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Chak Rule, a blot on Kashmir history—Panun Kashmir

KS NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, Nov 1: Panun Kashmir, front line organisation of Kashmiri Pandits came down heavily on the 'Self-Rule' balloon floated by PDP patron Mufti Mohammad Sayeed. It said that Mufti was pushing J&K State towards civil war.

"Reference to 'Chak Rule' by the PDP founder President is clear manifestation of his medievalist outlook with chronic hatred for anything which is historically Kashmir," Dr. Ajay Chrungoo told press reporters in Jammu today. The Panun Kashmir Chairman asked Mufti Sayeed to re-read his history and said, "Chak rule was the worst period of civil wars in Kashmir. It was a period of religious persecution, bigotry and conversions at the point of sword. Kashmiri Pandits were persecuted, killed and converted in this period, so were Sunni Muslims".

Dr Chrungoo said that Mufti betrays a selective sense of history and said, "how could history of Kashmir's freedom struggle start with invasion of Moghuls and not usurpation of the throne of Kashmir by another foreigner Shah Mir". He further said that his organisation was constrained to ask if Mufti Sayeed was Kashmiri in origin. Dr. Chrungoo added Yousuf Shah Chak was a renegade who implored Moghuls to intervene in Kashmir and fought them only when they spurned him. "By demanding 16th Century sovereignty for Kashmir Mufti Mohammad Sayeed was becoming a great political risk for India". Dr. Chrungoo said, "for lesser charges Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah who had his own stature was dismissed from chief-ministership and put behind bars for 22 long years".

Panun Kashmir chief observed that reference to return to Chak rule was a well planned conspiracy of Mufti Sayeed to wash out Kashmiri Pandits from the state. He alleged that during the previous Mufti regime, all the bureaucrats were given instructions not to entertain any Kashmiri Pandit. Dr. Chrungoo further said the whole 'exposition' of self rule seeks to brand India as a colonial power and Kashmir as an occupied territory. "I don't know why he is not being arrested for treason for unambiguously identifying with Pakistans' position on Kashmir in the name of self-rule," asked Dr. Ajay Chrungoo. He further asked why should we talk about pre-1952 and 16th century sovereignty and not debate if Indian constitution was really an impediment in the development and progress of Kashmir. Harping on self-rule and autonomy is not serving the cause of egalitarianism but pushing back to regressive medievalists past.

He added that it was shocking that PDP patron was being sent to UN to address the UNO as head of the non official Indian delegation and present his concept of self-rule for the resolution of so-called Kashmir dispute. This speaks volumes about the inept handling of Kashmir affairs by the UPA government at New Delhi and claimed that Mufti's ultimate objective was the communal balkanisation of India. Congress party's role as mute spectator to the relentless assaults on the sovereignty of India by its coalition partner, the PDP is a matter of serious concern.

The veteran Congress leader and president All State Kashmiri Pandit Solidarity Conference Sh ON Trisal asked the people of the state to go through the old files of Aftab and Kidmat from 1959 to early 90's during which Mufti had been a strong supporter of free flow of Indian Constitution in the state. Now Mufti has taken a U-Turn and wants us to return to the Chak feudal era and to a dispensation that seeks to take Kashmir away from India". The press conference was also addressed by Dr MK Teng, Chairman Advisory Panun Kashmir, Prof. BL Fotedar and Sh. Kuldeep Raina, General Secretary, Panun Kashmir. END

THOSE WHO LEFT US

Kashmir Sentinel and Panun Kashmir Foundation mourn their sad demise and pray for the peace to the departed souls

1. Smt. Asha Ji Bhat W/o Sh. BL Bhat, R/o Nazuk Mohalla Anantnag; presently at H.No: 112, Ganesh Vihar Lower Muthi Jammu. 1/9/2006
2. Pt. Lambodhar Nath Koul S/o Nidhan Koul, R/o Sathu Barbar Shah Sgr; presently at 378-B, Sec-I Durga Ngar Bantalab Jammu. 1/9/2006
3. Sh. Shyam Sunder Bhat, R/o Zewan Kashmir. 2/9/2006
4. Smt. Mohini Chaku W/o Lt. Sh. Bansi Lal Chaku, R/o 19-Lower Laxmi Nagar Sarwal, Jammu. 3/9/2006
5. Smt. Arandati W/o Lt. Sh. Arzan Nath Bhat, R/o Tengpuna Pulwama; Kmr; presently at 575 Sarwal Colony, Jammu. 3/9/2006
6. Smt. Prabawati Malik W/o Lt. Prem Nath Malik, R/o Fateh Kadal Sgr; presently at Greater Enclave Rehari Colony, Jammu. 3/9/2006
7. Smt. Jai Kishori Babu W/o Lt. H.N Babu, R/o Sathu Barbarshah Sgr; presently at 258-C Ram Vihar Old Janipur, Jammu. 4/9/2006
8. Sh. Gopi Nath Zadoo S/o Anand Joo, R/o Nowgam Anantnag; presently at Qtr. No: 36, Phase-Ist Muthi

Camp Jammu. 4/9/2006

9. Sh. Pushkar Nath Khushoo S/o Lt. Tara Chand Khushoo, R/o Batyar Ali Kadal Sgr; presently at 17-D, DDA SFS Flats, Mayur Vihar Phase-III Delhi. 4/9/2006

10. Sh. Soom Nath Raina, R/o Dialgam Anantnag; presently at 330 Laxmi Vihar Tomal Bohri Jammu. 5/9/2006

11. Smt. Kamlawati W/o Lt. Sh. Jia Lal Pandit, R/o Uma Nagri Anantnag; presently at Karan Nagar Udhampur. 5/9/2006

12. Sh. Rattan Lal Koul S/o Lt. Sh. Raghoo Joo Koul, R/o Safapora Kmr; presently at 251, Block-I Greater Noida, UP. 5/9/2006

13. Sh. Jagar Nath Koul S/o Lt. Sh. Shanker Nath Koul, R/o Goja Mohalla Anantnag; presently at 51-A, Sec-4, Indrapuram Gaziabad. 6/9/2006

14. Sh. Prem Nath Bhat S/o Lt. Shanker Dass, R/o Kulgam, Kmr; present at Dina Nagar Barnai Jammu. 6/9/2006

15. Smt. Dulari Raina W/o Sh. Avtar Krishen Raina, R/o Sallar Anantnag; presently at Dandyal Udhampur. 7/9/2006

16. Smt. Ratna Koul W/o Sh. Chaman Lal Koul, R/o Khan-Khai Sokhta Nawa Kadal Sgr; presently at H.No: 22, Lane No: 1 Anand Nagar, Bohri, Jammu. 7/9/2006

17. Sh. Madan Lal Koul S/o Lt. Sh. Vishwa Nath Koul, R/o Pathankot. 8/9/2006

18. Smt. Gouri Shouri W/o Lt. Sh. Jia Lal R/o Mahind Anantnag; presently at 511 Mishriwala Camp Jammu. 9/9/2006

19. Sh. Jawahar Lal Kakapuri S/o Sh. Mohan Lal Kakapuri, R/o Zaindar Mohalla Sgr; presently at H.No: 2, Talab Tillo, Bohri Jammu. 9/9/2006

20. Smt. Sarla Raina W/o Dr. AK Raina, R/o Chowgam Anantnag, Kmr; presently at H.No: 552, Subash Nagar, Jammu. 9/9/2006

21. Sh. Brij Nath Raina S/o Lt. Maheshwar Nath Raina R/o Bagh Jogi Lanker Rainawari Sgr; presently at H.No: 718, Vinayak Nagar Muthi, Jammu. 10/9/2006

22. Smt. Durga Ji W/o Lt. Sh. Keshav Nath Tickoo. 10/9/2006

23. Smt. Durga Ji W/o Lt. Sh. Keshav Nath Tickoo. 10/9/2006

24. Sh. Sanjay Koul S/o Sh. Chaman Lal Koul, R/o Badami Bag, Sgr; presently at Sari Rakhwalan Jammu. 10/9/2006

25. Sh. Som Nath Khar S/o Lt. Maheshwar Nath Khar, R/o Baramulla Kmr; presently at Krishna Nagar, Miran Sahib, Jammu. 11/9/2006

26. Smt. Phoola Shah W/o Sh. Bal Krishen Shah, R/o Chattabal Sgr; presently at D-114, Ram Dutt Enclave Uttam Nagar, New Delhi. 11/9/2006

27. Smt. Sham Rani Koul W/o Lt. Sham Sunder Koul, R/o Sangrampore Sopore; presently at Sharda Colony Patoli Brahmana, Jammu. 11/9/2006

28. Smt. Girja Shashoo W/o Lt. Sh. Abinash Shashoo, R/o Ragunath Mandir Habba Kadal Sgr; presently at H.No: 1073-F, Lane No: 10, Nanak Nagar, Sector-8, Jammu. 11/9/2006

29. Smt. Sedlakshmi Mattoo W/o Lt. Shyam Lal Mattoo, R/o Lal Mandi Jawahar Nagar Sgr; presently at H.No: 8, Lane No: 6, Hazuri Bagh, Bohri, Jammu. 13/9/2006

30. Smt. Arandati Hali W/o Lt. Kashi Nath Hali, R/o Chandpora Habba Kadal, Sgr; presently at 155, Manorama Vihar Bohri, Jammu. 14/9/2006

31. Sh. JN Kachroo, R/o Mumbai. 14/9/2006

32. Sh. TK Bhan S/o Lt. Sh. Kashi Nath Bhan, R/o Lal Nagar, Channapora, Kmr; presently at Inderprastha Pune. 15/9/2006

33. Smt. Rani Koul W/o Lt. Sh. Dwarika Nath Koul, R/o Shalla Kadal; presently at Janta Enclave Ludhiana. 15/9/2006

34. Smt. Shobawati Ranju W/o Lt. Sh. Dina Nath Ranju, R/o Zainakadal Sgr; presently at 61 Durga Nagar, Talab Tillo, Jammu. 15/9/2006

35. Dr. BL Nagri S/o Lt. Sh Shyam Lal Nagri, R/o Channpora Sgr; presently at 2066-A, Kungposh Jain Nagar, Delhi. 15/9/2006

36. Smt. Raj Dulari Fotedar W/o Sh. Moti Lal Fotedar R/o Rainawari, Sgr; presently at 31-A, Karan Nagar Ext. Jamu. 16/9/2006

37. Sh. Roshan Lal Pandita S/o Lt. Sh. Lambodhar Nath Pandita, R/o Mahind Anantnag; presently at H.No: 234, Sec-2 Shivalik Puram Janipur Colony, Jammu. 16/9/2006

38. Sh. Janki Nath Kandroo S/o Sh. Sona Ram Kandroo, R/o Nazuk Mohalla Anantnag; presently at 418, Laxmi Vihar Tomal Bohri Jammu. 17/9/2006

39. Sh. Shumbu Nath Malla S/o Lt. Ranju Malla R/o Sheltang Habba Kadal Sgr; presently at H.No: 18,

Rajinder Nagar Sahibabad UP. 17/9/2006

40. Sh. Soom Nath Raina S/o Lt. Sh. Vishambar Nath Raina, R/o Vanpoh Anantnag; presently at B-6, Sec-9 Rohini Delhi. 17/9/2006

41. Smt. Shyama Bhat W/o Sh. Maharaj Krishan Bhat, R/o Purshiyar Habba Kadal, Sgr; presently at Ludhiana. 17/9/2006

42. Smt. Asha Koul W/o Lt. Sh. Kashi Nath Koul, R/o Rainawari Sgr; presently at H.No: 7, Phase-5, Tawi Vihar Sidhra Jammu. 18/9/2006

43. Sh. Dileep Trakroo S/o Lt. Sh. Makhan Lal Trakroo, R/o Drabiyar Habba Kadal Sgr; presently at 215/C, Ram Vihar Old Janipur, Jammu. 19/9/2006

44. Smt. Remika Takoo W/o Lt. Sh. AK Takoo, R/o Indra Vihar Old Janipur; presently at Peeraghari Paschim Vihar Delhi. 19/9/2006

45. Sh. Pushkar Nath Wangnoo S/o Lt. Sansar Chand Wangnoo, R/o Purshiyar Habba Kadal Sgr. 20/9/2006

46. Sh. Moti Lal Wali S/o Lt. Pt. Niranjan Nath Wali, R/o Drabiyar Sgr; presently at Pitampora Delhi. 20/9/2006

47. Smt. Durgashori W/o Sh. RK Bhat, R/o Nagam Chadoora Kmr; presently at 10 A&B, Lane No: 2 Bharat Nagar Bantalab, Jammu. 21/9/2006

48. Sh. Brij Lal Kandroo S/o Lt. Sh. Veshnu Joo Kandroo, R/o Nazuk Mohalla Anantnag; presently at H.No: 8, Lane No: 4, Saraswati Vihar Bohri, Jammu. 21/9/2006

49. Sh. Radha Krishen Bhan S/o Lt. Shri Shridhar Joo Bhan R/o Majoor Nagar, Sgr; presently at H.No: 15, Sec-G, Sainik Colony, Jammu. 21/9/2006

50. Sh. Nand Lal R/o Kulgam Kmr; presently at 16/A, Sec-2, Sharda Colony Patoli Brahmana Jammu. 22/9/2006

51. Sh. Kanya Lal Dhar S/o Lt. Sh. Tara Chand Dhar, R/o 115-B, Bawpur Allahabad UP. 22/9/2006

52. Smt. Koushaliya Malla W/o Sh. SN Malla, R/o H.No: 97, Lane 1-A, Adarsh Nagar, Bantalab, Jammu. 22/9/2006

53. Sh. Raj Nath Pandita S/o Sh. Badri Nath Pandita, R/o Akingam Anantnag; presently at New Delhi. 22/9/2006

54. Sh. Manohar Nath Safaya S/o Lt. Sh. Ved Lal Safaya, R/o Sathu Bar Bar Shah Sgr; presently at 89 Shanker Vihar Talab Tillo, Jammu. 23/9/2006

55. Sh. Shibani Lal Bhat S/o Lt. Maheshwar Nath Bhat, R/o Noorpora Tral; presently at 108-F2 Govts. Qtrs. Janipur, Jammu. 24/9/2006

56. Sh. ML Kaloo, R/o Badiyar Sgr; presently at 253-K Bharat Nagar Rehari Colony, Jammu. 24/9/2006

57. Smt. Mohan Rani Dhar W/o Sh. Nath Jee Dhar, R/o Khonmoh Sgr; presently at 173-H, Sec-2, Durga Nagar, Jammu. 24/9/2006

58. Smt. Raj Dulari Pandita W/o Lt. Moti Lal Pandita, R/o Nunar Ganderbal; presently at 75/2, Vijay Nagar Camp, Road Talab Tillo, Jammu. 25/9/2006

59. Sh. Makhan Lal Raina S/o Lt. Sh. Maheshwar Nath Raina, R/o Lariyar Tral; presently at Laxmipuram Chinore, Jammu. 25/9/2006

60. Triloki Nath Qanoongo S/o Lt. Arzan Nath Qanoongo, R/o Narparistan Sgr; presently at A/32, Upper Shiv Nagar, Jammu. 25/9/2006

61. Sh. Girdhari Lal Wangnoo S/o Lt. Nath Jee Wangnoo R/o Razdan Kocha Sgr; presently at 320, Vniyak Nagar Muthi, Jammu. 25/9/2006

62. Sh. Prithvi Raj Koul S/o Lt. Sh. Sarwanand Koul, R/o Safakadal Sgr; presently at O.R.T. 66 Nagrota Camp. 25/9/2006

63. Smt. Veena Koul W/o W/o Sh. Ashok Koul, R/o Ahmedabad. 26/9/2006

64. Smt. Kamlawati W/o Sh. Shamboo Nath Mukhi, R/o Mattan Anangnag; presently at Khajuria Mohalla, Jammu. 27/9/2006

65. Sh. Ashok Kumar Tickoo S/o Lt. Sh. Radha Krishan Tickoo, R/o Zaindar Mohala Sgr; presently at H.No: 537, Housing Colony Janipur, Jammu. 28/9/2006

66. Smt. Jaya Koul W/o Sh. Maharaj Krishen Koul, R/o 49-A, Subash Nagar, Jammu. 28/9/2006

67. Sh. Brij Lal Tamiri S/o Lt. Sarwanand Tamiri, R/o Karpura Khushki Rainwari, Shivpora, Ram Munshi Bagh, Sgr; presently at 301, Colonel's Colony, Jammu. 2/9/06

68. Sh. Prithvi Nath Pandita S/o Lt. Sh. Shridhar Wattal, R/o Akingam Anantnag; presently at 54-B, Top Sherkhania Jammu. 29/9/2006

69. Sh. Ravi Ji Koul S/o Sh. Gopi Nath Koul, R/o Shutra Shahi Sgr; presently at C-30, Z/4, Dilshad Garden Delhi. 30/9/2006

70. Dr. Bansi Lal Pandita S/o Lt. Sh. Jia Lal Pandita Seeru Pattan; presently at 83/3, Adarsh Nagar,

Bantalab, Jammu. 1/10/2006

71. Smt. Oma Shori W/o Sh. Omkar Nath Koul, R/o Hangalgund Kmr; presently at 635 Block-G, Mishriwalla, Jammu. 2/10/2006

72. Sh Naveen Bhat S/o Sh. Makhan Lal Bhat, R/o Heera Mohalla, Anantnag; presently at JI/227, Sec-2 Durga Nagar, Jammu. 2/10/2006

73. Smt. Babli W/o Sh. Subash Chander Bhat, R/o Wanpoh Anantnag; presently at Lane No: I, Dutta Colony Lower, Bernai Jammu. 2/10/2006

74. Sh. Janki Nath Tikoo S/o Lt. Raghu Nath Tickoo, R/o Karfali Mohalla Sgr; presently at D-25, Pocket-D SFS Flats Mayur Vihar Phase-III, Delhi. 4/10/2006

75. Anita Bhat W/o Sh. Rajesh Khajuria. 4/10/2006

76. Smt. Dulari Bakshi W/o Sh. Radha Krishen Bakshi R/o Magam, Kmr; presently at Lower Shiv Nagar, Jammu. 4/10/2006

77. Sh. Trilok Nath S/o Lt. Lakhman Dass Koul, R/o Magam Anantnag; presently at Q.No: 84, Phase-1st Purkhoo Camp, Jammu. 5/10/2006

78. Smt. Soomawati Patwari W/o Sh. Soom Nath Patwari R/o Mattan Anantnag; presently at H.No: 1, Digiana Pully Jammu. 6/10/2006

79. Smt. Uma Shori W/o Sh. Sri Kanth, R/o Kokernag Kmr; presently at H.No: 868 Lane No: 2, Ext. Anandnagar, Bohri, Jammu. 6/10/2006

80. Sh. Hari Krishen Harkar S/o Lt. Aftab Bhat Harkar R/o Malayar Sgr; presently at H.No: 189, Lane No: 3, Shant Nagar, Janipur Jammu. 6/10/2006

81. Smt. Usha Dhar W/o Sh. CL Dhar, R/o Karan Nagar, Sgr; presently at Manegaon Jabalpur. 7/10/2006

82. Sh. Jagannath Dhar R/o J-316, Sarita Vihar Delhi. 8/10/2006

83. Smt. Kishni Koul W/o Lt. Sh. Jawahar Lal Koul, R/o 34, JK Colony, BSF Campus Paloura Top Jammu. 9/10/2006

84. Smt. Rani Saraf W/o Sh. Shamboo Nath Saraf R/o Shopian Kmr; presently at H.No: 29 Sec-I Laxmi Nagar Muthi Jammu. 9/10/2006.

85. Smt. Muglani Devi W/o Lt. Sh. Prem Nath Mattoo, R/o Zadipora Kulgam; presently at H.No: 1, Lane No: 2, Gurrah Barnai Jammu. 9/10/2006.

