु कॅछा मंगुनि। राजन छुनुनोव सु ब्यवॉरी कॅरिथ तु कनस थफ कॅरिथ न्यबर कॅडिथ। बहलूल वोत जंगलस मंज तु लॉगिन किजि हर्यन हुंघ मकानु बनावुन्य। अपॉर्य द्रायि पादशाह संज ज़नानु। तमि वोन बहलूलस कुन, “दरवेश, क्याह छुख करान?” दरवेशन वोनस वापस, “जनथ छुस बनावान।” पादशाह बायि वोनस, “कुनख मा?” दरवेशन द्युतुस जवाब, “आ कुनु।” पादशाह बायि पृछुस, “कृतिस कुनख?” दरवेशन दोपुनस, “अँकिस च्चचि वॅरिस।”

पादशाह बाय गॅयि स्यठाह ख्वश। अख च्चचि वोर द्युतुन दरवेशस। दरवेशन करिनस किजि हवालु तु च्चोल। पादशाह बायि थवि यिम किजि मॅहलु खानस मंज ताक्वस प्यठ। पादशाहन पृछुस किजन मुतलिक तु तमि वॅनिनस च्चचि वरिच दॅलील। पादशाहन त्रोव ठाह ठाह कॅरिथ असुन।

दपान अमी रॉन्न छु पादशाह सोपुन वुछान। सोपुनस मंज वुछुन जनथ, येति माँछ क्वलु आसु

वसान। अँकिस कुलिस तल वुछुन स्वनु सुंद तख्त। अथ तख्तस प्यठ वुछिन पनुन्य ज़नानु बिहिथ। यि तमाशु वुछिथ ह्योत पादशाहन ति बागस मंज अचुन। डीड्य वान्यव द्युत नु तस अंदर अचुन। दोपुहॅस, “यि छु जनत तु यि छु हुमि ड्यक बजि मॅल्य ह्योतुमुत।” अँथ्य सुत्य गव पादशाह हुशार।

पगाह शामस द्राव पादशाह ति जंगलस कुन। अति वुछुन बहलूल किजि हर्यन गिंदान। पादशाहन पृछुस, “दरवेश साँब, क्याह छिव करान?” दरवेशन वोनस, “जनथ छुस बनावान।” पादशाहन पृछुस, “सोदा मा करख?” दरवेशन द्युतुस जवाब, “आ करु।” पादशाहन पृछुस, “कृतिस कुनख?” दरवेशन वोनस, “सतन पादशाहन हुंघन सतन खज़ानन।” पादशाहस च्चज ख्वरव तलु म्यँन्न नीरिथ। साँचाह कॅरिथ वोनस, “न हज़, च्चै कुनुथ ना यि जनथ राथ च्चचि वॅरिस?” दरवेशन द्युतुस जवाब, “बेकलु, तमि कोर न वुछुनय सोदा। च्चु आख वुछिथ सोदा करनि।” पादशाह गव पशैमान।



(अगर कांह चीज़ स्यठाह द्रोग आसि तु काँसि बनि मुजि म्वलस, दपान छि ‘तस बन्यव च्चचि वॅरिस जनथ।’ अगर कांह नफर द्रोग चीज़ श्वगि म्वलु छाँडि, दपान छि ‘सु छु च्चचि वॅरिस जनथ छाँडान।’

[Archives - Project Zaan]

OUT OF BOX

Flowers on your side of the path :

An elderly Chinese woman had two large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole which she carried across her neck. One of the pots had a crack in it while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water. At the end of long walks from stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full. For a full two years, this went on daily, with the woman bringing home only one and a half pots of water. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, but the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection and miserable that it could only do half of what it had been made to do. After two years of what it perceived to be bitter failure, it spoke to the woman one day by the stream, "I am ashamed of myself because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house." The old woman smiled, "Did you notice that there are flowers on the side of your path but not on the other pot's side. That is because I have always known about your flaw, so I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you water them. For two years, I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house."

Each of us has our own unique flaw. But it is the cracks and flaws we each have that

make our lives together so very interesting and rewarding. You have just got to take each person for what they are and look for the good in them. So, to all of my cracked pot friends, have a great day and remember to smell the flowers on your side of the path.



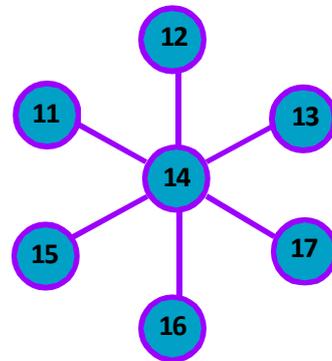
ANSWERS TO JUMBLE 2 (Milchar Nov-Dec 2011)

HENDA VENDA ; SOOMYAR ; VITASTA ;
ROGAN JOSH



Question : Insert the numbers 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 in the circles below in such a way that the total is the same in all directions :

Answer :



Compiled by: K.K.Kemmu

**Learn Kashmiri.
It is our mother-tongue.**

Editor's Mail

➤ Dear Editor,

Thanks a lot for Milchar. At least our younger generation will get know what has been our culture and ethos. Eminent writers are on the job and hence results are bound to bear fruit. I would request that a Kashmiri calander be displayed in every issue for information to all, i.e. Dates for all the Kashmiri functions like Ashtamis, Punims, start and end of dertapannchuk, Herat, Diwali, auspicious dates for different occasions to help Kashmiris to organize their events accordingly.

