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Mouth-watering Peaches - A Taste of Kashmir



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Message from the President - M.L.Mattoo Between Ourselves

amaskar. Wish you all a Happy Diwali. My recent trip to Jammu has given me further insight of how things have started changing in particular to Samoohik Maikhla. I was invited by All State Kashmiri Pandit Conference to attend this community Yagneopavit function. It was preceded by performing all functions like Mehandiraat, Devagon etc. In this function, 21 boys participated, who were from different parts of the world. One boy was from US, 2 boys were from Kashmir valley and the rest were from Jammu. The KP community should be thankful to ASKPC organisers for such reformist activity and congratulate them for doing so year after year. They also take lead in conducting marriages of poor girls.

This trip gave me another opportunity to meet various sick and destitute families in the Camps at Muthi, Purkhoo, Mishriwala, Nagrota and Udhampur. On behalf of KPA, a monettary help of about Rs. 15000.00 was offered to various deserving families.

Last month once again, we witnessed the sad demise of Shri J.N.Kachroo, a founder-member of Project Zaan and Member of the Milchar Editorial Board. Shri Kachroo used to take lot of interest in KPA activities and was a regular contributor to Milchar. Father of Shri Suriender Kachroo, our Ex-General Secretary, Kachroo Sahib was the man of very

high integrity and dedication and we will always miss him.

Kharghar Project: Our architects have already issued a tender notice in 2 newspapers (Free



Press Journal and a Marathi daily) on 7th October 2006 and we are awaiting builders' response for the construction work. We as a community have been complacent regarding the collection of funds after the initial impetus. Repeatedly we have been requesting members about contributions, but it seems members are waiting for the work to start. With the present funds available, it will not be possible to start the construction on continuous basis, in case we decide to start piling work on 9th December 2006, the Mahurat date.

NOIDA Association has also purchased a piece of land at NOIDA. I their working committee members who have been collecting funds for their project. I was really surprised that in the last 4 Sundays, they have moved from door to door and have collected Rs. 20 Lacs. The community population there is about families, but their lifemembership is about 400. I would request our biradari to pick up further initiative from here and send their cheques to KPA by the time we arrange for door to door collection.

Editorial - M.K.Raina

Ah! Kachroo Sahib

he Editorial Board, 'Milchar' announces with deep regret, the sad demise of its seniormost member Shri

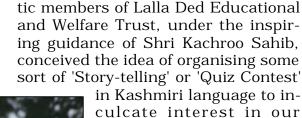
J.N.Kachroo on 14th September 2006

at Mumbai. Shri Kachroo Sahib's departure from the scene has been a great loss to the Mumbai biradari in general and the Kashmiri Pandits' Association in particular.

Shri Kachroo Sahib got associated with 'Milchar' in the year 2001, when its Editorial Board was re-constituted to bring in professionalism in its publication. Apart from the valuable guidance he provided to the Board, Kachroo Sahib initiated the column 'From the Pages of Histrory' in 'Milchar' in January 2001 and continued it till August 2005 when he could not a Kashmiri literary concentrate much on writing due to his ill-health. His contribution to refurbish the journal has been enormous. The vacuum created

by his departure as far as 'Milchar' is concerned, can not be filled for a long time to come.

Apart from his contribution to Milchar, Shri Kachroo Sahib was instrumental in launching the Project Zaan, a Kashmiri literary platforn in the year 2000 in Mumbai. It was actually in late 1998 that some enthusias-



Shri Kachroo Sahib was instrumental in launching the Project Zaan, platforn in the year 2000 in Mumbai.

culcate interest in our youngsters in their mothertongue. Initially, one page hand-outs were released along with the Milchar, giving tit-bit information about our culture, language, birth place etc. to our youngsters. These hand-outs created interest not only in our young generation, but also in the senior members of the community. It was here when Shri Kachroo Sahib and his team discussed the blue print of the project with Kashmiri Pandits' Association for the larger interest of the community, and KPA decided to give logistic support to this laudable effort. Consequently, on 30th April, 2000, Project Zaan was re-launched as a joint project of Lalla Ded Educa-

tional & Welfare Trust and the Kashmiri Pandits' Association. Mumbai.

The periodical 'Hand-outs' ultimately gave way to the 'Information Digest Series', of which 5 volumes have been published till date. This also includes the publication of 'Basic Reader for Kashmiri Language', the first of its

kind in the country incorporating the Standardised Devanagari-Kashmiri Script, in March 2001, . The 'Reader' was further revised and republished in June 2004.

From the start, Shri Kachroo Sahib had the young boys and girls of the community in mind, who he wanted to be in touch with their language and their roots. So he conceived the idea of conducting quiz programmes on the yearly basis, where these youngsters could recite stories, poems, riddles etc. in Kashmiri, and also answer question related to Kashmir and Kashmiri, based on the information given in 'Information Digests'. Thus started the 'Quiz Contests' of Project Zaan, which were held year after year, initially for only youngsters, and finally for seniors as well. First such Quiz Contest was held at Kashyap Bhawan on 30 April 2000 at the re-launch of Project Zaan itself. With the help of Shri Sunil Fotedar of Texas, USA, the Project was also put on internet in the year 2001.

Though the Project Zaan could not do well during the last couple of years mainly due to lack of funds, it was hoped that the things would move in the right direction once the revised blue-print, which Shri Kachroo Sahib had lately thought upon, was ready. But the Almighty did not allow us company of Shri Kachroo Sahib for long and the Project got yet another setback.

In keeping with the hopes and aspirations of Shri Kachroo Sahib, this is the right time that the organisers revive the Quiz Contests, induce more interest in our youngsters and add more volumes to the Information Digest Series. Since the Project Zaan has already some capital for introducing

prizes for various events, it would be worthwhile, if some sort of Award is also started in the name of Shri Kachroo Sahib. It is hoped that the organisers will not find the community wanting and many well-wishers will come forward to finance the Project. If such a thing happens, it will be a humble tribute to the great personality of Kachroo Sahib on behalf of the Mumbai biradari.



A Memoir

That night on 14 September 2006, suddenly my world stood still, my life came crumbling down

like a building of cards and I was shattered. **Boitoth** (Shri J.N.Kachroo), the dearest person who was my friend, guide and philosopher for the last over five and a half decades was recalled to the eternal home by his Creator. What the Lord giveth, He taketh back and so it had to be!

Besides teaching me academic subjects from first principles, he taught me precept and practice, how to live a fullfilling life, by loving without expectations and service before self.

I owe him immense gratitude for having touched my life in so many meaningful ways which defy definition and description. He was the one who accepted me despite all my faults and flaws. He showered on me loving care as no one else, during my formative years; thus moulding my character nearest to his heart's desire.

"Adieu dear SIR, till we meet in far beyond at the Elysian Fields, never to part again."

T.N.Bhan Gauri Aparts., Eksar Road, Borivali

Reaching Out - S.P.Kachru IMPERFECT MANKIND

There is a perfect ant,

a perfect bee etc. etc.

perpetually

mankind

but

unfinished.

ver since human beings started thinking about their identities and values, they have been aiming for an ideal - the perfect human being, whom all

other human beings should strive to imitate. There is only one concrete result of this deliberation upon which everyone in the human race will agree, however-namely that mankind as it lives and behaves on this planet today, has not yet become perfect. No wonder

that while nature does attain perfection but we people never do.

There is a perfect ant, a perfect bee etc. etc. but mankind is perpetually unfinished. Imaginatively, when mankind's spirit awoke to life, a concept

was born that became known as ethics. Ethics can serve as a signpost on the way to becoming perfect. Imperfect or as some may want to address unfinished man requires ethics because the consciousness of self prompts people to think of themselves first and only then - if at all - to think of others. Despite Ethics, crimes like wars, murder, mayhem and better not to mention lesser rated ones like dishonesty, continue to exist & grow, unabated. The only thing that has continuously changed & will continue to change is the way in which morals are interpreted, justified and implemented. Unfinished mankind, however, has remained & will

continue to remain as far away from what people actually should be or could become. Modernity has provided a garb that men now have a shower and a shave before going to



attack another fellow human being.

