



मिळुचार
MILCHAR

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House Boats on Dal Lake in Srinagar.

Credit for introducing House Boats in Kashmir goes to Pt. Narain Das, father of Swami Laxman ji.

Message from the President
Between Ourselves

Namaskar.
Wish you a very Happy
&
Prosperous New Year

Although we Pandits celebrate 'Navreh' on the 'Pritipada of Chaitra Shuklapaksh', yet I feel that the 'New year' ushered in by Gregorian calender has got so mingled with us, that sharing joy and happiness on this day as well, would not detract anything from the sanctity of our 'Navreh'.

Recently, as you are aware, elections for the Board of Trustees of our Association were held for the term 2002-2004, and a new team has taken over the reins of manning it. The change of guard has brought in some of our time-tested and experienced members, with a dash of some new enthusiastic faces and a good number of youngsters, who, I am sure, will endeavour to strengthen our Association with zeal and dedication.

Being one of the senior-most members of the new team, who has been associated with the KPA right from its inception, I would take this opportunity to pay my respects and regards to our predecessors, who are no longer with us, and seek the guidance from our old living stalwarts who have nourished the Association like a child, which is a 'grown-up body' of more than four decades now.

Steadily, KPA has tried to reach its established goal and hope your further cooperation and blessings shall fulfill all the aspirations of the community.

To interact more with the community spread all over Mumbai, we have set out our mind, keeping in view the various suggestions made in our AGM to maintain our cultural heritage, for betterment of our community.

I would entreat upon biradari members at large to come forth with suggestions and guide the new team of BOT to perform its duty in proper and dignified manner.

Thanking you.

M. L. Mattoo
President

हा म्यानि वतन

... फूला कौल

हा म्यानि वतन, हा म्यानि चमन!
गुल तुँ गुलज़ार चुँय,
खसुवुन आफताब चुँय, चुँय छुख शुहुल चिनार
हा म्यानि वतन, हा म्यानि चमन!

बागे-सब्ज़ार कॅशीर, वलुवुन गुलाब कॅशीर
पीर दरगा'ह कॅशीर, तुलमुल नाग कॅशीर
जन्नते-बेनेंजीर कॅशीर, चे'शमे-शाँही हुंद आब
हा म्यानि वतन, हा म्यानि चमन!

सा.तुँकि वावुँह नवि सरुँह जुव छु अचान
गुलमर्ग, पहलगाम, डकसुम जां'ह नुँ मशान
डलगेटुँह नाव शूबान, बासान पुशपक विमान
हा म्यानि वतन, हा म्यानि चमन!

अथ ऋ'ष्य वारि हाय, कॅम्प सुँज लॅज्य नज़र
गुलशन खाक गव, चूर फो'र बेखबर
कुकिलन मो'ठ ग्यवुन, बुलबुल वदान ज़ार ज़ार
हा म्यानि वतन, हा म्यानि चमन!

रोशिवुँनि टॉट्य मॉज, बोज़तय म्योन ज़ार
छूयनुँह छसय गाँमुँच, गोम को'त वतनुक यार
रठतम जिगरस सूँत्य, दिल छुम स्यठा'ह बेकरार
हा म्यानि वतन, हा म्यानि चमन!

Editorial
Our Brothers in Kashmir
... P.N.Wali

One of the things that struck me during my recent visit to Srinagar, first after exodus, was the number of KPs who had not left Kashmir even till today. This number is anything between nine to eleven thousand people. They are living in Srinagar, small towns and even far flung villages. Some times even one family in a village.

Their stay may be called by some foolhardiness but to others, it is sheer courage and grit. They faced real bad times. In early days, they were looked as unwanted representatives of Indian state. They had, with their own eyes, seen the worst atrocities committed on innocent people, whether it was Sangrampora, Wandhahama or any other place. A gentleman in Badiyar, was once thrown out from the upper storey window of his house. He broke his bones, went for treatment, got well and again continued to live in the same house, attending to his job in downtown Srinagar. He is still there. These people are in addition to few hundreds who are living in Srinagar, either their offices were there or they were transferred there on promotion etc.

These people live there. They find the environment comparatively less antagonistic than it was a few years back. But they feel that the rest of the Kashmiri Pandit community has forgotten about them. They feel that they are suspected or written off by the biradari members living outside the Valley, whether as migrants or otherwise.

I felt it is time that we spared some thought for these forelorn brothers. They are part of the community. They have every right for a sense of belonging to the community.

And we owe it to them. In this war, they are in the fore-front. We are in the rare. We need to support them.

These people, have made their own Association, called Hindu Welfare Association, which tries to keep them networked together. They are holding annual Hawans at atleast 8 places. They are looking after their temples. They are performing their marriages (over 400 in 12 years). Even the government is doing nothing for them, when it announces from the top of the world that it wants KPs back in the Valley. To show its seriousness, let it first start making little easy for these people. Unemployment (about 350 youths presently) is a serious problem with them. Let the government help in this when it is helping even the families of hardened terrorists killed in the fight with security forces.

Let us atleast make it clear to these people that we are with them.

नये दीप जलायें

... मोती लल खर

आओ मिल कर फिर से नये दीप जलायें ।।
मत दोहराओ बीती बातें, क्यों न फिर से
आपस में मिल कर रहें, नई राहें बनायें ।
इक नया इतिहास बनायें
आओ मिल कर फिर से नये दीप जलायें ।।

याद तुम्हें भी होगा, सदियों साथ रहे थे
और इतिहास रचा था हम ने तुम ने
क्यों न फिर से आपस में मिल कर
खूब हंसें और हंसायें ।
इक नया इतिहास बनायें
आओ मिल कर फिर से नये दीप जलायें ।।

क्यों न फिर से आपस में मिल कर
पहले की तरह घुल मिल जायेंगे
मिल कर जो बैठेंगे हम तुम मोती
मसले भी हल हो जायेंगे ।
इक नया इतिहास बनायें
आओ मिल कर फिर से नये दीप जलायें।।

From the New General Secretary

A Word of Thanks

... C.L.Raina

At the outset, let me extend my sincere and heartfelt thanks to one and all in the Board of Trustees of Kashmiri Pandits' Association for having assigned and entrusted me with the duties and responsibilities as 'Secretary' of the Organisation. I wish and hope to contribute whatever little possible within my reach and competence.

My ardent and utmost desire, wish and ambition is to see and ensure our Association to be lively, vibrant, self-supporting and self-generating for which unconditional and continuous effort and cooperation from each and every member is required as a 'Must'.

I would therefore, in all earnestness, appeal to biradari members to come forward with the slogan 'What I can give' rather than 'What I can get' from the Association.

The Association is to be nourished and brought up to the age and stage when it will start 'giving'.

We are abundant in 'talent' but perhaps lack the 'will' to utilise it for the benefit of our 'less fortunate'. We have highly qualified doctors, scientists, engineers, lawyers, specialists and other professionals, who serve as torch-bearers to vast multitudes. I would entreat them to spare a fraction of their expertise for the good and well-being of our community members.

Our Association is presently housed in a residential complex and as such it has become difficult to expand and enlarge our field and sphere of activities as enshrined in our bye-laws. Couldn't we think of arranging a piece of land where we could house a common Prayer Hall - a Temple, a Community Hall, a Library, a Medical Aid Centre and other common facility centres for the benefit of our children, aged and the women-folk. All this entails and involves heavy funding. How many of us have been donating/contributing for these and other such causes and purposes for the good of our own brothers? Couldn't we voluntarily take the challenge and rise to the occasion instead of waiting and looking over the fence? The goal is not far, only if we make a 'determined start'.

The job of the Secretary, as I can literally understand from the word asks for:

| | | |
|----|--|------------------|
| S: | Selfless, Speedy, Satisfying | - Service. |
| E: | Earnest, Expeditious, Enthusiastic | - Disposal |
| C: | Cheerful, Caring, Calm | - Mood |
| R: | Respectful, Reliable, Responsible | - Attitude |
| E: | Ever-fulfilling, Eveready, Everlasting | - Solutions |
| T: | Transparent, Tactful, Tearless | - Dealings |
| A: | Alert, Able, Accountable | - Administration |
| R: | Realistic, Reasonable, Remarkable | - Response |
| Y: | Yogic, Yeoman, Young | - Yearning |

As mentioned earlier, we have to make a start somewhere, sooner or later to achieve the goal. It is thus with this objective in mind, I, as a beginning, have decided and started

attending Kashyap Bhawan every Sunday between 10.00 a.m. and 1.00 p.m. from 1st of December 2002.