86. Sh. Prem Nath Ganjoo S/o Lt. Ganesh Dass Ganjoo, R/o Wanpoh Anantnag; presently at Nowabad, Jammu. 9/10/2006

87. Sri Kanth Bhat S/o Lt. Sh. Gopal Bhat, R/o Nadimarg Kmr; presently at 70/2A, Lower Roop Nagar, Jammu. 9/10/2006

88. Smt. Gowrishori Raina W/o Lt. Sh. Jagar Nath Raina, R/o Habba Kadal; presently at 1/1, Ext. Pamposh Colony, Janipur, Jammu. 9/10/2006

89. Smt. Soomawati Razdan W/o Lt. Tara Chand Razdan, R/o Mattan Kmr; presently at Battal Ballian Camp, Udampur. 10/10/2006

90. Sh. Deepak Bagati S/o Sh. Madan Lal Bagati R/o Bulbul Lanker Sgr; presently at 24-C, Sec-1, Bagwati Nagar, Jammu. 10/10/2006

91. Sh. Moti Lal Jad S/o Lt. Sh. Bag Lal Jad. R/o Nazuk Mohalla Anantnag; presently at H.No: 9A, Sec-4A, Trikuta Nagar Ext. Jammu. 10/10/2006

92. Smt. Gowri Sheeri Mattoo W/o Lt. Sh. Gwash Lal Mattoo, R/o Durga Nagar 160/3, Roop Nagar, Jammu. 10/10/2006

93. Sh. Mahraj Krishan Fotedar, R/o Sehpora Kulgam, Kmr; presently at 42-F Lower Shiv Nagar, Jammu. 11/10/2006

94. Smt. Chand Rani W/o Sh Dina Nath Dhar, R/o Khyar Anantnag; presently at 53/C Om Nagar, Udheywlla, Bohri. 11/10/2006

95. Sh. Niranjan Nath Parimoo S/o Lt. Sh. Bagwan Dass Parimoo, R/o Narsingh Garh Sgr; presently at H.No: 69, Lane No: 8, Upper Laxmi Nagar Sarwal, Jammu. 11/10/2006

96. Sh. Ravindra Kaul S/o Sh. Hari Krishen Koul, R/o Zaindar Mohalla; presently at C-804 MS Apartments and Hostel KG Marg Delhi. 11/10/2006

97. Sh. Shamboo Nath Bhat S/o Lt. Sh. Shanker Bhat, R/o Lar Ganderball; presently at H.No: 10, Friends Colony, Paloura, Jammu. 11/10/2006

98. Sh. Radha Krishan Bakaya S/o Lt. Sh. Sri Kanth Bakaya R/o Sathu Barbar Shah Sgr; presently at H.No: 156, Manorama Vihar, Bohri, Jammu. 12/10/2006

99. Sh. Triloki Nath Koul S/o Lt. Sh. Shiv Ji Koul, R/o Nai Sarak Kmr; presently at 67-A, Patoli Mangotrian Jammu. 12/10/2006

100. Sh. Triloki Nath Tiku S/o Lt. Ganesh Dass Tiku, R/o 123 Jawahar Nagar, Sgr; presently at Boston USA. 13/10/2006

101. Sh. Janki Nath Koul S/o Lt. Sh. Raja Ram, R/o Uttersoo Anantnag, Kmr; presently at Balak Nagar Udhampur. 14/10/2006
102. Sh. Tej Krishan Koul, R/o 318, Khojabagh Baramulla, Kmr; presently at 36-C, Block-A, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi. 14/10/2006
103. Sh. Girdhari Lal Koul S/o Lt. Dr. Dina Nath Koul, R/o Sathoo Barbar Shah Sgr; presently at Inderprastha, Faridabad. 15/10/2006
104. Miss Namrata Muju D/o Sh. Ajay Kumar Muju, R/o Flat No: C-I, Pocket-5, Sec-2, Housing Board Flats, Channi Himmatt, Jammu. 15/10/2006
105. Sh. Amar Nath Warikoo S/o Lt. RN Warikoo, R/o 26 A/C Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, R/o Navi Mumbai. 16/10/2006.
106. Pt. Lambodhar Nath Ganjoo S/o Lt. Pt. Ganesh Dass Ganjoo, R/o Wanpoh Anantnag; presently at Lane: 4, Udheywalla. Jammu. 16/10/2006.
107. Smt. Uma Sadhu W/o Lt. Sh. Srikanth Sadhu, R/o Hatmura Anantnag; presently at H.No: 70/3, Sector 1-A, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.
108. Smt. Shyam Rani Kakapuri W/o Lt. Sh. Shyam Lal Kakapuri, R/o Zaindar Mohalla Habba Kadal, Sgr; presently at h.nO: 622, Sec-3, Upper Talab, Muthi, Jammu. 17/10/2006
109. Smt. Devki Taing W/o Lt. Pt. Madhusudhan Taing, R/o Vanpoh Anantnag; presently at Basant Nagar Ext. Janipur, Jammu. 18/10/2006
110. Smt. Roopawati Bhat W/o Lt. Sh. Mahishwar Nath Bhat, R/o Wachi Kmr; presently at H.No: 9, Lane No: 1, Anand Nagar, Bohri, Jammu. 18/10/2006
111. Miss Suman Zadoo D/o Sh. Raj Nath Zadoo, R/o Gund Ahalmar Nai Sarak Sgr; presently at H.No: 27, H.No: 17 Salian Talab Udhampur. 18/10/2006
112. Smt. Sheela Devi W/o Sh. Makhan Lal Pandita, R/o Handwara, Kmr; presently at H.No: 11, Gali No: 9, Surya Vihar Bohri, Jammu. 19/10/2006
113. Smt. Soomawati Tikoo W/o Lt. Sh. Som Nath Tikoo, R/o 30-Shalla Kadal Sgr; presently at H.No: 4, Sector-2, JDA Roop Nagar, Jammu. 19/10/2006
114. Smt. Shobawati Bhat W/o Lt. Pt. Tota Ram Bhat R/o Magam Kmr; presently at H.No: 283/C, Sec-I Durga Nagar, Jammu. 19/10/2006
115. Sh. Prithvi Nath Raina, R/o Goja Mohalla Anantnag; presently at H.No: 33 Lane No: 2, Block-B, Roop Nagar, Jammu. 20/10/2006
116. Sh. Dina Nath Kachroo S/o Sh. Narayan Joo Kachru, R/o Baramulla, Kmr; presently at Flat No: EI Trikuta Appts. Sector-4A Trikuta Nagar, Jammu. 21/10/2006
117. Sh. Bansi Lal Tickoo S/o Lt. Sh. Dina Nath Tickoo, R/o Rawalpura, Sgr; presently at Chankyapuri New Delhi. 21/10/2006
118. Smt. Shyama Koul W/o Sh. Kishen Lal Koul, R/o Channapura, Sgr; presently at B-2, Asha Appts. Rajinder Nagar Sahibabad, UP. 21/10/2006
119. Sh. Makhan Lal Pandita S/o Lt. Sh. Tara Chand Pandita, R/o Mantapura Anantnag; presently at Vinayak Nagar, Upper Muthi, Jammu. 22/10/2006.
120. Smt. Kamla Bakshi W/o Sh. PN Bakshi R/o Bulbul Lanker Sgr; presently at 28, Opp. Krishna Building New Plots. 23/10/2006
121. Smt. Jaya Munshi W/o Sh. Ashok Munshi R/o Ali Kadal Sgr; presently at H.No: 19, Basant Nagar, Janipur. 23/10/2006
122. Smt. Parmeshwari Koul W/o Lt. Sh. Radha Krishen Koul, R/o Rainawari Sgr; presently at Opp. U-Block Govt. Qtrs. Subash Nagar, Jammu. 24/10/2006
123. Smt. Chuni Raina W/o Lt. Sh. Mohan Nirash, R/o A-41, Neb Sarai, New Delhi. 25/10/2006
124. Smt. Kamla Shori W/o Lt. Shamboo Nath Koul, R/o Jawahar Nagar, Sgr presently at H.nO: 694, Palam Vihar Gurgaon. 25/10/2006
125. Smt. Roopawati Zafrani W/o Lt. Shamboo Nath Zafrani, R/o Kharyar Habba Kadal, Sgr; presently at 29-B, Pocket-A, SFS FLats, Mayur Vihar, Phase-II, Delhi. 25/10/2006
126. Smt. Soomawati W/o Lt. Sh. Sohan Lal Raina, R/o Chowalgam Kmr; presently at H.No: 20, Lane No: 1, Bantalab, Jammu. 26/10/2006.
127. Sh. Shamboo Nath Koul S/o Lt. Sh. Neel Koul, R/o Dalhassanya, Habba Kadal, Sgr; presently at H.No: 106 Sec-11, Faridabad. 26/10/2006
128. Smt. Laxmishori Tickoo W/o Lt. Jia Lal Tickoo, R/o Delhi . 26/10/2006
129. Sh. Jiya Lal Koul S/o Lt. Sh. Hari Ram Koul, R/o Sheshyar Habba Kadal; presently at H.No: 15, Kodgehalli Bangalore. 27/10/2006
130. Smt. Raini Jigri W/o Lt. Sh. Sohan Lal Raina, R/o Chawalgam, Kmr. 27/10/2006
131. Sh. Bushan Lal Koul S/o Lt. Sh. Govind Koul, R/o Anantnag, Kmr; presently at 662, Lane No: 5, D

Ext. Suryawanshi Nagar Muthi, Jammu. 28/10/2006

132. Sh. Raj Nath Bhan R/o Raghunath Mandir Habba Kadal Sgr; presently at Gurdaspur Punjab. 28/10/2006

133. Smt. Prabawati Koul, R/o Dantar Anantnag; presently at 128-C, Lower Shiv Nagar, Jammu. 28/10/2006

134. Smt. Veena Bhat W/o Sh. Bushan Lal Bhat, R/o Delina Baramulla Kmr; presently at H.No; 47, Lane No: 3, Bharat Nagar, Bantalab Jammu. 29/10/2006

135. Sh.Raj Nath Bhan S/o Lt. Prem Nath Bhan, R/o Bagh Jogi Lanker Rainawari Sgr; presently at GSI Migrant Camp TPT Nagar, Narwal Jammu. 29/10/2006

136. Smt. Asha Ji W/o Sh. Tej Krishen Bhat R/o Rafiabab Sopore, Kmr; presently at 660-C-2 Purkhoo Camp Phase-III, Jammu. 29/10/2006

137. Smt. Raj Rani Raina W/o Dr. JL Rania, R/o 25, Wazir Bagh Ext. Sgr; presently at Pravin Colony, Trikuta Nagar, Ext. Jammu. 30/10/2006

138. Smt. Arandati W/o Lt. Sh. Radha Krishen Bhat R/o Zewan; presentnly at 459 Sector-II Vinayak Nagar, Muthi, Jammu. 30/10/2006

139. Smt. Dhanwati Chogtu W/o Lt. Shamboo Nath Chogtu, R/o Zaindar Mohalla Sgr; presently at F-162/5, SBI Qtrs. Rajouri, Garden New Delhi. 30/10/2006

140. Sh. Roshan Lal Bhat R/o Zewan; presently at Muthi Jammu. 30/10/2006

141. Sh. Makhan Lal Ganjoo S/o Lt. Pt. Gobind Joo Ganju, R/o Raj Bagh Sgr; presently at Noida. 30/10/2006

142. Smt. Danwati Sadhu W/o Lt. Ragunath Sadhu, R/o Tangmarg; presently at H.No: 9, Lane No: 3 Roop Nagar Enclave Jammu. 31/10/2006

143. Sh. Sarwanand Pandita S/o Pt. Aftab Ram, R/o Lolab Kupwara; presently at Mishriwalla, Jammu. 31/10/2006

144. Sh. Kashi Nath Koul, R/o Ghat Jogi Lanker Rainawari Sgr; presently at 152A Indrapuram Gaziabad UP. 31/10/2006

END

EDITORIAL

Debate Must Start

As a politician Mufti Mohammad Sayeed has a penchant to court controversy. The PDP-founder president's patently secessionist speech in Srinagar on the eve of his departure for the UN has generated a debate in the country that is bound to have serious ramifications for India's future. Political pundits have been left thinking on whether Mufti subscribes to mainstream politics or clings on to the separatist ideology. How can mainstream politics and the secessionist variety be coterminous? Isn't that a situation of political blackmail at its best?

What the former Chief Minister said at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Stadium can have serious consequences for him and his party's political future. What compulsions such an experienced player that Mufti Sayeed is has in playing this stuff of dangerous politics? We don't know.

In his October 28 speech, which his daughter, also an MP of Indian Parliament, described as 'historic', Mufti Mohd. Sayeed made three points. One, the people of the state had been "caught between this side's gun and that side's gun i.e. playing equivocal between the gun that foments terrorism and the gun that seeks to protect people from the brutalities of terrorists. Why does Mufti Sayeed want to equate the gun, which has pushed out the valley's indigenous minority through a process of religious-cleansing; stamped out all forms political and social dissent by inflicting medieval brutalities---with a gun that seeks to restore security and freedom of speech to Kashmiris. Is it to build a state of psychological attrition where India is projected as a "colonial power" and its troops as "occupation forces". Nothing can be more demeaning than the practice of this pernicious politics. What is the hype about "de-militarization" all about? Why does not Mufti dispense with his NSGs first?

Two, Mufti claimed that New Delhi and Islamabad had realized that an "out of Box" solution would be possible. The PDP supremo added that the 'basis of permanent solution' can be created only by granting "self-rule". Then Mufti went on to elaborate 'self-rule'----where Kashmir would enjoy 16th century sovereignty when Yusuf Shah Chak was the ruler; have separate police and administrative services i.e. a situation of outright secession. No Kashmiri politician, mainstream or belonging to a regional outfit, has gone so far during the past six decades to champion this form of 'undiluted secessionism'. For far lesser charges Sheikh Abdullah—who had his own stature was dismissed from power in 1953 and put behind bars for 22 long years. Has Indian political class grown too thick-skinned to take challenges to national security so casually?

Lastly, Mufti Mohd. Sayeed demanded abrogation of Article 356 and went on to say that no Indian Govt. should have the powers to dismiss a democratically elected gov't. Politicians are fond of preaching sermons. One is tempted to ask why National Conference has been consistently indicting him for his role in 1984 when Farooq

Abdullah govt. was brought down through defections. Why KN Singh report fails to see the light of the day? It is the local politicians of Kashmir who have been murdering democracy time and again and then to rake up the secessionist bogey putting the blame on Centre.

Mufti Mohd. Sayeed has all along been advocating soft-pedaling of the secessionists. Umpteen times he has been pleading for liberal central compensation to the families of terrorists. A ludicrous situation where terrorists would remain free to wage war against the state and indulge in mayhem while the state takes care of their families! As Union Home Minister Mufti's role in handling the kidnapping of his daughter continues to remain under scanner. He as J&K Chief Minister refused to issue condemnation of blasting of bus by the terrorists, which left 40 BSF personnel dead. Visibly embarrassed Home Minister Shivraj Patil was constrained to speak, 'may be he (Mufti) has condemned but press has not reported'.

We are not concerned here with why State Congress continues to give muted response to the dangerous politics of its coalition partner. Obviously, it believes that holding on to power is far more important than pursuing principled politics.

What is germane to our concern here is -----Should politicians with separatist background or politicians championing secessionist politics be allowed to be part of political power game and should they be allowed to hold responsible positions in the Govt. If they are part of the political system what would be the ramifications for the national security? It is time nation initiates the debate. END

LETTERS

Which Gandhian?

Sir, A recent news report describes Nirmala Deshpande, who joined hands with Farooq Abdullah, Ghulam Nabi Azad Medha Padkar and Arundhati Roy to demand reprieve for Mohammed Afzal, as a Gandhian. There are Gandhians and Gandhians galore in this land, just as at there are Gandhis and Gandhis, both past and present. The report did not mention which sort of Gandhian Deshpande was or is. It is not known if she was Mahatma Gandhian during the latter's life-time. She was Indira-Gandhian and this may be the reason why she did not demand reprieve for Indira's assassins. She might have subsequently become a Rajiv-Gandhian and then a Sonia-Gandhian. As very few of the original Gandhians are now alive and such persons shun the limelight, it is advisable to be definitive about the type of Gandhian one writes about, lest people are misled into thinking that every Gandhian is the genuine product, just as Sonia Gandhi is mistaken by the innocents of this country as Mahatma Gandhi's kin.

--K.Sundaram,
Bangalore.

Adi Guru Shankaracharya and Kashmir

Sir,

After receiving much awaited issue of September of *Kashmir Sentinel* we have read it thoroughly. First of all, we would like to offer our obeisance and benediction to pontiff, Swami Amrita Nand Jee Maharaj, Shankaracharya of world famous Shardapeetham for his thought provoking presidential address at the martyrs day programme. The seer has won our admiration for referring Adi Guru Shankaracharya's historical Kashmir visit. The reference has doubled our curiosity for knowing all about Adi Guru's tour of the Valley and establishing Shardapeetham and Shankaracharya temple of Srinagar.

Actually we are trying our best to know all about Kashmir visit of Adi Guru since a long time. Now, when we have become regular readers of the *Kashmir Sentinel*, we pin our high hopes on writers of *Kashmir Sentinel* because they know historical facts of Kashmir. We do hope that some learned historian will pen the description of our long standing choice.

Other articles are also readable but conversation of Sati Sahni has influenced ourselves very much. Please publish more such conversations with others who lived in Kashmir and can benefit ourselves with their vast experiences.

—K.D. Tiwari

Barra-7, Kanpur-27

"Mattoo Murder Case

Sir,

Thanks to the media and public pressure, there is at least some hope of justice being done in the case. The sentencing of Santosh, son of police officer, will be significant. It will definitely send the signal that sons of politicians/goons/bureaucrats are not above law. The High Court verdict will surely help to restore people's faith and let us not forget that there are thousands cases of such nature that do not get similar publicity. All those who were involved for acquittal of Santosh in the trial court should be made responsible and accountable to the law. Only then will justice seem to have been done.

--Deepak Mittal
J.V. Narasimha Raju
C/o Sanskrita Enterprises
Contractors & Builders, 7th Lane, Fort Vijayawada (AP)
JKLF killed Pandits

Sir,

There could be nothing farther from the truth than what is stated about the JKLF in "Giving teeth to terrorism" (*Hindustan Times* dated 29th August 2006).

"Saddam Hussain did not have Osama bin Laden's ideology. He was secular. So was the JKLF in Kashmir which led the revolt in 1989".

One need not comment about S.Hussain's antecedents, but one thing is certain that he persecuted Shia "Kurds" which certainly was not secularism. As far as JKLF is concerned, less said the better. In fact it was the JKLF that started its 'Kashmir campaign' with the mass killings of Hindus in the Valley, whose number is legion, notable among them who come to mind instantly are:

Sh. Nil Kanth Ganjoo, retired District & Session Judge; Sh. Tika Lal Taploo, Advocate; Sh. Prem Nath Bhat; Sh. Sarwanand Kaul "Premi"; Sh. Lassa Kaul, Director DD Kashmir and many more.

That much for Noorani's brand of secularism. In fact, terrorism in the Valley by which ever outfit has been essentially religion based with the war cry of JKLF.

We want Pakistan in Kashmir alongwith Pandit ladies without the Pandits"—such among other factors led to mass exodus of Pandits. Indeed, had the JKLF any pretence to claim to being secular, its revolt should have first started in PoK instead of in the Valley.

—P.N. Kaul

Talab Tillo, Jammu.

Kashmiri Lady

Sir,

Nowadays name of a Kashmiri lady is very much talked about in the media. We are embarrassed as we had never imagined in our wildest dream that this Kashmiri lady will work for those persons who are facing trial in a TADA Court. Her services are unparalleled as these include lodging, food and legal aid too.

We are hopeful that all about this lady with history of her family will be focussed in your esteemed monthly for its readers.

—K.D. Tiwari

Kanpur.

"Remedial Measures"

Sir,

A sizeable number of people want Afzal, who has been sentenced to death, to be pardoned by the president. They can be classified in three groups i) those who want the death sentence to be abolished on principle ii) those who believe that executing Afzal will send wrong signals to the Muslims and the Kashmiris who are being pampered under Article 370 over the blood of Hindus iii) those who believe that Afzal did not get fair trial and was not given a chance to defend himself. In reply to first group, the proper forum for taking up the issue is the parliament where the matter can be decided. I ask the second group and Muslims of Kashmir and Farooq Abdullah Gh. Nabi Azad to consider what signal will be sent to the security personnel, the families of those who were killed or the family of Dhananjay who was hanged to death for lesser crime than what Afzal has done and the majority community if the president were to pardon Afzal. To the third group, I say Afzal was tried in three courts, including the Apex Court and all the three gave the same verdict. If they think that the courts have sentenced an innocent man, they should ask their MPs to take up the matter urgently to suitably rectify our judicial system before more innocent people are sent to gallows. By the way are all Kashmiri Muslims innocent and poor?

C.V.K. Moorthy

2/14 Hudson Circle,

Bangalore (K.A.) END

Encounter With Truth

Saakshatkaar sensitises Mumbaites to Kashmiri Pandits' genocide

By Sunil Bhat

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people know the hidden truth about religious cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus—Panun Kashmir organised its Photo Exhibition “*Sakshaatkar—An Encounter With Truth*” in Mumbai from 21st-23 Sept. 2006. This exhibition which during its earlier display in Delhi in May this year had generated lot of political heat was this time held in Ravindra Natya Mandir near Sidhi Vinayak Temple Mumbai. Even though the leading members of Congress/NCP coalition government of Maharashtra excused themselves from attending this exhibition due to obvious reasons--hundreds of intellectuals, professionals, members of corporate bodies, Mumbai police officers, journalists besides a good number of politicians visited the venue. The faces of many visitors turned grim while watching the photographs depicting mayhem against Kashmiri Hindus besides vandalism of their religious places and other properties.

This Panun Kashmir endeavour organised jointly with Kashmir Exhibition group Mumbai was inaugurated on 21st September 2006 by Sh. Manohar Joshi-Shiv Sena leader & Ex-Chief Minister of Maharashtra. Lauding the efforts of Panun Kashmir for organizing such event to unfold the barbaric face of Islamic zealots through these photographs—Mr. Joshi looked angry and painful. Maintaining that government take very firm line against terrorism, he cautioned against any move being carried through current peace process with Pakistan which would be seen as a compromise with National honour and interests. He painfully compared the atrocious state of affairs of Hindus of Bangladesh with Kashmiri Pandits. He told that at both the places the common factor behind unleashing terror on the peaceful Hindu societies has been the role of Jehadi concept of Islam. He invited Panun Kashmir leadership to Sena Bhavan and showed keen interest in organising this Exhibition at different places throughout Maharashtra.

Dr. Subramaniam Swami President Janta Party in his key note address was quite categorical in condemning the anomalous character of so-called secularists of this country. He charged these secularists of carrying a plagiarized tendency which certainly is more dangerous to the integration of our country than the explicit dangers from our professed enemies. He objectively made a case for preparing Hindus of India to understand the need of building a "Hinduist Political Power". He felt that Hindus in India have been cornered and kept under a manipulative siege. As such the majority will of the nation is being smouldered and those decisions are being thrust on the people which are purely taken on minority appeasing basis. Lauding the efforts of Panun Kashmir in bringing out an entirely hidden face of truth about the happenings on Hindus, their places of worship and properties through Shakshaatkar-he vowed to place his services at the requirement of this organisation whenever and wherever needed. He desired that this exhibition coupled with the Panun Kashmir's integrationist propagation should reach to as many corners of the country as may be possible.

Mr. Ajit Wadekar the famed cricketer of yester years was moved at the sight of seeing the photographs of the murder of men, women and children, loot and plunder of temples and other Hindu properties. Speaking in Marathi he exhorted the leadership of the country to come out of their shells and act decisively against the perpetrators of such ghastly scenes as depicted through Shakshaatkar.

Veteran Army Commander Retd. Lt. Gen. Koul felt aghast at the very sight of seeing the desecration of some of the temples he used to usually visit during his childhood in Srinagar or during the course of his postings in Kashmir. He appreciated the efforts of Panun Kashmir in bringing to light the "other most cruel side" of the violent happenings in Kashmir.

Chairman Panun Kashmir Dr. Ajay Chrungoo dwelt specifically on the contours of politics which Pakistan as an epicenter of Pan-Islamists is playing to destabilize India by constantly keeping Himalayas under military pressure. He contended that Himalayas and KPs have a connectivity—that is why KPs had to face the brunt of Pakistan's terror merchandise. On the community's rehabilitational front he placed on record his appreciation for Balasaheb Thackery who was instrumental in providing reservations to displaced Kashmiri Pandit students in various educational institutions throughout Maharashtra. He said that history will determine the utility of those reservations for Kashmiri Pandit students in the process of their march to living a stabilized life. He extended an open invitation from Panun Kashmir to all such pro-Hindu forces who contemplate to play crucial role in securing Indian nation and its ethos to join together against the forces whose main agenda is to destroy the Hindu civilization.