The ethics of those who are on their way to becoming perfect human beings seem thus to be imperfect, a

fact that will clearly prevent these ethics from becoming fully effective. One of the main shortcoming probably is that, ethics are, as a rule, preached to others, hoping that they will take them to heart

thus underlining that we have two sets of morality, one which we preach and the other which we practice but seldom preach. Every human being, however, has his or her own unique experience to guide their ethical practices. There may not be any society where morals are not contravened daily. We are, thus, forced to admit that crime is unavoidable hence routine. Consequently, there is no point in referring to the unavoidable imperfection of human nature as a disease too since if it were so, we all would have contracted this disease as imperfection reigns everywhere.

In short, the perfect human being will never exist. ▲▲

Our Heritage - Prof. Raj Nath Bhat

Preservation of Culture, Identity & Heritage - 2

the Valley, to sever our ties with our ancestral land where our pedigree had lived for over five thousand years. Shaiva Kashmiri was there even before Kashmir knew any Buddhists, Sikhs or Muslims. The land was known not only for her bountiful rivers and mountains but also for the scholarship that it cultivated for over three thousand years. It is

recorded that when Patanjali completed his commentary 'Mahabhashya' on Panini's Ashtaadhyaya, he went over to Kashmir to consult and seek the approval of the pundits in Kashmir before 'releasing' it to the world of scholarship at large. A Buddhist scholar, Kumar Jeev who was trained in Kashmir, is a legend in Chinese history. it is believed, He. translated over a hundred Pali texts into Chinese. which saw Buddhism flourish in China. The Pandits have been a peace loving ethnic group, fond of

good foods, fruits and flowers, and above all scholarship. You may recall that after the displacement of 1990, the uprooted community was extremely concerned about the education of their wards, food and shelter was accorded a second priority.

A friend of mine from Jammu expressed his astonishment at seeing young kids appearing from nowhere early in the morning and their parents escorting them their way to some



nearby school, in most cases, a tent school. This has been and may continue to be the basic desire of our

biradari - pursuit of education, knowledge and gyan and understanding.

Sanskrit has been the language of intellection of our ancestors. This fact must not be ignored. It is an august duty of our generation to inspire and persuade our young minds to study Sanskrit and master it. Our ancestors mastered many languages simultaneously Sanskrit occupied a pride of place there. In the present materialistic world, parents assume engineering, medicine,

management are the only worthy areas that their wards ought to opt for. It is an ill conceived thought whose consequences can be fatal for our progeny. The areas of knowledge are many. We should aim at excelling in all areas including the study of Shastras and Vedas. This will ensure

In the present materialistic world, parents assume that engineering, medicine, and management are the only worthy areas that their wards ought to opt for. It is an ill conceived thought whose consequences can be fatal for our progeny.

glory to our future generation and those that follow them.

There are many communities in our own country that have suffered the trauma of displacement but they ensure that their kids learn the mother tongue at home. Can we emulate their example? Instances are many, but I bring forward just two: Bengalis who had to run away from what is now Bangladesh and Sindhis who flew Sindh in Pakistan. Bengalis are scattered in various states, so are Sindhis yet they speak their respective mother tongues at home. There are many other communities that deserve to be emulated in this respect. Instances are: Malayalis, Tamils, Punjabis, Gujaratis to name a few.

I was amazed to find that just four Gujarati families in Asmara, North East Africa had successfully preserved their mother tongue after nearly a hundred years of migration there! And their kids spoke chaste Hindi too just because, as they put it, they were amply exposed to Hindi Films right through their childhood and youth. The families sought brides for their sons and grooms for their daughters from Gujarat. There was not a single case of inter-community marriage reported.

May our renewed quest for preservation of our culture, identity and heritage make it happen across the country and abroad so that our progeny does not suffer the pangs of a lack of identity, as do many communities in several countries across Europe and the Americas.

Love Kashmiri, Learn Kashmiri! Be a rightful heir to your legacy and history and culture!

Matrimonial

Wanted suitable KP alliance for a slightly Manglik, good looking, smart girl, 5'-5", 10 August 1976 born, M.A. (Economics), B.Ed. (Jammu University), working as Lecturer in Degree College, Mumbai. Correspond with Tekni/ Kolawali to Mr. Raina, Mumbai.

Tel: (Res.) 022-65716118. Mob: 09223230640.

E-mail: amitraina007@gmail.com

Suitable alliance is invited for my son, born November 1977, height 5'-3", B.E. Electronics, working as Senior Engineer in MNC and posted at Mumbai. Please contact Mrs. Susheela Kachroo, C/ o Shri S.K.Garyali, Flat No. 701, Bldg. No. 38, NRI Complex, Seawood Estates, Nerul, Navi Mumbai 400706. Tel: 39220056.

26 January 1997

... Dr. K.L.Chowdhury ...

You amaze me, my country that not only you grant immunity to a dreaded Ghazi who spawned the insurgency, conspired and took up arms against you, looted, burned and raped and gunned down innocent denizens, with impunity but also accord him the privilege and the highest honour to take the salute today, in the Republic Day parade right in this borough here, so near to where his victims shiver in the refugee tents.

Book Review - Dr. B.K.Moza

M.K.Raina's 'kénh nón, kénh són'

am thrilled to receive a copy of, yet, another book of Short Stories by Shri M. K. Raina, streamlined written in Devanagri script of Kashmiri language. It is, indeed a great pleasure and privilege to put forth my thoughts that this latest publication of Shri Raina has aroused in my mind and review, as far as possible, its contents. A hundred paged book, published by "Expressions", Vasai, Dist. Thane and priced at Rs. 30.00, contains five short stories in Kashmiri language, revolving on the theme, that the title of this book upholds. The five stories reveal five commonly occurring situations, with in-depth focus on the psyche that is associated with Kashmiri life and the realities thereof.

'kénh nón, kénh són', literally means "something apparent and something underneath the depths", but if one ponders on this thoughtfully, it shapes as a philosophy, a reality which everyone realizes in life that, in our every day happenings there is as much invisible under the layers of time and space as is apparent to the naked eye. As the surface of an ocean reveals a magnitude of panorama as seen by the eyes, but, underneath in its depths, there is a phenomena of time and space which reveals itself differently and diversely at different occasions, as one goes into the depths and looks around with binoculars of perceptions and observation.

Mr. M. K. Raina does not require an introduction as, by now, he has become a well-known person in our Kashmiri circles, he is associated with. Born in 1948 in Kashmir, he is by profession an engineer. Till 1990, he remained engaged in Kashmir with postings in different parts of Kashmir which provided his keen eyes an abundance of Nature and its bounties that Kashmir abounds in. This employment, however, did not last longer and with exodus of Kashmiri Pandits, he was also displaced internally, firstly to Jammu for five years as a refugee and then with a shade of better circumstances, he migrated to Mumbai where he is presently based apparently under satisfactory environs of opportunities which he has been in keen look out whole of his life. He has created a world of his own in Kashmiri literally circles, as a writer of Kashmiri prose and poetry, as a linguist for Kashmiri language, its streamlined Devnagri script and computer friendly fonts, reproducing Kashmiri classics, present day literature that is, surprisingly, getting generated abundantly in different scripts and fonts of Kashmiri language. He is associated with many journals that our Kashmiri Organizations bring out at different places in the country, being a prolific writer of Kashmiri prose and poetry of contemporary interests. It is always refreshing to visit his website www.mkraina.com