Annual General Meeting 2002
Secretary's Report for the Year 2001-2002

Dear Biradari Members,

It is my pleasure and an honor to be able to put before you a report highlighting the functioning of KPA Mumbai for the fourth successive year.

KPA Mumbai, in its very humble way, has strived to provide leadership to the Biradari so as to ensure that the future generation of our community, who have for reason beyond their control, got scattered globally, do not lose their roots. We have always thought this leadership to be like an iceberg where the media, the analysts and members of the Biradari see the one-tenth of it that stands above the water line and those to whom this portion looked shapely and interesting have been kind enough to shower their appreciation. But working in a socio-cultural association like ours, is like working at the base of the iceberg where it is cold, dark, uncomfortable and therefore unnoticed by observers who might feel nothing is happening. I am convinced that leaders should see their role as a part of large process and not be a process itself. They get to run with a baton for a few laps of a relay race.

I am thankful to all the members of the Biradari who have allowed me to run my laps and now it is time for me to handover the baton.

KPA Mumbai has been active during the year under report, as always, and has worked towards achievement of the goals for which the trust was set up.

Scholarship: KPA is proud to inform you that we have been appointed as the administrative agency for distribution of scholarship among the best performing students in the migrant school at Nagrota and Muthi Camp in Jammu by Sheela Dhar Trust, Mumbai. The scheme has been made functional from this academic year. The same Trust had also appointed us to identify some urgent need of the Muthi camp school, Jammu. It is a pleasure to inform you that Sheela Dhar Trust in consultation with KPA provided a water cooler to the camp school, thereby making lives of these young children studying in the school, more comfortable.

Medical Aid: We give out relief to the needy patients in two forms. The tangible being the cash assistance whenever somebody asks for it. As you would see from the balance sheet we have spent Rs. 7000/- on this account. The intangible being, providing accommodation in Kashyap Bhavan to the needy ones who come to Mumbai for treatment from various parts of the country. This year, we had patients staying with us along with their family members for a duration of more than 100 days in total. You would also be noticing from the balance sheet that we have been able to increase the medical funds to Rs. 3,50,000/- during the current year. This all has been possible because of the donation and contribution received from many of you.

It is our dream that in the coming years we have enough money in this fund so that we are in a position to help every needy member of our Biradari who ask for it. We request for generous donation to this fund.

Cultural Activities: The annual get together on 17th February 2002 where we all sat together to pray to the Almighty for the welfare of our community was very well attended. The most encouraging aspect was the participation of young generation in large numbers. This is a proof that KPA is doing work in the right direction passing our rich socio-cultural heritage to the generation next. We are thankful to all those who donated to KPA that day.

Mohanlal Aima Musical Awards had better participation this year. We are thankful to Shri Onkar Aima and his family for having donated the prize money for this award. This event will always be considered as a very important event in the cultural activity at KPA.

Annual Cultural Programme: 16th March 2002 and all roads led to Rangsharda Bandra, where we had Mr. Rajendra Kachroo, who came from Delhi to present us with a musically rich cultural evening. The continuous demand from all the youngsters during the show for the Kashmiri song bears a testimony to success in our efforts of keeping the language alive through such programmes. We also met on the occasion of Navreh, in Kashyap Bhavan.

Thanks to contribution, both monetary and literary. **Milchar**, has been published regularly during the year. Now it is available on net at www.milchar.com

Zaan: This project conceived and implemented jointly with Lalded Educational and Welfare Trust needs support and co-operation by way of participation from all of you. KPA organized the event on 19 August 2002 and the prize winners were not only featured prominently in the Milchar but awarded on the stage of Rangsharda on 16 March 2002 in the presences of all the Biradari members. This programme which is basically designed by Lalla-Ded Educational & Welfare Trust with the aim to impart information about history, geography, culture and language of Kashmir will not be successful unless the elders and parents take interest. I would sincerely appeal to all of you to lend your help so that generations to come do not find themselves as rudderless boats.

We are thankful to Shri Sunil Fotedar of Texas, US for having created a site on the net which he maintains and updates with the inputs from Mr. M. K. Raina, Co-Editor Milchar. Logon to Website : www.zaan.net

Kashyap Bhawan: Kashyap Bhavan has become a revenue earner in our trust. We have received Rs. 111001/- as donation by those who use Kashyap Bhavan Hall for various functions. You would notice that there is a decrease in revenue as compared to last year. The reason for it is that we had to close the hall for a period of about two and a half months to carry out renovation and repairs. We spent about Rs. 1.8 lakhs for that. The hall now needs a permanent sound system, which can be a value added facility for the use of the hall.

Finance: The Balance Sheet comes to your hand along with this report reflecting the sound financial position of the Trust. Our deposits have gone up to Rs. 13,22,431/- We have achieved this due to efforts of various Biradari members who donate by themselves and also collect donation from friends and well-wishers at the time of release of Annual Souvenir. The expenditure of printing has gone up as compared to last year basically because of two reasons, one because of the size of the Souvenir increased due to better

response from donors and this year we decided that each Biradari member should get a copy of the Souvenir, so more printing was done.

Life Membership: We welcome the addition of 59 life members to KPA during the year and I request you all to approve their membership which has been already accepted by the Board.

~~This year again the elections are due for the Board of Trustees and I am sure the new team will carry the good work done so far. I wish that the incoming General Secretary receives the same co-operation as I received during my tenure from all of you.~~

~~Thanking you,~~

Yours Sincerely,
Suriender Kachroo
Outgoing General Secretary

From the Pages of History
Fanaticism Not Hereditary

... J.N.Kachroo

Hindu rule in Kashmir came to an end when Shah Mir captured the throne in 1339. He assumed the name of Sultan Shamas-ud-Din and founded the Sultan Dynasty, which ruled the Valley for 222 years.

Sultan Sikander (1389-1413) was the most infamous of the Sultans. He was the most intolerant, biggoted and a religious fanatic. Because of his policy of religious persecution, there was a large scale migration of Hindus, besides conversion. He earned the nickname of Butshikan, the iconoclast, for resorting to the destruction of temples and images (idols) of Hindu gods. Ironically, both his father Qutub-ud-Din (1373-1389) and his son, the illustrious Zain-ul-Abdin (1420-1470) were not only free from religious fanaticism but visibly liberal and just.

Liberalism of Qutub-ud-Din:

Famines were, unfortunately, of regular occurrence in Kashmir during the reign of Qutub-ud-Din. Often the severity of the scarcity of food grains was, as always, felt in the months of June and July. The King resorted to a novel practice of not only helping his depressed subjects divert their attention from a constant anxiety of want but also providing them with opportunities of sharing the stocks of grains stored by the more fortunate. During these months of scarcity, the King, his ministers, nobles and the affluent used to perform 'Yagnyas' and distribute cooked food amongst the starving population irrespective of their faith.

Qutub-ud-Din allowed continuance of Hindu dress, manners, customs among the converts to Islam. His participation in and encouragement to the performance of Yagnyas, though for a humanistic objective only, shows his religious tolerance and a deep sense of humanism.

The Sultan and his Muslim subjects used to visit a temple in Alau-ud-Din Pura every morning. Qutub-ud-Din had two wives who were sisters. This is not permissible under Muslim law. These non-orthodox practices did not appeal to Sayyid Ali Hamdani, who exhorted the King to divorce one of them and remarry the other according to the tenets of Islam. He advised him to change his dress. In spite of the fact that the King held the saint in high esteem, he did not accept his advice.

Zain-ul-Abdin's Justice

Zain-ul-Abdin firmly believed that the primary responsibility of the state was justice, equality and economic prosperity. He was not only just but believed in being seen as just. He possessed an uncanny sense of solving crimes. Zain ul Abdin was visibly impartial particularly in sensitive matters of Hindu-Muslim relations. The following episodes (cases) illustrate these claims:-

Instinctive Justice

Zain-ul-Abdin (1420-1470) was not only a far-sighted, impartial, able administrator and a reformer, but he exhibited tremendous religious tolerance and possessed a keen sense of

justice, often not guided by any recorded book of law. Here is an example of how he administered justice even when there was no evidence:

There lived a Brahmin in Kamraj, the lake district. Once he lost a cow which he could not find for a long time, despite sustained efforts. He lost all hopes. After four years, one day he accidentally found it with a resident of Maraj (dry district). The Brahmin claimed the cow but the other man would not agree.