Mr. Udhav Thackery, Executive President of Shiv Sena alongwith his party MP Sanjay Raut visited the Exhibition on the second day. Mr Thackery was moved by the photographs to such a extent that he asked the Panun Kashmir leadership to evolve a joint mechanism with Sena top brass on how and at what wave lengths the two organisations can work together in effectively defeating the Jehadi onslaught. He underlined the need to bringout all such cruelties committed by Islamic Jihadis (as depicted through Shakshaatkar) to limelight so that it works on creating an overall public view against these perpetrators. He also requested Dr. Chrungoo to contribute regularly for Shiv Sena mouth piece *Samna* in order to strengthen the nationalistic point of view more arduously.

Mr. George Fernandes, former Defence Minister and NDA Convenor during the panel discussion thanked Panun Kashmir for its steadfastness in pursuing a radical nationalist political agenda. He said that very few organisations in India have a holistic view of the overall well being of the nation and counted Panun Kashmir as

indeed one among them.

During the stay in Mumbai, Panun Kashmir leadership had also some useful interactions with Santan Prabhat Chief.

Here are some views which had been recorded by some prominent people on the visitor's register kept at the venue of the exhibition. These views are reproduced here for the benefit for our readers:-

1) SUBRAMANYAM SWAMY: "A poignant reminder that Hindus of India have to unite to safeguard Hindu civilization. Defence of Pandits is the defence of our legacy"

2) AJIT WADEKAR: "Yes, every Hindu must unite to get our beautiful Kashmir out of the clutches of terrorists and the fanatic neighbours".

3) ASHOK WADEKAR: I promise from this day I will be part of this organisation to resolve the issue for KPs.

4) MAITHLI: Can't imagine such things happening in Kashmir. So much is hidden or swept under carpet by the authorities".

5) S. MURLIDHARN: "The Exhibition really brings out the atrocities systematically carried out in J&K but effectively suppressed".

6) UMANG SINGH CHAUHAN: I am stunned to see all this. Never knew that it is so bad. Please tell me how can I contribute for the betterment of the situation. I am providing my details. Please contact whenever you need any help.

7) P.T. KORDE: The photographs and literature in it are so gruesome that they boil your blood.

8) MINA SEVERA: "It is a very sad that we do not even know about these happenings. Why oh why oh why".

9) ARUN IRKE: As Saraswat I am highly worried. When shall I have an opportunity to pray at Sharda temple in Kishen Ganga/Madhumati Valley and recite Namaste Sharde Devi Kashmiri Puravasini....I pray during my lifetime I can make the pilgrimage.

10) RAJA DESAI: This is not an exhibition but it is a scratch on Indian Heart.

11) Dr. K. NARAIN: Very heart rendering and an eye opener. The Exhibition speaks of fearlessness and commitment of letting people know the situation as it exists.

12) G.S.V. CHAITANYA: Panun Kashmir has done a great job by risking their lives by travelling in Jehadi dominated regions. Also a very non-violent way to put across the message. India still remains vulnerable to such atrocities and genocides.

13) VEER KUMAR: All the photos in the Exhibition speak out in bitter truth which everybody knows but nobody realised how bitter it was.

14) M.R.M. PREM KUMAR: Photographs and pictures can at times depict more effectively than the written words on untold human tragedy.

15) ASHA SHIRKE: I feel that all Hindus should unite and help Kashmiri Hindus by all means. END

Supping with the president of 'Terroristan'!

By Sumer Kaul

"The more things change the more they are the same. This French saying fits recent Indian governments like a skullcap, in many policy matters but most conspicuously in the matter of dealing with their mischievous counterparts in Islamabad. The lingering expectation that the UPA government would at least in this regard make a clean and purposive departure from the 'NDA's namby-pamby flip-flop policy was refurbished after the terrorist strike in Mumbai. Barely two months later, this expectation stands squarely belied. It is back to flip-flop, and worse.

As with all terrorist strikes, intelligence and other knowledgeable quarters saw an unmistakable ISI-Jehadi signature on the Mumbai train blasts. The prime minister himself was quoted as saying: "We are certain that these terrorist modules are instigated, inspired and supported by elements across the border without which they cannot act with such devastating effect".

Dr Manmoham Singh also underlined the fact that the Musharraf regime had not honoured its January 2004 pledge to stamp out the terror outfits on its soil. Consequently, and very rightly, he called off the then impending secretary-level talks with Pakistan and unequivocally declared, rightly again, that it would not be possible to continue on the path of dialogue and CBMs in these circumstances. According to a public opinion survey soon after, 87 per cent of those polled fully endorsed the prime minister's stand.

So, what happened between then and Dr Singh's Latin American outing? What happened to make him retract on the question of talks and, amazingly, decide to set up a "joint mechanism" with Pakistan to combat terrorism? Imagine joining hands with the board of directors of a terror polytechnic to fight its murderous graduates! Is this

sheer naviety, or are there some unseen pressures at work?

Dr Singh has denied "any insinuation that whatever was done with Pakistan is at the behest of the US". One would dearly like to believe him, and would readily do so too if the prime minister explains the two astonishing assertions he made prior to meeting Musharraf in Havana. One, that the terrorist organizations in Pakistan "act autonomously" and two, that "Pakistan itself is a victim of terrorism"! The first is not a mere endorsement of Musharraf's ludicrous statement after the Mumbai massacre; it is a verbatim echo. And the second is something that must have at once surprised and delighted the wily General.

What on earth is the basis of Dr Singh's assertions? How can he disregard the mountain of irrefutable evidence about the involvement of Pakistan's military-mullah regime in anti-India terrorism? Just about the time Dr Singh made this statement, the Congress chief minister of Jammu & Kashmir, Ghulam Nabi Azad was declaiming in a TV interview about the escalating terrorist ingress from across the LoC. "There is ISI, there is the (Pakistan) army that abets, arms and supports militants to infiltrate. So I don't think this could be possible without the knowledge of Musharraf *sa'ab*", he said.

Nor does anyone else think so, that is, anyone who is not under extraneous compulsions to disown the reality or to say that Pakistan too is a "victim of terrorism"! Are the (age-old) Sunni-Shia clashes or attacks on churches or the angry protests of the Baluchis against their long-standing exploitation and the killing by Pakistan army of their most respected leader, Akbar Khan Bugti, examples of terrorism? Is sectarian enmity or regional discontent the same thing as the terrorist violence launched by Osama's footsoldiers and suicide bombers in the West and by Pakistan's military-mullah combine in India?

No matter how hard one may try, it is impossible to see any merit in Dr Singh's statement. Nor can one see what national interest is served by so mollycoddling Musharraf and company. Dr Singh can rest assured that his countrymen are not amused at all by this sudden and drastic change in India's position vis-a-vis Pakistan and its anti-India gameplan. And, pray, what message are we sending to the international community which we have been urging for so long to please take note of and do something about Pakistan's terrorism against India?!

Will Dr Singh's changed perspective change the ground reality? Forget it. The terrorist strikes will go on. If anything, these may well take on a new dimension following the Musharraf regime's recent "truce agreement" with the Al Qaida-Taliban militants in Pakistan's Waziristan province. Shorn of the spin Islamabad has put on the "truce", what it really means is that Al Qaida and the Taliban who already again virtually rule the roost in large chunks of Afghanistan will now have no constraints whatsoever to re-group and devise and launch their terror attacks in the region and further afield. In other words, escalating attacks against American and NATO forces in Afghanistan and, given the heightened bonding between Al Qaida and Pakistan's exclusively anti-India terrorist organizations, against India too.

The Bushmen have of course taken a benign view of the agreement initiated by their "great ally" (against the so-called global war against terrorism!) but American media, analysts and even politicians have gone hammer and tongs at Musharraf. They are openly blaming Musharraf's coddling of mullahs and giving a free hand to the notorious ISI for Pakistan's militaristic and jihadi actions. One US newspaper dubbed Pakistan as "terroristan" and an ABC telefilm portrayed it as a breeding ground for fundamentalism and terrorism. Many a newspaper titled their editorial comments on Pakistan's chicanery with the words: "With friends like these...!"

But in India, the worst victim of Pak-sponsored terrorism with a toll for more than 70,000 Indian lives, it is 'friends like these' that we are keen to embrace, repeatedly and despite such attempts proving disastrously counter-productive in the past. Why? Why do we go on trusting the wily General whose record of treachery and double-speak are no secret?

Dr Singh calls it "a leap of faith" and says he is optimistic that resumption of official talks and the proposed joint mechanism to monitor and combat terrorism augur well for peace and reconciliation in the subcontinent.

So, does the prime minister know something we don't? Has Musharraf undergone a change of heart? Is he now sincere about ending his regime's anti-India mischief? Will he, as an immediate earnest of his peace protestation hand over without any fuss and further delay that consummate crook called Dawood Ibrahim, the Kandahar skyjackers and the others in the list of 20 criminals and terrorists wanted in India? That will be the proverbial litmus test of both the General's sincerity and Dr Singh's wonderously renewed faith in him.

*(The author is a renowned Journalist. His columns on Kashmir and Regional Affairs are read with great respect). END

The mishandling in Kashmir

By M.D. Nalapat

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that gave the then Union Home Minister an opportunity to deliver a strategic victory to the Islamic militants. Today, it is daughter Mehbooba who keeps the tradition of her all-powerful family. Her wit and presence have been very helpful to Mufti Mohammad Syed, whose Wahabbi identity has never been concealed.

Manmohan Singh, his eyes fixed on responding to every whim of the Saudi-influenced Bush White House, is looking on mutely while the Mufti family talk of a “One Country Two Systems” policy that would free the Wahabbis from the restraints on their exclusivist agenda created by Indian sovereignty. What is meant by Mehbooba is actually a “Two State” solution that would replicate the 1947 inferno.

Thanks to the September 11, 2001 attack on US targets by “Al Qaeda”, Washington temporarily abandoned its policy of embracing Islamic terrorism. In the 1920s, the then British Empire backed the ultra-fanatic Wahabbi religion in the Mid-east, seeing in its illiterate and recidivist adherents an ideal counter to the Turks, never mind that Ankara then (and to an extent, even these days) backed the moderate Sufi Islam that made the religion such a beacon of learning for generations. In 1932, London succeeded in installing the puppet Al Saud dynasty, which from that time has done the economic bidding of first the UK and now the US. In the 1960s and beyond, the US and the UK backed the Wahabbis against Arab nationalists such as Nasser and the Baath. It was, therefore, no surprise that in the 1980s, secular Afghan nationalists eager to take up arms against the Soviet invaders were ignored in favour of the same bunch of thuggish, boorish fanatics that had received the backing of Washington for a half-century. In a sense, it was this policy of first the UK and later the US that spawned the upsurge of Wahabbi terrorism.

After losing her nerve soon after the 1974 nuclear test, Indira Gandhi refused to sanction the series of explosions needed to perfect a nuclear deterrent. She also moved closer towards Sheikh Abdullah, an individual who never hid his contempt for India. Abdullah was no Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, but while the second was abandoned by Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of “Free” India alternated between placing Abdullah under “House Arrest” in salubrious locations such as Ootacamund and Kodaikanal, and releasing him into control over the Kashmir administration every once in a while. Indira Gandhi quickly abandoned even the pretence of a stick, and made the Abdullah family the masters of Kashmir. Throughout the 1970s, religious fanatics from across the border began to settle in the parts still under New Delhi’s control, and a large number of madarsas that had Wahabbism rather than Islam at their core got established. By the time the Soviet troops retreated from Afghanistan in 1989 because of the inner rot within the Soviet structure caused under Gorbachev, the thousands of fanatics trained under these “schools” were ready with their Islamic terrorism. Since then, the state has bled and till this day, still does. Unlike in the case of the Punjab, where the gallant population, of that frontier state joined with the security forces to vanquish the ISI’s hirelings, in Kashmir, these same elements have the patronage of precisely those families who came into the state during the Sheikh Abdullah period in order to destroy its Indian identity. Particular mention can be made of the “Syeds”, who claim to be from Central Asia, and few of whom hide their Wahabbi inclinations. Nearly four years ago, after the Islamic terrorism in Kashmir was exhausted thanks to the bravery of the security forces and a section of the local population, one such individual was annointed the Chief Minister of the State by the Congress Party, encouraged—to everyone’s surprise—by the NDA. During the period when he has been at the core of decision-taking in Kashmir, Mufti Mohammad Syed has succeeded in pushing his state back to 1994, when the security forces were on the defensive.

Today, for the first time since the Islamic terrorists were placed on the defensive in 1996, the security forces are being instructed to avoid action against individuals who are close to key members of the present Kashmir administration. The links, some of the intensely personal nature, between members of the Mufti clan and those engaged in subversion against the very state that has enriched and empowered this family, are common knowledge in Kashmir, and go back to 1989, when Rubaiya disappeared in a manner that gave the then Union Home Minister an opportunity to deliver a strategic victory to the Islamic militants. Now, it is daughter Mehbooba who is keeping the tradition of her all-powerful family. Her wit and presence have been very helpful to Mufti Mohammad Syed, whose Wahabbi identity has never been concealed. Today, of course, support for the ideology represented by the Mufti’s family is not just a personal decision of a single indulgent individual but has continued as the official policy of the Congress Party. Since the Mufti family took direct charge of the state, over much of Sopore, the upper reaches of both Shopian and Pulwama and Takipora, Maidanpora and Darpura in Sopore have come under militants’ control, as they were from 1990 to 1996. As the Manmohan Singh government has adopted a “See, Hear and Speak (of) No Evil” towards Pakistan, this pernicious situation has been allowed to develop unhindered.

During the fightback against militants’ terror in Kashmir, several militants understood that the game plan of the militants was to create a Wahabbi state where the local Kashmiris would reduce to the status of second-class citizens. In 1995, they began to resist the invaders from across the Line of Control, helping the security forces substantially in the five years that followed. Since the Mufti family was annointed as the masters of Kashmir, most of these heroes have been murdered in cold blood. And because of the support provided to the Mufti family

by both the NDA as well as the UPA, even the National Conference has been forced to move closer to the Hurriyat-supporting PDP. Indeed, Islamabad can now have the satisfaction of seeing its once enemy mouth the same "Self Rule" slogan as do the PDP and the Hurriyat (that is, those who have the social skills needed to win over the Raisina Hill cocktail set). Chief Minister Azad has been abandoned by his own High Command, an example being the three bye-elections that took place in the state, in all of which the Congress Party surrendered its strongholds to the PDP, thus helping the latter to convince the many Wahabbis in Kashmir that the "national" party no longer had an interest in retaining a presence in the state. Fortunately for India, the PDP lost, thanks to its policy of open support for elements that seek to drive the state backwards towards the hell of the 1990s

Manmohan Singh, his eyes fixed on responding to every whim of the Saudi-influenced Bush White House, is looking on mutely while the Mufti family talk of a "One Country Two Systems" policy that would free the Wahabbis from the restraints on their exclusivist agenda created by Indian sovereignty. What is meant by Mehbooba is actually a "Two State" solution that would replicate the 1947 inferno. If certain key advisers to the Congress leadership have their way, "Chenab Solution" will come, which would give Pakistan what it actually wants in Kashmir, control over the water resources that originate within the state. It is these advisers who prevented the helpless Congress Chief Minister of Kashmir from ensuring a split in the PDP, when the secular Ghulam Hassan Mir attempted to revolt against the domination of the Mufti family over the PDP. Kashmir is going back to 1994. How many more lives of secular Kashmiris and the security forces will it take to bring the state back to health? More importantly, will UPA ever be held to account for this crime against the state?

*(The writer is a former editor of the Mathrubhumi and Times of India.) END

VIEW POINT

Hurriyat's misleading propaganda

By A.N. Bhardwaj

Voicing grave concern over the conduct of the anti-national elements on the issue of human rights violations being allegedly committed by the Indian forces on the Pak-supporting terrorists and the custodial deaths etc., with false remarks, are based totally on flimsy grounds. Sh AB Bharadwaj, President International Human Rights Protection Council, said that the unfounded incidents are flared up to mislead the international community simply to defame the image of the Indian Government and its forces.

In fact, the Indian forces have best record in the world and are known to be most disciplined.

On the other, the Pak-supported lobbies and proxies should peep into Pakistan and PoK where abuses of human rights are committed frequently. There, people have no democratic rights and no constitutional status. They are treated as slaves and no opportunity is provided to express their grievances. They are treated as second class citizens. There sectarian clash are too glaring and they attack and kill one another brutally. The Human Rights Commission Pakistan is also admonished for remaining silent spectator to the rise in religious extremist resulted cold-blooded killings.

These so-called guardians of human rights should know the facts before raising finger against other. The Pak-army committed innumerable massacres in eartstwhile East Pakistan. They raped hundreds of women and molested them for their sexual hunger. There army used heavy artillery and poisonous gas to liquidate own people. The Balochis are crushed with heavy hands. In northern areas i.e. Gilgit and Baltistan etc., the people are treated as slaves. They have no constitutional status. The JKLF leaders highlighted their atrocities and incidents of human rights violations committed by Pakistan in the UN session held in Geneva. They further accused Hurriyat and other separatist allies for not raising voice against Pakistan to refrain it from committing atrocities on the people of the PoK and northern areas. They admonished the different attitude of Kashmiri leadership of their double standard. END

Kashmir Dispute The Myth-II

By Dr. M.K. Teng

of the many distortions of the history of the transfer of power in India, which form a part of the Kashmir dispute, the most conspicuous is the distortion of the historical facts of the boundary demarcation between the Dominion of India and Pakistan in the province of the Punjab. After the announcement of the partition plan on 3 June, 1947, a Boundary Commission was constituted by the British to demarcate the boundary between the Muslim majority zones and the Hindu-Sikh majority zones in the two provinces of Bengal and the Punjab. The Boundary Commission for the demarcation of the Muslim majority zone in the Punjab was constituted of four Boundary Commissioners, two of them representing the Muslims and two representing Hindus and the Sikhs. Justice Din Mohammad and Justice Mohammad Munir

represented the Muslims and Justice Mehar Chand Mahajan and Justice Teja Singh represented the Hindus and the Sikhs respectively. A British lawyer of great repute, Sir Cyril Radcliff was appointed the Chairman of the Commission. Sir Radcliff presided over the Boundary Commission appointed for the demarcation of the boundary in the province of Bengal as well.

The Boundary Commission was charged with the responsibility of demarcating the Muslim majority region of the Punjab from the Hindu-Sikh majority region of the province on the basis of the population and other factors, which were considered to be relevant to the division of the province. Justice Mohammad Munir and Justice Din Mohammad refused to agree upon the criteria to specifically identify the factors other than population ratios. The Muslim Commissioners insisted upon strict adherence to the population proportions as the basis of the division of the province.

Mehar Chand Mahajan and Teja Singh pleaded for a balanced interpretation of the terms of reference of the Boundary Commission and emphasised the need to bring about harmonization between population proportions and the "other factors", specified in the terms of reference. They felt that the division of the province of the Punjab was bound to affect the lives of millions of people, belonging to various communities living in the province as well as the future of the two Dominions, India and Pakistan. The Commissioners pointed out to the Commission that the population of the Hindus and Sikhs was unevenly distributed over the province of the Punjab. They pointed out that larger sections of the Hindu and Sikh population were concentrated in relatively smaller region of the East Punjab and the imbalance would be reflected in demarcation of Hindu and Sikh majority regions from the Muslim majority regions of the West Punjab. They expressed the fears that the territorial division of the Punjab on the basis of population would earmark a smaller part of the East Punjab, to the Hindu and Sikh Community which would not commensurate with their population in the province. The Hindus and the Sikhs, Mahajan and Teja Singh pointed out to the Commission formed 45 percent of the population of the province and the territorial division of the province on the basis of the population ratios would leave them with less than 30 percent of the territory of the Punjab.

Mahajan and Teja Singh pointed out to the commission that fair distribution of river waters, irrigation headworks and canal system and cultural and religious centres could not be left out of its consideration in the delimitation of the Muslim majority and the Hindu and Sikh majority regions of the province. They emphasized the necessity of keeping in view the geographical contiguity of the demarcated regions, the communications and the viability of the borders of the two Dominions of India and Pakistan. They told the Commission that in the demarcation of the borders between the West Punjab and the East Punjab balance would have to be achieved to ensure a fair and equitable division of the territories of the province between the Muslim community and the Hindu and the Sikh communities.

The most controversial and bitterly contested part of the demarcation for the borders was the division of the Doab, comprising the districts of the Lahore Division. Of the four districts of Lahore Division, the District of Amritsar was a Hindu-Sikh majority district and the district of Gurdaspur was a Muslim majority district with the Muslims having a nominal majority of 0.8 percent. Both Din Mohammad and Mohammad Munir insisted upon the inclusion of the entire Lahore Division in the West Punjab. The Muslim Commissioners were men of great ability and legal acumen and had the advantage of representing the majority community of the Punjab. They knew that the inclusion of the Lahore Division in the West Punjab would be of crucial importance to the future of Pakistan. The inclusion of the Lahore Division in the West Pakistan would ensure the Muslim homeland a larger share of water resources, irrigation headworks and the canal system of the Punjab. It would also close the only communication line; the Jammu-Madhopur fair weather road, which ran between the Jammu and Kashmir State and the Dominion of India. The Muslim League leaders were keen to isolate Jammu and Kashmir and build pressure on the ruler of the State to compel him to come to terms with Pakistan. Jammu and Kashmir was not wholly isolated from India and had a contiguous frontier with Kangra and the Punjab Hill States, which had acceded to India. The State Government could construct an alternative communication route to connect the State with India. The construction of an alternative road between the State and the Dominion of India would, however, be an arduous task and take a long time, thus exposing the State to more hardship. Logistically also the construction of an alternative road would pose many problems. The borders between the State and the Indian Union running east of the Pathankot tehsil in Gurdaspur district, through which the Jammu-Madhopur road run, were mountainous and rugged and largely snowbound. The closure of the Jammu-Sialkot road and railway line and the Jhelum Valley road, which linked Srinagar with Rawalpindi had been closed by Pakistan and there was little prospect of their being thrown open for transport after the State joined India. By the time, the Boundary Commission begun its work, Pakistan was left with little doubt about the disinclination for the ruler of the State Maharaja Hari Singh to accede to that country.

Mahajan and Teja Singh pleaded for the inclusion of the Division of Lahore in the East Punjab. The two Commissioners raised fundamental issues with unparalleled eloquence in respect of their claim, which Sir Cyril Radcliffe could not overlook altogether. The issues they raised, included:

- i) the distribution of water resources between the East and West Punjab, the location of the irrigation

headworks and the canal system;

ii) the continuation of the communication lines in the East Punjab of which the Lahore Division formed Centre;

iii) the demarcation of a viable and defensible border of the India in the Punjab;

iv) the interests of the Sikh Community which had its largest assets in the West Punjab and its main religious and cultural centres in the Division of Lahore;

v) the Indian interest in the road-link between Jammu and Madhopur, arising out of its proximity to Jammu and Kashmir State for the security of that state as well as its future relations with the Indian Dominion.