This apparent, vast and varied background has provided him an invisible insight with depth, in looking

around the minute details of every day life in general and in particular the practices and nuances of a Kashmiri as it obtained in Kashmir before terrorism over there, and now in a widespread diaspora, consequent to Kashmiri Pandit exodus from their ancient homeland. His professional expertise has provided him a unique know-how of engineering and reverse engineering as required constructing intense plots for complex situations, getting in to attachments and detachments, with microscopic details and photo-finishing of conceived relations and dramas thereof, layer by layer, with high powered lens of his perceptions and observations with visionary breadth of heart and head. This is necessary for constructing a macro structure of happenings of day to day lives as it obtained once upon a time and as it prevails presently. His literary language is simple and sweet, as of a common man in every day life. Having researched Kashmiri Proverbs, Vaaks and Shrukhs, he very skillfully chisels into the depths and engraves jewels of Kashmiri idiom appropriately, to broad band complex situations remarkably and humorously. Though a sufferer of Kashmiri Pandit internal displacement, his writings reveal broad mindedness, associated with Kashmiriyat, maintaining in word and spirit the tenets of communal harmony. He has a keen eye on the injustice that our women-folk have received and the focus is visible to reform the society in this respect. His life has been a visible struggle, as he lost his father in early childhood and was brought up under the care of his great mother and as the saying goes

behind his outstanding contributions, there is a woman, his outstanding partner of life and a happy family. This apparent acknowledgement of women greatness is, rightly, becoming visible and focused in his short stories, so are the intense situations through which the down-trodden in our society pass.

With this as the background, the first story in this book is about 'Thukshukur' which beautifully describes the feudal practices followed by landlords and money lenders in general and in this situation in Kashmir, in particular. "Interest on loan and interest on interests" used to enslave the common man in debts required for performing the marriages of their young ones. Though the system was eradicated in Kashmir immediately after the partition of the country, when the people's government came in power over there in 1947, the practice is still relevant speaking generally. With changed times the values have also changed and this is revealed with great insight in this story where one brother of old values suffers the pangs of this cruel system. But his vagabond brother, whilst totally disrespecting these values, offers timely succor to his brother, in volunteering himself to serve the money lender to pay off the loans, and contrarily makes the life of the money lender miserable by following the literal meaning of the proverbial commands, the latter generally gives, causing great harm to him. The situation, in the process, becomes as tense for the money lender as he prefers to forego the debt and get riddance from the vagabond employee whose services he had agreed to exploit in place of his older

brother who was growing weak under the burden of age and prevailing circumstances caused by his adherence to old values and respect for the employer. Kashmiri language is remarkable for its treasures of quality proverbs and idioms which, at times, convey differently than what they literally mean. Mr. Raina has very commendably chosen many such proverbs which the younger brother is making use of in turning the tables in confronting his master by following the literal meaning of the proverbs. The whole drama thus provides a humorous, interesting and literary piece of literature.

The second story, 'Vath' is focusing on a social situation, faced by Kashmiri Pandits. due to their being discriminated for jobs leading to their migration beyond the limits of the state, in search of bread and butter and subsequently by internal displacement after the onset of terrorism in the state, which caused their large scale exodus from the valley in 1990. The story describes the pains of this migration displacement and reveals the values of 'relationship', which prove mostly superficial at the moments of trials and tribulations. Even amongst the brothers, sharing the accommodation which a migrant brother had created at Delhi becomes unpleasant causing crafty set back to his brother who was displaced, lock stock and barrel by exodus. Though the sister-in-laws had very sympathetic relationship among themselves, the relations grew sour, as generally happens under such situations, between haves and have nots. In the process the parents suffer and die a sad death and the younger

brother has no alternative other than returning to Jammu for his survival. With better conditions he works hard, does well and succeeds in having his own residence. On the inauguration day, he invites the elder brother's family who visit them with an ulterior motive. However, the brotherly relation reveals, blood is thicker than water and the strained relations get once again corrected with changed circumstances. The story ends on an optimistic note when the elder brother wills his Delhi property amongst the two sons, one his own and the other that of his brother. The whole is a brilliant plot of events and details, revealing the pains, migration and exodus of Kashmiri Pandits, has caused in their real lives.

The third story 'Tabdeeli' is revealing a fascinating drama caused by the transfer, (Tabdeeli) of a dedicated officer in Kashmiri ambience, who had risen from mechanic to a Head Clerk over thirty seven years of his service. By dint of his dedicated services, attachment of affection and love for his colleagues and moral integrity, he created a niche for himself in the office. As used to happen, this long service had made him possessive of his job and was, therefore, very much upset with the transfer order, a new boss had allowed to take place. As his all efforts to reverse this order, appeared to have not proved purposeful, the dedicated officer gathers courage to accept the reality and prepare himself to face the challenge caused by the transfer. The story reveals the clash of egos and such sensitivities very delicately. He visits the office in another town of Kashmir, in preparation of his move,

and is thrilled to find some of the old colleagues who had served him and the respect he was still commanding upon them. As per the Kashmiri calendar, which is an obsession with Kashmiri psyche, it was very auspicious for him to shift to his new office, by noon on a particular day. To be on time he sends his family and some necessities of house hold to the site of his transfer assuming he would rush as soon as the new boss gives him the relieving orders, and reach timely to suit the limitations caused by the calendar. The boss remained busy with some urgent meetings, could be in connection with the efforts he had decided to make in reversing the transfer orders of this Head Clerk, who was an asset to his organization. Just before noon, the boss reaches the office and instead of signing the relieving orders, he gives him the message that he had got his transfer orders reversed. What a climax! He is visibly upset and all his colleagues heave a sigh of relief and congratulate him for having been retained in the same office. The story again is revealing the values old order hath and what it means to keep pace with the changing times. It also describes artistically the relationships that used to exist in offices providing stability, security and self-respect. Even the peon was respected and he was extended all courtesies that used to be in vogue amongst the top heirarchy. Mr. Raina has succeeded in picturing the emotions and feelings as an artist of appropriate words, expressions and meaningful proverbs.

The fourth story, 'Shamima' describes the communal harmony we used to have in Kashmir which is also

referred to as 'Kashmiriyat'. It details the lives of two families in Kashmir, one a Hindu and the other a Muslim, both living as very close relatives, always at the beck and call of each other. Both have only a daughter, which grow together as very close friends. After graduating from the college, the parents make intense efforts, as is the usual practice, to search for the matches of their daughters and both are married with great expectations. The Hindu daughter, Tosha, migrates to Kolkata where her husband finds a suitable job and the Muslim daughter. Shamima, settles with her husband who, as desired by her parents, was a business man. Though distances create visible barriers, the two families and their daughters remain in close and constant touch with each other. Tosha, in course of time, gives birth to a son and Shamima to a daughter. For some time things are apparently all right, but under the covers, the things turn volcanic with Shamima, as her husband wants to give her a divorce and marry other girl for whom he had long standing infatuation. A storm gets created in both the families but Shamima, being a lady, is destined to suffer. However, the deal is settled and divorce entitles Shamima to monetary benefits and also with the possession of her daughter, Bunty. Shamima's parents feel distressed with this happening. Shamima, however, gathers courage and she stands by her parents, consoling them that she was, as if, their son, always with them for all intents and purposes. Lot happens in between and she finally joins the school as a teacher despite lot of opposition from

her parents. The Head Mistress develops a great liking for Shamima and in her mind wishes her to marry her brother who had recently lost his wife. The Head mistress, creates the situations and gets the remarriage of her brother, though much senior in age, solemnized with Shamima despite all apparent opposition. Originally, it was agreed that Shamima's daughter would also live with her mother but this does not become acceptable to her husband as someone advises him that this would deprive his son, from his deceased wife, of love and affection from Shamima as she would in that case be partial to her own daughter. Despite all efforts to the contrary, Shamima has to reconcile, being a woman, to leave her daughter under the care of her parents and pass the days with her new husband at the cost of her happiness. Days pass on like this and one day to make the Eid purchases, Shamima's husband was waiting for her to return from school, when he looks upwards to the nest of a sparrow on the ceiling of his verandah, where he was waiting. The mother sparrow was comforting her young one when the husband orders to get the nest uprooted. This causes a commotion to the mother sparrow who apparently gets broken down and breast beaten to find her young one killed. This creates a change of heart in Shamima's husband who now realizes the pain that Shamima must be having, being separated from her daughter. He immediately reverses his aversions and brings her daughter to live with them. Shamima returns from her school and finds to her immense joy, her daughter and step son playing together as brother and

sister. This makes her feel that though her husband was much senior to her in age, he was still with a human heart and she develops great admiration and affection for her husband. With this happy feeling, the story comes to a conclusion with optimism that still there is humanity left in our society.