The Brahmin sought justice from various officials, but failed to establish his claim. Ultimately, he approached the King and petitioned for justice. The King did not dismiss the plea of the Brahmin.

Zain-ul-Abdin summoned the alleged thief to his presence and asked him to answer the Brahmin's charge. The man denied the charge and said that the cow belonged to him and was with him ever since its birth. But the Brahmin insisted. In order to test the veracity of the accusation, the King threw some green waternuts before the cow and its calf. The cow ate all of them with relish while the calf after some sniffs turned its head from them. This clearly proved that the cow while with the Brahmin was accustomed to eating waternuts, a product of the Wular Lake whereas the calf which had been brought up in Maraj district, was totally unaccustomed to this sort of food. The King gave his verdict after the thief had confessed his crime. The cow along with the calf was restored to the rightful owner and the thief was suitably punished.

Uncommon Judgement

A holy ascetic from Mecca - a Saiyyid, became jealous of a Hindu sadhu because of the latter's proximity to Sultan Zain-ul-Abdin and consequent royal patronage he would receive. In a fit of jealousy, the Saiyyid killed the sadhu. The matter was naturally taken to the Sultan, the fountainhead of justice. He consulted prominent moulvis and pundits. They all agreed that the only legitimate retribution was death. The Saiyyid commanded respect for being from the Prophet's family. Sultan's decision could have political fallout. Yet Sultan would not let go the Saiyyid unpunished. Instead of killing the man, he decided to kill his reputation.

He ordered that the Saiyyid be seated on a donkey, facing the tail, his head shaved and long beard soaked in dirt, and paraded through the streets.

It is claimed that the Saiyyid was never seen in that kingdom thereafter. Any lessons for the present!!



Reflections
How the History is made?

.. Krakal

While travelling to Jammu by the Swaraj Express, do you know the snippets I picked from the long leisurely discussions we had all along the way? Sample:

- 1) Why Kashmiri Hindus were all Brahmins? Were other casts missing?** No. The Kshetri (the fighters) under pressure from the invaders mostly migrated to Kishtwar and Bhaderwah side. So the Kashmiris in that part are mostly Kshetris. Brahmins migrated to other parts of the country. Lower classes got converted as their physical, mental and economical strength did not allow them much options.

- 2) Why Shivratri is celebrated by KPs one day earlier? What is Salaam?** To break the religious and the spiritual moors of KPs which kept them alive despite extreme pressures and cruelties inflicted on them. The famous story of when Jabbar Khan wanted to shift Shivratri to June so that benefit of snow on the occasion was not available. That year it miraculously snowed on this occasion in June. Other dictum was to make them to come to Durbar on the Shivratri day to 'Salaam' (to pay obeisance to the Nawaab). This was to divert them from usual Shivratri prayers. To meet the situation, they decided to do the prayers on the previous night itself. It therefore happens to be 13th day of moonlit fortnight and not 14th as the rest of the country.

- 3) Why Kashmiri Pandits offer saltish *Tahar* to gods when the Hindu tradition is to offer sweets?**
It is said that the tradition of *Tahar* is from Central Asia. It used to be offered to gods in Kashmir without salt. Salt would be added to *Prasad* later to make it palatable. In course of time, the *Tahar* offered also became saltish.

- 4) What is 'Ramgodha' and 'Vagur' at Shivratri?**
Vagur, from Wahi Guru - it is from Sikhs. This addition to Shivratri paraphernalia was to please Sikh rulers. Similarly, Ramgodha was in deference to Dogra rulers, who worshipped Ramji.

Spirituality & Religion

Self-realisation

... Man Mohan Ambardar

Every doctrine provides different spiritual paths for men of different temperament but nowhere are these so clearly or scientifically formulated as in Hinduism. The three basic types of path are the Jnana Marga or way of intellect, the Bhakti Marga or way of love and the Karma Marga or way of action. A natural hierarchy is recognised in the Margas as Jnana Marga being the highest and Bhakti Marga the next. However in embarking upon a path, there is no question of a man choosing what he considers best. He must recognise the possibilities of all the margas and only two questions arise for him; which is most in accord with his temperament and in which he can find guidance from a Guru. Furthermore, the Margas are by no means exclusive of one another, in fact, it is usual for a path based upon one to contain some elements of the others or atleast of one of the others.

It is said in scriptures and by sages that an aspirant must make effort on the path but that grace also is necessary and that is the end. Realisation is bestowed by grace, not achieved by effort. It is said in the Upanishada that the Atma chooses whom it will.

He who gives himself upto the Self, that is God (Gita X.20) is the most excellent devotee. Giving ones Self up to God means remaining constantly in the Self, without giving room for the rise of any thoughts other than the thought of the Self.

Whatever burdens are thrown on God, he bears them. Since the supreme power of God makes all things move, why should we, without submitting ourselves to it, constantly worry ourselves with thoughts as to what should be done and how and what should not be done and how not? We know that the train carries all loads, so after getting on it, why should we carry our small luggage on our head to our discomfort, instead of putting it down in the train and feeling at ease.

The great teachers also have taught that the devotee is greater than the yogi (Bhagvat Geeta) and that the means to realise is devotion which is of the nature of reflection on one's own self (Viveka Chaudamani). Thus, it is the path of realising BRAHMAN that is variously called Dharma Vidya, Brahma Vidya, Atma Vidya etc. What more can be said than this? One should understand the rest by inference.

The greatest of all aids to self-realisation, is the presence of a realised man. This is called SATSANG, which means literary 'fellowship with Being'. Association with sages who have realised the truth removes material attachments. On these attachments being removed, the attachments of the mind are also destroyed.

The supreme state which is obtained here and now as a result of association with sages and through the deep mediation of self enquiry in contact with the heart, cannot be gained with the aid of a Guru or through knowledge of the scriptures, or by spiritual merit or by any other means.

Neither the holy waters of pilgrimage, nor the images of gods made of earth and stone can stand comparison with the benign look of the sage. These purify one only after countless days of grace but no sooner does the sage bestow his gracious glance than he purifies one.

What is unconditional surrender or perfect devotion? Self-enquiry dissolves the ego by looking for it and finding it to be non-existent, whereas devotion surrenders it. Therefore both come to the same ego-free goal, which is all that is required.

Surrender is giving oneself up to the original cause of one's being. Do not delude yourself by imagining this source to be God outside you. One's source is within one's self (Geeta X.20 and Atma Sakshatkara, a part of Sarva Jnanottara from Siva Agamas, wherein Lord Shiva gives instructions in the path of knowledge to his son Lord Subrahmanya and his wife Devi Parvati.)

The quality of devotion is not strained, it is effortless natural. God does not command us to love him. We love him because we can not help it. If we are so fortunate as to be drawn to him in love, let us yield ourselves freely to that impulse, the more freely because we have submitted a good deal too freely to impulses of a different order. A legendary devotee named Pralhada, we are told, prayed thus "May I ever bear unto Thee that love which the ignorant bear to the means of pleasure they find in the world". And not only should there be devotion to God, but it should be also pure - free from bargaining. Devotion should not be conceived as a means to some end; otherwise it would not be devotion to God.

Complete surrender does imply that you should have no desire of your own that God's will alone is your will and you have no will of your own.

There are two ways; one is looking into the source of the 'I' and merging into the source, and the other is 'feeling'. I am helpless by myself. God alone is all powerful and except for throwing myself completely on Him, there are no other means of safety for me, and thus gradually developing the conviction that God alone exists and the ego does not count. Both methods lead to the same goal. Complete surrender is another name for JNANA or Liberation.

So Bhakti Marga is the way of love and devotion, leading to Union and therefore the most ecstatic path. Since God is verily the self, love of the self is love God; and that is BHAKTI.