Both Mahajan and Teja Singh avoided the heavily value-laden discourse of the Congress leaders, in their presentation to the Commission. They marshalled up concrete facts relevant to the demarcation of boundary in the Punjab and elucidated in detail the consequences—geographic, economic, political and strategic, the division of the province was bound to lead to and their impact on the future of the Hindus and Sikhs in the Punjab. Sir Radcliffe was a man of independent outlook, sent down from his country to draw the boundaries of the new Muslim State of Pakistan, which the British had actively connived in creating. Sir Radcliffe knew little of the cultural configuration of the Punjab, its economic organisation and its history. Not only the Punjab, Sir Radcliffe knew much less of the history and culture and economic and political organisation of Bengal, the other Indian province he was commissioned to divide between the two communities, Hindus and Muslims, on the basis of population proportions.

Mahajan and Teja Singh were genuinely fearful of the future of their communities in the Punjab. The history of the Punjab had been shaped by Hindus and the Sikhs. The Sikhs established a powerful Kingdom in the Punjab, the borders of which extended from Afghanistan to the eastern fringes of Tibet. The Sikh state integrated the Himalayas into the northern frontier of India. The Himalayas, Sanskritised by the Hindus of Kashmir, formed the civilisational frontier of India. The establishment of the Sikh power put an end to the long history of the invasion of India from the north. The division of Punjab was bound to have serious effect on the future of the Sikh community. The Punjab was considered by the Sikhs to be their homeland. The Sikh places of pilgrimage were located in the eastern part of the Punjab, mainly the Division of Lahore. The responsibility of apprising the Boundary Commission of the sociology of the Sikh religion and its moorings in the Hindu civilisation of India, fell upon the Hindu and Sikh Commissioners. Teja Singh, ravaged by the anti-Hindu riots in the Punjab, exhibited great courage and forbearance, in defending the cause of his community.

The Muslim League carried on a strident campaign to build pressure on the Commission to demarcate the boundary between the east and the West Punjab on the basis of the population proportions. The British Governors of the Punjab and the North-East Frontier province along with the British officials posted in the two provinces acted in tandem to influence the Commission.

The Boundary Commission was entrusted with the historic task, of the demarcation of the Indian frontier in the north. Jammu and Kashmir formed the central spur of the warm Himalayan uplands and the new configuration of power created by the emergence of the Muslim state of Pakistan, was bound to effect the security of the Himalayas. There is no evidence to show that the Indian leaders realised the importance of the crucial changes, the emergence of Pakistan, would bring about in the structure of power-relations along northern frontier of India.

The Hindu and Sikh leaders of the Punjab evinced serious interest in the boundary demarcation. Both Mahajan and Teja Singh kept themselves in close touch with the Hindu and Sikh leaders of the Punjab. Among them were Sir Shadi Lal and Bakshi Tek Chand. Both Sir Shadi Lal and Tek Chand were in the confidence of Maharaja Hari Singh. The Indian leaders had warbled notions about the northern frontier of India. They were carried away by the fraternal regard, the Asian conference held in Delhi in 1946, symbolised. The Indian leaders viewed the solidarity of the Asian people and the emergence of the Asian nation from colonial dominance as basis for coexistence and cooperation among the Asian people. Gandhi disclaimed national frontiers. He claimed commitment to vaguely conceived concept of anarchism which formed a part of the intellectual tradition of the early twentieth century.

They had accepted partition of India, but they refused to recognise its political implications. They were unable to comprehend the significance of the demarcation of the boundary between India and Pakistan in the Punjab. Their inability to link the boundary demarcation in the Punjab with the security of the Northern Frontier of India exposed Jammu and Kashmir and the entire Indian frontier, stretching to its east, to foreign aggression.

--(To be continued)

Note: The essays in this series are based on documentary sources and records in the Archives of India and the Archives of Jammu and Kashmir State; Records of the Boundary Commission; States Peoples Conference Papers in Nehru Memorial Museum, New Delhi; contemporary Newspaper Files and Interviews.

*(The author was Head of the Political Science Department, University of Kashmir. His book 'Article 370 and its Significance' is considered to be a classic on the subject.) END

Cry, the Beloved Valley
Down memory lane in the paradise that was

By Sumer Kaul

As I see live pictures on
TV of yet another dance
of death in Srinagar, my mind goes down memory lane, for the nth time. But on this balmy October morning in Delhi, the usually bitter-sweet nostalgia about my hometown is particularly bitter, for it was in this very month that a terrible blight fell over the beautiful Valley.

It seems aeons ago, those childhood years when Kashmir was a paradise, not a playground of strife and violence. When pristine water, not blood, flowed down the serene Vitasta. When Kashmiris were Kashmiris, not Muslims and Hindus, and visitors were tourists, not terrorists. Nor plundering invaders, like the heavily-armed hordes that descended on the Valley 59 years ago...

October 1947 was unusually bright and sunny for Kashmir. This is the time when chrysanthemums stand in full bloom and the Virginia Creeper blushes every shade of red. The mountain Valley, a garden of myriad flowers in summer, begins now to be dominated by the mellow sights of autumn. Leaves of the majestic Chinar, already golden, turn to flaming red. The discerning tourist finds this the best and most tranquil of the seasons in Kashmir.

In the upper reaches of the Valley, there is already a sting in the morning air. The villagers' thoughts are all of harvest and the difficult winter months ahead. They pray for a mild winter even as they sing and dance in the rice paddies. Elderly women dip their feet in the rivulets to know if it has snowed in the far away hills. If the water bites, it is sure to be a bad winter.

But the autumn of 1947 was full of unusual forebodings. Even as a small boy I could sense the uneasiness in the air, and realise dimly that a new and vague fear had gripped people all around me. For ten weeks, the state of Kashmir had lived from day to day precariously between its two big and mutually hostile neighbours, the newly independent India and the newly created Pakistan. Suddenly the situation came to a head. In one short week a rapid sequence of events turned the Kashmiris' uncertainty into panic.

On October 22 news was received in Srinagar that armed marauders from Pakistan had descended upon the sleepy border town of Domel. Maharaja Hari Singh, the Dogra ruler of the state, despatched his tiny army to meet the invader. The following day his field commander radioed a message of total disaster. Nothing stood now between the capital city and the advancing hordes except 50 miles of straight road.

Intense fear seized the 2,50,000 inhabitants of Srinagar as incoming refugees reported harrowing tales of looting, arson, vandalism, brutality, rape and murder. The Maharaja fled to Jammu, 200 miles away. The royal convoy used the last drop of petrol available in the city. Within hours after the Maharaja's escape became known, the civil administration collapsed. Srinagar was now on its own, a marooned island.

The situation was such that no invader would have needed to invade the capital. He could have simply walked in, and assumed control. But the Pakistani tribesmen, lured by the promise of plunder, were wasting precious time in the small town of Baramulla, 34 miles away. They even removed brass electrical fixtures in the belief fostered by their Pakistan Army collaborators that any yellow metal in the promised land would have to be of gold.

This gave Srinagar the chance to recover from the first shock. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, recently freed from jail, towered over the scene like a colossus. This bear of a man, affectionately called Lion of Kashmir, took instant command of the situation and threw himself and the party, the National Conference, into the heroic task of mass organisation.

Abdullah gave the people slogans that resounded throughout the city and, like a magic charm almost, dispersed the heavy mood of fear and panic:

"Hindu-Muslim-Sikh Itehad
Naya Kashmir Zindabad"
(Long live Hindu-Muslim-Sikh unity/Long live New Kashmir)
"Hamla aawar Khabardar
Hum Kashmiri Hain Tayyar"
(Aggressor, take heed, watch out/We Kashmiris are ready to fight).

The Polo Ground for 100 years an exclusive playground of royalty, became the training ground for a militia force. While adults took over the essential services, schoolboys (I was one) were organized into platoons and entrusted with the important task of marching up and down the streets, shouting cheerful slogans of ultimate victory.

The entire activity was in fact aimed at preventing total demoralization. Militarily it had no value. On the

night of October 26, the invaders had come to positions within five miles of the city. No slogans could now arrest the intense panic in Srinagar. Only children slept that night. Never was a dawn in the Valley dreaded so much.

And then it happened.

On the morning of October 27 a drone was heard in the sky, and a plane appeared through the autumn mist. Then a second, and then a third. Indian troops had arrived.

Within literally minutes of landing they plunged into battle with the invaders on the periphery of the airport itself. Many lives were lost in the fierce fighting, including that of Major Som Nath Sharma, who became the first to win the Param Vir Chakra, independent India's highest gallantry award. This initial bunch of heroic soldiers routed the invaders and forced them to retreat helter-skelter. Srinagar was saved.

"What followed can only be described as scenes of hysterical relief and joy. As Sheikh Abdullah was to recall later:

"When for the first time the people of Srinagar saw the incoming planes from India and saw the tanks of the Indian Army passing through the streets, their anguish was turned into joy. The people, Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, heaved a sigh of relief, knowing that their honour and dignity would not be safe".

There was every reason to rejoice, then and in the subsequent week and months. Not only had the gallant Indian Army delivered Srinagar from the immediate threat, in the ensuing fully fledged India-Pakistan war it was decisively pushing the invaders back to where they had come from. And it would most certainly have cleared the state of the last Pakistani soldier but for the Indian government's Mountbatten-dictated decision (the first of an unending procession of blunders to date) to go to the United Nations with a complaint against the Pakistani invasion.

Instead of asking Pakistan to cease and vacate, the UN Security Council which was dominated then as it is today by double-dealing imperialist powers, called for a cease-fire which came into effect on Jan 1, 1949. Although a considerable area of the state was still under the occupation of the Pakistan army (as it has been ever since), the essentially peaceable people of Kashmir heartily welcomed the end of fighting and bloodshed.

Little did they imagine that the end of the war spelt the beginning of a problem that would hang over their heads for half a century, a problem that would not only cause three more India-Pakistan wars but spur the rulers in Pakistan to design and unleash a terror gameplan that has injected religious fundamentalism in the state, caused untold social strife and mass exodus of the Pandits, the original inhabitants of Kashmir, and taken a toll of 70,000 lives, and still rising.

Cry, the Beloved Valley. end

NEWS

Haryana Govt: introduces cash assistance scheme

KS Correspondent

AMBALA: In yet another welfare measure, Haryana government has decided to give financial assistance to the Kashmiri Pandit families living in the state. The assistance will be provided by the Social Welfare Deptt. of the state on the analogy of other pension schemes provided by the department.

In the initial phase an amount of Rs 1000 monthly will be provided to a family and 39 such families have been identified. A family will be provided an assistance of Rs 15000 at the time of marriage of a daughter. Under the scheme, sanction has been accorded to the drawal of Rs 2,34,000 under plan scheme from the treasuries for disbursement among the families for the period April to September, 2006.

Welcoming the decision, Chief Area Coordinator Haryana, Mr JL Koul hoped that the government will introduce more welfare measures for the exiled community.

He said that it was the outcome of relentless efforts of organisation that Haryana government made reservation for Kashmir Migrants in professional and other educational institutions followed by the cash assistance scheme for them. Mr Koul appealed to the Chief Minister of Haryana to reserve some seats for the exiled community in medical colleges also. end

Two Round Table Conferences-Impressions-III

By Dr. Ajay Chrungoo

I t will be dishonest if I fail to mention that the participants of the 2nd Round

Table Conference were provided with notepads and pencils. But only towards the end of the second and penultimate day. Perhaps somebody in the state government having some sensitivity about the seriousness of the entire exercise must have intervened and extended the courtesy to the delegates.

The presentations by the leadership of Kashmiri Muslims in the two round table conferences brought out a glaring feature. In the IInd Round Table Conference these leaders tried to moderate the stridency they had shown in the Ist Round Table Conference. National Conference leaders tried to build the emphasis implicitly as well as explicitly on making the LoC as a dividing line between the Indian and Pakistani domains. Omar Abdullah in his presentation made an interesting observation. He said that the massive turnover of voters in the by-elections for the State assembly was because terrorist rank and file wanted it to be so and not because of any other reason. He said that he was surprised that an active terrorist module, which was hiding in a house quite near to the place where he had addressed the election rally, did not choose to attack him. He asked the GoI to analyse properly the reasons for such behaviour of terrorist rank and file. He also asked Government of India to analyse properly as to why those elements whom GoI patronises with money and influence always choose to oppose the GoI line in the Kashmir valley. Muzaffar Beg while elucidating the concept of self-rule put an olive branch to Govt. of India when he conceded that in the matters involving national security Centre should have the right to dismiss the state government.

But one thing was very clear Pervez Musharraf after floating the balloon of 'self rule' had openly unleashed a process of convergence between the political lines of Pakistan, National Conference, PDP and the Hurriyat. This convergence reflects the inability of the local Muslim leadership to give up Muslim identity politics in favour of secularism. It also depicts that Pakistan is pursuing a deft strategy to unhinge India. The guiding principle of this approach is to patronise any formula which further fortifies Muslim Identity Politics in Jammu and Kashmir, create cracks in the secular vision of India and always keep Pakistan closer to US approach on Kashmir.

The tactical moderation in the Muslim stance was perhaps due to two reasons. One the rising crescendo of Jihadi violence in the state and the boycott of the IInd Round Table Conference by the separatist leaders. And second to the intervention made by Panun Kashmir in the IInd Round Table Conference. The issues with regard to the historical and constitutional dimensions of the so-called 'Kashmir dispute' were summed up by this author in his presentation in the 2nd Round Table Conference as:-

"1) the Accession of J&K State to India was not conditional. Therefore, a settlement which reopens the question of finality of accession would be against the national interests.

2) the constituent Assembly of the J&K state was not a sovereign body and did not exercise any plenary powers. It derived its powers from the state of India, which was created by the transfer of power in India by the British, the lapse of paramountcy and the instrument of Accession executed by Maharaja Hari Singh to accomplish the accession of state of India.

3) the Constitution of India is not constitutive of the State of India but is only declaratory of the state of India...The Indian state was already created when the constitution was drafted.

4) the constitutional myth being assiduously propagated by certain quarters--that the J&K state signed only the Instrument of Accession and not the Instrument of Merger, has no basis. While the Instrument of Accession was mandatory for all states, the Instrument of Merger was only meant for smaller principality-level states to join bigger states and thus did not apply to the state of J&K.

5) that the powers vested in the President of India in respect of the operations of the provisions of India to J&K, as envisaged by Article 370, can only be exercised by the President to widen the area of applicability of the Constitution of India to J&K and not to roll back the provisions extended from time to time."

Without making use of any adjectives to describe the reaction of Kashmiri Muslim leaders as well as the representatives of Govt. of India to this presentation, it can be said with humility all of them were provoked to serious introspection. Panun Kashmir represented by this author raised some basic issues. 'A solution based on separate political organisation for J&K on the basis of its Muslim majority character would lead to second partition of India and will have consequences more dangerous than the partition of 1947 itself...the link between communalism and subversion needs to be unravelled and addressed to smash the local support structures of subversion. In fact, local communalism has been utilizing democratic space and even developmental initiatives to further entrench itself...Never before in Kashmir's history has its civil society been so mute to the assaults by non-state actors on freedom of speech and right to dissent, criminalisation of society, communalisation leading to decimation of the principle of pluralistic co-existence etc. Victims do not even name the identified killers. How can a civil society justify itself when it remains indifferent to the very values that make up the civil society...Secularism and religious separatism are irreconcilable positions. In the same country you cannot have secular and theocratic dispensations at the same time in different parts. We believe that the description of Kashmir as a dispute is the very negation of Indian secularism."

It can also be said with some authenticity that very rarely have such issues been raised before the leadership of the country and the state in a platform like the IInd Round Table Conference on the Kashmir issue. Govt. of India and the political establishment have time and again tried to trivialise the issues which underline the discourse on Kashmir.

This author took the opportunity of the conference to declare unambiguously that, "...the creation of Panun Kashmir--an area where there would be unfettered free and full flow of secular Indian Constitution, would

provide an alternate system for Kashmiris who would like to live in a secular dispensation and outside the instrumentality of Article 370. The vision of Panun Kashmir was thus elucidated with confidence to elicit respect in the leadership of the country and provoke a new thinking on Kashmir.

This concluding part on the impressions of the author about the IInd Round Table Conference does not contain such references which were brought to the notice of the participants of IInd Round Table Conference, like the genocidal attrition of Kashmiri Hindus, communalisation of Muslim social milieu in the state and the destruction of the civil society of Kashmir. This was only done for the reason to elucidate the starkly political aspects of the deliberations. It would be however out of place if the author does not place on record his remarks at the conclusion, "Sir, just before the IInd World War, Hitler laid the diplomatic basis for snatching Czechoslovakia after forcing Chamberlain, the PM of Great Britain to accept German position. When Chamberlain declared to the British Parliament his understanding with Hitler, one of the ministers of the ill-fated country was present in UK that time. He remarked after listening to the speech that--If you have sacrificed my nation to preserve the peace of the world I will be the first to applaud you. But if not, gentlemen, God help your souls..... Sir when my community was pushed out of Valley, there were many who thought that by hushing up the issue they will save India and its secularism . Now the jihadist violence has spilled over into rest of India. My community prays for India. Let our nation be spared of the colossal human tragedies which the acts of omission and commission of leaders unleash on the peace loving people, as happened during the fateful events leading to IInd World War."

--Concluded

*(The author heads Panun Kashmir) END

Self-recognition Dominates Kashmir Philosophy

This is the text for Paper read by Swami Amritanand Ji, Sankarcharya of Shardapeeth Kashmir at a seminar on Kashmir Shaivism organised to commemorate the birth centenary of Swami Lakshman Ji

on the sacred occasion of the birth centenary of

Ishwarswarup Lakshman Ji Maharaja (b. Vaishakh Krishna Dwadashi, 2007) we, on behalf of Kashmir based Shardapeeth, heartily welcome the learned audience to a seminar on various aspects of Kashmir Shaivism and earnestly pray to the mother Sharda to invest you all with her Shaktipat (grace) for your higher ascension. As corroborated by history of Kashmir, Lord Krishna visited the sacred land of Kashmir to enthrone the child-bearing widow of King Damodar and proclaimed resonantly that Kashmir is the incarnation of goddess Parvati, the spouse of Shiva (Kashmira Parvati). As is well-known Kashmir has been a renowned seat of Sanskrit learning and literature and has made unparalleled contributions to the mosaic of Indian culture and civilization. No other part of the country can claim such a role for itself. But, during the post-Sankara period in India a sort of vacuum developed in the realms of philosophical thought processes and the acharyas (doctors) from Kashmir rose to the occasion to fill the vacuum with their life-affirming philosophical thesis of Shaiva non-dualism.

As delineated in the Ishvasya Upanishad those in pursuit of '*avidya*' are sure to get immersed in the recesses of darkness. Inferior to them are those who are absorbed in the acquisition of so-called knowledge. The upanishadic *mantra, andham tamaha pravishanti*—provides a comparison between '*Avidya*' and '*Vidya*'. '*Avidya*' is certainly fatal, but '*Vidya*' is more fatal if it is wayward and direction-less. The six systems of our philosophy evolved a world view which by and large led '*vidya*' away from the objectivity of life and world and what goes to the credit of Kashmiri scholars is that they after a careful reevaluation of the entire corpus of philosophical thought developed a new thought system that lent or new approach to the philosophical issues, thus putting the entire genre of Indian thought on a new road of continuity and development. Parallel to the Indian culture with its vedic roots was the *tantric* world-view that had evolved its own meditative and yogic praxes. Its approach in essence was transcending theological frames and we believe that the *Tantric* approach in modern-day history of our country was responsible for our all-embracing secularism which is now our national identity and signature. The genesis and ultimate flowering of Kashmir philosophy of unblemished non-dualism had its own motivations and scholars world-wide have evinced keen interest to study it with thoroughness.

The Kashmir philosophy contains a new appraisal of man, world and God where they are closely knit together like the beads in a string, one supplementing the other. Shiva is held as absolutely free; Shakti is the 'heart' of Shiva and Jiva is the blossoming forth of Shakti. But, Shiva as the Central subject of this thought-process holds the universe of multiplicity in a close bond like the thread running through the beads of a necklace. Such a thought heralded a new declaration of a minute understanding of human mind and psychology and final self-recognition as a redemptive process.

In the context of Sankara Vedanta, Kashmir Shaiva philosophy makes it explicit that Sankara's illusionist

theory makes Brahman inactive and insensate as it has no freedom in absolute to manifest the whole creation as Paramshiva has and such, salience of the philosophy makes it distinctive from Sankara Vedanta. Another point of departure is that it gives no acceptance to the discrimination based on caste and gender. In contrast to Vedanta, Kashmir Shaivism is egalitarian as it does not deny any caste initiation and participation in matters spiritual. It rejects status, caste station, age and gender as entitlement factors and components for attainment of social and spiritual gains.

The Kashmir philosophy has been frequently presented as '*Pratibhigya Shastra*' or '*Pratibhigya Darshan*'. It will never be inept to emphasise that it holds *Pratibhigya* as liberation which through its meditative praxes awakens the potential in a seeker of limited potentialities to recognize his inherent position as Shiva, shorn of all imperfections in doing and knowing and willing. Prior to the state of self-cognition a limited Jiva is not aware of his perfections and that is what is known as 'imperfect knowledge' in the Shaiva parlance. To cognise one's all-pervasiveness is recognition which in the system is coded as self-realisation. Liberation is not an attainment of an un-reachable destination. It signifies recognition of one's original and real position of being Shiva which till attainment of such a state of awareness remains hidden under layers of 'limited knowledge'.

Self-recognition is the liberation and unlike other systems of thought Kashmir philosophy does not prescribe elaborate methodologies. The exercise and utility of which it considers nearly useless. If compared with other systems, the non-dual philosophy of Kashmir is broad-minded and catholic and does not put a seeker to a fare of 'dos and dont's' and its main thrust is to know the world as an emanation of Shiva. Rejecting the caste-based entitlement theory it grants entitlement to any seeker keen to crossover the sea of world for ultimate liberation.