The fifth story is 'Zaan-Ded', which literally means the 'mother of identity'. It portrays the tragedy which our heritage is suffering due to our changed circumstances, displacements and exodus. Zaan Ded weathers the onslaughts in her homeland, refusing to come out, as did happen to the people who were taking her care but were compelled to get displaced for so many reasons. She weathers the snow storms and typhoons but remains in her abode and all the migrants in far off corners fail to reach her to take possession of the heritage that is thus left in the homeland. Whosoever, tries to bring her reaches her alone or when it is too late and in the process they only get killed unable to carry her through the frost and bite of the times. Still, Zaan Ded is hoping against hope that one moonlit night her heirs will appear crossing the barriers of time and space and give her a helping hand.

Mr. M. K. Raina deserves all kudos in creating these diverse situations and describing the same in such a lucid language which leaves a deep impression on the minds, difficult to describe. He is now bringing out every year a new publication of his own besides doing the outstanding work of a Karamayogi, in rendering our classical and contemporary literature in streamlined Devnagri and putting

Contd. on Page 29

Terror Scenario - Dr. Shiben Krishen Raina

TERRORISM IN KASHMIR: ORIGIN & GROWTH

roadly speaking, when justice and right are denied to a person over a longer period of time, the person is left with two options: bear the situation patiently, or the reaction is anguish, and that reaction, in the process culminates into terrorism. Besides other things, spreading of communal hatred, religious frenzy, separatist tendency etc. are the tools which terrorists generally use. Guns too are used to achieve the so-called specified mission. Fanaticism, extremism, radicalism, separatism, militancy, activism etc. are its other names or manifestations. This is one side of the picture of terrorism (terrorists fighting

people. Needless to mention here that acts of terror are carried out by people who are indoctrinated to the extent of following a strategy of dying to kill. They are the ones who



have become pawns in the hands of their masters who direct their paths, sitting in the comforts of far off places with all the facilities available to them. Masters have their vested political interests while as pawns seemingly have nothing to gain except suffer for a cause about which they themselves don't know or know very little.

Terrorism in Kashmir is almost 18

Modern terrorism has resorted to other option of intimidation, i.e. influence the mass media, in an effort to amplify and broadcast feelings of intense fear and anger among the people.

for a genuine cause i.e. liberating themselves, their society/country from the oppressor/ perpetrator). Another side of the picture is disgusting and questionable. Over the years terrorism has emerged as a systematic use or threatened use of violence to intimidate a population, community or government and thereby effect political, religious or ideological change just to achieve personal gains. Modern terrorism has resorted to other option of intimidation, i.e. influence the mass media, in an effort to amplify and broadcast feelings of intense fear and anger among the

years old now and has likeness to the second side of the picture. It has a history long enough to be traced from the date when partition was forced resulting in the emergence of two nations, India and Pakistan, after the sub-continent freed itself from the colonial rule of the British Empire. It may not be out of context here to probe into the consequences in detail that gave rise to terrorism in Kashmir. But again, before that, giving a brief introduction of this widely known beautiful valley would be too apt.

Kashmir - Paradise on Earth (Switzerland of Asia), Nature's grand

finale of beauty is a masterpiece of earth's creation of charm and loveliness. Famous for its beauty and natural scenery throughout the world and for its high snow-clad mountains, scenic spots, beautiful valleys, rivers with ice-cold water, attractive lakes and springs and ever-green fields, dense forests and beautiful health resorts, enhance its grandeur and are a source of great attraction for tourists. It is also widely known for its different kinds of agricultural products, fruit, vegetables, saffron, herbs, and minerals, precious stones handicrafts like woollen carpets, shawls and finest kind of embroidery on clothes. During summer, one can enjoy the beauty of nature, trout fishing, big and small game hunting etc.; during winter climbing mountain peaks and sports like skating and skiing on snow slopes are commonly enjoyed. In addition to the above, Pilgrimage to famous religious shrines of the Hindus and the Muslims make Kashmir a great tourist attraction. About Kashmir Sheikh Sadie a great Persian poet is believed to have said, "If there is any heaven on earth, it is here in Kashmir, in Kashmir in Kashmir only."

Apart from natural beauty, Jammu and Kashmir has a unique cultural blend which makes it different from the rest of the country (India). It is not only distinct in cultural forms and heritage, but in geographical, demographical, ethnical, social entities, forming a distinct spectrum of diversity. The people of Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh, all follow diverse religion, language and culture, but continuously intermingling which symbolizes Indian Unity amidst

Diversity. Its different cultural forms like art and architecture, fair and festivals, rites and rituals, seers and sages, languages and literatures, embedded in ageless period of history, speak of endless unity and diversity with unparalleled cultural cohesion and amicability. Kashmir has been a great centre of learning. A treasure of

Kashmir has been a great centre of learning. A treasure of rich Sanskrit literature is to be found here. Early I n d o - A r y a n i c civilization has originated and flourished in this land.

rich Sanskrit literature is to be found here. Early Indo-Aryanic civilization has originated and flourished in this land. It has also been embracing point of advent of Islam bringing its traditions of Persian civilization, tolerance, brotherhood and sacrifice.

After the British withdrew from the Indian subcontinent in 1947 and India and Pakistan emerged as two separate countries, princely states were given an option to choose the country they wanted to stay on. Obviously, the states falling geographically within had no other option but to merge with the country they were situated. Border states like Kashmir, Jodhpur etc. took time to come out with their firm decisions probably because they wanted to enjoy

the status of an independent Statehood. In the case of Kashmir, where Maharaja (King) Hari Singh was the ruler, situation worsened considerably. Territorial disputes over Kashmir had already started brewing, Pakistan claiming that Kashmir should go to his side since Muslims were in majority there. Apprehending that Maharaja might opt for an accession to India, Pakistan prepared for an aggression in a bid to capture the State forcibly hoping that masses, mainly

The Instrument of Accession executed by Maharaja Hari Singh was the same which was signed by other rulers of the other princely States. Similarly, the acceptance of the Instrument of Accession by the Governor General was also identical in respect of all such instruments.

Muslims, would support its mission but that didn't happen. Secular forces headed by the then popular mass leader Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah fondly known as Sher-i-Kashmir motivated the Kashmiri people (Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs) to rise to the occasion and stand united to counter and frustrate the evil designs of the enemy who was marching to the capital city Srinagar indulging in bloodshed and mayhem. A new slogan echoed the entire valley: "Hamlavar khabardaar, hum Kashmiri hai tayaar-Hindu Muslim Sikh Ithaad, Naya Kashmir

Zindabaad—" Beware you attackers! We Kashmiris are ready to counter you—Long live the Unity of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs-!!— At Hazuri Bagh, Srinagar before a large crowd on October 1, 1947, Sher-i-Kashmir proclaimed: "Till the last drop of my blood, I will not believe in two-nation theory." It was a rebuff to Mr. Jinnahfather of the nation of Pakistan, who was watching the developments so closely from his country side. Finding their designs on Kashmir not fructifying, Pakistan rulers launched an armed attack on Jammu and Kashmir to annex it. Tribes in thousands along with Pak regular troops entered the State on October 22, 1947 from several points and indulged in loot, arson, rape, bloodshed and mayhem. Bowing before the wishes of the people and seeing his own regular army being out-numbered and to push back the invaders, the Maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession in favour of India on October 26, 1947 on the prescribed terms and conditions. This was accepted by the Governor General of India, Lord Mountbatten the next day. The Instrument of Accession executed by Maharaja Hari Singh was the same which was signed by other rulers of the other princely States. Similarly, the acceptance of the Instrument of Accession by the Governor General was also identical in respect of all such instruments.