Sweet & Sour
Thoughts - At a Funeral
... Tribhuwan N. Bhan

The patriarch of a corporate sector in India Mr. Dhirubhai H. Ambani breathed his last on 7th July 2002. During his funeral the next day, I tried to have a glimpse of his mortal remains but failed to do so, as there were over 25000 mourners and I could not physically jostle myself through the huge crowd. So I decided to come home and watch the funeral on the small screen. While watching the funeral of Mr. Ambani on TV, my mind went racing back to February- March 1961, when with about 30 more persons, I attended the funeral at Chandanwadi, of Hari Singh, Ex. Maharaja of Jammu & Kashmir state. Here I was watching on TV, the funeral of a man who came from an unknown village, Churwad of Gujarat and rose to become a business tycoon. His funeral was one befitting an emperor. Simultaneously, in a flash, the scene of the other funeral I attended in 1961, came across my mind, when an ex-ruler of an Indian state had the funeral of a commoner.

From Rs. 500/- Mr. Dhirubhai Ambani created the empire of Reliance Industries worth Rs. 65000 Crores at present. He was a visionary who achieved the impossible through hard work, dedication and singleness of purpose. Though he had not received any formal education in Economics or Commerce, he proved to be a genius in the field of "Business Administration" and a financial wizard. Thus he became a legend in his own lifetime.

It was my destiny to be present at the funeral of one-time ruler of J&K State, stand just few feet away from his mortal remains, gaze at the same endlessly, and then after a gap of four decades to witness the last journey of the doyen of Industrial advancement in our country. Comparisons are odious and unhealthy, but at times like these any person, who is aware of facts and figures realizes that a ruler left a truncated and fragmented state as a legacy, which has proved to be a problem not only for our country but also for the whole world. In contrast, a commoner has left behind an industrial empire as his legacy not only for his family but also for the entire nation. Thus I draw a conclusion that nothing is everlasting, neither the glitter and grandeur of royalty nor the pain and pangs of poverty. Whatever one may inherit, or create, remains here on this planet. One departs from this world empty handed, when one leaves for his ultimate abode. What matters most is the impression one has carved out in the minds of the people according to his deeds or misdeeds, during his lifetime.

Thus one is judged not by who you are, but what you do.



Theatre - Natya Parva 2002
Moti Lal Kemmu's 'Aka Nandun'

Natya Parva 2002, the Theatre Festival of Sangeet Natak Akademy, New Delhi was organised in Mumbai in association with the National Centre for Performing Arts, Mumbai, from 1 December to 16 December 2002. The Kashmiri play 'Aka Nandun', a presentation by National Bhand Theatre, Wathora, Kashmir was staged on 3 December 2002 at Y.B.Chavan Auditorium. The play in original Kashmiri language, music and costume was penned, designed and directed by Shri Moti Lal Kemmu.

The story revolves round a queen longing for a son after giving birth to seven daughters. A Sadhu blesses her with a son on the condition that the boy be named Aka Nandun and be returned to him after 12 years. The queen accepts the condition. After 12 years, the Sadhu returns and asks for Aka Nandun. The queen tries to strike a bargain with the Sadhu by offering him money, land and jewellery, but the Sadhu does not relent. He commands her to cut Aka Nandun into pieces, cook them and serve them on 11 plates. Finally she complies and the Sadhu leaves, directing her to call Aka Nandun aloud, upon which Aka Nandun reappears.

Aka Nandun has been a part of Kashmiri folklore for ages. It would be sung in music assemblies. Attempts to put it on stage and TV were made several times. The format chosen by Pt. Kemmu has been that of Opera, with elements from Kashmir's own theatre style of 'bàndûh pãthûr'. The presentation, even before an audience, majority of which was non-Kashmiri speaking, was excellent.

The format chosen by Kemmuji has tried to interpret the message of the tale. The tale, which ordinarily looks to be very sordid, is not actually so. The concept of a *mayavi* Aka Nandun being cut to pieces, when the actual one is there to appear on the call of his mother, has been dramatically brought out.

The story is of Hindu dimensions, with prayers, mystics and gods forming part of the tale. The actors, director, musicians and all, are Muslims, particularly of rural background.

About Pt. Moti Lal Kemmu :



Born in 1933 in Srinagar, Kashmir, Shri Moti Lal Kemmu took his graduate degree from J&K University in 1953. He received training at M.S.University, Baroda under a Govt. of India

scholarship. He has also been awarded a Senior Fellowship (in literature) by the Deptt. of Culture, Govt. of India.

With his plays *Teen Asangat Ekanki*, *Trunove*, *Tshai*, *Tota Ta Aana* and *Bhand Duhai*, Shri Moti Lal Kemmu has established himself as an important dramatist in Kashmiri. Actively involved with the promotion of the traditional Bhand theatre of Kashmir as well as other arts including the Dhamali dance, he has organised a number of workshops for actors and playwrights in Kashmiri.

Shri Moti Lal Kemmu received the Sahitya Academy Award in 1982 and was honoured by the Jammu & Kashmir Government for his service to Kashmiri literature and arts. Shri Kemmu received the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1997.

Kashmir Turmoil
Kashmiri Pandits' Migration
... Javaid Iqbal Bhat

[Excerpts from 'Pundit Migration - The Psychology of Home Sickness' by the author, as appeared in the 28th October 2002 issue of 'Greater Kashmir', the most widely circulated English daily in the Valley.]

It was the sudden fear psychosis triggered by the open exhibition of lethal ammunition, which prompted Pandits to retrace the steps they had taken during their first migration. Some blood curdling incidents further deepened the fear. What at the atmosphere were two portentous happenings; first was the hanging of M.Maqbool Bhat in Tihar Jail in 1985 following the judgement handed out by N.K.Ganjoo and second the communal riots which ravaged South Kashmir in February 1986. The Chief Minister Dr. Farooq Abdullah resigned on January 18, 1990 and the first couple of months of the same year saw the mass exodus. Within a few months, the number had crossed 2.5 lakh.

In the heat of those momentous months, some Muslim youth resorted to abominable behaviour alien to the softer tenets of their faith. Slogans like, 'Jis ko Kashmir main rehna hai, Allaho Akbar kehna hai' although not meant for striking terror among Pandits, yet their import would have been lost only on the naive. A number of grisly acts of savageness against them (Pandits) who had quietly remained aloof from the rattling of guns outside, hastened their departure. The tale of Brij Nath Kaul, writer Kaul, his sister and his wife of Village Harman, Tehsil Shopian, is one among the heart rending tragedies which is a slur on the face of humanity. This young couple along with Kaul's sister was kidnapped in May 1990. The two young ladies were stripped off and molested in the public. They were then gangraped. After torturing them in various ways, the legs of husband and wife were tied to a jeep at village Imam Sahib. It was around midday. The jeep was driven, dragging the young couple and Kaul's sister along with. They cried and cried, their bodies were injured and bled profusely. The eyes of Bhushan Lal of village Aamsen, Tehsil Kulgam were gouged out and ears chopped away. After killing B.K.Ganjoo, an assistant engineer in the Telecom Department in March 1990, the militants forced his wife and his daughter to taste the blood soaked rice. Girija Tikoo of Bandipora worked as a laboratory assistant at the Government Girls High School in Trehgam, Kupwara. After abduction in June 1990, she was shred into pieces on a bar and sawmill.

It was indeed fear, which impelled them to review their staying decision in the widening chaos and eventually amid panic, disappeared behind the Pir Panchal. Though there is no irrefutable evidence to corroborate Jagmohan complicity preception, there is scarcely any doubt that with some crisis management exercise, he could have prevented the convoys of Pandits and not facilitated it as he did. It is outlandish to say that he had a plot in his mind to cipherise the Muslim population. A point worth marking here is if minority Muslims in Hindu Tamil dominated areas in Sri Lanka have reconciled to the Tamil homeland struggle launched by the LTTE, why haven't the minority Hindus in Kashmir?

Nevertheless fear of loss of limb, life and the intellectual property combined with the burden of history propelled them to march out for peaceful meadows but landed in snake infested refugee camps without a refugee status which could have attracted the attention of International Humanitarian Agencies. They are designated as Internally Displaced People (IDP). Why? In the reply lies the rub. In order to discourage the

internationalization of the issue, the government of India has deliberately aborted any attempt to that effect. In consequence, they are deprived of international aid and assistance as is being supplied to other refugees of the world.