The supreme purpose of Indian philosophy is 'know thyself-atmanam *Videhi*' for which all branches of philosophy do make a mention of '*Pratibhigya*' in one way or the other. Their methodologies are different but destination is the same. In Kashmir *Shaivism* the motivational force is the Agamic thought determining its destination and methodologies, not the Nigamic approach and premise. In Agamic approach the method and destination, both are recognition-oriented and Kashmir non-dual philosophy is a part of Agamic ideology with recognition as its teleology. Self-recognition dominates Kashmir philosophy as its main theme while in other systems its mention is a mere formality to stabilize a seeker in his psycho-physical frame. In Vedanta we find delineation of self-recognition in an indirect manner. In fact, 'I am Brahman's', 'This atma is Brahman', '*Thous Art That*', 'Be Brahman to attain Brahmanhood' and 'This whole universe is Brahman' do create an impeccable identity between Brahman and Jiva and an identity founded on recognition. There is not much of variation between recognition in Shaivism of Kashmir and recognition as delineated in Vedanta. In the former recognition is comprehensively all-inclusive accepting everything as one's own expansion or manifestation and in the latter recognition is the outcome of rejection of everything what can be called negationist approach. '*Pratibhigya*' in essence is awareness of attributes of 'Chita' and 'Anand', Chidanand, but in Vedanta it is insensate as Brahman is bereft of self-sciring potency.

This assembly of the learned can pay its best tributes to Lakshman Ji Maharaja as a great son of the soil if we all earnestly endeavour to mobilise the scattered Indian society on the unity plank of Kashmir Shaivite model. With the success of our honest efforts Kashmir as the crown of India, will get ushered into a new phase of history.

*(Translated from original Hindi by Prof. M.L. Koul) END

Sharda Sandesh released

KS Correspondent

FARIDABAD, Nov 4: The first issue of "*Sharda Sandesh*" was release here today at a glittering function held at SRI SHARIKA CHAKRESHWARI, HARI PARBAT". The journal, a quarterly Bilingual News letter" was released by Padamshri JN Koul and HH Shankaracharya of Shardapeeth Kashmir Swami Amritanand Dev Ji graced the occasion. In his message, Sh JN Koul said that it is heartening that the news letter will highlight the activities and achievements of Sharda Sarvagya Peeth Kashmir. Mr Koul said that the essence of Kashmir Shaivism and the messages of Rishis like Kashyapa, Abhinavgupta, Laleshwari, Nundrishi, Jagat Guru Shankaracharya and many others have been guiding us and now it would be Sharda Sandesh to propogate their messages.

Swami Amritanand Ji in his message described Kashmir as the centre of enlightenment but expressed concern on inhuman activities going on in the Valley. Swami Ji reiterated his commitment to reinstate Dharma in the Sharda Pardesh. He hoped that the news letter, edited by eminent scholar Prof. C.L Sapru, will play its role in this direction.

Many eminent scholars, intellectuals, writers and socio-cultural activists attended the function. END

A Short Story Writer Is Born

Title: Rambhara bhthees' piyath

Author: Makhan Lal Pandita

Language: Kashmiri (Nastaliq)

Price: Rs 250/-

Published By: M.L. Pandita

180, Sector-1, Lane No: 4, Durga Nagar, PO Roopnagar, Jammu

By Arjun Dev Majboor

Makhan

Lal

Pandita's

emergence

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a

A serious short story writer is a good augury for Kashmiri literature. *Raembara bhthees piyath*, the book under review, is author's 3rd collection of short stories, his earlier books '*Girdab*' (Whirlpool, 2003) and *Karan Fiyur* (Change of Times, 2000) were well received. With his new publication, the author has made his mark as a competent short story writer. The book is decorated with a beautiful jacket and carries 12 stories. The stories are:

- 1) *Dayi Pos* (Guest without formal invitation)
- 2) *Bata Thal* (Rice Plate)
- 3) *Gardish* (Round)
- 4) *Nov Bistar* (New Bedding)
- 5) *Roshan Laleen Kitab* (Roshan Lal's Book)
- 6) *Yeli Gauri Malyun Gayi* (When Gauri went to her parents' house)
- 7) *Babu Ram*
- 8) *Machhar* (Madness)
- 9) *Vuh Ropiya* (Twenty Rupees)
- 10) *Toht Taf* (Hot Sun Shine)
- 11) *Hawas* (Strong Desire)
- 12) *Raembara bhthees piyath* (on the bank of Rambhara)

The author has himself written the Preface, while Sh. Mohd. Yusuf Teng has penned the Foreword. Mr. Teng has praised author's style, the theme of the stories, his vocabulary and appropriate usage of metaphors and similes. He has commented, "Probably no other Bata (Kashmiri Pandit) in future would be able to rival the author's use of colloquial Kashmiri".

What strikes the reader in the book is that the author while adopting the style of narrating the story has tried to present his characters in their own milieu-the characters speak their own language and seem real and full of life. The stories keep the reader's interest sustained so much so that he gets lost in an environment which is every inch Kashmiri. The theme of the stories revolves round people who are plebians, some of the themes relate to displacement and exile as well.

Nov Bistar (New Bedding), *Roshan Laleen Kitab* (Roshan Lal's book) and *Toht Taf* (Hot Sunshine) portray plight and struggle-ridden life of Displaced Kashmiris. In *Nov Bistar* the stories pertain to a rural Displaced Kashmiri Pandit family. This family had got prepared back home in Kashmir a new bedding. It is a painful account of the family which carries this new bedding to Jammu. Each quilt carries seven kgs. of cotton. It gets soiled in monsoon rains, while the family awaits registration at temple premises in Jammu. Finally, the soiled quilts are consigned to the river Tawi, as there is no need for these in the hostile tropical climate.

In '*Roshan Laleen Kitab*', the author utilises his meagre savings to get his book published in Jammu. To his dismay nobody bothers to read his book. So much so, even his close friend to whom he had gifted a complimentary copy, does not bother to go through it. He just puts it on a shelf. It causes heartache to Roshan Lal when he sees that the groundnuts (Moongfali) he purchases, is served in an envelope made from the pages of his own book.

Toht Taf is a story in which a Displaced Kashmiri is sent back by '*Dharam Raz*' (one who decides heaven and hell) to bear the tropical heat. Snakes and Scorpion make the life more painful for this weather-bitten refugee. But for a person who has lived in the cool breeze of Chinar there are no other options.

In '*Raembara bhthees piyath*', the author probably tells his own story. A scene is portrayed in which a beautiful Gujjar lass, stricken by poverty, gets drowned in a river. The story pictures life in Shopian town and delineates beautifully its natural scenery and suffocating life in the forest hinterland. This story, written artistically and with candour, tells us much more.

The story '*Machhar* (Madness) is focussed on terrorism. How a brother kills his own brother, in this story, is heart-rending. It also raises many questions.

Yeli Gauri Malyun Gayi (when Gauri went to her parents house), projects the life of a Kashmiri Pandit

peasant family, which is steeped in poverty. The helplessness, the rigors and the difficulties of the peasant life and the sorrows have been vividly portrayed. This painful story is prelude to the displacement.

Vuh Ropiya (Twenty Rupees) is a story which revolves round a Kashmiri Pandit peasant and a poor shepherd (chopan). It focusses on the social hypocrisy, in which the shepherd trots out different excuses at different times and feigns illness and head injury to avoid paying back Rs 20/- he had borrowed from a Kashmiri Pandit. It also introduces comic scenes at the end.

The stories are written in a lucid language and appropriate to characters. These are full of metaphors and satire. The dramatic style in which the stories are presented keep the reader glued. Usage of appropriate words and the short sentences have enhanced the readability and in flow it resembles *Vitasta* in its pristine beauty and quietitude. The author does not allow his emotions, so pregnant in the situations he describes, to take over while narrating the stories. The theme has been presented in a sublime way. So far, Kashmiri writers have not portrayed rural life so vividly as has been done by Shri Makhan Lal Pandita. This is the key to his success.

The book has been marred by few mistakes in proof-reading and script transcription. This could handicap a reader not well-versed with nastaliq Kashmiri script. These few mistakes apart, one can say with certainty that a new short story writer has found his rightful place in the field of Kashmiri literature. Kudos to Sh. Makhan Lal Pandita.

*(Translated from original Hindi by Dr. R.K. Tamiri) END

Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora in Himachal Pradesh-Shimla-II

By Upender Ambardar

My posting and consequent stay at Shimla was a voyage of discovery for me. The numerous interactions and chitchats which I had with the 'baradari' members settled there for decades were undeniably a refreshing throwback to the blissful yesterdays, in addition to the pleasant trips down the memory lane. Barring a few marginal exceptions, the striking approximation of geographical and salubrious climatic conditions with Kashmir are sufficient enough to make the old memories come back to haunt our hearts and minds. Driven by ambition and the urge to achieve more, in addition to a vibrant combination of the qualities of resilience, determination and adaptability have made the Kashmiri Pandits to lead meaningful lives and distinguish themselves in their respective fields in the alien conditions. The Veteran actor and famous Bollywood celebrity Sh Anupam Kher (Khar), fondly known by his pet name 'Bittu' is pride of Shimla and the entire Himachal Pradesh. His father Sh. Pushkar Nath Kher lives at Fingasu estate near the famous Kalibari temple on one of the divergent routes of the Mall road.

Originally, belonging to Nai Sarak, Habbakadal Srinagar, Sh. Pushkar Nath Kher migrated to Shimla in the year 1950 lured by better prospects and opportunities available there. Now retired, he has served in the administrative sections of the forest department of Himachal Pradesh in various capacities.

Sh PN Kher, himself is a familiar name and face in Shimla. I would often spot him taking strolls on the whole length of the Mall Road. Due to his endless love for Shimla, he prefers to spend most of his time at Shimla, excepting for a brief stay during winter at Mumbai with his actor son. Though distanced from the original roots for a pretty long time, Kashmir is still a name close to his heart, about which he is always warm and demonstrative in his feelings. During one of my numerous interactions with him, Sh. PN Kher reminisced in an emotional tone accompanied by a sudden rush of nostalgia: "Memories linked with snow-fall and making of 'Sheen-Insan' (Snow-man) during my childhood days at Srinagar are still etched in my mind. The appetizing taste of mouth watering Kashmiri dishes like 'hogad-hak' (sundried fish and hakhsag), 'damalou', 'sochal-wangan'; in addition to Mogyal Chai' (*kehwa*) and traditional roti have still not forsaken my mind". He alongwith his spouse speak Kashmiri with an amazing fluency. Both their sons Sh. Anupam (Bittu) and Ranjan Kher (Raju) were born, brought-up and educated at Shimla. After his initial studies at DAV School, Lakar-Bazar and SDB College, Longwood Shimla, Sh. Anupam Kher subsequently graduated from the National School of Drama, Chandigarh, Anupam's maiden love for the theatre propelled him to travel to the tinsel town Mumbai to try his dame luck there. After his spectacular take-off with his first successful film '*Saaransh*', made by Mahesh Bhat, Anupam Kher had a meteoric rise in the stardom carrier and since then there has been no looking back for him on the road to success and fame in the Bollywood. Happily married to Kiron Kher, a popular actress on her own, and his one-time N.S.D. classmate, they are now settled at Mumbai, where they also run a Dance and Theatre school for children. Kashmir and the 'baradari' matters are always close to Anupam Kher's heart and he hardly misses a chance to espouse the related cause at the time of need. Likewise, Ranjan (Raju) Kher is also a well-known face in the TV serials and the celluloid world. The abundant love that the natives have for Anupam Kher, make them to look forward to his each and every visit to Shimla with eagerness.

Sh. Pyare Lal Kher, uncle of Sh. Anupam Kher, now a retired Central Govt. employee settled at Delhi has

also adopted Shimla as his home. He was actively involved with the community affairs and has served as the secretary of the Kashmiri Pandit Sabha, Shimla for a few years.

Sh. MK Kaw, an esteemed name in the administrative and the 'baradari' set-up of Shimla is even today, after his retirement from the service, remembered for the luminosity of his contributions. He has occupied honoured and exalted positions in the bureaucratic set-up of Himachal Pradesh. Son of Sh. Prem Nath Kaw, a resident of Mallapora locality situated midway between Bana-Mohalla and Chinkral Mohalla, Srinagar, Sh. MK Kaw prior to his brief stay at Jammu came straight to Delhi from Srinagar in the year 1948, where his father served as a Central government employee. Both Sh MK Kaw and his younger sister Smt. Asha Kaw Sawroop belong to the elite Indian Administrative Service Cadre, whereas Dr. PK Kaw, their youngest brother, a renowned, scientist (Padamshree) is a doctorate in Physics. Dr. PK Kaw is Director of the prestigious Institute of Plasma Research, Ahmedabad, whileas his spouse Dr. Saroj Kaw (MBBS, MD) is running a private hospital at Ahmedabad, Gujrat. Born on 10th November 1941 at Srinagar, Sh. MK Kaw had initial schooling at the Govt. School, Malapora, where his grandfather late Sh. Shivjee Kaw was Headmaster. He reminisced in an emotional tone that the afterglow of the childhood memories of Srinagar are still fresh in his mind. He remembers with haunting emotional intensity the school days spent at the Govt. 'Jabri' school, Malpora Srinagar and the games enjoyed by him with the fellow children at the local temple courtyard. Sh MK Kaw besides being a Law Graduate has double Post Graduation degrees in Hindi and Public Administration. Being a person of affable nature, he has endeared himself to one and all, both natives and the baradari members with his amiable and supportive disposition. Sh MK Kaw, a combination of bureaucratic skills and literary and scholarly tastes is also a writer in Hindi and English. Besides having authored a collection of poems in English entitled 'An Oasis of solitude, look closely at Om and Kusha Grass, he has a number of books like '*Kehna Aasan Hai*' (a collection of poems), *Ikshvaku Sae* (a long poem) and a novel 'Aasman Nahin Girta' etc. to his credit. Being an IAS officer of the 1964 batch, he was allotted Himachal Pradesh cadre, where he occupied different positions.

He has served as Deputy Commissioner, Kangra from 1974 to 1976 and at Solan from the year 1973 to 1974 and then moved on to become Finance Secretary (upto 1977) and Director of Industries, Himachal Pradesh upto 1978. In the year 1978, he went on deputation to the Govt. of India but returned back to Himachal Pradesh administration in 1982, when he served as Principal Secretary to the erstwhile Chief Minister Sh Ram Lal and the present Chief Minister Raj Virbhadra Singh. Afterwards upto 1990, he served as Secretary Personal for one year, Secretary Education for three years and finally as Secretary Finance for three years. In the year 1990, he again went on deputation to the Central government in the Ministry of Defence as Joint Secretary, then served as Additional Secretary, Revenue for three years, Member Secretary of the Fifth Central Pay Commission, Secretary Ministry of Civil Aviation for one year, Principal Advisor to the Planning Commission for two and a half years and finally moving on to occupy the coveted post of Secretary, Ministry of Education, Government of India before retiring from the service in the year 2000. He is married to Dr. Raj Kaw, a Ph.D in Hindi from the Himachal Pradesh University Shimla, who is presently serving as a lecturer in Jesus and Mary College, New Delhi.

Recapping the blissful memories of the yore, Sh MK Kaw confided that as a child he was thrilled beyond words in watching the river Vitasta, both during calm flow and its fearful surge during the floods, when the anchored 'Doongas' (house-boats) would float high-up to the second-floor windows of his maternal grandfather, late Sh. Sat Lal Sadhu's house situated on the river-front. The community members of Shimla with whom I interacted revealed that Sh. MK Kaw who functioned as patron of the Kashmiri Pandit Sabha Shimla was a moving spirit of its activities. In spite of his busy schedule, he would ensure his participation in the various socio-religious functions of the community. The community members even now fondly recollect his help and guidance rendered to the baradari members during his stay at Shimla.

Sh Ravinder Nath Koul is another distinguished personality of Shimla, with whom I had lengthy and animated conversation at his office housed in 'Kumar House', located in the nicest surroundings amidst the natural grandeur of the forest trees and the mountain ranges backdrop. He is holding the prestigious post of the Director, Inter State Himachal Pradesh Electricity Board. Though detached from the original roots for a pretty longtime, Sh RN Koul is still anchored in the community traditions and customs. To my astonishment he speaks Kashmiri effortlessly and with natural ease. He is a resident of 'clarendon cottage', Upper Kaithu, Shimla. An original of Sheed-Gunj near Neelam Cinema, Srinagar, his father late Sh. Brij Lal Koul served in the office of Account General, Shimla in the year 1948-49. After having completed B.Sc. engineering in the electrical branch from Benaras University, Sh RN Koul had a brief stint as Pool-officer with the J&K Government during 1972-73 followed by subsequent service in the Nahan Foundary for a short spell in 1973. He afterwards joined the Himachal Pradesh Electricity Board in the year 1973, where he is involved with the distribution, transmission, load despatch and commissioning activities of the Electricity Board. His steep rise to the prestigious and coveted post of the Director is a recognition of his professional excellence and competence. The crusading zeal and the lightening speed with which he successfully restored the power supply in the shortest possible time during the worst snowfalls in Himachal Pradesh during the years 1980 and 1990 is acknowledge as one of his laudable

contributions.

His MBBS daughter is presently serving at Delhi, while as Sh RN Koul's spouse is a teacher at Shimla Public School. Sh RN Koul is also deeply involved with the socio-cultural activity of the community. For the past seven years, he is functioning as General Secretary of the Kashmiri Pandit Sabha, Shimla. He has also been instrumental in reviving the Sabha, which had gone oblivion for many years.

Dr. Lokesh Koul, Professor emeritus and a former Dean Academic Affairs of the Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla is another illustrious member of the Kashmiri diaspora of Shimla. My inquisitiveness to meet him drove me to foot the distance from my residence at Summer Hill to his lovely flat in the 'Everest Apartments' situated in the indescribable natural charm of the majestic deodar and pine tree surroundings at the lower Summer Hill. Dr Lokesh Koul, M.Sc. (Maths), M.Ed. (Gold Medalist) and a Doctorate in education is originally resident of Bana Mohalla, Razdan Kocha near Durga Patshalla, Srinagar. He joined the Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla as an Associate Professor in the Post

(Contd. from Page 11)

Graduate department of Education in the year 1975 and was promoted as a Professor in 1978. He has also functioned as member of the Executive Council, Academic Council, Finance Committee and University Court. In 1988 he was elevated to the esteemed post of Dean of Studies (Dean Academic affairs, of the said University. He remained on this post for ten years, though the stipulated term is only two years. He also functioned as Dean. Student's Welfare. On the basis of his impressive academic research work and noteworthy administrative contribution rendered to the University, he was the first Professor of Himachal Pradesh University to be selected as Professor emeritus (a life term honour). Prior to this Dr Koul had served in the J&K State education department for brief spell of one and a half years. During the Kashmiri Pandit agitation following the abduction of Parmeshori in 1967, he actively participated in the subsequent Satyagraha and protest demonstrations and in consequence he was put-up in the police lock-up for two weeks. Due to the resulting uneasy and flawed atmosphere in his department, he thought it better to resign from the service only to join as a lecturer in the Regional College of Education followed by Dayanand College of education at Ajmer from 1967 to 1969. He has also served as a lecturer at Kurukshetra University prior to his joining at the HP University.

Dr. Lokesh Koul has guided 39 Ph.D scholars and published five books in addition to 187 research articles, which have appeared in various national and international academic research journals. He has also figured as a one of the prides of Shimla in a survey conducted by a leading national newspaper during his hay days at the University. He also has six major projects financed by the UGC, NCERT and HRD Ministry to his credit. In addition to it, he is a consultant with the Commonwealth Higher Management Service, London, besides being a member of IGNOU, Advisory Board of NCERT and National Council for teachers' education. During my long chit-chat with him at his residence, the outpouring of emotions and love for Kashmir and the lost 'Home' was quite evident. He recalled with sadness "My heart still beats for my beloved Kashmir and even now, its very name spreads general cheer". With the approaching evening widening its net. I decided to end my animated conversation with him only to beat a hasty retreat to my residential quarter in the Radio Colony Summer Hill, being reminded of the memorable words "All the wealth of the world can not buy a 'Home' or pay for the loss of one; for a 'Home' is raised only by hearts".

—To be continued

*(The author is a keen Researcher. His studies on Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora in Himachal Pradesh have been widely acclaimed). END

Shivani-The budding artist

KS Correspondent

BHOPAL: Kashmiri Pandits are known for their contribution to the field of art and culture. One such theatre personality that earned fame in the field of art is Shivani Shah.

Born and brought up at Nai Sarak, Srinagar Shivani Shah daughter of Sh. JL Shah lives presently at Bhopal. Shivani has been attracted to acting since her childhood and is now a well known theatre artist. Shivani has not only worked in serials but also in a feature film "*Tarqueeb*".

She played a role in famous ETV Urdu serial "*Zohara Mahel*" with Late Nadira. She acted in a documentary produced and directed by Nitish Bhardwaj, Krishna of famous mythological serial "*Mahabharat*", telecast on DD National. The artist also played a lead role in Telefilm "*Naw Sal Choti Patni*", telecast on DD National in July 2006.

Deepthi Naval and Sunil Darshan declared her "Miss Personality" in the famous talent hunt show on DD National-*Kalakarz* presently, Shivani is working in a Hindi serial based on writer Shivani's famous novel-*Krishna Kali*. She is playing second lead role in the serial. The serial is being directed by famous film Director Amol Palekar. The serial is likely to be telecast on DD National in the month of December 2006. END

Readers' Mail
Positive Move

Sir,

Late Rajiv Gandhi used his brute majority in Parliament to pass a constitutional amendment and deny hapless Muslim woman who was the victim of the Shariat Panchayat. Today, the UPA government headed by same Congress party has told the Supreme Court that Fatwas issued by Muslim clerics do not have legal sanction. Either the Congress party has at last realised that national interest takes precedence over minority vote bank politics or is not sure of the support of the minorities viz Muslims anymore. Whatever the reason behind the change in policy, it augers well both for the nation and Muslim women, who have been held to ransom by the Mullah's on the basis of the anachronistic Shariat law".

—V.V.S Mani

33-IV Opp. Union Bank of India
Richmond Town,
Banglore-25

Sentinel a compendium source material on Kashmiriyat

Sir,

I am in receipt of the Brij Premi Special Number of the *Kashmir Sentinel*. The Brij Premi number of the Sentinel is a compendium of the source materials on '*Kashmiriyat*'. It provides students and scholars working on Kashmir, considerable source material on Kashmiriyat. I would request you to publish this special number of Sentinel in the form of a book.

--Dr. Mohi-ud-Din Qadir

Darulabad
Frashgund, Soibug,
Kashmir.