With J&K becoming legal and constitutional part of Union of India, Indian army rushed to the State to push back the invaders and vacate aggression from the territory of the State.

(To be continued)

Remembering our Roots - Arjan Dev Majboor Some Famous Tirthas of Kupwara & Handwara

ashmir has remained a cradle of Teerthas. Being surrounded by small and big mountain ranges, lush green forests and meadows full of flowers, attraction towards spiritualism has remained throughout its history. According to Abul Fazal there were seven hundred Teerthas at that time in Kashmir. Neelmata gives the details of hundreds of Vaishnava Teerthas situated in

place in the olden times. It was still a place of KP devotees. This Teertha has been mentioned in some histories on Kashmir.

Zurhom: 'hom' is the word derived from



Ashram. Ashrams were constructed for saints and learned scholars so that they could carry on the meditation and

Kashmir has remained a cradle of Teerthas. Being surrounded by small and big mountain ranges, lush green forests and meadows full of flowers, attration towards spiritualism has remained throughout its history.

Kashmir.

The Kashmir Mahaatmeyas—written by renowned scholar Sh. Anant Ram Shastri has collected Sanskrit Mahatmeys written in praise of various famous Teerthas. It is a great service to the scholar of Kashmir. Mahatmeys not only praise the Deities, but also give a full detail of the place and its importance.

In this article I am going to give brief details of some Teerthas surrounding Kupwara and Handwara of North Kashmir. I have not been able to see these places personally, but have collected information from some migrant K.P's of this area.

Zolur: This place is about nine kilometers from Sopore. It seems that it might have remained a Buddhist

creative work at ease, away from the hustle and bustle of towns and cities. Zurhom (Kupwara) is a famous Teertha which was the last station to reach the world famous teertha of 'Sharda' which is under the control of Pakistan now. From Zurhama about six hours journey on foot comes Sharda (Sharda—Desa of Kashmir).

During recent excavations made at Zurhama by the state Archaeology Department, important statues have been found. These are: 1) Bhagwan Vishnu riding on 'Garuda'. 2) Meditative Budha in 'Mudra' and 3) Yakhsha Mukh Shiva (a very interesting find). There was a Devi Mandir also, where devotees used to come. Finds of sculptures of Vishnu, Shiva and Budha show the tolerances

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of various faiths in Kashmir of that age. According to Neelmat Puran, Vaishnavism was the religion of the people in the times of king Neela. Even Shivratri at that time was not observed as a grand festival of K.P's in the later period uptill now. Buddhism has a great impact on our Kashmiri culture.

There were great 'Viharas', 'Chaiteys' and Gumpas in whole of Kashmir. I personally have seen a statue of Budha, two feet high having a small Vihara at its back. It was found while digging in a Pyrithrum Form at Zainapora (District Pulwama). Later I met the curator of Museum Lalmandi J.L.Bhan, a friend of mine, who got the statue in the museum. It was stated that the statue was fourteen hundred years old. It is about ten years prior to migration. What I mean to say is that the statues of Buddha were made with aesthetic sense of art from stone, metal, wood and ivory in Kashmir and many of these master pieces exist in the famous museums of the world. This shows that Buddhism had stretched its roots in the whole Valley. There is much more to say on this account, but this article is restricted to the teerthas of Northern Kashmir only.

Bhadrakali: Kali is the Goddess revered everywhere in our country. Bhadra-Kali is about seven kilometers from Handwara. The statue of Kali is said to be natural on the top of the hill. On Mahanawmi 'Teher and

Charvan' was taken to this place by the people of Handwara and Kupwara. It is interesting to note that migrants from this area, even go from Jammu to pay their obscene to this great Goddess. The teertha is on the hill. One Km. distance of ascending the hill is covered by foot. BSF has constructed

a new temple on the grand statue of Kali.

Saadeh Maaleyun: It is a very famous teertha of Kashmir. This is a wonderful place, where Sadhu Ganga (rivulet) flows. Bus from Handwara to Saadeh Maleyun is available. One and a half kilometer distance is to be tracked on foot from the bus stop to this auspicious place. Many poets, including me have used this name in various creative pieces of poetry. As is clearly known from the name, the place was famous, as many saints lived there for Sadhana. It is said that a large piece of land was attached to this place for the maintenance of the Ashram. Langar was run daily to give food to the saints and the devotees, who attended this Teertha. Some years back it is said, that the Pujari of this great place of worship was hanged to death. Nobody goes to this place of peace and beauty now. Saadeh

Maaleyun will remain in the books, but our younger generation must be made aware of our great heritage.

Tikkar (Kupwara): About two kms from Kupwara on the Kupwara-Chowkibal road is Tikkar. The place is in a forest. It was told to me that there was a temple of Raagneya Bhagwati

at this fine place. Tikkar was seen by people even up to the year when mass migration of Pandits took place. There was a beautiful Ashram, some great saints dwelt here and devotees would come from far off places to see this Ashram of learning. Sh. Moti Lal Saqi has told me that he used to visit this place almost once or twice a year. He would tell me the wonder-stories of this place of importance.

Ram Takht (Seat of Rama): The place is situated in the forest of Kralpora. Ram-Kund and Sita-Kund are also situated here. Due to big snakes rare people have seen this place.

One Pandit Kashi Nath, who is a Brahmin told me at Udhampur, that (old name Amravati). There is a statue of Shiva and one gets remedy from pain while bathing in the near by seven springs.

Harvan, the forest of Hara (Shiva) is near the village Tujar. There is a spring, and Shiv Lingam at this place changes sides. Devotees used to visit this place of wonder.

Chandigham: One and a half km from Sogam, where there is a Mahaganesha temple, Chandigham is reached. Chandi means the ferocious mood of Kali to destroy demons. At this place is a spring of 'Chandi Mata' down the hill. About twenty Pandit houses were there prior to migration.

Wilchgam : It is situated at a distance of 3 kms from Kralpora village. There

Some of the facts of various Teerthas mentioned in this article were told to me by Sh. Omkar Nath Pandit Darvesh and his worthy Mrs and daughter. Darvesh (a Saint) is their ancestral name of their great grand father - Jewan Pandit Darvesh, who was a spiritual saint of high order.

he has visited this place once after facing many dangers in the way leading to this place. One can not say, whether Lord Rama has come to this place or the Teertha has been named on the name of this famous king of Ayodheya.

Bumy: It is a very famous village. It has its own history. Gouripur (Now called Goorepur-a place of milk sellers) is near Bumy. It was told to me that Swami Nand Lal of village Hashru did his long course of Meditation here.

SHIV, **Harvan**: These are two places dedicated to lord Shiva. 'Shiva' is at one kilometer distance from Yembran

is an old temple of Nandkeshwara. The famous temple of this deity is near Sumbal and Dr. Agni Shekhar has written a book in Hindi on the great devotee of Shiva.

Gushi: Gushi was a big village of K.Ps. They were the Masters of grand orchards. Mangala Devi Temple is situated in Gushi. There is the story of a 'Devdaar Tree' which gave blood when cut by some local people and in the morning the tree was again seen standing by these people. They were frightened to see this wonder.

From the pages of history - Dr. Satish Ganjoo Satanic Holocaust of Kashmiri Pandits - 4

In this

article, the

author.