The demand of '*Panun Kashmir*', a leading platform of displaced Pandits of a territorial enclave within Kashmir with adequate provisions of security, is ideally indefensible but practically unsustainable. Who knows, tomorrow another upheaval will throw up another demand for a separate Sikh homeland. After all who could have imagined a Pandit homeland demand. All this when everyone knows that there are existing movements for a separate statehood in Jammu, separate union territory chorus in Ladakh.

This compartmentalization based on religio-ethnic identities will only accentuate the prevailing tensions and protract further the resolution of the vexed Kashmir issue. The repatriation must not be held hostage to the final settlement of Kashmir dispute, contrary to their return, is the indispensable ingredient of a composite strategy to tackle head on the Kashmir imbroglio. The common Muslims of Valley are yearning to pick up threads of shimmering inter-religious fabric, which was shredded by the unforeseen and sad turn of events. In the same breath, it must be stated that government of India is living on the Martian surface if it thinks that Pandits will be resettled in Kashmir without any tangible headway on the dispute-resolution front. Yes, it can be so but with a fear-ridden heart.

Nevertheless, we have something more than moral obligation to take up the cudgels on behalf of Pandits. There is no point listing our own woes. The world is conversant with them. Pandits are in the grip of undocumented grief and indescribable misery. Enter Jammu and you can't help report on their piteous state. A countable number of materially well-off Pandits must not, as conscientious human beings, distract our attention from the bulk of them, who have to scrimp and save to keep the wolf from the door. It is one thing to jot down a mile long commentary on any subject under the sun, but quite another to spend a night in a refugee camp under a tent. One day, on my visit to Jammu, an elderly Pandit broke into tears on seeing my palm suffused with raw walnut-juice. Through his glassy eyes brimful with tears, I saw the multicoloured sorrows he and his community have to encounter. Materially sound or not, all of them sighing for a glimpse of their leafy, rosy and sweet-aired Vale.



Eve's Corner

Position of Women in Ancient Kashmir

... Sonia Raina

Down the ages, Kashmiri women have been extolled as the best specimen of oriental beauty. James Milne in *Road to Kashmir*, characterised a Kashmiri woman as a 'primal creature in her Garden of Eden'. Kashmiri women however, witnessed varying fortunes, largely due to politico-social upheavals, much too frequent in the medieval period. During the dark periods, they were pressurised with servitude and deprivation. Their activities got confined to the four walls of the house. This seclusion sapped their intellectual curiosity and artistic creativity. In periods of comparative reprieve, some of them fought valiantly against injustices and were able to leave an enduring imprint on Kashmir's annals.

Women in Kashmir were not only equal but considered a little superior in many spheres of mundane life. Abhinavagupta, the versatile exponent of Shaivist philosophy says that according to the creed 'a man must have a woman as a messenger for communication with the All Powerful, who must be treated as one's equal and with honour, otherwise, he forfeits his rights to perform religious ceremonies and rituals laid down by the Shaivist preceptors'.

Regarding the position of women in early Kashmir, we learn that the first part of a woman's life was spent in her father's house, when liberal education was imparted to her. Bilhana, the poet laureate of 11th century A.D. says that even the women in their household spoke Sanskrit and Prakrit as fluently as their mother-tongue. Women, at least of upper classes received education in diplomacy and state craft, besides that of general nature like biological sciences, arts, music, singing, dancing & painting.

There is no indication of women being in seclusion or relegated to the background. The use of the veil was non-existent. Women could hold property in their own right. A passage from the *Rajatarangini* tends to show that after the death of her husband, the widow became heir to his immovable properties and not his sons.

Women enjoyed equal rights as men in the affairs of the state as also in the discharge of public duties. This is amply proved by the anointment of queens along with their husbands at the time of coronation. They fought alongside men on foot or on horseback. There is evidence that wise women made their husbands' rule a success. Queen Suryamati made judicious selection of ministers and other officials to give public confidence in her otherwise weak husband, King Ananda. He was later made to abdicate in favour of his son. Didda dominated her weak husband Kshemagupta. She controlled the destinies of the kingdom as regent and a queen for half a century.

The great success with which Didda and Sugandha governed their dominions, naturally presupposes that they were put in the way to efficiency by some previous instruction and practice. Heroism displayed by Didda and Kota Rani was exemplary. Queen Kalhanika went at the head of an emissary to bring rapprochement between Bhoja and Jayasimha. Women of a lesser status too appear to have taken leading part in the political activities of the State.

Regarding the proper age of marriage of a woman, no positive evidence is forthcoming. A perusal of the *Rajatarangini* generally leaves the impression that pre-puberty marriage probably was not in vogue in ancient Kashmir. A story related by Kshemendra in the *Desopadesa* may indicate that girls were married at a mature age.

Widows were expected to live a pure life, devoid of luxury. The use of ornaments or gorgeous dress was forbidden to her. Remarriage of widows and of other women does not seem to have been absolutely forbidden. Partapditya II married the wife of a rich merchant. Kota Rani's remarriage after Rinchana's death is well known.

The custom of burning of Sati was in vogue in Kashmir from an early time. In the stories of Kathasaritsagara, which was composed in the valley in 11th century A.D., the custom appears to be quite common. About the historical cases of widows burning themselves at the death of their husbands, we have a number of instances in Rajatarangini. The custom of Sati was so deep rooted in the valley that even mothers and sisters and other near relatives burnt themselves along with their beloved deceased. Gajja cremated herself with her son Ananda, Vallabha with her brother-in-law Malla, and the sister of Dilhabhattaraka cremated herself with her brother. The custom persisted long after the Hindu rule till Sultan Sikander banned it.

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ऐसे रोकें बुढ़ापा

... संगीता आखुन

बुढ़ापा शारीरिक प्रक्रिया का एक अहम अंग है। जो पैदा हुआ है उसे एक न एक दिन बूढ़ा होना ही है। ऐसे तो हम इनसे मुक्ति नहीं पा सकते हैं क्योंकि यह जीवन का अत्यंत कठोर सत्य है। फिर भी हम इसे अपनी तरफ से दूर भगाने की कोशिश जरूर कर सकते हैं। इसे हम लम्बे समय तक टाल सकते हैं।

क्रियाशील बनें : कभी भी बुढ़ापे को बोझ या श्राप न समझें। बुढ़ापे में जितना ज्यादा हो सके, गतिशील बने रहें। इससे शरीर ठीक रहता है और रोग भी दूर रहते हैं।

खुद हंसें : हंसना अपने आप में ही श्रेष्ठ व्यायाम है। हंसने से तनाव दूर होता है व शारीरिक रोग भी दूर होते हैं। जान बूझ कर हंसने की आदत डालें और खूब हंसें। इससे दिमाग को ठंडक और शान्ति मिलती है।

गहरी नींद लें : गहरी नींद शारीरिक और मानसिक तृप्ति के लिये बहुत जरूरी है। अच्छी नींद के लिए शाम को भोजन जल्दी कर लें। रात में चाय या काफी न पियें एवं दूध का उपयोग करें। सोने से पहले हाथ मुंह जरूर धोयें। सोते समय किसी बात की चिन्ता न करें। नर्म बिस्तर का प्रयोग न करें। तकिया भी न लें। दिन में शरीर की मालिश करें। इससे नींद अच्छी आती है। शाम को भोजन करने के बाद थोड़ा घूमें जरूर।

तनाव से बचें : तनाव में कभी भी न रहें। आशावादी बनें और चिन्ता करना छोड़ दें। अपने आप को व्यस्त रखें। अपने दिल की बात दबायें नहीं। यदि कोई समस्या हो तो परिवार के सदस्यों को बतायें। तनाव से बचने का लिए अच्छा साहित्य पढ़ें। दिमाग में अच्छे विचारों को जगह दें।

Book Review

Vitasta Annual Number 2002

Vitasta Annual Number

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Vitasta Annual Number has over the years become synonymous with the ancient glory and past heritage of our motherland - Māj Kāshir. The 35th Annual Number (2001-2002) of the Vitasta, blessed by Sharika Bhagwati (an artistic vision) in Kashmiri Panditani attire, unfolds a Kaleidoscope of the 'Asthanas' of Kashmiri Pandits in the Valley, which instil reverential devotion into the minds of Pandit community.