LET GOOD SENSE PREVAIL

An open letter to the community brethren

A happy news for is that a Pandit Organisation has finally decided to approach Supreme Court with a writ petition, raising certain relevant basic demands by the community from time to time, when none in the administration is ready to hear our long standing justified grievances. This is a really bold and courageous step. This step should have been taken much earlier.

Now, the ball is in the Apex Court, which has record of its impartiality. It does not favour one, appease other, nor is influenced by party politics. Its decisions are purely based on legality, reason and justice.

Jawahar Lai Sher

Rohini.

'Pressure Tactics'

Sir,

I strongly feel Afzal Guru should be hanged to death. Those who are asking for sympathy are tactically supporting terrorism. The highest court of land has rightly sentenced a terrorist responsible for killing security guards. Our President should not succumb to the pressure tactics of self serving politicians like Farooq, Nabi Azad, Sonia Gandhi and others. The death sentence is a deterrent to future terrorists. Let us not allow another Kandahar and Rubia Syeed to be repeated.

--Radha Vijay Kumar

Bangalore. END

Srinagar in 1930s and 1940s—Glimpses of Social Life-I

By Shamboo Nath Gorkha

It is a daunting task to recapitulate the social life we lived in Kashmir in 1930s and 1940s. So much has changed over the past 6-7 decades. 1947 is a watershed in the history of Kashmir. It not only marked the transition of Kashmir from autocracy to popular democracy, but also created conditions for Kashmir's plebian society to rapidly become a modern one. Purchasing power of the common Kashmiri increased manifold. Media, both print and the electronic, exposed Kashmiris to outside

influences. Education also had far reaching impact on Kashmiri society. Growing economy opened up Kashmiri society, Kashmiris began interacting with others as never before. In this essay an attempt is being made to acquaint the new generation of Kashmiris with the sort of life Kashmiris lived in the previous decades when amenities of modern living were not available.

Daily Life:

People were early risers. They would get up in the wee hours and go to their respective places of worship. On return, they would fetch Kashmiri bakery from their respective bakers (Kandur). Since Kashmiris preferred to buy breakfast bread from the baker, it was not unusual to see people in queues at the baker's shop, waiting for their turn to purchase bread. After visiting the bakers the people would collect milk from the local milkman (Goor).

The morning breakfast was usually light. Employees used to take lunch at 9 AM. They were very punctual in attending the duties, latecomers were taken to task by their superiors. The labourers/carpenters (Chhan) Masons (Dasil) etc. used to carry food along with them in their tiffin (Ganjbana). Women attended to the domestic chores—house cleaning, clothwashing, husking paddy (Dhanya Munun) as few rice mills were available. The ladies also had to carry water from the nearby stream/river. Some families would arrange professional water-carriers (Paniyur).

At 6 AM vegetable growers would carry their produce-Hak and other vegetables to different parts of the city for sale. Large portion of vegetable land in Srinagar was reserved for Hak (Saag) and Monji (Kadam). Hak of Kawdara used to be superb and quite sweet. In Ali Kadal quarter two ladies Jigri and Zoona would bring big fatus of Hak on their heads from Kawdara.

Boat shopkeepers also brought their merchandise in the morning for sale. It used to be carried in big boats called Khochoos. They would attract buyers by shouting '*Gaer Ha*', '*Mong Hai*', '*Muth Ha*', '*Makai Ha*', '*Razma Ha*', '*Warimuth Ha*' etc. Ghat of Ram Kolun Yarbali in Srinagar city was a common place for this type of merchandise. Those days people did not use soap routinely, they preferred particular type of clay. Boats carrying Goret miech (a particular clay) were seen every other day. It was purchased mostly by Kashmiri Hindus. The seller carried it in fatus. Pandits used it for house cleaning, hand washing and ritual purposes. Other items of daily use were also sold through these 'moving' shops.

A non-Kashmiri Halwai (sweet seller) was often seen roaming around in the streets of Srinagar. He used to carry '*Halwa*' (Sweet pudding) in a box and would recite Urdu verses to attract customers. He would say, '*Zara Aa Ke Dekho Mein Kya Bechta Hoon*' (come to see what I sell), '*Mein Khuyeh Walla Halwa Bava Halwa Bechta Hoon*'.

In summers temperature hardly exceeded 34°C. No electric (table/ceiling) fans were available. Hand fans (Wavaej) were used to have cooling effect. In summers *sodagars* (chhapdi farosh) were seen carrying on their heads baskets of 'snow (yakh)'. In colloquial Kashmiri they would say '*Kamiy Vana Volmakhu Yakho*', '*Yakho*' (Ice from which forest I have brought you!), '*Kana Dur Garyo*', '*Wah Yakho Wah Wah Yakho*' (Ice, should I prepare earrings for you), to attract customers. These *sodaghars* used to store snow in winter months in deep wells in Harvan forests. For daily use they would carry it in baskets.

One baker Sita Ram would be on the streets around mid-day to sell different brands of biscuits and bread. He carried these in a small box on his head. A middle-aged Muslim gentleman also roamed in the city with a book written in Kashmiri.

Twice a week two male strangers would be seen in Pandit mohallas, particularly around 9-10 AM. Their heads used to be covered with blankets. They would enter houses of Pandits and say '*Meh Asih Cheeza*' (I want something) They were turned off by offering them a cup (Khos) of rice.

'*Sadhmakars*' would move in a group. Their attire looked quite comical—Multicoloured long chogas (gowns), with caps on their heads. They would come to Pandit houses once a week. The head of the group would be an old man with white beard (safed resh). On entering the Pandit house he would loudly shout '*Jai Gosaen*', '*Jai Gosaen Chuh Anganas Manz Deetav Deetav, Vishnarpan*'. After receiving a cup of rice, the '*Sadhmakar*' would shower blessings on the family.

Also seen were '*Ladishah*'. And non-Kashmiri *Sadhhus* would come as snake-charmers. Ladishah wore white poch (gown) and white Muslim turban. He carried an iron staff with bangles, and would, after entering the compound of Pandits, recite few Kashmiri verses comically to entertain the family members. He would leave after receiving a cup of rice. The snakecharmer used to carry a snake in a coir basket and would make snake dance to the tune of his flute. At other times some people from the villages carried monkey or bear with them. They would visit different mohallas and entertain people by making monkey/bear play different games.

Lower income group ladies used to wear Pulhuro (grass chappels), woven in feet from soft and fine grass. Rich families used to wear leather shoes, which cost Rs 2 and 12 Annas per pair. Only members of feudal elite and the affluent people wore 'flex shoes', while middle income groups would wear canvas/cloth shoes (12 annas per pair) in summer. In winter they wore Bata rubber shoes (Rs 1-4 anna per pair). The butcher class used to wear black leather hard shoes, '*Puj Pazaar*'.

Religious Life:

Both Pandits and Muslims were God-fearing, religious in outlook. They woke up early to go to temples and mosques to offer prayers. Good number of people in Srinagar city visited Hari Parbat early morning daily, while Muslims, would visit Makhdoom Sahib and Sikhs the Chati Padshahi. The ringing of bells in temples, Azan in mosques and Shabad Kirtan in Gurudwara provided a serene ambience, which also reminded about pluralistic character of Kashmirian society. Those days no loudspeakers were fitted in places of worship.

Pandits immersed ashes of the dead mostly at Shadipur, while some went to Gangabal. There were no special arrangements for Gangabal Yatra at the Governmental level. In 1947 there was no yatra due to tribal raid.

The plebian society had strong faith in soothsayers. Quite a few of them were popular with the people. Sona Mout and Mama Kaloo would roam bazaars of Srinagar city. Sona Mout wore a dirty poch (inner of pheran) and carried an earthen pot filled with charcoal on his left shoulder. He would hurl choicest abuses and talk rough. His face had fearsome look, people would feel scared. Sona Mout lived in the house of Pt. Shirdhar Joo, Ex-Conservator Forests at Rehbab Sab, Nowakadal, Srinagar. Prominent disciples of this mastana included Dr. Gwasha Lal Koul, renowned physician, Kh. Gh. Mohammad and his son proprietor of M/s Gh. Mohd. Noor Mohd. and Noor Mohd. Sons, Booksellers, Mahraj Ganj, Srinagar.

Another mastana was nicknamed 'Boundrich'. He used to roam mostly in Sumbal but would also visit Srinagar city. While roaming he would loudly shout 'Boundrich'.

Mama Kaloo was seen mostly in Ali Kadal area. His refrain was 'Allah Hoo!' 'Allah Hoo! I have seven daughters, Oh God, kindly arrange their marriages, Allah Hoo! Zikre-Dam Peera Boztam". Some other distinguished religious personalities with exalted spiritual powers included—Saboor Sab (Tulmulla), Kash Kak (Manigam), Bhagwan Gopinath (Gadud Bagh), Nanda Mout, Swami Nand Lal, Grata Bab, Shiv Ratangir, Mathra Devi, Sati Maech, Devid w/o Late DN Raina, Proprietor of Remington Typwriters. These people had lot many disciples. These mastanas, as per their disciples, possessed powers which instantaneously solved the problems of their murids. Swami Lakshman Joo was a leading Shaiva scholar at Ishbar. Pandits and Muslims used to go to Moulvi Atiquallah for 'Taweez' (amulet).

Marriages :

Marriages were settled through middleman, called *manzimyor*. For Pandits the job was performed by Muslim barbers. One such young person was quite popular—Gh. Mohd. the Dwarf. He wore *sharahi yezar* (sherwani), a white turban, a short coat with a white cotton chadar around his shoulders. He used to carry dozens of Teknis in a Khaki bag hung on his left shoulder. The bride's father or the head of the family would take 2-3 tekis in prospective grooms from the middleman and then match these through their *Kulpurohit*. The two families enquired about each others' antecedents and exchange *Kulawalis* (status list of each families relations). After the families were satisfied, then confirmation was conveyed through Gh. Mohd. the middleman. After the nod from boy's family, the middleman would visit bride's side and wish them '*mubarak*' on the formal acceptance of proposal by groom's family.

The *Kulpurohit* would then decide the auspicious date for gandum (engagement) and lagan (wedding day). Gandun was performed at a temple or at the house of some relation of groom's family with austerity. Only 5-6 close relations were called and served tea and *Takhtachi* (Kashmiri Baker delicacy). Then an elderly person of groom's family would present a bunch of flowers, *poshgond* to his counterpart from bride's family. They would embrace each other. Then the elder person from bride's side would reciprocate the exchange of Poshgond. After the completion of tea session and other related formalities, the father of the groom or the head of the family would give a pledge that his family would treat the bride as his own daughter. He would also assure that his family members would not demand anything as part of dowry. On this assurance, the bride's side would profusely thank groom's side. Before dispersal the bride's side would offer 11 Kands (candy), 1 kg of Almond, 2 kgs of Sugar and 11 breads to groom's side.

The lagan ceremony too was solemnised in a simple manner. The Baratis were served a 7-8 course meal, no cold drinks or tea was served. During rot lagan. (night reception of Barat) the groom's side would prepare their own tea. The bridegroom would wear Achkan, a chooridar Pyjama and Kesari turban. These articles were usually borrowed from a nearby rais (wealthy person), who would gladly lend these to his neighbour. The groom would lead the barat and used to be mounted on horse first. Muslim biradari also borrowed choga, shilnswar, green turban from a nearby rais.

Amusement and Entertainment:

People were generally poor. They visited Mughal gardens and other parks for picnics. The melodious voices of Abbabel and Bulbul heralded the beginning of summer. Peculiar flowers with yellowish hue in graveyards and yemberzel and Nargis elsewhere would blossom in early summer. Buds

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of almond tree, *badam*, *phulai*, would first sprout near Hari Parbat, Ganesh temple and Devi Angan, Waris Khanun Chah garden and Badami Bagh, Zewan, Khrew etc. On Sundays Pandits and Muslims would throng to Devi Angan and Badam Wari (Waris Khanun Chah area) with Samovar, food and other eatables. Little girls would collect the petals of almond flowers, make garlands with needle and thread and then put these around their

neck. To entertain the people, who had come to see the Badam Phulay (blooming of Almond flowers), Pandit and Muslim halwais used to put up their stalls in tents. Pandit halwai would prepare Luchis of maida (fried bread) and nadar munji (Lotus stalk pakodas). Muslim halwais prepared parathas and fried Mungfuli. Other vendors would roast raw singhara (waternuts) on fire prepared by grass and serve these to visitors. They would crush the roasted singharas with the help of two small stones.

Fairs would put spice into the otherwise dull life of poverty-stricken Kashmiris. They would participate in large numbers. Muslims visited Dastgir Sahib and Makhdoom Sahib on the occasion of Urs of the two saints. On the occasion of Mehraj-ul-Alam, Milad-ul-Nabi lakhs of Muslims would throng to Hazratbal to have deedar of Moi Muqadas. Pandits used to go to Tulmulla on the day of Jyesth Ashtami and also on Ashtami days. They would also go to Khrew to pay obeisance to Goddess Jwala. Sadhus in good numbers used to come for Amarnath Yatra. A month before yatra sadhus and sanyasis would throng to Srinagar and stay at Durga Nag, Dashnami Akhara and other mohalla temples. This event was keenly watched by natives of Srinagar.

Around spring time Pandits celebrated Navreh, Zang Trai and Ramnavmi. On festivals of Ramnavmi and Mahanavmi (Autumn), Pandits used to visit Hari Parbat and the Akbar's Fort on the hillock. The fort would remain open for all the nine days on these occasions, the fort temple housed an image of Goddess Kali.

Dussehra used to be celebrated officially at Chandmari (Khar Maidan-Ass Ground), Tattoo Ground at Batmalinu. The place is now used as Transport yard. One week before Dussehra effigies of Ravana, Kumbakarna and caricature of Lanka were prepared with Bamboo sticks and stuffed with crackers. At 4 PM the jawans of the state forces would line up at the Tattoo ground. Maharaja Hari Singh, seated on horse, would take the salute and then sit in a specially decorated Shamiana. He would be received by his cabinet ministers, civil and military officials, besides, the distinguished citizens. After sunset 'Lord Rama', seated on a decorated rath would pass near the effigies and shoot arrows at these. Within minutes fires would breakout and effigies would perish. In the evening. Maharaja would host the prominent gentry, his ministers and officials and present a sovenior coin to each of them.

Maharaja Hari Snigh's birthday was celebrated with great pomp and show. On this day 1 kg of rice was distributed free to poor people. Students of all government schools, dressed in Kapuri colour turbans, would be present at different ghats from Amirkadal to Chattabal. Maharaja, after offering puja in Gadadhar Temple, would mount a specially decorated boat, Parinda, rowed by 100 oarmen. The Oarmen were attired in ceremonial uniform. At different ghats students used to raise slogans 'Hip Hip Hurrah', 'Mahraj Bahadur Ki Jai', 'Long Live Maharaja'. Maharaja would respond by raising his right hand, and salute them.

From Chattabal (weir) Maharaja would move to palace in a car. A Durbar was held in evening at Durbar Hall, Shergarhi. Members of Cabinet, Civil and Military officians and prominent citizens would present nazrana of 1 pound.

Cheaper entertainment was also available. A middle-aged Muslim gentlemen, would roam streets of Srinagar with poet Mehjoor's book in his hand. He would in particular recite poet's '*Bagh-e-Nishat Keh Gulo-Naz Kran Kran Wali*' (This poem was published in Mehjoor's collection by M/s Gh. Mohd. Noor Mohd. and Sons, Mahraj Ganj, Srinagar). Subsequently, this poem was recorded by Hindustan company. Affluent people would hear it on their gramophones.

A '*Behrupia*' would present varying poses of two sides of his face. This would provide comic entertainment to people. They presented him a 'paisa each. One Jabbar Chanta, a middle aged person from Dalhasanyar had suffered hemiparesis. Because of facial palsy he had been nicknamed Jabbar Chanta. He would be seen at many functions, fairs and Urs of different Sufi saints. He used to carry a bioscope machine on his left shoulder. At the function he would yell 'German Chhu Jang Karan (Germany is at war)', 'Sah (Lion) is roaming in jungle,' while exhibiting various soundless pictures to the audience. He would receive 1 paisa per show.

In 1931 there were only two Cinema halls-Regal and Palladium in Srinagar and seasonal one at Gulmarg. In 1940 Krishen Bal, Proprietor of Regal Talkis constructed one more cinema hall-Amresh Talkies. The charges for class III ticket was 4 annas (25 paisa).

—To be continued

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Wedding customs among old Kashmiri Pandits

By Dr. R.K. Tamiri

Exile and its impact on culture of the community living in exile has remained a favourite theme for scholars. Folklore, Ritual, Myth, Legend etc. evolve out of experience of the people over millenia. Culture thus flowers best in its native soil. Detachment from the

original habitat endangers the culture of the exiled group. In cases where the population mass of the exiled group is small, widely dispersed and quite far away from the original homeland, preservation of historically evolved culture comes under serious strain.

Between 17-19th centuries nearly 500 Kashmiri Pandit families left Kashmir and settled in plains of Northern India. Lahore and Lucknow, with 200 and 150 families respectively, formed their major diasporas. These Pandits were very proud of their history and intensely conscious of their Kashmiri Pandit identity. They tried to preserve what they could in those times when communication links between their new place and Kashmir were not easy. These Pandits lost their language. Due to their intense desire to preserve Kashmiri Pandit identity, their living together in community mohallas besides the availability of Kashmiri *purohits*, many of the rituals and customs have survived. Sender observes, "They gradually forgot their Kashmiri language but clung to customs which they had brought from Kashmir. They lost their sense of identification or unity with those who had remained behind in Kashmir. They did this without substituting old for new bonds with local residents of their new domicile." Improved links between them and Kashmir helped further reinforce the extant customs.

The present essay focusses on the wedding customs prevalent among these old Kashmiris, who left their homeland two or three centuries ago.

Purohits:

Many of the *Purohit* families too left Kashmir along with their *Jajmans*. Some of the *Purohit* families used to go during winter months or as the occasion demanded to the plains. These *purohit* families looked after the ritual needs of Kashmiri Pandits who lived as far apart as Lahore and Allahabad. No precise details are available about the identity and the number of these families. The claim that the number of these families was 100 looks untenable. The debate in community journals in 1870s showed concern on the dwindling number of these *purohits*. Community members were warned not to alienate the *gurus* and while initiating the reform against increase in ritual expenses care was taken not to undermine their livelihood from the proceeds of various rituals.

This period had witnessed some tensions between *purohits* and their *jajmans*. Due to the individual aberrations of the *purohits*, many *jajmans* went for change of *gurus*. In Lahore a son confiscated the property his father had bestowed on the original *guru* and switched on to a new *guru*. In Multan a local *guru* was arrested for murdering the son of a widow in revenge for changing *gurus*. In Lucknow a *guru* refused to attend his client's funeral in the mufussil because of the inconvenient journey, and sent an 'incompetent novice' newly arrived *guru* from Kashmir. This built up further pressure for changing the *guru*. Many of these Pandits felt that the *gurus* were not really learned. *Gurus* too were exploring new opportunities—either because of better opportunities than their hereditary livelihood or because of less favourable terms in his traditional calling. Though at the individual level the *gurus* remained dispensable, yet at the group level they could not be ignored. They, however, did not attempt to capitalise on their potential and remained vulnerable to the will of their patron *Karkuns*. Their fragmentation and lack of cohesion failed them in integrating with the larger Pandit *biradari* in Diaspora.

Despite tensions between *Karkuns* and their *Purohits*, serious attempts were made to promote matrimonial alliances between two social divisions of Kashmiri Hindus. Former Governor J&K Late BK Nehru's maternal grandfather, hailed from *guru* group.

Kishen Narain Shivpuri, one of those who objected to the forging of matrimonial alliances, argued 'whether the *Karkuns* will marry with them (*gurus*) depends upon whether the *gurus* continue to take charity'.

Besides conducting rituals *purohit* played important role in wedding ceremonies. They helped in arranging marriages—bringing *Teknis* (Janam Kundlis) of prospective bridegrooms to the family of the bride and matching these *teknis*. In cases where marriage alliance was not settled through *guru*, the latter still received his share what he was entitled to otherwise. Again, it was the *guru* who would go round to personally issue invitations to weddings of his *jajmans*. In 1892 Lahore Kashmiri Pandits dispensed with this practice and decided to send formal invitation cards. This invited some criticism. The editor *Safir-i-Kashmir* claimed that it would diminish the sense of community identity.

Marriage Choices:

The old Kashmiri Pandits reinforced their racial and social identity by refusing to marry outside their community. Even during family lunch or dinner, if a person from outside their caste/*biradri* would join they would leave their food. There were 25-30 Kashmiri cooks who looked after the culinary needs of their patrons. There was strong resistance to eat food from non-Kashmiri cooks when many of these Kashmiri Pandit students went for higher studies to colleges in different cities of India. How could this mindset accept marriage outside the community. Even such a westernised family like that of Nehrus opted for matrimonial alliances within their own *biradari*, at least upto Pt. JL Nehru's time.

There was reluctance on the part of both old Kashmiris as well Kashmiri Pandits living in Kashmir to accept alliances from each other. About this scholar Sender comments, "The boundaries of their community as an effective social group had shades, not clear lines of demarcation. Their disinclination to bring wives from Kashmir itself was not absolute. Practices of adoption served to dilute boundaries further. Likewise, the lack of marriage ties between the *Karkun* and *guru* sections of the Pandits was not total".

There were strong arguments both in favour of and against forging matrimonial alliances between old Kashmiris and Pandits in Kashmir. Old Kashmiris regarded the Kashmiris of Kashmir as inferior. Those in the Valley regarded the old Kashmiris as different. They debunked them as the people who had forgotten their customs and grown darker under the cruel north Indian sun. Lack of trust also inhibited the marital status. One of Justice SN Katju's ancestors had, a century ago, gone to Kashmir and taken, a second wife, while his first one was still alive. He had not told the girl's side about his first marriage. This sort of incident created a legacy of mistrust between old Kashmiris and Pandits of Kashmir.