Dr. Satish

Ganjoo has

detailed the

satanic

holocaust of

Kashmiri

Pandits over a

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write-up is

ragi had even issued orders that everyday about 1500 to 2000 Brahmans be brought to his doorsteps, remove their

sacred threads, administer Kalima to them, circumcise them and make

them eat beef. These decrees were ferociously and brutally carried out. The Hindu religious scriptures from 7th century AD onwards and about 18 magnificent temples were destroyed, property confiscated ladies and abused. Thousands Brahmans killed themselves systematic and evade this horrific barbarism and thousands migrated to other places, resulting in their third tragic mass exodus from the Saffron Valley of Kashmir. Those who stayed behind were not only forced to pay jazia, but their noses and ears were chopped off. To escape the tremendous pain and agony, they cried. "I am not a Hindu."

being carried in After Kashmir, the next Milchar in destination of Iraqi for war instalments. against so-called infidelity was Kargil. It is now a Shia dominated area and there are frequent sectarian clashes between them and the Buddhists.

In AD 1519, about ten thousand Kashmiri Pandits died during pilgrimage to Harmukh Ganga, where they had gone to immerse the ashes

of those eight hundred Hindus who had been massacred during Ashura a year before. Poet-historian Suka says

about this cataclysm, "Ganga was



oppressed with hunger, as it was after a long time that she had devoured bones; she surely devoured the men also who carried the bones." It was after a gap of many years that the people were allowed to go on a pilgrimage to Harmukh lake, which ended in the most devastating tragedy.

Qazi Chak, the founder of 1553-1586), carried thousand cows were used to be the Chak rulers, who were Shias, just to injure

celebrated and highly educated Aryan Saraswat Brahmans were made the objects of laughter and reproach. They were publicly taunted, abused and humiliated. The last Chak ruler, Yaqub Chak, had a bigoted zeal for the propagation of Shia sect and planned

Chak rule in Kashmir (AD ferocious religious policy and made conversion of many Hindus to Shia sect of Islam. According to Suka, one killed everyday without any opposition under the orders of religious sentiments of the Kashmiri Pandits. These

mass conversion of the Hindus. However, he could not administer his criminal designs because of the Mughal annexation.

Akbar was tremendously influenced by the amazing moral supremacy of the Kashmiri Pandits. Abul Fazl records in Ain-i-Akbari, "The most respectable class in this country (Kashmir) is that of the Pandits, who, notwithstanding their need for

freedom from the bonds of tradition and custom, are the true worshippers of God. They do not loosen their tongue of calumny against those not of their faith, nor beg, nor importune. They employ themselves in planting fruit trees and are generally a source of inspiration for others". The great Mughal

Emperor abolished jazia and other unjust taxes imposed upon the Hindus. He also evinced great interest in the rehabilitation of the Pandits. Suka says, "The Emperor announced that he would without delay reward those who would respect the Brahmans in Kashmir and that he would instantly pull down the houses of those who would demand the annual tribute from them."

The greatness of Akbar lies in his magnificent and fascinating policy of religious tolerance. Jahangir and Shah Jahan were not so tolerant. But their religious enthusiasm cannot be termed as fanatic. During this period, the Brahmans could perform their religious ceremonies after paying some tribute. But the whole scenario

changed with the accession of Aurangzeb to the throne. With his bigoted fanatic and dogmatic approach, the Kashmiri Pandits were once again made vulnerable. Iftkar Khan, the Mughal governor of Kashmir during the reign of Aurangzeb, brutally tyrannized over the Brahmans to such an extent that they approached Guru Teg Bhahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru, at Anandpur in Punjab and solicited his

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personal intervention with the Emperor. This ultimately led to the Guru's martyrdom and made Guru Gobid Singh to create the Khalsa to fight the oppressors. Muzaffer Khan, Nassar Khan and Ibrahim Khan were other governors of Aurangzeb who ferociously terrorized the Kashmiri Pandits. These celebrated scapegoats were once again forced to migrate from the land of their origin. It was the fourth disastrous mass exodus of the Aryan Saraswat Brahmans from Kashmir.

During the rule of later Mughals, Kashmir witnessed the outbreak of the worst kind of religious intolerance. In AD 1720, Mullah Abdul Nabi, also called Muhat Khan, a non-resident Kashmiri Muslim, was appointed as

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Shaikh-ul-Islam. In order to assert his religious authority, he asked the Deputy Governor, Mir Ahmed Khan, to start a campaign of persecution of the Kafirs (infidels) - as the Kashmiri Pandits were called. In order to satisfy his satanic ego, the Mulla issued six commandments:

- 1. No Hindu should ride a horse, nor should a Hindu wear a shoe;
- 2. That they should not wear Jama (Mughal costume);
- 3. That they should move bare arms;
- 4. That they should not visit any garden;
- 5. That they should not have tilak mark on their foreheads;
- 6. That their children should not receive any education.

But Ahmed Khan refused to execute the mischievous decree. The Mullah then excited his followers against the Kashmiri Pandits. He established his seat in a mosque, assumed the duties of the administrator under the title of Dindar Khan and let loose the reign of terror. The Hindus were wickedly tormented, their houses burnt and property looted. Hundreds of Brahmans were killed, prostrated, maimed and humiliated. They began to run away in large numbers and hide

the most horrific and terrible conditions generated by the Mullah and his gang. But soon he was assassinated by his rivals and his son, Sharif-ud-Din, become the new Shaikhul-Islam. The son improved upon the brutal methods of his father and inflicted most barbaric, cruel and inhuman tortures upon the vulnerable Brahmans. The plight of the Kashmiri Pandits during this period became tremendously miserable and tragic.

The Afghan rule in Kashmir (AD 1753-1819) was a period of cruelty, homicide and anarchy. W.R. Lawrence calls it the "reign of brutal tyranny." The barbarous Afghans employed every wild, inhuman, primitive, ferocious, cruel and brutal method to suppress the Kashmiri Brahmans. A pitcher filled with ordure was placed on the head of a Pandit and stones were pelt on it, till it broke and the unfortunate Brahman become wet with filth. Their brutality and atrocity crossed the extreme limits when Hindus were tied up in grass sacks, two and two, and drowned in the Dal Lake.

The victimized Hindu were forced to flee the country or were killed or converted to Islam. There was horrible mass exodus of the Kashmiri Pandits.

Their (Afghans') brutality and atrocity crossed the extreme limits when Hindus were tied up in grass sacks, two and two, and drowned in the Dal Lake.

themselves in mountainous terrain. This was the fifth dreadful mass exodus of the legendary Kashmiri Pandits from their mystic motherland. Those who remained behind lived in

sixth one, to far away places like Delhi, Allahabad, etc. Many covered the long distances on foot.

(To be continued)

Sept. - Oct. 2006 മാൽമാൽമാൽമാൽമാൽമാൽമാൽമാൽമാൽ Page 22

Viewpoint - B.K.Dass

Nisar: Too Good To Be Spared

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utumn 1988. The environment around at the newly sprung up colony at Zainakot Srinagar was live with golden pastures

and humming bees. New neighbours were all around giving a cosmopolitan colour to the colony. One Sunday, a new neighbour, Ghulam Qadir Karwani managed a meeting of all the residents of the area to form a welfare committee. Amongst many, the gathering consisted of the Ex. Chief Secretary, the late Poshkar Nath Koul and his brother Moti Krishan Koul. Kouls welcomed the formation of the Welfare Committee, but did not accept any of the posts. Election was held and by voice vote Ghulam Qadir was elected as the president and I was elected as the Vice-President. Ghulam Qadir proposed the name of Nisar Ahmad Shah in his absence for the post of the General Secretary for his being an enthusiastic young and energetic one. With voice vote Nisar was elected as the General Secretary of the nonpolitical and nonreligious Welfare Committee in absentia.

The Committee worked well until some IMAM was invited during the holy month of Ramadan to preach Islam in the newly constructed mosque on the auspicious Jumat-ulvida Shab. Those were the days when

telecast of Ramanand Sagar's Ramayan was eagerly awaited by both the Muslims and the

Pundits. The Imam, in the dead of night started on the



public audio system: "We the Muslims have the lonely Allah and His Prophet Mohammad to worship. Unlike Islam, Pundits have number of Gods in the form of Monkeys, Bears....and what not. Some have snake necklace around their neck". Nisar raised an objection to the Imam's style of preaching. He pleaded: "Imam Sahib, you are an outsider. Preach Islam without attacking or criticizing any other religion. Don't hurt the sentiments of our Non-Muslim neighbours". Soon the gathering in the mosque got divided, some in favour and some against Nisar. Violent, enthusiastic and energetic as he was, he struck the head of the President's brother with the amplifier. The brother went into coma and recovered his consciousness after fifteen at Soura Medical days Institute. In the meantime Nisar went into hiding.