The 'Adi-Sthapanas', the 'Consecration' and the 'Sanctification' of our ancient temples and shrines have their own legends and history, which has been encompassed within the covers of the Annual Vitasta Number by eminent writers and scholars.

The agenda/theme of the Annual Numbers of Vitasta set by its Editorial Committee, since years now, depicts the zeal and the concern of the Committee to cover such subjects which in the present-day diaspora of the community needs prioritization for preservation, before the dust of the times obliterates our rich religious and cultural heritage.

The theme of the 35th Annual Number presents a panorama of Homeland Pilgrimage Centres of Kashmiri Pandits - a timely and pressing need for our youngsters to know about their proud legacy.

While the Annual Number speaks about the various better known Asthanas like Ksheer Bhawani, Hari Parbat or Amarnath, at the same time, indepth information into some important but 'little known' Asthanas, has been provided by eminent writers, which perhaps, hardly a few of us know.

The '**tsuk**' - चुक [Sorry, I can not find the exact English word which can give the intensity of Kashmiri word चुक] with which Moza Sahib along with his team worked assiduously throughout the year in finalization of the theme, selecting the writers and approaching them to contribute (which by itself is a big task), and then sit through months in editing and compiling the data, is discernably evident from the compendium which is before you as the 35th Vitasta Annual Number.

In the post-exodus era, when Kashmiri Pandits have been, apart from living in ghettos in Jammu & Udhampur camps, scattered in the country, either struggling to make their two ends meet, or when the younger generation is pursuing their studies (courtesy-Maharashtra state and now more states which have come to the rescue of what otherwise would have been a generation wasted), the regular publication of *Vitasta* Annual Number seems the only periodical which sincerely endeavours to keep the ethos of Pandit legacy alive even in odd and hostile atmosphere.

... J.L.Manwati

Poetry
Middle Path*

Once there lived a prince named Shrone
He was one of the greatest epicures
the history has ever known
He was obsessed with sensual gratification
He did weird things for his satisfaction
He would enjoy food fifteen times a day
For doing so, he had his own way.
After enjoying greedily and eating to fill
He vomited the food with help of a herbal pill
One day he came to know that Buddha
had come to a nearby village
His curiosity to listen to the sermons
took him to the sage
Nobody believed that Shrone had gone
to listen to a sermon
As if western direction had borne
the morning sun.
He listened keenly to Buddha's discourse
And his life took a different course.
Buddha's words played magic on Shrone
He decided to renounce his family and throne.
He resolved to follow Buddha to all the places
Without caring a bit for his comfortable palaces.
He who used chariots and never walked on land
Was now walking barefooted with the
holy band.
All monks would bathe and walk on
smooth path
But he walked on thorns and would not
take a bath.
As disciples took a moderate meal
But he starved himself with a stubborn zeal.
After a long starvation he became a horrible sight
Now he was a bony cage and seemed
struck with blight.

The prince for whom the scents

were once a passion
Was now stinking badly and
worthy of compassion.
Buddha, the omniscient, easily divined
The turmoil going on in Shrone's mind.
Buddha wanted to get Shrone out of this
'new foolishness'
Knowing very well that hurting oneself is
no goodness.
He visited Shrone's hut one day
And said, "Shrone, I heard you loved to play veena, your favourite instrument"
Shrone weak and famished in agreement.
Buddha enquired, "What if the strings are tightened too much"
Shrone replied, "Sir, strings will break even with a moderate touch"
Buddha asked, "And what if the strings are
kept too loose"
Shrone replied, "Again, playing veena
will be of no use".
Buddha said, "What applies to veena
applies to us too
Avoid extremes and do what I tell you to do".
"Be moderate in eating, sleeping
work and recreation
That is what will take you slowly to perfection."
"Shun the extremes if you want music in your soul
By taking to 'middle path'
you will reach the final goal."

[* Old story about Buddha. Put to verse by **Vinay Kaul**]

छुम पोशि नूळुंज जामुंह
... भवानी भाव्यवान पंडित

छुम पोशि नूळुंज जामुंह गंडिथ, कामुंह दीवुई म्योन ॥

छुम साज मुली चंगुंह वायान, रंग वुछुमस शोम ।
छुम नालुंह रो'टमुत हरुंह प्याला, ओम छा किनुंह जोम ॥

हर वुछुमस ओम जामुत, प्यालुंह वुछुमस ओम ।
प्यालुंह पो'यमस लोलुंह नारय, अदुंह सपदुम मोम ॥

शेरि वुछुमस मोरुंह छाया, ओ'मकारय नोम ।
चूरि वुछुमस दूरुंह ग्राया, हूरि दिल ह्यथ गोम ॥

पूरि कनि खो'त पूरुंह नूरुई, दूरि गा'ह ये'लि प्योम ।
नालुंह रो'टुमय वारुंह वारय, दामुंह प्याला च्योम ॥

लछिनोवुय दछि पोंपुर, अछि दारे प्योम ।
गछि कुठि छा गटुंह कुठि छा, वटुंह छा डुलोम ॥

नरदुंह ग्युंदुनम परदुंह छाये, दरदुंह बागस गोम ।
शस्त्रपंजस लजिमुंह ग्राये, दुखाला ओम ॥

दरदुंह पोशन करदुंह ओ'नमुत, मरदनुई हुँज काँम ।
नालुंह रो'टनय भाव्यवाने लालुंह निशि उत्तोम ॥

☒ ☒ ☒

Children's Page

The Sun

- ? Distance from Earth: 14,96,00000 Kms.
- ? Approx: Diameter: 13,92,000 Kms.
- ? Approx: Circumference: 43,73,000 Kms.
- ? Mass: 2 billion billion billion Tonnes.
- ? Mass in terms of Earth: 3,30,000 times
- ? Rotation: About 25 days at Equator to 36 days near poles (because of its gaseous composition)
- ? Temperature at surface : 5500⁰ C
- ? Temperature at core : 15 million⁰ C
- ? Surface gravity : 38 times that of Earth
- ? Time for sunlight to reach Earth: 8 Min. 18 Sec.
- ? Approximate Age : 4.6 billion years
- ? Expected life span : Probably another 5 billion years before it starts to die.
- ? Chemical composition :
 - Hydrogen: 92.1 %
 - Helium: 7.8 %
 - Oxygen, Carbon, Nitrogen, Neon: 0.1 %

The Sun makes a 100 million times more energy than all nine planets together. Yet it is huge fiery ball of gas, composed mostly of hydrogen like other stars. The secret to the Sun's power is a gigantic nuclear reactor buried deep inside its core, where atoms of hydrogen are squeezed together under tremendous pressure to form heavier helium atoms. This example of nuclear fusion turns 5 million tones of matter into energy every second, driving up the temperature in the Sun's core to 1,50,00000⁰ C. Earth receives a billionth of the total energy output of the Sun.

□□

Noble Etiquettes

Why do we prostrate before parents and elders ?

We prostrate to our parents and elders. We touch their feet and they in turn bless us. Why do we offer Prostration ??

Touching the feet of elders in prostration, is a sign of respect for the age, nobility and divinity that our elders personify. It symbolizes our recognition of their selfless love for us and the sacrifices that they have made for our welfare. It is a way of humbly acknowledging their greatness. This tradition reflects strong family ties which has been one of India's enduring strengths.

The good wishes and blessings of elders are highly valued. We prostrate to seek them. Good wishes springing from a heart full of love, divinity and nobility have a tremendous strength. When we prostrate with humility and respect, we invoke the good wishes and blessings of elders which flow in the form of positive energy to envelope us.

Compiled by 'Kóstur'

Stories for the Children
Charu & the Witch – Concluding part

... M.K.Raina

Charu got panicky for Gulu. He continued to look for him till he found him in a corner along with the bodies of some other children. Samang's brown horse was also there, standing on four legs but motionless. There were precious stones and jewellery placed on shelf like structures. There were swords and arrows, made out of large animal bones. There were all varieties of fresh and dry fruits and other eatables, stored in beautiful gem laden stone containers. Charu's time was running out. He quickly looked out for the glass jar containing souls, but there was none. There was a wall at another corner. Charu went behind it and found another small cave, in which fire was lit. He took a burning wood and searched each and every corner of the cave, but he could not find any souls. He got worried. He came out of the cave. Tara was alert, standing near the stone. There was no trace of a wind and Charu still had time. But he could not decide about his next move.