Best wishes and warm regards,

Ravinder Tikoo

Gurgaon.

ravi.tikoo@gmail.com

[Editor replies: Thanks for mail. Looks like you have missed some of the inner pages. Panchang is regularly included in the magazine and appears on Page 32 of the Nov-Dec 2011 issue.]

●●●

➤ Dear Raina Sahab,



I Thank you for sending me the PDF copy of Milchar (Nov-Dec 2011). Accept my congratulations on publishing such a quality magazine. I was delighted to see my Preface to Swami Shankar Joo's 'Leelas' in the magazine, and am really grateful to you for deciding to serialise the 'Leelas' in your prestigious magazine. Just one minor correction. Swami Ji's photo caption shows him as living from 1886 to 1931. The correct dates are 1830 to 1875.

Regards,

Prof. Anil Raina

Dept. of English & Cultural Studies,
Panjab University, Chandigarh
Mobile: 91-9815232318

aneelraina@gmail.com

[Editor replies: 1886-1931 is the Bikrami Samvat which was not indicated due to oversight. Error is regretted.]

●●●

➤ Dear Mr. Raina,

Thank you so much for the effort, for producing a good magazine.

Sandhya Shungloo

sandhya@sakshammedia.com

●●●

➤ My dear MK,



I am enclosing a Kashmiri write up in Devanagari script for your assessment and for being corrected. It is for the first time that I have used this script to write. Whatever I have written in Kashmiri so far is in Nastaleek script. If you feel the write up has some merit, please give it some space in 'Milchar'.

My blessings to you and your family.

Yours,

P.K.Kaul

Santacruz, Mumbai

kaulpk@indiatimes.com

●●●

➤ Dear (Rajen) Kaul Sahib,



Namaskar. It gives me immense pleasure to know that I am associated with Milchar since past 6 years now. In these years I have seen Milchar growing from mere 20 Pages to 50 pages which is an achievement in itself.

In all it is a great achievement whereby Milchar has contributed to Kashmiri families living in Western India. The best part of the Milchar are the sections where the articles referring to our great Gurus are depicted and told about their miracles. I have gone

Editor's Mail

through many articles in Milchar, but think that there should be one more section of 'Learn to speak kashmiri, our Mother-tounge'. this will be required for our youngsters who have born and brought up in western India. Of course they will learn Kashmiri if we insist them in speaking at home but if it is a mixed religion whereby either mother/father have been married out side of our religion then it becomes important for us to make sure that these children know Kashmiri also.

Secondly, it was indeed a pleasure to know that Annual Havan is being carried out on 21 & 22 January. I would like to participate as an active volunteer for this Havan and pray for Maej Sharika's blessings. Hence if any work is assigned to me, it will be great. May Maej Sharika bestow peace and happiness on all Kashmiris.

Ashish Dhar

Borivali, Mumbai

ashish73dhar@gmail.com

➤ Dear Editor,

It is always a pleasure to go through the pages of Milchar and frankly speaking, we eagerly wait for the new issue. The content is superb with all the three languages included. Information given through the column 'Know Your Motherland' is very informative and I am sure, our youngsters who have not been to the valley are benefited a lot. I would like to record my special appreciation for the net edition of Milchar, coming in colour. It is really a treat to the eyes.

Regards,

Manoj Dhar

Ashok Vihar, New Delhi

ndts2007@hotmail.com

युवा शक्ति ... राकेश रोशन भट्ट

अंधेरे रास्तों पर बिखरे थे हम
अब दिख रहा सवेरा है
युवा शक्ति ने मिल कर
हटाया ये अंधेरा है
हमारी सादगी को
हमारी कमजोरी समझा गया
एक बार नहीं सात बार हमें
घर से निकाला गया
ज़ख्मों को सहलाया, गमों को भुलाया
हर बार, फिर से उन्हें गले लगाया
हम ने जब जब आशियाना बसाया
सब कुछ लुटा हुआ
खुद को उसी चौराहे पे पाया
इस बार इतिहास नहीं दोहरायेंगे
बल्कि नया इतिहास रचायेंगे
पूरी दुनिया को अपनी एकता
मकसद और दृढ़ता की झलक दिखायेंगे
ये मातृभूमि, ये घर, जो तेरा है और मेरा है
रोंद के हमारा हक़, दुश्मनों ने
जिन पे जमाया हुआ डेरा है
हमें तो अपनी धरती चाहिये
हम आसमानों पर दावा नहीं करते
और ये तो हम पा के रहेंगे
क्योंकि, हम अब किसी से नहीं डरते
जाग उठा है अब युवा पंडित
होसला है जिसका धनुष, इरादे जिसके तीर
आज साकार हो रही है वो कल्पना
जो थी अब तक केवल तसवीर
जय पनुन कश्मीर ... जय पनुन कश्मीर



Poem penned for

International Youth Conference at Pune

Contact author at : rakeshroshanbhat@gmail.com



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