January 1990. We all migrated and left behind Nisar to the care of vultures. One afternoon Nisar was about to have his lunch when

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Mujahids barged in and asked him to come out for some important task. He was packed on a horse-driven cart and taken to a nearby village Mallur on Sumbal Road . He was laid on the road and his veins were slit with a razor. When the people around objected they were directed not to bother for he was a Batta (A Kashmiri Pandit). There are so many Muslims who had to sacrifice their precious lives for their humanitarian and secular thinking. Kuka Parey, a Kashmiri Muslim should not be forgotten. He died a true Indian and a champion of anti-terrorism. Even today there are many Nisars & Kuka Pareys in the valley. Recently one's ear-lobe was amputated. Many had to be contented without noses.

Let us not poison our mind because of ignorance. All Muslims are not good, but all are not bad. Any community is the mixture of good and bad. This is my precious experience of sixty-seven years.

Counterview Too Good To Be Spared

.... Kapil Kaul

was a student of S.P. College in Srinagar during early 70's.

I had my best friends among

Muslims as well. We used to visit each others homes freely, as friends every where do. During the exams we learned together and supported



each other. We had both fun as well as rivalry now and then, which experts say is healthy. But as a whole we

remained friends. Even when our ways separated in pursuit of our careers, we remained in touch by correspondence. And whenever we met back home in Srinagar, we hugged and rejoiced in rejoining old friends - nay - brothers and sisters!

Majid liked to eat the food my mother had prepared at my home. And he was not the only one. Shafi, in spite of being an introvert and a staunch mind never hesitated to knock at my door - or even me at his for that matter - whenever and for whatever reasons, studies or going to cinema. Riyaz was

And when I did meet one or the other, they seemed to be very indifferent. Some kind of transformation had taken place.

a nephew of late MP Shamim Ahmad Shamim from Shopian. He was progressive and good at debating on topics. Hamid was from Tanki Pora and interested in acting. Abdal Ahmad I remember was a peaceful and gentle fellow. We were the only two graduating students in Sanskrit. He was the grand son of the popular Kashmiri poet Mahjoor. He would come to my home where my father helped us understand Sanskrit texts.

We were friends and being Hindu or Muslim was a thought that never stood as an obstacle in our relationship. When the wind of my arrival struck the ears of my friends, particularly Muslim friends, they would instantly drop in at my residence.

Until in the summer of 1987, there was none of them. And when I did

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meet one or the other, they seemed to be very indifferent. Some kind of transformation had taken place. Was it they had grown older or matured? Was it I had returned after a couple of years and the change had come about within me? Lots of questions but no answers. In retrospection it was our ignorance. No one among us realizing the dirty trick that was shaping unabatedly to swallow us up.

In 1985 when I asked some of my KP friends why the Muslims had changed their dress code, wearing long shirts and silwars, I was told that it was a Bollywood film influence. I had seen on TV news from Pakistan that the city image was similar than it used to be in Srinagar.

I went to see Majid at his Cultural Academy office of Lal Mandi. An orderly told me that he was upstairs in his office. A wooden veranda led to his room at the end. The chair where he was supposed to sit was empty. Suddenly he had vanished? In the room there was another curtained door, may be leading to some other rooms. For the sake of courtesy I didn't touch the curtain. I waited and waited but he did not turn up. The adjoining room was filled with about ten to twelve persons whose glimpse I had caught before entering Majid's room. I looked around from the veranda and again saw the room with persons. Although it was an office, the persons seemed to fuss over some matters other than culture or office work? Some of them did not seem to be like Kashmiri Muslims at all.

I realised afterwards that my presence had caused some sort of stir. I was an irritant. One of them in the

room uncongenially gave me to understand that I should better go than keep waiting for the person. I penned down a note and left back a package of bananas on the table for my friend. Majid never showed up.

Half a year later in 1988 Majid had to rush to Chandigarh. His father had been taken ill and he was referred from Soura Hospital to PGI. At Srinagar he had collected my brother's address my friend Ashwani. from Chandigarh he along with his cousin and another friend had dropped in without hesitation at my brother's place to seek his help at PGI. They were served tea and promised help by my brother. My father wrote this to me, "Majid told me that you had been to his office twice but he had been out. He told me here to write to you for a pardon."

Another friend known as Mehboob told me that some time back Majid had gone to "a foreign country". He did not elucidate except saying that Majid was saying if Kapil could go to a foreign country, why couldn't he? It could be that he had been to Iran or to POK illegally, I guess!

I went to Shafi's home at Fateh Kadal. Earlier his mother Lalla would have embraced me and his two sisters, would have come out running and smiling. but this time they even did not get up to greet me. There was room only for a formal conversation that took place, they sitting in their *wot* and me standing outside the window in their house compound. I felt uneasy because I had not known them like this ever before! Mohd. Shafi took me to a room on the first floor. I noticed

Contd. on Page 29

Biradari News

● Justice 4 Priyadarshini Mattoo - Santosh Singh awarded Death sentence in Mattoo murder case :

Priyadarshini Mattoo has finally got justice. The Delhi High Court convicted Santosh Kumar Singh of the rape and murder of Priyadarshini 10 years ago. Delivering the verdict in a packed courtroom, a division bench of justices R.S.Sodhi and P.K.Bhasin strongly criticised the judgment of the trial court that had acquitted Santosh seven years ago for lack of evidence against him. The prosecuting agency, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), was seeking death sentence for Santosh. On December 3, 1999, Additional Sessions Judge G.P.Thareja had given Santosh the 'benefit of doubt', although the judge said he knew the accused 'was the person who committed the crime'. The high court said the trial court was wrong in doing so. "By acquitting the accused, despite being convinced that there was no doubt in the prosecution's case, the trial court has mauled justice. Its decision has shocked the conscience of the court." the bench said. The court said it was clear that police had initially tried to sabotage the probe under the influence of Santosh's father, then an IPS officer. Some key witnesses were not examined to help the accused. But the trial judge had 'quite amazingly given a perverse judgment' even after holding all the circumstantial evidence in favour of the prosecution. Santosh's acquittal had led to strong

Biradari News

public reaction, and had triggered a debate on whether justice was beyond the reach of the common man. Although the CBI, which had been pulled up for its handling of the case, filed an appeal against the verdict in the high court in 2000, the case was brought out of cold storage only this year after a sustained public campaign. The acquittals in the Jessica Lall murder case this year added to the public uproar. (Input courtesy: hindustatimes.com)

Latest: On 30th October 2006, the Honourable High Court of Delhi awarded Death sentence to Santosh Singh, citing it as a 'Rarest of the Rare' case. KPA and Milchar congratulate those young people of the community especially Aditya Kaul and Indu Jalali, who spear-headed the movement 'Justice 4 Priyadarshini Mattoo' and mobilised public opinion for severe punishment to the culprit.

● S.N.Pandit's book released:

Kashmir Hindu Sanskars (Rituals, Rites and Customs) - A Study by Shri S.N.Pandit was released by a reputed Kashmiri scholar Prof. (Dr) B.L.Koul on 8th October 2006 at Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra, Anand Nagar, Bohri, Jammu at a special function attended by a galaxy of scholars, writers, poets and intellectuals. Reputed Sanskrit scholar and social worker Prof. (Dr) Ved Kumari Ghai was the Chief Guest of Honour.

The book of 464 pages, priced at Rs. 475.00 deals with a brief historical

background of every ritual and the allied subjects but the main thrust is on rituals which otherwise would have been lost to coming generations. There is no doubt that the book will serve researchers and dispersed KPs all over the world for a long time.