Charu noticed, Tara was wet. He had taken another dip at the spring. Charu was angry. Tara should not have left the spot he was stationed at. He rebuked Tara and Tara licked his feet, begging pardon. In a flash, Charu felt, he had had some clue to rescue Gulu. He took out a bowl from his sack and went to the spring to fill it with water. He did not forget to have another dip before he entered the courtyard again.

Tara kept the bowl on ground and climbed up a tree. From there, he looked at the chimney. The owl was fast asleep there. Charu dimbed down immediately, picked his bowl and went inside cave again. He reached near Gulu and poured the spring water over him. Gulu started moving his eyes and lifting his hand. Charu shouted with joy. Within moments, Gulu was alive. He embraced Charu and kissed him. Tara heard their voice and came running inside. He licked Gulu's feet. Gulu patted him. Charu and Gulu wanted to leave immediately but Tara would not let them go. He was looking at the brown horse of Samant. Charu understood what Tara wanted. Charu and Gulu, both came out. Tara remained there. Charu emptied his sack and filled it with spring water. Both of them had a dip, and carried the sack inside the cave. With his small bowl, Charu poured water on Samant's horse. He was also alive. They poured the water on as many people as they could and all of them were alive. Time was running out and they could not waste time on getting more water from the spring.

The brown horse and the people who got life back, jointly slid the entrance stone. All of them were out of the cave. Charu instructed all to run to safety before the witch came or the owl awoke. And an idea struck Charu's mind. The owl was sleeping and it was the right time to kill him. He signalled Tara. Tara ascended to the top of the cave and down brought the owl, his wings tightly held in his teeth. Owl was half asleep, fluttering his wings. Tara dropped him near Charu and Charu lifted him in his hands and twisted his neck. There was a thundering roar all around. Charu continued twisting owl's neck and the wind started blowing. The witch was somewhere near, roaring with pain. Wind blew faster and the witch came close to the spring, shouting and screaming. The owl was still alive and Tara was not able to kill him. He put him under the foot of the brown horse, and the horse trampled it. There was a loud scream of both, the owl and the witch. The witch fell near the spring half dead, screaming and pleading for life but the horse was mad. He did not look at the witch and instead kept the owl pressed under his foot. Tara, jumped over the owl and tore his neck apart with his sharp teeth. The owl

and the witch died instantly. And a miracle took place. There was no spring now. It vanished. The magical water channel was calm now. There was no splashing and there were no colours. The skeleton bridge also vanished.

Charu and Gulu, both were sad. Those, dead inside could not be given life now, as there was no spring and no magical water. Before they started leaving for their home, they heard noise inside the cave. And in a few moments, all those who were still dead inside, came out alive, running and shouting, to the pleasure of Charu. They had all attained life at the death of the witch.

When Charu and Gulu reached top of Vismainag, they saw flocks of different varieties of birds coming towards plains of the cave. They saw nightingales and bulbuls and parrots and long necked swans, all chirping and singing, and retiring at the fruit bearing trees. The whole area looked like a piece of paradise. But Charu, Gulu, Tara and the horse, did not want to stay in this paradise. They wanted to be home before it was night. Tara ran fast and fast so that he could inform the villagers in advance.

Charu and Gulu mounted on Samant's horse. When they reached the foot of Vismainag, there was no ravine. The banks had joined back. The trees were there and the rope was lost inside the earth. Beyond this place, the land had grown with lots of flowery plants. There were no wild bushes and the whole area looked beautiful.

When Charu and Gulu reached Kolur, all the villagers had assembled at both the banks of Hapatara. All of them shouted with joy and embraced both Charu and Gulu. Charu had done a great job at the risk of his life and was now the hero of the village. Charu's parents were in tears of joy, having seen their son alive. Tara was carelessly swimming and playing in the waters of the stream.

Next day, villagers removed the thorny bushes barrier from right bank of Hapatara and declared that area open to all. They changed the name of the snow-capped mountain from Vismainag to Charunag, in the name of their hero.

Project ZAAAN
Know Your Language

Peculiar Kashmiri Words & Phrases - 2

अल्ला 'ह अल्ला 'ह खॉर सला 'ह

(alláh alláh khär saláh)

The end of a dispute or a transaction.

अरुँसरुँ (arûsarû)

Hesitation or inability to make up one's mind ~ doing nothing concrete.

अशखाश (ashkhàsh)

Total destruction - this word is generally employed for cursing.

अँट्य अँट्य (àṭṭi àṭṭi)

To cause to wander from country to country.

अँदरुँखल (àdrû-khal)

Extreme insult, consigning to destruction.

आचुँमन (àts ûman)

Ceremonial sipping of water by Hindus.

आज्य् दर्शुँन (आदि दर्शुँन)

(àjṭi darshún / àdí darshún)

A ceremony in which a person inspects the reflection of his/her face in the clarified butter before it is offered as an oblation.

आँठुँ शेठख (àṭhû shèṭhakh)

A certain unlucky marriage, prohibited by astrology, when the bride is born in the sixth sign of the Zodiac and the bridegroom in the eighth thereafter.

(To be continued)

Report & Biradari News

AGM & New B.O.T.

Annual General Meeting of the Kashmiri Pandits' Association, Mumbai was held on 24th November 2002 at Kashyap Bhawan, Andheri. In addition to the normal business scheduled under the AGM regulations, a new Board of Trustees was elected for the term 2002-2004, in accordance with the standing provisions of the Constitution. The following were elected un-opposed as per the notification issued by Shri Vijay Misri, Returning Officer. Official positions held by them, as per the unanimous decision taken in a meeting of the newly constituted Board immediately after the AGM, are indicated against each:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Shri M.L.Mattoo | President |
| 2. Smt. Shanta Kapoor | Vice President |
| 3. Shri J.L.Kak | Vice President |
| 4. Shri C.L.Raina | General Secretary |
| 5. Smt. Neena Kher | Jt. Secretary |
| 6. Smt. Meena Wanchoo | Treasurer |
| 7. Shri J.L.Manwati | Member |
| 8. Shri P.N.Wali | Member |
| 9. Shri S.P.Kachru | Member |
| 10. Smt. Neelam Trakru | Member |
| 11. Shri S.K.Kaul (JNPT) | Member |
| 12. Shri Virendra Takoo | Member |
| 13. Capt. Rakesh Shah | Member |
| 14. Shri M.K.Raina | Member |
| 15. Shri Sunil Mattoo | Member |

Following were nominated as permanent Special Invitees to the meetings of the Board of Trustees:

Shri Surinder Wazir, Smt. Shakuntala Aima
Dr. C.L.Kaul, Shri Moti Kaul, Shri Jayant Raina
Shri Kapil Raina, Shri T.K.Raina, Shri Sanjeev Kaul
and Shri Ashok Tiku.

In addition, the following Committees were constituted:

Felicitation Committee:

- | | | |
|------------------|-----|-------------|
| Shri Mr. J.L.Kak | ... | Chairperson |
| Shri J.L.Manwati | ... | Member |
| Shri Moti Kaul | ... | Member |

Medical Aid Committee:

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----|-------------|
| Smt. Shanta Kapoor | ... | Chairperson |
| Shri S.P.Kachru | ... | Member |
| Capt. Rakesh Shah | ... | Member |

Hawan Committee:

| | | |
|--------------------|-----|----------|
| Capt. Rakesh Shah | ... | Convener |
| Shri Chand Bhat | ... | Member |
| Smt. Neena Kher | ... | Member |
| Smt. Meena Wanchoo | ... | Member |
| Shri S.P.Kachru | ... | Member |
| Shri P.N.Wali | ... | Member |
| Shri T.K.Raina | ... | Member |

Cultural Committee:

| | | |
|----------------------|-----|--------|
| Shri J.L.Manwati | ... | Member |
| Smt. Shakuntala Aima | ... | Member |
| Smt. Rita Kaul | ... | Member |
| Shri P.N.Wali | ... | Member |
| Smt. Neena Kher | ... | Member |
| Smt. Vijaya Bhan | ... | Member |

Souvenir Committee:

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|---------------|
| Shri J.L.Manwati | ... | Coordinator |
| Shri Ashok Tiku | ... | Member |
| Shri Kapil Raina | ... | Member |
| Shri M.K.Kachroo | ... | Member |
| Shri Moti Kaul | ... | Member |
| Smt. Neena Kher | ... | Member |
| Shri Surinder Wazir | ... | Member |
| Shri S.K.Kaul (JNPT) | ... | Member |
| Shri Suriender Kachroo | ... | Member |
| Shri S.Vaishnavi ... | | Member |

Biradari Picnic

On 29th December, 2002, a biradari picnic was arranged at Hevibhushe Farm, near Pen in the Raigad District, 80 Kms. form Mumbai. About 200 biradari members travelling in 3 luxury buses and private cars, participated. The Farm, a vast area of land with grown up coconut trees, flower plants, water ways, fish pond, swimming pool, play grounds, children's amenities and country type enclosures provided a peaceful atmosphere to the visitors. Children had a busy day, participating in games like Cricket, Football etc. Indoor games like Tambola, Musical Chairs and some competitive events were also held, much to the delight of everyone. We also had a guest from Jammu, Shri Krishen Langoo, who delighted one and all with the recitation of Lalla Vakhs.