Despite this mistrust, many old Kashmiris continued to advocate closer ties with their community brethren in Kashmir. One MN Sapru, in May 1891 issue of *Safir-i-Kashmir* called upon his biradari members to demonstrate their obligations to members of the community in Kashmir. In a tone of sarcasm he snubbed his biradari of old Kashmiris, "only Kashmiris are ashamed to speak their mother tongue and look down on the *tazi vilayat*, the newly arrived, as if their own forefathers had not been born in Kashmir" and strongly recommended issueless parents to frequently adopt babies from Kashmir. Many of old Kashmiris did bring babies from poor Kashmiris. Similarly, of and on marriage alliances were also forged. Pt. Devinder Nath Koul, an advocate of Rawalpindi, who owned a house there, married his sister to Pt. Janki Nath Dhar of Srinagar. So strong was the urge for old Kashmiri Pandits to seek alliances within their own biradari that even in 1940s brides who were graduates opted for matriculate grooms. Extensive inbreeding among these old Kashmiris has led to abnormally high rates of leukemia, psychiatric disorders, and other genetically transmitted diseases. Sender's comments are worth quoting here: "Most Pandits agree that they are too inbred; but no consensus emerges on how to define the eligible marriage pool. The desire to retain identity as a Kashmiri Pandit, to preserve the biological links with past generations, is strong;

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but so is the realisation that perhaps new blood would strengthen the community. The debate about marriage is essentially a debate about the future of the community and how best to preserve its existence. Can one remain a Pandit if a spouse or parent is not a Pandit?"

Institution of child marriage was common a century ago among these Kashmiris. End of child marriage was an important agenda before the reformers of Kashmiri Pandits of northern India in 1870-1890s. Divorce/separation was virtually non-existent. In cases where in-laws maltreated the daughter-in-law, the latter would prefer to bear with the indignities rather than walk out of marriage and face social censure.

So too was widow re-marriage unacceptable. Though there was no concern on the issue of taking more than one wife, widow re-marriage was a taboo. Prof. Lakshmi Dhar Kalla, renowned Sanskrit scholar of Delhi and an old Kashmiri Pandit undertook campaign in 1920 favouring widow re-marriage. However, till 1940 not a single widow had been re-married. Their plight was worse. At times concern was shown for improving their economic condition. In 1895, Pt. Shamboo Nath Goghai, first Indian to be named as a judge wanted to remarry his widowed daughter in Calcutta. Even after he obtained religious approval based on the shastras, he failed to remarry her.

Wedding Ceremonies:

Tika and Takh: After the matching of Teknis, in which the stars and their configuration are assessed for the success of married life and longevity of the boy and the girl, the two parties go *Tika* and *Takh* ceremony. This nomenclature is not used by Kashmiri Pandits of Kashmir nowadays. It is the first ceremony in wedding of old Kashmiri Pandits. This ceremony is akin to gandun (engagement) and and Kasamdry of Kashmiri Pandits of Kashmir.

Takh term was used by Kashmiri Pandits of Kashmir till 1st and 2nd decades of 20th century. According to Shri Arjun Dev Majboor, a noted scholar, word *Takh* may have its origin from *Vakh*. *Vakh Diyun* in Kashmiri means to agree in principle. He also surmises may be this part of the ceremony was conducted on a portion of the house called *Takh* (Floor of a window).

On this day relations were called. From boy's side young ladies would come with bridal dress, jewellery and *Tika* and decorate the bride. A small party of young ladies from bride's side would pay a return visit and offer *Tika* and jewellery to the boy. This function could take place even a year before marriage. Girl's side would ask for horoscope of the boy. Normally, boy and girl would see each other first time only during Lagan and exchange glances through mirror. More liberal families asked for photographs before marriage.

In *Takh* part of the ceremony parents of the boy and the girl would set the terms for marriage, particularly about the *Taan* (jewellery) i.e. 5 Taan : 3 Taan : 2 Taan and 1 Taan. 5 Taan would mean *Pucca Panch Taan* - 5 of every item of jewellery-5 bangles, 5 sets of ear rings, 5 necklace sets and a tagadi (waistband). Affluent families offered tagadies, weighing as much as 100 tolas of gold. In 5 Taan Taakh girl's side had to offer huge cash to boy's side during 'Garasun' ceremony. This could be any amount ranging from Rs 10 thousand to Rs 50 thousand. In 1900-1920 by any standards this was an astronomical sum. Everything regarding marriage and particular demands of the boy's side are settled during Takh in advance.

Dapan bata i.e. invitation to bride and bridegroom before marriage by their respective relations, followed the

same pattern as in case of Kashmiri Pandits resident in Kashmir. In places which housed sizeable number of Kashmiri families marriages were conducted in community Shadikhana. A week before the wedding the family would shift to *shadikhana*. Relaying of *Shehnaï* music would start from the day of shifting. A ceremony, which betrays local influence, '*Bhandawar*' (Announcement of Wedding) was observed in *Shadikhana*. Mango leaves are strung on a strong cotton ring and hung at the entrance of *Shadikhana* or home where the wedding is to take place. This string of mango leaves is known as the '*bhanda war*'. Mango leaves are considered sacred, first Puja starts with this. Multani Mitti or white clay soaked in water and mixed with varied colours is used to paint floral designs, again called, '*Krool*' on the entrance wall to mark the auspicious occasion. Swastik sign is also put. It would be followed by Ganesh Puja.

Gota, Badia, Shagun :

These three ceremonies take

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place before marriage. *Gota* (masala used in filling betel leaves) is prepared as thin flakes from pistachios, almonds, betel nuts and coconuts. Dried vegetables are kept ready well in advance.

In Badia (Masale Wali Wari) ceremony black mash (*urad dal*) lentil is grounded in a chaki (hand driven grinding machine) and then mustard seed oil, flour, spices (*coriander, jaivitri, saunf* (aniseed), nutmeg etc.), *salt, zeera* are added to it. With '*lohng*' (clove) *sada suhagan* (Happy Married Life), '*Swastik*' and '*Om*' are inscribed on it. These are round in shape, size equal to that of hand and have a hole in the centre. Silver coins are placed in the holes of these '*badias*' and then these are dried in sun. The '*badia*' are then sent by the bride's family to the groom's house. It signifies the acceptance of the wedding between the two families. '*Badia*' are also distributed to relatives. Badia function used to be as big as '*Garasun*'. All biradari members and relations were called. Guests could be as many as sixty. A tasty meal consisting of *Roganjosh, Kalia* (yellow meat), *Dupyaza, Pulav* and sweet dish etc. was served. This function took place in bride's house. This part of the ceremony is also called *Shagun*. A special saltish porridge is made from rice and pieces of chopped intestines of the goat (chuste). It is called *vari*. This special delicacy is served to the guests.

When *Shagun* is not part of the Badia ceremony, badia are cooked once again. The lady (usually pufi) who prepared the dough for the badias places rice, badias, salt and money in a terracota plate (Tok) and holds this on her left shoulder while she prepares the dough for the badias. This '*Zang*' (rice, salt, badia, money) is given to Guruji or in some places to the poor and needy as a gesture of good will.

Mehendirat (Mehe-nzeraat):

Henna for the bride comes from the groom's house as shagun. This function is held in the evening. Though there is no bar to cook meat for this function, but usual cuisine for the dinner includes Dam Alu, Cheese, Sour Brinjal, Palak-Cheese. Old ladies sing '*henze path*' and other items available in books. '*Henze*' books were supplied by *purohits*. Young ladies sing hindi filmi numbers. *Tumbaknari* is not used. Unlike Kashmiri Pandits of Kashmir, pufi has no role in this function—She neither applies henna nor does she get money. Previously, *henna* was applied on the palms and the nails of the bride, with a mere blob dabbed on the feet. Now professional '*mehendiwallis*' have taken over and use *henna* liberally making intricate patterns on the palms, forearms and on the feet right up to the ankles.

Devgun:

It is the ritual bath for the bride and the groom. Six unmarried girls tie curds in a Muslin cloth and hold it over the head of the bride/the groom. They pour water through this to bathe them.

The Guru conducts the *puja* around the sacred fire during which the bride wears the '*Dejeharoo*' strung on a sacred thread in her ears. The significance of wearing the *Dejeharoo* is that the bride is now ready for wedding. It is remarkable that the old Kashmiris have clung on to *Dejeharoo* all through.

—To be continued

*(The author is a keen Researcher on the Folklore and Cultural History of Kashmir). END

Chronology of Events (Sep 7-Nov 4, 2006)

Sep 7: Mohd. Altaf Malik alias Pinto Malik, accused of killing Ircon Engineer and his brother, escaped in a dramatic way from judicial custody. Two HM terrorists were killed at Gulshan Abad, Pulwama. Terrorists shot dead a cop in his house at Budbug, Handwara. A student, injured by terrorists earlier, succumbed to his injuries. An Afghani terrorist Ibn-e-Qasim was killed in Manjakote. Terrorists injured a civilian Kuldeep Singh in Doda. Security breached at Bhawan as an SPO reaches there with pistol.

Sep 8: An IED was defused in the premises of Agriculture office at Kishtwar. Kuldeep Singh succumbed to injuries. Farooq Abdullah and ML Khurana summoned in Kandhar hijacking case. Manmohan Singh asks Parvez Musharraf to address issue of terrorism.

Sep 9: An SPO and a surrendered terrorist shot dead two SPOs and escaped after looting six rifles,

wireless set and other ammunition from Police Post Chanyas, Gandoh. A surrendered terrorist was killed and his wife injured by terrorists at Checha, Kishtwar. Two terrorists were killed in Mendhar. 117 rounds of ammunition were recovered at Pali, Kathua. Terrorists gunned down auto driver Bilal Ahmed Mir who had managed the arrest of a terrorist in 2005 at Sonwar. Terrorists also killed a civilian and injured another at Bandipore. Dreaded terrorist Yasin Pathan of Waziristan was killed at Dunaro, Pulwama.

Sep 10: Security forces killed a terrorist in Damhal-Hanjipora area. Terrorists targeted a patrol party of SOG killing a constable and injuring another. Two soldiers were injured in an encounter at Gujjar Pati, Kupwara. A terrorist and a jawan were killed in an encounter at Manthori, Doda. Security forces busted a terrorist hide-out at Thannamandi and recovered 35 kg RDX and nine grenades.

Sep 11: Security forces killed two exfiltrators in Gurez sector; a Pakistani terrorist was killed in Bandipore. Terrorists barged into the house of a PDP worker and shot at him at Hassanpora, Bijbehara. Troops recovered a huge cache of arms and ammunition at Muthul Nala in Machail sector. A major tragedy was averted as an IED was detected and defused near GMC, Jammu. A JKP team left for Punjab following the arrest of HM terrorists at Madhopur earlier.

Sep 12: Former Union Minister of State, Mohd. Maqbool Dar escaped unhurt in an IED explosion near Bijbehara, two persons were injured in the incident. Two terrorists were killed at Gujarpathri, Kupwara. A terrorist surrendered in Baramulla. JKLF activists go on hunger strike against alleged Human Rights violations.

Sep 13: Terrorists killed a jawan in an attack at Lamad, Qazigund and injured a woman at her house at Iqbal Nagar, Sopore. A bride-groom was attacked by terrorists at Badamibagh, Sopore. Police busted a hawala racket by arresting three persons and seizing Rs 2 lakh and grenades in Pulwama. TADA Court in Jammu awarded 17 years RI to a militant, Abdul Noorani.

Sep 14: An LeT terrorist, involved in massacre of 13 members of minority community in Udampur, was killed in a gunbattle in Basantgarh, Udampur; an SPO and a VDC member were killed and six security personnel injured in the encounter. A jawan Ravi Kumar killed an Army Major Harish Kumar in Manjakote, Rajouri. A civilian was injured in exchange of firing at Chitta Patta, Gandoh. A HM terrorist was arrested in Chatroo. Three live grenades were recovered from house of a terrorist at Simbal Camp, Jammu. Terrorists beheaded a photographer Shabir Ahmad Dar in Pulwama; terrorists shot at and wounded a Headmaster in Kulgam area.

Sep 15: An Army jawan was killed and seven others injured in a terrorist attack at Watergam. LeT 'Distt. Commander' for Udampur was killed at Nadimarg, near Kulgam. Four persons, including two soldiers, were injured in an IED blast at Zainpora, Pulwama. A youth was killed and five members of an SPO's family were injured when a terrorist lobbed a grenade on the SPO's house at Surankote, Poonch. Security forces destroyed two hideouts and recovered arms and ammunition in same area.

Sep 16: A HM terrorist Mohd. Shafi, who had surrendered escaped from Chatroo Police Station in Doda. Another HM terrorist surrendered in Doda. Arms and ammunition were recovered at Hill Tak, Darhal and Pangai, Thannamandi. Eight terrorists were killed in four gunbattles in Kashmir valley. Four cell-phone bombers were arrested from a car at Pohru Chowk on Srinagar-Jammu Highway. A body was recovered from Satrena forest area. Manmohan Singh and Parvez Musharraf agree to form counter-terrorism mechanism.

Sep 17: Two jawans were killed and two others injured as a jawan opened firing and then shot himself in Tangdar, Kupwara. A terrorist was killed in Gantmulla, Baramulla. Two bodies were recovered in Srinagar security forces and police launched a massive hunt to trace stolen cars.

Sep 18: The Valley observed strike against the remarks of Pope Benedict XVI's. Three family members-Raju Chopra, wife and daughter, and their driver and servant were murdered at Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

Sep 19: Three terrorists were gunned down at Tanta Daman, Gandoh (Doda). Security forces destroyed a terrorist hideout at Mahote, Surankote and recovered arms and ammunition. Four persons, including two CRPF personnel, were injured in a grenade explosion at Batmaloo General Bus Stand. Gujrat Police claimed to have busted LeT sleeper cell as they arrested four suspects. J&K Governor said that J&K enjoys highest degree of self-rule. Syed Ali Shah Geelani and many terrorist organizations rejected Havana declaration.

Sep 20: Two terrorists were killed at Ban Khour in Mahore. Three terrorists were reportedly trapped at Kotli Kalaban in Manjakote (Rajouri). A terrorist was killed and another arrested in Doda. Terrorists killed a woman Razia Begum at Bali, Gandoh and chopped off ears of Abdul Gani at Bashi Kishtwar. Two terrorists were killed at Barpura, Baramulla. Police arrested a LeT female activist and recovered arms and ammunition, including 100 kg RDX across Kashmir Valley. Two civilians were injured in a grenade attack at Sher Bagh, Anantnag. Top LeT terrorist Aslam Kashmiri, linked to Varanasi blasts, reportedly slipped into Bangladesh.

Sep 21: Four infiltrators were killed in Uri sector. A terrorist was killed at Chitragam, Pulwama. A student was killed and four others, including two jawans, were injured in a grenade attack at Wahipora on Srinagar-Tangmarg road. A soldier was injured in an IED blast at Kaimoh, Kulgam; a PDP activist was injured in his house in Tulla Khan, Bijbehara. A terrorist was killed at Kotli Kalaban, Manjakote. Four of a family were killed in a blast at Loharan Da Mohalla in Hari Budha, Poonch. Hizb denied ceasefire offer and put conditions to

any such offer.

Sep 22: A terrorist was killed at Tarzoo, Sopore. While a civilian was killed by terrorists in Damhal Hanjipora, Anantnag. A HM terrorist was arrested in Kishtwar, Doda. Bush said that Kashmir was to be settled between India and Pakistan.

Sep 23: A terrorist was killed in an encounter at Chitibandi, Baramulla. A HM terrorist was arrested in Srinagar. Terrorists injured three jawans at Onta Hamam, Sopore and killed a civilian at Kangan, Security forces arrested two OGWs at Pangi, Thannamandi.

Sep 24: Security forces foiled yet another bid of infiltration killing four infiltrators in Uri sector; two LeT terrorists and jawan were killed in the Valley. Terrorists killed a 12th standard student Shamima Akhter of Manglogi Dalwa (Gool) for her refusal to marry a terrorist. A JeM terrorist surrendered in Marwah, Doda. Over 1000 Kashmir terrorists are reportedly in Hizb camps in Pakistan's NWFP.

Sep 25: Terrorists killed four civilians, including a woman in different incidents in Doda district. Forces smashed two terrorist hideouts in Rajouri and Poonch districts. A lady cop and two civilians were killed and six others injured in the Valley on the first day of Ramzan.

Sep 26: An Army Captain and two terrorists were killed in an encounter at Bandipore. Afzal Guroo, convicted in Parliament-attack, to be hanged on Oct 20. Central government has devised multi-pronged strategy, including use of Pvt. detectives, to counter terrorism.

Sep 27: Terrorists carried out attacks at different places in the Valley killing an ASI and a cop and injuring 21 persons, including 14 JKP and CRPF personnel. Three women were injured as they walked over an explosive device near Ordinance Depot Khandoor, Anantnag. A 65 year old HM terrorist was killed in Ramban while three others are believed to be trapped in Gool. Police today arrested two terrorists, OGW's and five Bangladeshis across Jammu region.

Sep 28: Two injured in terrorist attacks yesterday succumbed to their injuries, terrorists killed a lady SPO in Kupwara and injured a chemist at Anantnag. Three people, including two police officials, were arrested as they didn't respond to the signals at Nakas on Pahalgam road. A SPO was killed and another SPO and two terrorists were injured in an encounter at Simbli, Mahore. Police arrested yet another Hawala operator Naseen Ahmed in Mendhar, Poonch.

Sep 29: A terrorist was killed in a group clash between HM and LeT at Neeldora, Shopian. A terrorist was killed while four others escaped in an encounter in Lolab. Police arrested 10 boys who were on their way to PoK in North Kashmir. Valley observed shut down against Guru's conviction. Terrorists killed a civilian in Dessa, Doda and kidnapped a village headman from Bhimdassa in Gool. A HM terrorist who had earlier escaped from Chatru PS was apprehended in Marwah. A BSF jawan shot himself dead at Sanatnagar, Srinagar; two CRPF personnel were killed and eight CRPF jawans and one CISF cop injured in an accident in Doda.

Sep 30: Two soldiers were injured in an IED blast on Marhama-Sangam road, near Bijbehara. A class 12th girl student was injured in a grenade attack at Pattan. Security forces recovered 50 kg RDX in Mahore. Mumbai police claimed that ISI masterminded and LeT and SIMI executed Mumbai serial blasts.

Oct 1: Two LeT terrorists were killed in Surankote while two HUJI terrorists were arrested at Khushal in Chatru, Doda. Six OGWs of terrorists were also arrested in Jammu region. Terrorists killed a kidnapped Nambardar in Gool. An Army jawan shot himself dead at Gund, Banihal. Valley again witnessed violence against death sentence to Afzal Guru.

Oct 2: An IED was defused at Pulwama while a security jawan, a trader and two children were injured in different incidents across Kashmir valley. A civilian was repatriated in Chhamb sector. A couple alongwith child were arrested after crossing 'over LoC in Uri sector. The couple claimed that Kashmiris feel insecure in PoK.

Oct 3: Police killed two HM terrorists at Beerwah, Budgam. Terrorists attacked house of a village headman at Chandilora, Tangmarg; they set on fire two cars of the headman. Terrorists also launched a grenade at the house of a civilian at Qamarwari, Srinagar. Hearing in Pathribal case on November 3.

Oct 4: Four cops and a civilian killed, an encounter continues at Badshah Chowk, Srinagar. Two terrorists were killed in Ashmuqam, Anantnag. Two of a family were killed and two more wounded in Ahlan Gadol, Anantnag. 21 terrorists surrendered after crossing to this side of LoC in North Kashmir. A terrorist was hurt in a grenade blast in Rajouri, when the grenade exploded. 64 civilians of Sawara, Doda crossed over to Chamba alleging terrorist threat.

Oct 5: The Badshah Chowk encounter ended with death of two terrorists, seven cops and a civilian. 30 people, mostly cops, were reportedly injured in the encounter. Al Mansoorian claimed the responsibility for the attack. A terrorist was killed at Surigam, Lolab. Doda police denied threat of terrorists in Sawara village and said that some of the people who migrated to Chamba were wanted in a murder case. Afzal Guru's family met President APJ Abdul Kalam and sought clemency for Guru.

Oct 6: A civilian was killed and six others injured in a grenade attack at Bus Stand Batmaloo, Srinagar. Body of a woman was fished out from Liddar river. An Al-Badr terrorist was killed at Lenipora, Bumai, Sopore and two were arrested in Anantnag. The arrested terrorists were believed to be involved in planting of bombs at the

National Highway. The valley again witnessed demonstrations against Guru's death sentence. A *fidayeen* struck at Bela Colony, Rajouri injured a cop; the *fidayeen* was reportedly holed up. Two terrorists were arrested from Pangai, Thannamandi.

Oct 7: Five infiltrators and two army personnel were killed in Gurez sector. Terrorists beheaded a Territorial Army recruit Mohd. Shafi Mir in Sopore. Body of a civilian Ab. Rashid Gani of Isus, Achabal was recovered from same locality; the body bore torture marks. Two HM terrorists, planning to plant an IED on the highway, were arrested from a hideout at Botingoo, Anantnag. A cop was killed and two other police personnel injured in a grenade attack on their vehicle at Moori Top, Gool. *Fidayeen*, reportedly holed up at Beli Colony, Rajouri, managed to escape.

Oct 8: Army today foiled an infiltration attempt by killing four infiltrating terrorists of LeT in Sabjan Sub Sector in Poonch; an army jawan was killed and a captain injured in the operation. Terrorists attacked and injured a surrendered terrorist at his house at Tarigam, Budhal. Terrorists struck again in Sopore and beheaded a Dental Surgeon, Dr Mushtaq, the doctor was tortured and slaughtered with shaving blades. Three children were injured as they fiddled with an abandoned explosive device near Chittibandi, Bandipore. BJP leaders met President APJ Kalam and opposed any clemency to Guru. Mirwaiz Umar returned from USA.

Oct 9: The terrorists not only withdrew Rs 60,000 from the accounts of the killed doctor at Sopore but also burnt his car near police station Sopore, police recovered body of a civilian Ghulam Ahmed Wani of Sumlar; there had been an encounter at his house sometime back in which two terrorists were killed. 25 kg IED was recovered from Sarthal, Doda. Army recovered huge cache of arms and ammunition from the encounter site in Sabjan sub-sector.

Oct 10: Four Army personnel, including a JCO, and a LeT terrorist were killed and a jawan injured in an fierce encounter at Chamreh, Surankote. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said that India will give credible evidence to Pakistan about latter's role in July Mumbai blasts. Widows of martyrs of Parliament attack met President APJ Kalam to oppose clemency to Guru.

Oct 11: A terrorist was killed at Chandial in Gursai, Mendhar. A civilian was injured in crossfiring in Pulwama. Death of a youth Irshad Ahmed Lone of Chanpora, Srinagar at Delhi sparked protests in the Valley as people alleged that the youth was killed in custody. Farid Ahmed Ganai of Kralpora, Kupwara, who had gone over to PoK alongwith his wife in 1993, returned with his wife and six children and surrendered before the Army.

Oct 12: A terrorist was killed in Kupwara while a soldier was injured in a terrorist attack in Bandipore. A major gunbattle was going on between the terrorists and the security forces in Shopian, police recovered explosives including eight kg RDX and three grenades from Nud village in Sama. A HM ultra's father was booked under PSA for sheltering terrorist.