• Nuptials:

- * Ruchi, D/o Smt. Vijay & Dr. Tej Kuchru of Oshiwara, Andheri, Mumbai was married to Puneet, S/o Smt. Pushpa & Shri Ganesh Kaul of Jammu on 2nd October, 2006 at Jammu.
- * Monica, D/o Smt. Nimmy & Shri Ravinder Takoo and grandson of Shri Pran Nath Takoo of Kandivli, Mumbai was married to Sumeet, S/o Smt. Rita & Shri C.L.Razdan on 29th September, 2006 at Jammu.

KPA congratulates the couples and their parents.

• AGM of KPA Mumbai :

The AGM of the Kashmiri Pandits' Association, Mumbai was held on 17th September, 2006 at Kashyap Bhawan, Bhawani Nagar, Andheri. In addition to other normal business, Audit Report and Balance Sheet were placed on the table. The Income & Expenditure Statement for the year ending 31st March 2006 showed an income of Rs.24,21,640.00 (compared to Rs.10,31,437.00 for the previous year) and the expenditure of Rs.8,73,029.00 (compared to Rs.8,31,669.00 for the previous year).

• AIKS AGM:

According to a notification issued by the General Secretary, AIKS, New Delhi, the EC and AGM of the Samaj will be held at Kolkata on 24th December 2006 followed by a KP Conference on 25th December 2006. On this occasion, special issues of NAAD and VITASTA will also be released. Kashmir Sabha, Kolkata has offered to arrange the accommodation for the participating guests.

Photo Exhibition 'Sakshaatkaar -

An Encounter with Truth': This exhibition, organised by Panun Kashmir was held at Ravindra Natya Mandir, Prabhadevi, Dadar, Mumbai from 21st September 2006 to 23rd September 2006. According to Panun Kashmir, this Photo-exhibition could be possible only after a protracted survey for three years conducted by a team lead by Dr. Ajay Chrungoo, Chairman of Panun Kashmir. The exhibition depicted the various facets of religious cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus in Kashmir valley. The calamitous events that lead to exodus, the struggle to survive in refugee camps and recreate a dignified life in exile, were laid bare in the exhibition.

• AIKS Mehfil-e-Mushaira :

A Mehfil-e-Mushaira was organised by the All India Kashmiri Samaj as part of its silver-jublee celebrations on 14th October 2006 at India International Centre, New Delhi. A host of Kashmiri poets participated.

He Left Us

Shri Jagan Nath Dhar S/o Late Raghu Nath Dhar (originally of Vicharnag, Srinagar) left for his heavenly abode on 8th October, 2006 at Delhi. Shri Dhar was ex-Chief of Operations, International Airports Authority of India.

🖂 Letters 🖂

⋈ Homage to Late Shri J.N.Kachroo:
 I first met Shri Kachroo about 1997-1998. He was a handsome man with a noble bearing and always reminded me of my maternal grandfather Pt. Nand Lalji Kitroo, a great Educationist in his times.

I once read Shri Kachroo's article about his sad experience at Baramulla in 1947. My heart took a leap into the past. My Father who was a Lecturer at St. Joseph's College, Baramulla escaped the holocaust by a whisker. We fled Baramulla on Sunday morning and the Qaballis (Raiders) landed on Monday night.

My association with Shri Kachroo was limited to Lalla Ded Educational & Welfare Trust activities. His enthusiasm was enormous. It egged me on. I remember him when we visited Vasai-Virar area in search for land for the School. He always walked in the lead giving others courage and hope. Had the Trust succeeded in its endeavour, surely Shri Kachroo would have been its first Principal and advisor

Shri Kachroo is no more amidst us. Lalla Ded Educational & Welfare Trust is also no more in effect. Nonetheless his absence will be felt whenever we think of his best contribution to the Community - 'PROJECT ZAAN'. Lucky are those born in Shri Kachroo's Family. May God Bless and give them courage.

- Avtar K. Misri

⊠ 'Sharda Sadan' :

The name itself makes one stand proud and tall. I congratulate those

who had the courage to dream this.

It is my observation that there is an invisible divide between KPs living East of Chembur and those on the West. This year the Annual Hawan was held at Khargar for the very first time (would be Home for Sharda Sadan). I noticed very little attendance by KPs living in the West. Quid Pro Quo. You don't come to my Hawan why should I come to yours. Perhaps ??

For Fund raising KPA has set up a Core group of Nine. Under the able leadership of Shri Makhan Lal Matoo, the group will certainly do KPA proud. Their Conviction, Influence and Honesty of Purpose will fetch them the desired/required Crore, no mean achievement.

However not withstanding all above, it is my humble opinion that this Project can wait. After all KP Refugees post-Independence waited over 3 decades to achieve their dream Kashyap Bhavan. So what is the hurry. Displaced KPs post-1989 can wait a decade if need be. There are more Serious and Pressing concerns at hand - the Displaced KPs or Migrants still living in miserable conditions in Jammu Camps. I request the KPA Trust to urgently deliberate on this and if deemed fit do the necessary. Take this Crore and head for Jammu. Construct may be 40 or more Pucca/decent structures of about 500 sft (no frills) on the land already occupied by these migrants. Give them some relief and respectable surroundings to live in.

The Community can provide free of cost - Planners, Architects, Civil Engineers, Logistic Support Supervisors etc. Material may be purchased at a discount from some local sympathetic suppliers. Let

Mumbai KPs lead the way

- Avtar K. Misri

⋈ Kashmiri Literature:

Dear M.K.Raina "órzù, dór kóth". I have no words to thank you for the work you are doing to preserve the literature written during the period of migration of Kashmiri Pandits.

Your selfless and honorary work will be written in golden letters, when somebody like you writes the history of this crucial period in black & white i.e. very honestly but critically. As for I am concerned, I did not do much during the last 16 years but only the tragedy of driving away the oldest community of Kashmir in our own country remained, cutting my each nerve day and night. During the past two years after spending nearly two lac rupees, doctors could not give me bit of relief from my trouble. But the pen did not stop to write whatever I felt. It was Kashmir only which crunched me always. Bearing the heaviness of my left arm, I wrote what came to my mind. It is your grace that it is now preserved on internet for the researchers of the coming times to do justice to it.

My total works are nearly twenty. The 'Neelmat Puran' is coming this year. The album 'Sangarmaal' is now complete and will be released soon. The 'vàvas kún' (To the Wind) attached herewith, is a longer statemental poem, sending my words through the wind. I wish some organisation comes forward to featurise the poem.

I once again thank you for your good wishes for me and the work you are doing to preserve Kashmiri language, culture and history.

Arjan Dev Majboor, Jammu.

⋈ Shri N.N.Pandit:

I feel the death of Shri Niranjan Nath Pandit as a personal loss to myself, for, Pt. Niranjan Nath during my stay at Mumbai around late 1940's looked on me as his brother. I am determined to speak that he always stood up for the weak and oppressed. I deeply mourn his death and share the grief with his family. May God bless his soul. I will cherish for ever his magnetic charm and the qualities that made him such a wonderful companion and a true friend. I say, he is not dead, he is just away.

- Manmohan Ambardar, Satara.

Book Review

... From Page 13

it on net for benefit of the general masses. His publications have a place in our libraries and in the curriculum of Kashmiri language courses. The day is nearing fast when his works will be recognized for literary awards and rewards. It is an eye opener that he has to spend from his pocket for bringing out all these treasures of our contemporary Kashmiri literature. Whilst bringing awareness to this shocking reality, I wish Maharaj Krishen Ji all the best and many laurels and recognitions he deserves.

View & Counterview ... From Page 25

the old house had undergone some modifications. He had joined Kashmir Administrative Services (KAS) after doing MA in English from KU. We sat, talked about this and that, God and the world. We never met again. It was a relationship like a knife that had turned blunt. You could no longer use



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INITIAL İJÇ TÂÇ

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