The only negative point in the otherwise joyful trip was scored by the quality of food provided by the Farm Management. Breakfast was however better.

Kashyap Coop: Housing Society (Proposed):

A Society by the name of Kashyap Cooperative Housing Society (Proposed) has been formed by a group of KPs at Oshiwara, Mumbai on 22nd September 2002. The purpose of forming such a society, as per a press note issued, is to enable biradari members to live together and share their joys and sorrows. Following were elected as office bearers of the Managing Committee:

Chairman : Mr. R.C.Sheopuri
Vice Chairman: Mr. C.L.Kaul
Hon. Secretary : Mr. Ashok Tiku
Hon. Treasurer : Mr. S.P.Kachru
Executive Members: Mr. Moti Kaul, Dr. C.L.Kaul, Mr. Rajen Kaul and Mr. R.N.Mongha.

Biradari members interested to become members of the proposed society may contact:

Kashyap Cooperative Housing Society (Proposed), 905/12, Indra Darshan, Oshiwara, Andheri (W), Mumbai 400 053.

Tel: 91-22-26390805/26390397

Fax: 91-22-28635923.

Nuptials :

Nirja, D/o Smt. Usha & Shri Avtar Krishen Bhat of Mandakini Hsg. Society, Virar was married to **Sushil**, S/o Smt Tathiji & Shri Chamanlal Pandita on December 1, 2002 at Jammu.

Payal, D/o Smt. Girja & Shri Villa Kaul of Seva Kunj, Aundh, Pune (Niece of Shri Moti Kaul of Sundervan Complex, Andheri) was married to **Vikas**, S/o Mrs. Meena & Mr. Bharat Shah on December 8, 2002 at Pune.

Amit, S/o Smt. Krishna & Shri I.B.Raina of Andheri, Mumbai was married to **Payal**, D/o Smt. Teja & Shri Ashok Kaul of Delhi on November 27, 2002 at Delhi.

Shalin, S/o Smt. Veena & Shri Ashok Raina of Vasai was married to **Varsha**, D/o Smt. Vijay & Shri P.K.Jala of Delhi on December 12, 2002 at Delhi.

Kuldeep, S/o Smt. Munjoo & Shri R.R.Wazir of I.C.Colony, Borivali was married to **Suchitra**, D/o Smt. Nancy & Shri H.L.Jaikhani of Bangalore on November 27, 2002 at Jammu.

Births :

Smt. Gayatri & Shri Sanjay Bradoo of Chembur were blessed with a baby girl on 31st December 2002. Shri Sanjay is the son of Shri R.L.Bradoo.

Smt. Sunny & Shri Rajesh Kapoor of Shastri Nagar, Andheri were blessed with a baby boy on 23rd. December 2002. Shri Rajesh is the son of Smt. Shanta Kapoor.

New Life Members

(LM-565)

Moza Ashok

Flat No. 103, Plot 308,
Wonderful C.H.Society, Sector 21, Nerul,
Navi Mumbai 400 706. Tel: 27708876.

(LM-566)

Moza Vinod

C-314, Jyoti Apartments,
Shahad (W), Kalyan, Dist. Thane .
Tel: 300718.

(LM-567)

Kher Sunil

603, Sai Sparsh, Plot No. 74,
Sector 19, Nerul, Navi Mumbai.

Kashmiri Cuisine at your door steps

Recently opened Kashmiri Restaurant '**Poush'- Essence of Kashmir** in Andheri is the brainchild of a hotelier Shri Om Takoo. The elevational architecture of the restaurant, for which craftsmen were brought right away from Kashmir, resembles that of a traditionally done up Houseboat, with slanted pinewood shingling in typical Kashmiri style. Traditional Krewel-embroidered wall hangings and Kangdis used as flower vases and Kashmiri music in the background creates the perfect Kashmiri ambience. A special thing to mention, is the Khutumbandi ceiling inside, perhaps the only one of its kind in Mumbai. A Shikara by the side of the restaurant, crafted to provide you that 'surfing effect' while you have your meals the Kashmiri style, adds beauty to the whole conception.

The menu enlists mainly Kashmiri Pandit dishes both vegetarian and non-vegetarian. 'Poush' makes use of recipes that are generations old. The cooking medium is only mustard oil, to retain 'that' originality. Food is served in copper pots by attendants in Pheran. Steaming hot Kahwa is served in Samovars. All this speaks volumes about the owner's passion for Kashmir. 'Poush' also offers home delivery within city limits at a nominal charge and theme party catering. Address: 17, Mayfair Oberoi Complex, Off Link Road, Near SABe TV, Andheri (W). Tel: 56970825, 56994553. ☒☒

Letters

☒ It was with real sorrows that I heard about the sad demise of Shri Onkar Aima. I knew him since 1956. I will cherish for ever his magnetic charm and the qualities that made him such a wonderful companion and a true friend. He is not dead, he is just away.

M.N.Ambardar
Satara

☐ We receive the copies of Milchar regularly and are abreast of the happenings in Mumbai Biradari. Such publications serve community well and are a mirror through which the daily occurrences, community's health, advancement in style and stature, the weaknesses and the strengths can best be seen and compared. I congratulate you and the Editorial Board of Milchar for their persistent, positive and sustained efforts not only in keeping the journal going, but also improving it in style and syntax. I do hope that you are receiving a copy of our Quarterly publication Sundervani. I have requested the Editor of Sundervani to give a wide publicity to Milchar in the next issue to optimize the sale /distribution of Milchar, so that both of our people could be nearer to each other. I expect that you will reciprocate in the similar manner.

Secondly, I would like to say that we have about 700 families of Kashmiri Pandits living in Chandigarh, Panchkula, Mohali and its adjoining areas, with prospective candidates for admission every year to the professional colleges at Mumbai and other places. Your Association is doing a commendable job first in advising the dates of admission in the colleges to Kashmiri Samiti, Delhi and Kashmiri Pandit Sabha, Jammu, and then counselling the candidates for their admission to various colleges in Maharashtra. We do not receive the intimation regarding the admission dates and as such the candidates have to rely upon the information which they obtain from Delhi or Jammu and then go to any of these places to get the requisite forms and registration of their names or complete whatever formality is required for the said admissions. This becomes a circuitous route and more often than not some candidates are not able to avail of this opportunity. I would request you to route a copy of such information to our Sabha also.

Sqn Ldr. B.I.Sadhu
President
Kashmiri Sahayak Sabha, Chandigarh

☐ I received Milchar issue July-Sept., 2002 just now. I am exceedingly glad to see the quality of the journal getting improved, issue by issue.

M.K.Raina
Essar Steel Ltd., Surat

☐ This is with reference to the write-up of Pt. Manmohan Kaul 'Achkan' under the caption Urdu Language published in July-Sept. 2002 issue of Milchar. The world renowned Urdu poet Pt. Daya Shankar Kaul 'Naseem' had no connection with Agra as was mentioned by Pt. Achkan. Naseem was born in Kashmiri Mohalla, Lucknow and died of cholera there in his ancestral haveli. He was a Bakshi in the court of Nawab Amjad Ali Shah of Oudh. For details please read the second volume of my book 'Kashmiri Panditon Ke Anmol Rattan'.

B. N. Sharga
Kashmiri Mohalla, Lucknow

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