Oct 13: Two HM terrorists and a security personnel were killed in the encounter in Shopian. Two civilians were injured as the matador in which they were travelling was caught in crossfiring at Kanspora, Baramulla. Eight cops and nine others were acquitted in the escape of a terrorist Ghulam Rasool Shah from SMHS hospital in 2000.

Oct 14: Four terrorists were killed in two separate incidents in Gurez and Pulwama while five people were injured. Terrorists targeted a petrol vehicle at Nadihal, Bandipore. Terrorists struck at Tandar, Gundana in Keshwan, Doda and snatched four rifles from VDC members. LeT condemned the slaughtering of a doctor in Sopore and added that such acts cannot be described as acts of Jihad.

Oct 15: A SPO turned terrorist, who was instrumental in the attack on police station Ind, Gool, surrendered alongwith one another in Gool. RDX and grenades were seized in Poonch. A cop was killed and another injured as a terrorist fired upon them near Ghanta Ghar (Lal Chowk), Srinagar. Two HM terrorists were killed in different operations in Kellar, Pulwama and Matigowran, Anantnag. A Congress activist escaped unhurt as terrorists targeted his residence at Lajoora, Pulwama.

Oct 16: The villagers of Sugoo village captured a terrorist Rayees Ahmed Malik and handed over him to police; they had been given Rs 2-lac. HM claimed that the terrorist was disowned by them. Two Bangladeshi terrorists, who had travelled by Pooja Express, were arrested in Delhi.

Oct 17: Terrorists struck again in Srinagar and killed two cops, including driver of IGP Kashmir. Three cops and a civilian were killed in attacks at SOG camp Sopore and District Hospital Baramulla. The suspended Indo-Pak dialogue is to resume from Nov 14.

Oct 18: Army gunned down four infiltrating terrorists near LoC in Kupwara district. A terrorist was arrested with two hand grenades at Chak-e-Raithan, Budgam and an extortionist at Qazigund Anantnag. A CRPF personnel committed suicide in Anangnag district. Doda police rescued two VDC members who had been kidnapped by the terrorists from Tandu Garethar. Arms and ammunition was recovered in Rajouri district. Geelani called for a three day strike for clemency to Guru.

Oct 19: Terrorists fired at and injured a PSO of a PDP councillor in Sopore; they also snatched his weapon. Terrorists kidnapped a civilian Abdul Majid Bhat of Tikipora, Lolab, tortured him and left after

amputating his earlobe with sharp knife. Two terrorists were killed in different incidents in Bandipore and Watergam, Rafiabab. Syed Ali Shah Geelani led demonstration against deferment of execution of Afzal Guru. 11 Kashmiri detainees were released on eve of Eid. A boy was killed in Budhal while fiddling with an explosive. Doda police destroyed a terrorist hideout in Gandoh and recovered huge quantity of rations. Five Army jawans and a driver were killed in an accident near Nowgam on the outskirts of Srinagar city.

Oct 20: Security forces killed two terrorists at the residence of a serving SI Ghulam Mohammad Bhat at Banigam, Shalimar (Srinagar). People held protests alleging that Imam of a local mosque Mohammad Altaf Shah was shot at by a CRPF jawan in Pathan Bagh locality of Srinagar. Two more bodies of terrorists were in the encounter at LoC in Kupwara sector. A boy was killed and another injured in a blast at Dardpora, Kupwara. Forces recovered 4 kg RDX at Yaripora Kulgam and picked up a youth for investigation. A LeT terrorist was gunned down at Joura Walla, Gandoh. A Kashmiri terrorist was held by Delhi police and recovered RDX and Rs 10 lakh in cash from his possession. Principal Session Judge Udhampur awarded life imprisonment to five and declared two others absconding in the case related to gruesome massacre of Hindus at Dansal Morh Dandli, Arnas in April 2002.

Oct 21-22 Nine infiltrating terrorists were killed in three different encounters in Boniyar, (Uri), Kanzalwan (Gurez), Machail (Kupwara) in past 48 hours. A terrorist was killed at Nagreb, Bag. People held protests against the death of a youth Maqbool Ahmed Dar allegedly in custody in Bandipore. Terrorists damaged a railway bridge at Repora, Palhalan and lobbed a grenade towards Police Station Sopore. Six terrorists were arrested across the Valley. Two LeT terrorists were killed at Missile, Gandoh; a boy was killed in a blast in Kishtwar. Five people, including three government teachers, were arrested for helping terrorists in Darhal, Rajouri. Three Army jawans were killed and two others injured as a colleague opened fire at them in a camp at Narian in Rajouri district. Ritesh Kumar, a signalman posted in Leh, was arrested by Police on arrival from Jammu at Delhi Airport for spying and being an agent of ISI.

Oct 23: A civilian was killed and a fire service employee injured as terrorists detonated an IED in JK Cable Network office at Tarzoo, Sopore. A police personnel injured in a terrorist attack at Lal Chowk, Srinagar on October 15 succumbed to his injuries. RR claimed to have busted a terrorist network which was being allegedly supported by PDP leader Ghulam Hassan Rather in Kupwara; A terrorist travelling in PDP leader's vehicle was killed and six of his associates were arrested. Five civilians were injured as terrorists lobbed a grenade towards security forces at Sopore. A HM terrorist Baba was and an OGW of terrorists were arrested from Doda district. An explosive device was defused by a Road Opening Party in Bhimber Gali, Poonch. TADA Court today granted bail to Bitta Karate in a case registered against him in 1990. Number of missing civilians of PoK rose to six as they failed to appear on the cross point for their return. A jawan killed his two colleagues and ended his life in Budhal, Rajouri.

Oct 24: Two HM terrorists and a porter were killed while a SPO was injured in a fierce encounter at Keran Dhar, Gandoh. A terrorist hideout was busted and arms recovered in Bafliaz. Terrorists killed a Congress activist Mohammad Afzal Beigh at Changoo, Dooru (Anantnag) and a SPO at Baramulla Main Chowk. Terrorists caused an IED explosion in Pattan, Baramulla. Union Home Minister Shiv Raj Patil said that militancy may assume the shape of a mini war.

Oct 25: Terrorists killed two brothers Matloob Ganai (25) and Hafiz (18) at Duraswami, Lolab and an ex-SPO Aziz Mir at Yaripora, Kulgam. BSF foiled an infiltration bid by arresting three intruders in Uri Sector. An under trial thief escaped from police custody from GMC, Jammu, three cops were arrested. Even as new Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee asked for tension-free situation at borders, Hurriyat leader Umar Farooq described political situation in the Valley as grim.

Oct 26: Even as people protested against the death of a PSO of a PDP leader at Sheri, alleging that the PSO was killed by security forces, two soldiers were killed and 15 soldiers and six civilians injured in a road accident near Letpora on Jammu-Srinagar Highway. Three police cops-Abdul Rehman, Ashiq Hussain and Mohammad Shafi-were arrested for enacting an encounter drama at Ziarat at Astan Bala, Kishtwar. A HM terrorist was arrested from Basti, Bhaderwah. Investigations in Mobile use case by under-trials at Kotbhalwal jail trace calls and SMS record of the mobile. 28 cross LoC on Karvan-e-Aman.

Oct 27: Valley observed shut down on the anniversary of arrival of Indian troops in the Valley in 1947 while terrorists lobbed a grenade towards a CRPF bunker near DC's office that failed to cause any damage. Two cops, one each of IRP and CRPF, were killed in separate accidents in the Valley. While two terrorists were nabbed in Mysore, Army expressed apprehensions that terrorists might enter into Chamba, HP from Doda. Two terrorists were killed and another injured in an encounter in Mendhar. Arms and ammunition including six kg RDX, was recovered from Chingus, Rajouri.

Oct 28: A civilian was killed and 36 others injured in a grenade attack at Sopore. A boy was injured as he kicked a suspicious object on road in Ganderbal. A woman was killed and another injured in a grenade attack on a GREF vehicle in Gool, Reasi. One more terrorist was killed at Kasbalari, Mendhar; an Army jawan was also killed in the encounter. A LeT terrorist was arrested in Doda. A couple of Kupwara was arrested after their

return from PoK; the couple claimed that there is "No Azadi in Azad Kashmir", separatist leader Yasin Malik was allegedly beaten up by an SPO of PDP MLA.

Oct 29: A 24 year old civilian Mohammad Iqbal of Qasba Yar, Rajpora, Pulwama was kidnapped and later slaughtered by terrorists; the terrorists branded him as an informer of the govt. A LeT terrorist and four new recruits were arrested in Mahore, Reasi. The terrorists killed at Kasblari, Mendhar have been identified and all were foreign mercenaries. A havaldar was gunned down by a colleague jawan at Rehmbal, Udhampur; it was the third incident of its type in past eight days. Pakistan Foreign Minister Khurshid M. Kasuri claimed that India and Pakistan were close to strike a deal on Siachen.

Oct 30: A close associate of Salahuddin, Noor Mohd. was today killed in the house of his in-laws at Panchrawa, Baderwah. A student was killed and a cop kidnapped by terrorists in Gulabgarh, Mahore. A terrorist was killed in Bandipore. A SPO turned terrorist Parvez Ahmed of Tikipora, Lolab was arrested by the SOG Kupwara. An encounter took place between terrorists and forces in Sopore but the terrorists managed their escape. Six accused facing trial in *fidayeen* attack on Raghunath Mandir in March, 2002 were discharged by a court in Jammu.

Oct 31: In yet another set-back to prosecution, five accused involved in Daler Mehandi Night blast at Bus-Stand Jammu in 1997 were acquitted, 15 people had died and 72 others injured in the attack. A large quantity of explosives and ammunition was recovered from a forest of Arngi Dhok in Thannamandi (Rajouri). Lt. Col. Saxena was killed by a subordinate jawan at Harwan, Srinagar. Police took the custody of a terrorist in the mobile use case in Kot Bhalwal jail.

Nov 1: A surrendered terrorist was kidnapped and subsequently killed by terrorists in Gool. RR and Banihal Police destroyed a terrorist hide-out and recovered huge quantity of arms and ammunition. Bid to abduct a civilian Mubarak Shah at Sheikhpura, Sallar was foiled as the family snatched his weapon but the terrorist managed to escape. A terrorist was arrested from Tantraypora while another surrendered at Achabal, Anantnag. SHRC of J&K has sought reports about the killing of a Kashmir engineer in Delhi. A piquant situation was witnessed at Chakan-da-Bagh crossing point as PoK authorities didn't turn up to take four PoK citizens who had been overstaying on this side of LoC.

Nov 2: A BSF jawan was killed and two others injured as terrorists attacked them outside busy Shakti sweets on Residency Road, Srinagar. Puneet Singh of Khawaja Bagh, Baramulla, a SPO disengaged only on March 16 this year, were shot dead by terrorists in the town, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen claimed the responsibility. Two cops were held for extortions in two different incidents in the Valley. Two terrorists surrendered in Doda. A terrorist was held for killing a surrendered terrorist. Arms and ammunition was recovered from Samyal forest in Ramban.

Nov 3: A top HM terrorists Bil Wahab of Kamad, Anantnag, who had surrendered last year, was gunned down by terrorist in the outskirts of Anantnag. An IED was detected and defused near Sher Garhi Police Station on Srinagar. A civilian was kidnapped in Kupwara while three police officers escaped unhurt in a terrorist attack at Pinglish, Tral. A LeT terrorist was gunned down at Sangiot, Mendhar. Claiming the joint anti-terrorism mechanism was still at discussion level, Army chief said that cross-border terrorism and infiltration still continue.

Nov 4: 200 kg RDX, 61 detonators and large quantity of explosive material was recovered from a cave, used by terrorists as a hideout, in Sumbar, Ramban. A civilian was injured by terrorists in Kandi area of Rajouri; forces recovered 28 rounds in the same area. A HM terrorist Mehboob Khatana of Rajouri was arrested at Tengpuna, Pulwama. Bobby of a Sumbal youth Nisar Mala was exhumed today as the family alleged that the youth had been killed by security forces five months ago. Union Minister of State Sriprakash Jaiswal alleged that Nepal was being used by terrorists as a base and for their safe passage into India. END

All roads lead to Lal Ded

By Bilhan Kaul

of Kashmir, all the literary greats of Lal Ded takes the

cake as number one poet not only among her peers but extends to six centuries down the line in our age as well. Hence the question that is most important is her number one ranking in Kashmiri literature justified? In doing so, we have not to resort to sentimentality or romanticism which Bertand Russel describes as love for the past but put her to the rigours of critical analysis and evaluation.

Firstly, whether she was a saint poet and mystic is immaterial to present occupation and need not detain us to explore her number one position among the poets of Kashmir whether of past or of present.

Lal Ded, had she lived in present times could easily have been existentialist scholar but that she was saivite yogini as Richard Temple calls her reflects the mood of the age in 14th Century. Kashmir Saivism was the

fashion of 14th Century Kashmiri Hindus and was followed by both classes and masses in equal measure. The fact remains Lalla was a poet of high quality and that is to state the obvious. She was definitely a Saivite Yogini and used it as an instrument to give way to her poetic genius. In the end, she chose her own path with inspiration often preceding the thought.

Lal Ded wrote her poetry with fury and passion and even with intellectual arrogance. Her poetry came to her in a fit of emotion, seized her entire being inspired her to vomit gems of Kashmiri literature. Lal Vaakhs are forceful enough to hit you on the face before you realize what has hit you. Most importantly, you should not read or hear them in English translation. In doing so, as in the case of all poetry does not convey even the one fourth of original Idea or to put it differently, does not convey in any manner the skills of Lalla. Therefore, read them in Kashmiri language. Never mind if the alphabets are Roman or Devnagri.

Lalla was more than a mere saivite Yogini. She was a philosopher, teacher, pacifist, social reformer. But her genius lay in her poetic compositions. Incidentally, her competitor as number one Kashmiri poet is another woman Habbakhatoon. Lal Vaakhs are forceful while Habbakhatoon's composition are more down to earth. Lal Vaakhs are philosophers's stone as against Habba Khatoon whose concerns are more mundane. Lal Ded preaches as against Habba Khatoon's compositions which are born in the backdrop of intense agitation and poetic sermons acts as a balm on that agitation. Lalla walks alone confident of herself and her knowledge. Habba Khatoon is not so sure of herself and creates poetry for her solace. Lalla creates poetry to confirm her confident status.

She is a mystic and her concerns are universal. Habba Khatoon is an out and out a Kashmiri poet and uses Kashmiri beauty to create a top class imaginary. The theme of her poetry is that she has just missed the bus. Lal Ded was already on board surveying the scene as an outsider. Habba Khatoon wanted to swim with the tide as against Lal Ded had no inclination to swim with current. She was forever a rebel. A rebel with purpose. A rebel with cause. Her sympathies are not for people or for even her own self. She searched for meaning in life and it was life long mission for her. Habba Khatoon created poetry to create sympathy for her and for her condition. Her poetry was created in isolation and yet was meant for people. Habba Khatoon's Vatsun was meant to create awareness. As against Lal Vaakhs, where, search was more essential.

In the end, Lal Ded beats Habba Khatoon as premier poet of Kashmir because Lal Ded had more skill and her Vaakhs viewed with cool head created more impact.

Some scholars notably PN Bazaz has suggested that she was influenced by Sufis and that she brought about synthesis between Islam and Hinduism. I must say that this is quite outrageous claim. We have no evidence that Lalla was influenced by Sufism. In any case, Islam was just beginning to penetrate Kashmir during Lalla's time and the interaction of Lal Ded with Hamdani is totally false. She was out and out a Hindu who was impressed with Saivism. Her Guru Sedamol initiated her in Saivite philosophy and in following Vaakh she conveys her gratitude.

Gurun Dupnam Kunny Vachun

Nuybrai Dupnam Andar Achun

Sui Gau Lali Vaakh Tu Vachun

Tavwy Huytam Nangai Nachun

That Lalla was in the practice of Yogic penances can be seen in the following Vaakh which is easily her best.

Damadam Kaurmas Daman Hale

Prazuloym Deef t Nanayum Zaath

Andrum Prakaash Nubar Chotum

Gati Rotum t Karmus Thap.

This Vaakh is simply mind blowing in its intensity. Watch out for skills and dexterous use of Kashmiri language and watch out for metre in the above Vaakh. Marvellous is least one can say. This Vaakh is also noticeable for the force with which it is uttered.

There is hint of rising above religious dogma in the following Vaakh.

Muda Krai Chai N Dharun Tu Parun.

Muda Krai Chai N Rachinai Kai

Muda Krai Chai N Deh Sandarum

Sahaz Vuyachurn Chui Vapudesh.

In the last two stanzas she is also contradicting herself what has been stated earlier. In view of the difficulty in writing Kashmiri language in Roman script I limit myself to following one Vaakh to convey to reader her poetic genius.

Lal Bu Drayus Kapsi Poshi

Kadai tu Dunyu Kadnam Lath

Tuiyi Yali Kharnam Zauz Tuiyi

Vovir Vaan Gayum Alunz Lath

Dhobi Yali Chavnas Bu Kani Pyathai

Saz Tu Sabun Machnum Yachui
Suchi Yali Phirnam Hani Hani Kachai
Ad Lali Mai Prayum Parmai Gath.

The above mentioned Vaakh confirms why Lalla is premier poet of Kashmir. It also confirms why she walks tallest among the many great poets of Kashmir. It is a show piece poetry. It is a poetry of highest order. It has all the ingredients of greatest poetry written by mankind. It has everything which poetry lover wants to find. Skill, imagery, metaphor, philosophical outpourings and the determination to come through.

We accord Lal Ded as number one position keeping in view number of factors. And when we consider those factors all roads lead to Lal Ded. She rules among the minds and hearts of Kashmiris.

Her influence is also evident when a section of Kashmiri society tried to communalize her name and give it Islamic connotation. Lot of effort was undertaken to appropriate her in Islamic ethos. All we can say is that Lal Ded belonged to mankind and not just to Kashmiris.

In fact, Lalla was quite appalled by depredations carried by Muslim invaders. This is evidenced by following Vaakh.

Shiv Chui Thali Thali Rozan
Mu Zan Hind Tu Muslaman
Trukh Hai Chuk Paan Praznaay
Soi Chai Shvi Sati Zam Zan

It is certainly not the Vaakh that makes non distinction between Hindus and Muslims. It tells foreigners to maintain human dignity and not discriminate between man and man. It tells them to look inwards and realize one's own self as God is seeing in the heaven.

In the end, it is a tribute to Lal Ded that she continues to occupy our minds and hearts even after more than six centuries after her death. She defined Kashmiri poetry and set standards for others to follow. And to tell the truth her standards are still hard to climb. She was her own self and genre of poetry that she created was unique. Lal Ded's poetry gives the impression that she was poet of intellect. Yet, all her poetry rose from deep recesses of the heart.

The English translations of her compositions fail to do justice to her. Because translator seeks to focus on words and search for its equivalent. By doing so flavour and unity of the poetry is lost. That is why translations by Prof. Jaya Lal Koul or PN Bazaz in English fail to do justice to her compositions. Because poetry is not all about meaning it should be captured by senses much before one seeks to get the meaning.

END

Jammu Tourism Needs Value Addition

By Mahesh Kaul

Tourism cannot grow in isolation. The intangibility and multiplier effect that are inherent components of every tourism product make it special and delicate.

Tourism is not just marketing of a destination area without creating a proper infrastructure for the tourist intake and thereby neglecting the carrying capacity.

Tourism means value addition with changing customer demand and taste. If timely value addition of a tourism product is not made possible with professional skill then there is every possibility of its decay prematurely.

Value addition leads to prolonged tourist stay in the destination area. The longer the stay of the tourist in the destination area, the more is the credibility quotient. Jammu has been the focus of attention primarily due to the pilgrimage tourism. And the source of attraction being the Shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi. The planners and policy makers have not been able to expand the tourism circuit of Jammu properly beyond Mata Vaishno Devi. The reason being simple- the ignorance of heritage potential of the Jammu region. Jammu has been the seat of power and epicentre of rich cultural heritage. The forts, palaces, educational institutions being the tangible part of the folklores, and other art forms that are unique to this region. Both these aspects have not been focussed upon and well documented.

If these aspects are incorporated into the tourism circuit in a phased and planned manner then the tourism of Jammu region will be phenomenal success. As the focus has never been on heritage in technical terms-it has led to the destruction of the heritage in this region.

Historical palaces, temples & forts are in shambles due to lack of proper conservation & preservation. If anywhere restoration has been carried out that too has been done with incompatible material, thus altering the

heritage character of building or monument.

The historic Mubarak Mandi is an apt example of vandalism, ignorance & lack of the sense of heritage on the part of one and all. These are numerous examples of the lack of sense of heritage in the Jammu region.

This negligence has minimised the tourism potential of this region. If the tourism potential of the Jammu region has to be made sustainable then the policymakers & tourism planners will have to understand that involvement of professionals at various levels from diverse fields is the need of the hour.

The tourist stay can be prolonged if the itinerary is crafted with professional skill. The involvement of historians, conservators, tourism management professionals and expert bodies like ASI is of paramount importance.

To create tourist gaze in Jammu region we need to focus on the following crucial areas.

1. Listing and Documentation of heritage sites & monuments.
2. Conservation and Preservation of these sites & monuments.
3. Incorporation of these sites & monuments into the tourism circuit.
4. An analysis of the tourist carrying capacity.

We have no proper listing and documentation mechanism for the heritage sites and monuments. This has resulted in their vandalism and negligence. Once these sites and monuments are listed and documented- it will lead to heritage tourism in this region.

The next stage should be to involve professionally trained conservators, architects and historians for their restoration so that these monuments and sites become the symbols of tourism of this region and add an element of sustainability to it.

Once these sites and monuments are restored then these can be easily incorporated into the tourism circuit. This will be the real value addition to the tourism of the Jammu region,

This will also ease the pressure on the limited circuit of tourism due to Mata Vaishno Devi.

A proper frame work for the carrying capacity analysis should also be devised so that the tourist influx can be accommodated and managed properly.

Another aspect that needs special focus is that global climate challenge is posing a serious threat to the heritage structures all over the world. In the coming years, as per the UNESCO, prominent heritage sites will be out of the heritage list. This means that the heritage structures need special professional and technical attention if we want our posterity to know about their roots. To sum up, Jammu tourism can be converted into sustainable tourism product if the above mentioned inputs are incorporated for its value addition.

**(The Writer is MTM from University of Jammu & member PATH)*